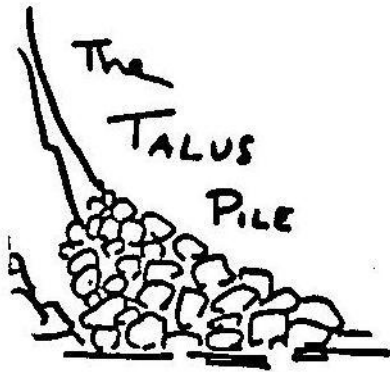


NUMBER 150  
September 2011



## CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP

P. O. BOX 2037  
RIDGECREST CA 93556

### **TRAINING SCHEDULE**

Oct	5	Stretcher Practice – Part 4	Roseman
Oct	8-10	Yosemite Valley	Derkey
Oct	13	Owens Peak Full Moon Hike	Derkey
Oct	17	Meeting	Rockwells
Oct	20	First Aid Scenario	Derkey
Oct	26	CPR	Najera-Niesen
Nov	14	Meeting – Pre-meeting: Cold Injuries	Huey, Sakai
Nov	15	CPR	Najera-Niesen
Dec	TBD	Splinting – Sager & more	Loughran
Dec	TBD	CPR	Najera-Niesen
Dec	12	Meeting	Breitenstein, Derkey, Hinman

For TBD dates contact Eileen Loughran at [Eileen.Loughran@clmrg.org](mailto:Eileen.Loughran@clmrg.org)

### **SCREE**

Check our web page at [clmrg.org](http://clmrg.org).

Check the California Region's web page at [cmra.org](http://cmra.org).

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

*"I only went out for a walk and  
finally concluded to stay out till  
sundown, for going out, I found,  
was really going in."*

— John Muir



CLMRG is funded in part by United Way of Indian Wells Valley.

## **OPERATION REPORTS**

### **Operation 2011-02 (Incident)**

OES #2011-LAW-0141

26 May 2011

Fossil Falls (Inyo County)

By Dave Miles

#### **Summary:**

The rescue was for 21 year old Kathrine Thompson. She had fallen while trying to climb out the mouth of the canyon. With the assistance of the California Highway Patrol, Olancha Fire Department and Inyo County Search and Rescue, Katherine was lowered to the bottom of the canyon and taken by ambulance to the hospital.

#### **Narrative:**

On Thursday May 26, 2011 at 1640 I received a call from Inyo SAR Deputy Tim Winkler. A 21 year old female had fallen in Fossil Falls. Olancha Fire Department was on scene and had assessed her to have possible spinal injuries and needed a technical rescue team to get her out of the canyon. Deputy Winkler said he would next call Kern County Sheriff Sgt. Edgerle. Carol Burge agreed to be the Coordinator with Shelia Rockwell helping on the telephone. The plan was to assemble a hasty team to depart the Hut by 1710. At 1645, Sgt. Dan Edgerle called with the official call-out. I arrived at the Hut at 1705 and then received a call from Carol that we had a total of 6. They were Tom Roseman, Daryl Hinman, Nathan Simons, Bob Rockwell and Paul DeRuiter. I called both Dep. Winkler and Sgt. Edgerle and informed them of our status.

As everyone arrived at the Hut we loaded the Explorer and DeRuiter's truck with all of the equipment we might need for the technical raising and carryout. We left the hut at 1715. Around this same time Debbie Breitenstein, Dan Bishop, and Bud Gates called to inform me of their availability, all three would come together as soon as possible. At 1726, I got a call from Tim Winkler who let me know that Mercy Air was waiting at Little Lake to fly our subject out. We arrived at Fossil Falls at 1740 and we started to load gear in packs to take over to the Falls. Dean Chavez from Inyo SAR (who was the on-scene incident commander) and I proceeded to the location of the subject, Kathrine Thompson. She had fallen while trying to climb out the mouth of the canyon.

