

CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP

TALUS PILE NEWSLETTER, DECEMBER 2006 NO. 140

TRAINING SCHEDULE

T Dec 11 Mon Meeting C. Burge Myers Renta

Dec 15-17 Fri-Sun Desert peak Huey (one day)

Dec 19 Tue Christmas party Westbrook

Dec 23-25 Sat-Sun Open (Dec 25 Christmas Day)

Dec 29-31 Fri-Sun Open (Jan 1 New Years Day)

Jan 6-7 Sat-Sun Open

T Jan 8 Mon Meeting Finco D. Burge Doerr

Jan 12-15 Fri-Mon Tyndal Bishop (Jan 15 MLK Day)

Jan 20-21 Sat-Sun Open

T Jan 23 Tue Basic First Aid First Aid Committee

Jan 26-28 Fri-Sun Desert peak Finco (one day)

Feb (TBD) (TBD) Pear Lake Hut Roseman

Feb 3-4 Sat-Sun Baldy Myers

Feb 9-11 Fri-Sun Whitney North Fork Bishop

T Feb 12 Mon Meeting Huey Bishop Loughran

T Feb 17 Sat MRA recert practice Training Committee (Feb 19 President's Day)

T Feb 21 Wed First Aid Topic B First Aid Committee

Feb 23-25 Fri-Sun Desert peak _____

T Feb 28 Wed First Aid Topic B First Aid Committee

T Mar 3 Sat MRA recert (Search) Training Committee

T Mar 7 Wed First Aid Topic B First Aid Committee

Mar 9-11 Fri-Sun Aggie Bishop

Mar 12 Mon Meeting Rockwell Rockwell Loughran

T Mar 14 Wed First Aid Topic B First Aid Committee

Mar 17-18 Sat-Sun Telescope Myers

T designates official training activities.

OPERATION REPORTS

Operation 2006-02 (Search)

Piute Mountain

22 February 2006

By David Miles, Operation Leader

On February 21 at 2100, I received a page from Sgt. Plank that CLMRG was asked to search for a lost 16-year-old motorcycle rider. I agreed to lead the operation. Six other field members responded for the search: Tom Sakai, Mike Franklin, Eric Toler, Bud Gates, Werner Hueber, and Dennis Burge. Carol Burge was the coordinator.

We met at the hut at 0500 on 22 February in order to be at the command post by 0700 as requested by Sgt. Plank. The command post (CP) was on Kelso Valley Road 14 miles south of Weldon. We arrived at the CP at 0645 and were briefed on our assignment. The 16-year-old (Ryan Price) and his father had been riding their motorcycles in the Piute Mountain area when the father's bike broke down. They spent a cold night together with the bikes. In the morning, the father took a GPS position (35° 32.580' N, 118° 18.952' W) and told his son to remain with the broken

motorcycle while he rode out to get help. The Kern County helicopter went to this location but could not land or find Ryan. The Desert team was called out at 1500 and several teams spent all night trying to reach the PLS. At this point, Ryan had spent two very cold nights outside.

We were assigned a route and started to drive up a dirt road to the start of our assignment around 0725. At 0735, Ryan and his father appeared on a motorcycle. We confirmed that this was our subject and returned with them to the CP. Ryan had walked all night down the motorcycle trail and had almost reached the CP when his father found him.

After the debrief, we returned to the hut and were finished by 0840.

Operation 2006-04 (Transit)

Frazier Park, California

28-29 April 2006

By Mike Myers, Operation Leader

CLMRG received a page from the Kern County Sheriff's Department at approximately 2100 on

28 April 2006. Janet Westbrook called me shortly after looking for a leader, so I took the operation.

I called the sheriff, who told me that they were looking for a missing 67-year-old male, Won Lee, who was with a group at Frazier Park for a picnic and had wandered away from the picnic area during the prayer for the meal. They requested that we be in base camp at 0700 the next day.

Dave Miles, Dan Bishop, Bud Gates, and I committed to the operation. Gates was able to commit to only one day and expected to travel alone. Later, Bob Huey also committed. We met at the Hut at 0330 the next morning. We had five for the operation, and Gates would be on his bike. I was uneasy about his riding home on the bike after a day of searching, so I released him from the operation.