I walked down to the subject at 1748 as Olancha Fire Department personnel finished tying her into their stretcher. She was secured to a backboard and had her head immobilized. She had complained of pain in her tailbone and had facial trauma. She was not fitted with a harness and had an improvised lashing into the stretcher. I decided that the best course of action was to lower her down the lower falls to the awaiting Fire Department vehicles at the bottom of the canyon. Meanwhile, Debbie, Dan, and Bud arrived at 1815. We set up anchors and rigging for a twin tensioned line lowering using a SCARAB and ID. Tom Roseman and Daryl Hinman were the two stretcher attendants at the ends of the stretcher. Because of the lack of a harness on the victim, the limited tie-in of her to the stretcher, and her spinal injuries I decided that we must keep her horizontal. We completed the lowering to the bottom of the falls at 1900. Olancha Fire Department then carried her to the vehicle and drove around to the Mercy Air helicopter for transport to Antelope Valley Hospital.

We also helped one of the friends of the subject who was unable to climb out of the canyon on her own. Dan Bishop assisted her during the lowering, similar to a tandem rappel. We then packed up all out gear and went back to the parking lot. There we had a debrief with Inyo SAR and Olancha Fire Department. We left at 2000 and were back at the hut and headed home by 2100. I called Carol Burge and Sgt. Dan Edgerle to let them know the good outcome.

**Operation 2011-03 (Alert)**

OES #2011-LAW-0159

9 June 2011

Telescope Peak (Inyo County)

By Dan Bishop

**Summary:**

Alert for an overdue hiker attempting a hike from Badwater to Telescope Peak.

**Narrative:**

Thursday evening, June 9<sup>th</sup>, Tom Roseman took a call from Inyo Deputy Tim Winkler with regard to a missing 26 year old male who was attempting to hike from Badwater to Telescope Peak to Mahogany Flat. The subject was approximately 1 day overdue with temperatures in the valley in the 100's. Inyo County wanted search teams to arrive at the Stovepipe Wells Command Post at 0700 on Friday.

Elaine Riendeau agreed to be the Coordinator and Terry Mitchell assisted in the call-out. After some logistical rearrangements, Dan Bishop agreed to be the Operation Leader with the team of Tom Sakai, Debbie Breitenstein, and Mike Derkey. Kern Sheriff Lt. Camps was filling in for Sgt. Baldwin.

At 2230 the call came in that the subject walked out and drove to Panamint Springs where he works as a cook, apparently uninjured. We made the appropriate calls and stood-down.

**Operation 2011-04 (Search)**

OES #2011-LAW-0174

19-21 June 2011

Yosemite Falls (Yosemite National Park)

By Linda Finco

**Summary:**

The search was for 30 year old George Penca. Mr. Penca was last seen with his group that hiked to the top of Yosemite Falls. Later that night it was noted that he had not returned to camp and he was reported missing. Mr. Penca has still not been found.

**Narrative:**

Sunday afternoon (19 Jun) Dave Miles received a direct call from Yosemite National Park requesting our assistance with a search in the Yosemite Falls area. Yosemite NP had an OES number and was requesting mutual aid through OES, but was contacting MRA teams directly requesting assistance. Carol Burge coordinated the callout and Mary Schmierer assisted with the telephoning. Dave Miles, Nathan Simons and I (Linda Finco) committed to the search. Dave asked if I could take over the operational duties and I agreed. Yosemite NP wanted teams at the SAR cache in Yosemite Village at 0730 on Monday, 20 June, for the briefing. I contacted Sgt. Baldwin and he stated he had not received the mutual aid request yet. I called the SAR coordinator in Yosemite and they stated they would give Sgt. Baldwin a call with the details. We met at the hut at 0100 and arrived at the SAR cache at 0530. We napped until 0700 when we checked in, got breakfast and prepared for the briefing. The search was for 30 year old George Penca. George was with a group of 80 people on a church outing in the valley. Twenty (20) members of the group hiked to the top of Yosemite Falls on Friday, 17 June. George struggled with the hike, but with the encouragement of his group made it to the top of the falls. The group stayed at the top for about two hours and then began their descent. No one remembered seeing George on the hike down, just thinking he was ahead of them on the trail. Later in the evening it was noticed that George was not back in camp and the Park Service was notified. The last known location where George was seen was verified in a photo at the top of the falls time stamped 1420. A hasty team was sent to run the trail but George was not found. The Park continued the search on Saturday and Sunday with over 50 searchers concentrating in the area around Yosemite Falls and running all the trails from the falls. The search area was now expanding with an estimated 100 searchers with the focus being on looking for clues, interviewing hikers and assessing risks in the search area (cliffs, fast water, etc). Our assignment was a sector near Ribbon Meadow. There is a trail from Yosemite Falls to this area. We were flown to the top of El Capitan to begin our search assignment. The sector was fairly large for 3 people to adequately cover, but after seeing the terrain we decided Ribbon Creek (which was