After a stop for breakfast, we rolled into base camp at about 0645. As the others prepared for the search, I checked in and learned that Sgt. Kirkland wanted us in the field as soon as we were ready. The Frazier Park team had located some tracks during the night that they believed were the subject's and wanted a fresh team of experienced trackers to take over. With an assignment in hand that was quickest I have ever gotten, I went back and informed the team.

We were just loading up to leave when Sgt. Kirkland flagged us down and told us to stand by. Someone, later confirmed to be Won Lee, had just wandered into the cabin area at the bottom of the mountain. Sgt. Kirkland released us from the operation, and we returned home.

Operation 2006-05 (Transit-OES- 06-LAW-0346)

Mono County, California

1 August 2006

By Linda Finco, Operation Leader

Sgt. Mike Kirkland (Kern County Sheriff's Department) paged CLMRG at 0010 on Tuesday,

1 August. Mono County was requesting help in a search for an 80-year-old male who had separated from his hiking party around noon the day before. I called Deputy Jeff Beard (Mono County Sheriff's Department), who said a CHP helicopter would be available at 1000 to insert teams for the search.

I told him we would arrive at base camp around 0800.

Mary Schmierer coordinated the callout, and Sheila Rockwell helped with the telephoning. Dan Bishop, Al Green, and Tom Sakai committed to the operation. Bishop, Green, and I met at the hut at 0500. Sakai joined us at Mammoth Lakes. We arrived at base camp around 0820. The Inyo County team was being briefed and given their assignments when we arrived. At this time, we received more information about the subject. Edward Bergeron, age 80 (5'4", 125 pounds), and his family had packed in by mule a week ago. The family had day hiked all week. On Monday, 31 July, the family hiked to Clark Lakes. At noon, they were returning to their campsite at Thousand Island Lake with Edward ahead of the rest of the family. When they reached their campsite, Edward was not there. The 12 family members, assisted by a wilderness ranger in the area, searched all afternoon and reported Edward missing that evening. Edward was wearing a gray Michigan sweatsuit, a green windbreaker, and a

Navy knit cap. He did not have any food or water. Edward has diminished hearing and eyesight because of his age, but he was independent and not likely to ask for help. Mono County had sent teams in that evening to start searching around Clark Lakes, set up trail blocks to interview other backpackers in the area, and possibly catch Edward if he had taken a wrong turn and continued hiking.

The helicopter arrived about 0900. As its crew was preparing to insert the first team, a report came in that Edward might have been found at Gem Lake, a short distance northwest of Clark Lakes. While we waited for confirmation, the operations leader, Bill Greene, approached us to see if we could assist in a search in the McGee Creek area. We could. When it was confirmed that Edward had been found in good condition (just tired from spending the night out), we were reassigned to the new search.

Operation 2006-06 (Search)

McGee Creek, Mono County, California

1 August 2006

By Linda Finco, Operation Leader

When it was confirmed that Edward Bergeron (see Operation 2006-05 above) had been found in good condition, our team-Dan Bishop, Al Green, Tom Sakai, and I-were reassigned to assist in the search in the McGee Creek area. We met Deputy Pete DeGeorge at the McGee Creek trailhead shortly after 1000. The report was that a 60-year-old woman was missing. A group of 15 had packed into a campsite about 4 miles up from the McGee Creek trailhead. Sometime on Monday, 31 July, some of the group hiked to an upper lake to swim. At some point, the missing woman and another woman began hiking back to the campsite. Somewhere along the way, they separated, and the missing woman never arrived back at camp. The group did a quick search, and when they could not find her, two of them hiked out to report her missing. When we arrived at the trailhead, Deputy DeGeorge said that two searchers were in the area and that they might have just made contact with the woman at the campsite. We waited until we had confirmation that the woman had been found and that our assistance was no longer needed. Deputy DeGeorge released us at 1100. We drove back to Mammoth Lakes for lunch and dropped Sakai back at his condo. We arrived back in Ridgecrest at 1500.

Operation 2006-07 (Search-OES-2006-LAW-0407)

Sequoia National Park, California

1 September 2006

By Tom Roseman, Operation Leader

Mike Myers received a call from Sgt. Gary Rhoades, our new Kern County Sheriff's Department Search and Rescue Coordinator, on 31 August. Sheila Rockwell accepted the job of coordinator and started looking for an operation leader because Myers could not take the operation. Although I was busy packing for the weekend trip to Tuolumne, I decided to take the operation.

Gregory Raye was overdue from a 2-week solo trip in the backcountry of Sequoia National Park. He had left on 14 August and had been seen last in the park the next day near Sphinx Lake. Al Green, Dave Miles, and Bud Gates committed to the operation with Paul DeRuiter and Dennis Burge available for the next day. I contacted Rich Brown of NPS, who told me that the assignments for Friday were filled but that they could use us Saturday morning, so we made plans to leave Friday evening. NPS was running the operation out of Ash Mountain, just inside the park near Three Rivers. I was leaving the house just before dark to run some errands when Brown called back with the news that one of the teams for Friday had canceled. He wanted to know whether we could be on site Friday morning to take a 48-hour overnight field assignment. I committed and called Sheila to let people know of the change.

Green, Miles, Gates, and I met at the hut at 0530 Friday morning and headed out in the sheriff's vehicle. We arrived at Ash Mountain around 0915 and signed in. We were briefed and given our assignment. Shortly before we had arrived, searchers had found what was likely the subject's main pack near Big Brewer Lake and were reworking the day's plan. Gates agreed to work with a dog team that needed someone and traveled to the LZ for a ride in. I was picking up a Park Service radio when the call came in over the base radio that Gregory had been found dead at the bottom of a cliff-likely killed in a fall. We signed out, loaded up the car, and headed back home. I called Sheila to tell her to stand down Paul and Dennis. I got home around 1600, unpacked, then repacked for Tuolumne, and headed north.

GROUP BUSINESS

Youngblood ready to take reins

30-year veteran of Sheriff's Department expects smooth transition from Wimbish

BY JAMES BURGER, Californian staff writer

e-mail: jburger@bakersfield.com | Wednesday, Nov 8 2006 9:59 PM

Kern County has elected some interesting sheriffs in seeking a balance between an insider's insight and the fresh perspective of an outsider. On Tuesday, they swapped again from incumbent Mack Wimbish, who spent his pre-sheriff career in the California Highway Patrol, to 30-year, retired deputy sheriff Cmdr. Donny Youngblood.

Editor: More at <http://www.bakersfield.com/102/story/83155.html>.

Our new SAR deputy is Sgt. Gary Rhoades, and the new commander is Shelly Castaneda.

And in Inyo County, Lt. Bill Lutze was elected sheriff, filling in behind the retired Dan Lucas.

SUMMARY OF PAST TRIPS

10 Mar Ah-So & Corkscrew Rockwell, Chuck Faris

We climbed this 5405' peak one mile west of Corkscrew. Then we traversed over Corkscrew and down to the car. 4900' elevation gain, 10 miles, 9.75 hours

23 May Sierra lakes Rockwell, Toler

Exploratory trips to Robinson and Lone Pine Lakes to check snow conditions.

9-10 Jun Whitney Trail Rockwell, Sakai, one guest

We cramponed up to Trail Crest and glissaded down.

16 Jun North Fork Sakai, Bishop

Sakai's birthday. Doug at the Portal Store gave us free hamburgers.

18 Jun Candlelight Rockwell

Up the Meysan Canyon side and down to Bighorn Park. The mosquitoes were vicious between Bighorn Park and the Portal.

24-25 Jun Norman Clyde Huey, one guest

We got to the base of the climb at 1700, saw snow all over the route, and packed back down.

25 Jun Thor Rockwell, Sakai, Bishop, Chuck Faris

Via SE couloir. First time for me on this route since 1977 with Carl Heller and Diane Lucas. I think this is the best class 2 route from the Whitney Trail, while Smiley Face remains the best from the North Fork. It is probably the quickest way to climb Thor. The SE couloir should be considered perhaps a better way to descend than our east couloir, especially for novices. It is not as loose, and it hits the main trail 500 feet higher.