high and moving fast) and the snow to the north made a perfect containment for setting up a perimeter to cut for tracks. Our confidence in our perimeter was reinforced by the easily spotted tracks of deer and other lugged boots in the area. We completed our assignment and returned to the LZ at 1520. We were picked up at 1640 and returned to Crane Flats at 1700 to await transportation back to the SAR cache. We arrived at the cache at 1900 and were debriefed. The search effort was downsizing for the next day, so most teams were released. We had dinner and got on the road at 1950 and arrived back at the hut on Tuesday, 21 Jun at 0100.

### **Operation 2010-05 (Transit)**

26 June 2011

Sunday Peak (Kern County)

By Linda Finco

#### **Summary:**

The search was for two overdue hikers on Sunday Peak. During the transit, the two hiked out.

#### **Narrative:**

Kern County Sheriff Sgt. Baldwin contacted CLMRG around 8:35 am, June 26th. He was requesting our assistance in a search in the vicinity of Sunday Peak near the Kern County and Tulare County border. There was a group of 6 people hiking on Saturday when they split up in to 3 groups. The middle group with a man and woman in their 60's and 70's never made it back to the vehicles. Tulare County started the search on Saturday, but only had a few searchers and they did not continue the search in to the night. Kern County was bringing more resources to assist in the ongoing search. Sgt. Baldwin gave the coordinates of the Command Post which would be near the vehicle (N35 47.56 W118 33.49). Sheila Rockwell coordinated the call out with the assistance of Janet Westbrook. Linda Finco, Mike Franklin, Tom Roseman, Debbie Breitenstein and Bill Stratton committed to the search. Members were told to meet at the hut between 9:30 and 10:00 am. Bill and I were the first to arrive and we began looking at maps and programming the GPS to locate the Command Post. When Mike arrived, we loaded up the Explorer and met Debbie and Tom in their vehicle at the Highway 178 & Highway 14 intersection. We were just approaching the Lake Isabella area when we got the call from the Kern County Sheriff Communications Center that the people had been found. Shortly after that we received a message from Sgt. Baldwin stating the two had hiked to a residence and requested help. We returned to the hut at 12:10 pm.

### **Operation 2010-06 (Search)**

OES#2011-LAW-0217

18 July 2011

Craig Canyon (Inyo County)

By Dave Miles

#### **Summary:**

The search was for an overdue canyoneer in Saline Valley. She was found OK.

#### **Narrative:**

On Monday July 18, 2011 at 0730 I got a call from Tim Winkler (Inyo SO) for a search in Saline Valley. Daria Malinauskas, a 23 year old female canyoneer was a day overdue from a solo descent of Craig Canyon. Craig Canyon has several 70 foot rappels and the weather was very hot. The reporting party (RP) said she was supposed to be back at 1300 on Sunday. He thought she had 3 to 4 liters of water. Her plan was to descend Craig Canyon and ascend Daisy Canyon. Our assignment was to drive to Saline Valley and search for tracks at the bottom of Craig Canyon to narrow the search. We were also to send one team up Daisy Canyon. The second team would wait at the bottom of Craig Canyon to provide a ride out for the Inyo team that would descend Craig Canyon.

I called Janet Westbrook and asked her to start a callout for a team to meet at the hut at 0900. The field team was David Miles, Tom Sakai, Bud Gates, and Mike Derkey. We met at the hut and loaded gear for a technical rescue and the shade popup. We took the Explorer and my 4Runner; two vehicles were essential for safety. We turned onto the Saline Valley road around 1100 and received a call from another RP who had found

my phone on the CLMRG website. I directed him to contact the Inyo County Sheriff. We then left cell coverage and dropped into Saline Valley. The road was very rough and the progress was slow.