30 Jun-2 Jul Heller Bishop, Huey, Bill Stratton

We left Whitney Portal on Friday, June 30. We went up the North Fork and crossed the Carillon-Cleaver col. We climbed the Cleaver on the way to camp on the north side of Tulainyo Lake. Our original goal was the east arête of Heller, but because our concerns about snow on the route, we opted to climb Heller from the west.

On Saturday, we headed down toward Wallace lake. I missed the start of the West Face route and instead headed up a good looking, relatively solid chute that topped out just north of and 80 feet below the summit. We encountered one exposed move that we protected easily with a sling. We were able to get a good view of the east arête and saw a few patches of snow near the ridge that may have caused problems. After summiting, we descended the same way, the northwest chute, and went back up to camp at Tulainyo Lake. Tunnabora was on the way, so we climbed it.

On Sunday, we climbed over the Russell-Carillon saddle. Two fingers of snow up the north side of the saddle made the climb a little easier. On the way out we also climbed Carillon.

A good weekend with four peaks: Cleaver, Heller, Tunnabora, and Carillon.

4 Jul Mystery Sakai, Bishop

Weather wasn't too good. We heard thunder but still headed for the summit. We went up to this little bump and saw that Mystery Peak was still 600 feet farther up.

9 Jul Stemwinder Bishop, Sakai, Franklin, guest Alisha

We did the roped climb of Stemwinder on Thor. As we topped out on the ridge we were greeted by thunder and lightning. We descended the SE couloir in pea-sized hail and heavy rain. Even in those nasty conditions that chute is a nice and very quick route to get off of Thor

8-9 Jul Morgan (north) Rockwell, Huey, Toler, Tom & Sigrid Sexton, Bill Stratton

Overnight trip. We wanted to traverse over to Stanford, but threatening weather suggested exposure on the connecting ridge was not a good idea. Anyone going into the Sierra soon, take plenty of mosquito repellent. Actually, I'm not sure about that. The repellent seemed to make them angry.

14-16 Jul Summer class day trips

Trail (Finco) 2 students and 4 members

Dragon (Miles) Miles, Huey, Franklin, DeRuiter, 6 students (all summited)

Thor (Bishop) Green, Sakai, Doerr, Bishop, 6 students

16-19 Jul Horseshoe to Portal Rockwell, Ron Atkins, and a couple of others

We did the Horseshoe Meadows to Whitney Portal loop. Pretty country but not as spectacular as the east side. Interesting weather.

28-30 Jul Summer class overnight trip (Bishop)

University and Independence Bishop, Finco, Renta, Green, Loughran, 2 students, guest Ron Atkins

19-20 Aug Whitney Rockwell, Toler, Bishop, Miles, Roseman, Breitenstein

Eric Toler's trip via the Whitney Trail. Breitenstein had to turn back the first day at Lone Pine Lake with blistered feet. The rest of us climbed different peaks. I managed Wotan's Throne and Whitney.

25-27 Aug North Peak, Conness Runkle, Hinman

Hinman and I climbed North Peak and Conness. We hiked in on Friday and camped two nights at Alpine Lake.

On Saturday, we hiked around the west side of Conness and coincidentally met Roseman and Sakai just north of North Peak. They had come in from Saddlebag Lake. We all ascended North Peak and then climbed Conness via the North Ridge (5.6). We roped up only for the two rappels (probably the crux of the route) and free soloed the rest of the climb because it was all 4th and easy 5th class. It took us only a little more than two hours to go from the summit of North Peak to the summit of Conness.

On Sunday, Hinman and I climbed the West Ridge (5.6) of Conness. We roped up and swung lead for the first 4 pitches. Then we simul-climbed and swung simul-lead four times. Each simul-pitch was about 3 regular pitches in length, so we figured we did the climb in 16 pitches. Still, it took us only 4 hours to summit. We were back in camp by 1330 and out to the trailhead by 1530. We stopped in Bishop for dinner and were back to my house by 2000 Sunday night.

A great weekend of climbing!

27 Aug Thor Rockwell, Tom Brown, Rachael Woodard, Corinne Newton

Day trip. Up the Smiley Face route, down the SE couloir.

1-4 Sep Tuolumne Meadows Nine members

Finco, Breitenstein, Roseman, Sakai, Renta, Najera-Niesen, Loughran, Westbrook, and Myers enjoyed perfect weather. Lots of climbing on Saturday. Conness on Sunday.

3-7 Sep Rainier Rockwell, Bishop

Dan Bishop's scheduled trip to Mt. Rainier via the Disappointment Cleaver route. Winter conditions (ice axe & crampons, roped glacier climbing). We did the scheduled route.

8 Sep Whitney Runkle

Day hike of Whitney. I went over the ridge to Iceberg Lake (instead of the use trail) and then soloed the East Buttress. No other climbers were on the Buttress. One couple was climbing the East Face. I met three guys from Ridgecrest coming up the Mountaineer's Route who knew David Miles.

A snow field was still in the gully just below the summit. I posted a short trip report on Ridgecrest Climbers at Yahoo Groups.

10 Sep Woolyback Rockwell, Green, Tom Brown.

Unscheduled day trip. We went via the old trail that starts on the Horseshoe Meadows road

22 Sep Whitney Trail Rockwell, Runkle, Clare Reda

On a day trip, we helped a group with ankle and knee injuries down the trail.

29 Sep Gould Rockwell, Roseman, Dave Gillanders

By way of Kearsarge Pass. Great weather.

29 Sep Whitney Runkle, Davis

30 Sep Russell Bishop, Huey, Franklin, Bishop, Brown, Woodard, one guest

East Ridge of Russell

6-9 Oct Yosemite Valley Members and guests

Roseman, G. & B. Niesen, "Ben," Breitenstein, Loughran, M. & A. Franklin, Schmierer, Gates, and Gates's brother went. Weather was threatening. Pass closed for a little while, opened, closed, opened. Lots of climbing and some hikes

28-29 Oct Russell Rockwell, Bishop, Paul Sigala

Paul Sigala drove down from Stanford, and we headed for Mt. Russell on Saturday and Sunday. Bishop joined us for Saturday only and topped out on Thor.

5 Nov Thor Rockwell, Huey, Sakai

We climbed Thor by the SE couloir. We started down the west side on the Mirror Lake route, but after the class 3 section, we headed directly for Bighorn Park down a natural chute.

12 Nov Owens Peak Rockwell, Sakai, and one guest.

Day trip.

22 Nov Snow Crown Rockwell, Sakai, Chuck Faris

Cold and windy unscheduled day trip up and down via Bench Lake.

3 Dec Snow Crown Rockwell, Roseman, Rachel Woodard, Tom Brown, Corinne Newton

Unscheduled day trip. Roseman and I summited and then descended via Bench Lake. The others turned back on the way up at Heart Lake.

9 Dec Perry Rockwell, Hinman

Unscheduled day trip on a nice ridge to this Death Valley peak four miles north of Dante's View.

There but never seen.

Wind-whistling and howling.

Whom are you calling?

-Andrew Ackley

Rescue Tracking Seminar

12-15 October 2006

By Debbie Breitenstein

Fernando Moreira, Frank Johnson, and Travis Sterhout of Nevada Trackers, Washoe County, Nevada were in town Thursday morning through Sunday afternoon to lead a seminar in Rescue Tracking.

The seminar started with a four-hour lecture Thursday night and proceeded through a full day in rain-dampened desert Friday, a full day in even damper and more challenging terrain at Walker Pass Campground Saturday, two hours of night tracking back in the desert Saturday evening, and a field exam and crime scene Sunday morning.

Rain made some aspects of the class easier but also caused aging and disturbance of track sets and gave the class a good spectrum of tracking problems. Fernando and his

team gave us plenty of scenarios and ideas for gear and further training. He has invited those who have acquired certification in this course to continue through his course in Dog Valley near Reno (a long weekend commitment with a \$5 cost for the certification).