We arrived at the bottom of Craig Canyon around 1400 and started searching for tracks. It was 113°F on my thermometer and I decided not to split the team at this time. Tracking was very difficult since the entire area was boulders and fist size rocks. We were finally able to identify a few tracks that fit Daria's size and were recent. We made a call to Tim on the satellite phone around 1500 and told him that we were very certain that one person had exited Craig Canyon recently and that we were proceeding to Daisy Canyon to search for tracks. We recommended that he not send his team down Craig but instead to start down Daisy. Tim had the same thoughts since Craig is a one way trip.

We drove to the bottom of Daisy Canyon and after an hour of searching were able to find tracks that were a good match to the ones exiting Craig Canyon. We followed the tracks up the trail until we could find enough partial prints to have a description to give Tim. We called Tim on the sat phone at 1730 to give our track description and he told us that Daria had been found at 1600 at Burgess Well and was ok. We packed up and started back down the 4WD road to Saline Valley road when the Explorer got a flat tire. We were able to change the tire and proceed to exit Saline Valley. We reached Olancha at 2130 and had some snacks and cold drinks. We were back at the hut and debriefed by 2330.

### **Operation 2010-07 (Rescue)**

OES#2011-LAW-0232

29-30 July 2011

Mt. Whitney Trail (Inyo County)

By Linda Finco

#### **Summary:**

A torrential storm stranded numerous day hikers on the Mt. Whitney Trail due to the elevated water levels at the stream crossings. A report of a hypothermic man at Trail Camp and concern for other day hikers without proper gear initiated the rescue.

#### **Narrative:**

On Friday night, 29 July, Dave Miles was contacted by Inyo County SAR. They were requesting assistance from CLMRG for possible multiple rescues along the Mt. Whitney Trail. The Mt. Whitney area was hit by torrential rains starting around 11 am and lasting until the early evening. When the storm cleared, Inyo SAR flew over the area and noted numerous parties stranded due to high river crossings. Inyo SAR used the loudspeaker to inform hikers to stay put and SAR would be up in the morning to help. Inyo SAR had also received a report of a hypothermic man at Trail Camp. Inyo SAR tried to locate the man before nightfall with the helicopter, but could not. We were requested to be at the Lone Pine Substation at 0600 the next morning and we would be inserted via helicopter to various points along the trail to assist hikers as needed. Terry Mitchell coordinated the call out with the help of Sheila Rockwell. Linda Finco, Dan Bishop, Bob Rockwell, Jeff Green, Mike Derkey and Dave Doerr committed to the operation. We met at the hut at 0430 and departed for Lone Pine a little before 5 am. We arrived at the substation just shortly after 6 am. The sheriff's priority was still the hypothermic man at Trail Camp. Dan Bishop teamed up with Dean Chavez (Inyo) and they would be on the first helicopter insertion at Trail Camp and assess the situation. The Forest Service Helicopter (525) and the Navy's China Lake SAR helicopter were both being used in the rescue operation. Dan and Dean left on 525 around 0700 and shortly after landing at Trail Camp, they found the hypothermic man, Blair Oram. He was equipped for only a day hike and after being caught in the storm a father and son (Eastlick) shared their two man tent with him where he spent a cold and wet night. He was assessed and given dry clothing; oxygen was administered and it was determined he needed to be heloed out. Dean, being an EMT, accompanied the victim to Lone Pine airport aboard 525. Dan finished interviewing people at Trail Camp and determined no other hikers needed assistance so he continued down to sweep the trail. Bob Rockwell boarded the Navy SAR helo on their first flight to scout the area for possible landing zones. The Navy helo inserted Bob and Mike Derkey above Mirror Lake and then inserted Dave Doerr, Jeff Green and Linda Finco in Bighorn Park below Outpost Camp. Inyo team members