Eighteen persons, mostly from CLMRG but also from KVSAR, Desert, Bakersfield, and Southern Kern, attended. Sixteen attendees qualified for certification in SAR Tracking, and two (L. Castro and

C. Burge) qualified for certification in the Track Aware portion of the course.
Attendees

Baskin, Brian (Op. Lt.)* KVSAR

Bishop, Dan CLMRG

Breitenstein, Debbie CLMRG

Burge, Carol CLMRG

Castro, Loren CLMRG

Doerr, David CLMRG

Finco, Linda CLMRG

Franklin, Mike CLMRG

Glass, (Randy) John Desert

Green, Al CLMRG

Loughran, Eileen CLMRG

Mayer, Ed Bakersfield

Miles, David CLMRG

Myers, Mike CLMRG

Nichols, Jay C. Southern Kern SAR

Sakai, Tom CLMRG

Toler, Eric CLMRG

Yaw, Victor Desert

*Completed 5 tracking kits (including measuring tape, mirror, vests)

THE CLINIC

Editor: This is more of a testimony by a possible victim of hypothermia than anything authoritative, but the victim's symptoms might be informative.

By Bob Huey

Last weekend, I climbed the Mountaineer's Route on Whitney and experienced shivering (for 30-45 minutes) with heavy, fast breathing at the notch (no trouble breathing at the notch when not shivering). It took about an hour to stop the symptoms after eating a gu and a candy bar, drinking, adding clothing, sitting on pack, getting under a space blanket, and two friends "leaning over" me.

Times: I left Ridgecrest at 0430 and the Portal at 0730. I hiked somewhat faster than usual to the notch (2 hours to Clyde Meadow, then 2 hours to East Face Lake, then 1_

7 hours to the summit).

Fluids: I drank a large coffee in Ridgecrest; a liter of Gatoraid at the Portal; and water at the first waterfall, at Clyde Meadow, and at the waterfall below East Face Lake (total 2+ liters); and I sipped on the way up from East Face Lake (probably 8-12 oz.) - I noticed that my urine was dark at East Face Lake and commented that it shouldn't be that color with the fluids I had so far. (I urinated 6-8 times on the way down, and the urine was clear.)

Food: Snacks at all breaks steak sandwich (from Charlie's) at 1130 below East Face Lake and one gu going up to the notch

Weather: Clear skies, cold and windy in the shade to the notch (45 minutes in these conditions). Other hikers said it was 27 degrees in the chute that morning without wind chill. The valve on my Platypus froze in the shady part of the chute.

Clothing: From the Portal to the notch-long sleeve Polartech shirt and wind stopper fleece on top, light but long-legged hiking pants on bottom, hat and silk balaclava thing on head. Polartech gloves on hands below the notch. For the last 45 minutes

below the notch, the wind was blowing, and I was cold. I kept moving, but my upper body felt cold, and my hands got very cold. I pulled the balaclava over my head and neck, but I was still cold.

At the notch-in the sun and out of the wind-I put on my wind pants and light wind parka but began to shiver. My breathing was fine until I began shivering heavily. I ate another gu, drank some water, and curled up on the ground in the warm sun. The shivering continued, and I couldn't get my parka zipped up. I lay there for 10-15 minutes and couldn't get warm or stop shivering. I asked for help. One of my partners gave me a Payday candy bar and covered me with a space blanket. I continued to shiver and breathe fast. My two partners then "leaned over me," and I breathed into my fleece jacket to warm my breath. I continued shaking for about 40-45 minutes, and it finally stopped. One partner coached me to relax to assist in controlling the shivering after about 40 minutes, and in an hour, I felt OK to stand up and move without shivering.

Then the question was about recovery and my actions to keep warm and get down. I elected to go to the top because I thought the wind in my face going down the chute from the notch could create the condition again, and I needed control to go down the chute. I was able to climb to the top OK but carefully. I had difficulty hiking to Trail Crest. It was exhausting and alternately hot and cold. In the wind, I had to hold my jacket shut at the neck to keep any cold breeze from cooling me, and out of the wind, I had to open everything up because I was sweating. Going down the switchbacks in the wind was OK, and below Trail Camp, I was fine and back to normal. I got down from the top in 4_ hours taking two shortcuts.

PASSAGES

Todd Skinner

(Excerpts from reports)

24 October 2006

Free-climbing pioneer Todd Skinner was killed yesterday, October 23, while descending fixed ropes on the Leaning Tower in Yosemite. Details of the accident are incomplete, but it appears that he and his partner Jim Hewitt were working on a free route on the 1,200-foot monolith. Skinner and his partner, Jim Hewitt, were rappelling the route Jesus Built My Hot Rod and were several hundred feet above the base when the accident occurred. Apparently, Skinner went first and suddenly fell; his rappel device and locking carabiner remained on the rope.

5 November 2006

The initial reports indicated that it was an accident on the descent (i.e., rappelling). . . . [Todd's] descent device, a GriGri, with a still-locked carabiner remained on the rope! Over the succeeding days, it came out that the cause of the accident was a failure of the belay loop on his harness. As the belay loop is intended to be the strongest part of any climbing harness, this was quite shocking.

Walt Walker

22 November 2006

By Glenn Henderson, RMRU

It is with heavy heart that I bring you the news that Walt Walker passed away today. He died from complications of lung and brain cancer. Walt is one of the founders of the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit in 1961 and a past president of the MRA (1986-1988). Please keep Walt and his family in your Thanksgiving prayers these next few days. Walt will be sorely missed. Editor: Dennis Burge says that the cancer resulted from a melanoma on Walt's forehead some 15 years ago.

24 November 2006

By Liz Anderson Callaway

I am certainly sorry to hear about Walt Walker. I truly admired him each time we met- usually at MRA quarterly meetings but at least once on an operation.

It was perhaps our first time to work with the Riverside Unit, and we met somewhere east of Riverside. Maybe Cabazon? Our group piled out of our cars in the dark and walked into the appointed meeting place, a cafe. The team members in the booths all looked up, scowling-on the edge of threatening-at the appearance of a woman.

Then Walt stood up, came forward, shook hands with our Op Leader, and, turning to me, shook my hand. The colored-parka guys in the booths all settled down. I have always remembered that quiet way that Walt over-rode any opposition.

Looking back, I can see that the CLMRG risked a certain element of reputation by including me in operations. Another example was taking me along to the Sheriff's Seminar up on the ranges.

10 December 2006

By Al Green

Walt was an active member of RMRU for 40 years, serving as president several times and as a respected operation leader for both local and joint operations. A memorial service was held on December 2. Four members of CLMRG (Dennis Burge, Bob Rockwell, Linda Finco, and I) attended

the service to express our sympathy and appreciation for Walt's contributions to mountain rescue.

DONATIONS

Carol Burge

CLMRG gratefully acknowledges recent gifts from the following friends:
CFC (second quarter)

United Way (second quarter)

Mario and Yolanda González In memory of Dave Dykeman.

Lois Adamson In memory of my brother, Carl Heller.

Don and Denise Terry In memory of Dr. Robert L. Dow and Robert L. Dow, Jr.

Thank you for your important work.

SCREE

Check our web page at www.clmrg.org.

Check the California Region's web page at crmra.org.

Newsletters from other MRA groups, gear catalogs, etc. are available in the hut.

All telephone numbers in The Talus Pile are area code 760 unless noted otherwise.

Haikus by Lura Osgood and Nona Mock Wyman appear originally in Gary Bogue's nature column in the Contra Costa Times.

Statistical observations

By Robert Rockwell, PhD

Editor: The membership has already seen this through the magic of electronic mail, but I wanted all our friends outside of the Group to see this important item.

8 December 2006

As of today, the average age of the CLMRG membership is 55.5. The range is from 36 (Dan Bishop) to 76 (Lloyd Brubaker). Mike Myers (55.3) is the oldest of the "young half," and Bill Ferguson (56.9) is the youngest of the "old half."

The average age in 1975 was 36.3, with a range of from 13 (Marc Hirschy) to 58 (Liz Anderson, born on Christmas day in 1917). Next above Hirschy were Mike Mason and Walters (17). Next below Anderson was Carl Heller (53).

Bishop, our youngest, would have been an average age member in 1975. And Heller was younger than today's average.

We now have 12 females and 23 males. In 1975, we had 7 females and 31 males.

If we extrapolate to the future, around the year 2035, there will be an equal number of males and females in CLMRG-about 18 of each. The average age will be 70. In the year 2100, the group will be composed entirely of females-27 of them. Their average age will be 105.

There is no point to this. I'm just interested in statistics.