were inserted above Outpost Camp by 525 and arrived first at the camp to begin interviewing hikers to determine if anyone needed help. Jeff, Dave and Linda continued on down the trail to assist hikers below. The debris flow down to Lone Pine Lake was significant, so Jeff, Dave and Linda searched the area to ensure no one was trapped in the debris. Bob and Mike searched the shortcuts between Bighorn Park and Lone Pine Lake and then the shortcut from the main trail down the drainage that bypasses the switchbacks. Dan and the Inyo team members located an abandoned pack above Outpost Camp and abandoned tents at Outpost Camp. After relaying information on the abandoned gear, it was determined the owners of the tents were safe at Whitney Portal. Later in the day it was determined the abandoned pack belonged to a family seen hiking out during the storm and later located in Lone Pine. All CLMRG and Inyo members hiked out to Whitney Portal. The last rescuers were down by 1200. So although SAR only assisted with one rescue, we talked to many hikers and answered their questions, and it was noted that just the SAR presence made them feel more secure as they hiked out. Also the Forest Service Rangers were hiking the trail, assessing the damage, and assisting hikers on Friday and Saturday. The sheriff treated us to lunch at the Whitney Portal store and then we were driven back to the Lone Pine airport to pick up our vehicles to head home. CLMRG secured at the hut at 1600.

As an oh by the way, it was noted on the various Mt. Whitney message boards that the Whitney Portal Store's "fry cook" Myles played a large role Friday night in helping out hikers stranded at the North Fork trail crossing. The water was running high and none of these hikers knew about the "old" trail. After hearing there were stranded hikers, Myles hiked up the old trail to help the stranded folks. He led them part way down the old trail and then continued back up to see if anyone else needed immediate help. There were also a lot of stories and kudos given to people for pitching in and helping each other out...folks that came prepared with more gear shared their gear with folks that were not as prepared for the weather. All these folks played a role in reducing the number of rescues we had to perform on Saturday.

### **Operation 2010-08 (Alert)**

3 August 2011

Kings Canyon National Park

By Dan Bishop

#### **Summary:**

Alert for an overdue hiker.

#### **Narrative:**

On Wednesday, 03 August, I accepted the Operation for a search for a missing hiker in the Kings Canyon National Park. The subject, Richard Reynolds, was 3 days overdue from a 12 day hike.

Terry Mitchell agreed to coordinate and Shelia Rockwell assisted in phoning. The only commitments were from TJ Dobson and Eileen Loughran. The Park service was requesting Type 1 teams able to be helo-inserted to search areas over 11000 feet. We were to meet at the Grant Grove Fire Station the next day at 7am. This would have necessitated a 2am Hut departure. At 9pm I received word that a helicopter crew spotted the subject by a fire he had started. Reynolds was airlifted out of the park and taken to a hospital for evaluation.

### **Operation 2010-09 (Rescue)**

29-30 July 2011

Oak Flat (Kern County)

By Linda Finco

#### **Summary:**

Search for two overdue hikers hiking from Oak Flat to Delonegha Hot Springs. During the search the two hikers hiked to a road and were driven to town.

#### **Narrative:**

Dave Miles received the call from the Kern County Sheriff at 0530 on Sunday, 14 August. Dave used our Google number to locate another operations leader and I got the call at 0540. Terry Mitchell started the coordination and then Sheila Rockwell took over. Both telephoned the team looking for people to commit to the

operation. The information we received was that the search was for two men, 35 and 37 years of age. They were dropped off on the Oak Flat road below the lookout tower around 1100 on Saturday, 13 August. Their goal was to hike from the Lookout Tower to the Delonegha Bridge parking area along the Kern River. At that point if they could not cross the river they would hike back up to Oak Flat and be out by midnight. When they did not arrive at either destination at the given time, the two were reported overdue. The sheriff got teams out on the trail in the vicinity of the Delonegha Bridge parking area, but they were unable to locate anything. The sheriff also had teams on the river and a helicopter searching the area on Sunday. CLMRG was contacted to assist in the search. The sheriff wanted us to go to the PLS at the Oak Flat Lookout and try to determine where the two might have gotten off the trail. Linda Finco, Mike Franklin, Nathan Simons and Eileen Loughran committed to the search.

We met at the hut at 0700 and determined the best route to Oak Flat. We stopped to pick up snacks and later in Lamont for a break and a "to go" breakfast at McDonald's and we arrived at Oak Flat a little after 0930. Sgt. Kenny Smith introduced us to two campers who were renting the observation tower from the Forest Service for a weekend of camping. They met our two hikers on Saturday and it was from their camera and pictures we got a general description of what the two were wearing and carrying for gear. Our two overdue hikers were Kevin Briley and Michael Manoso. They told the campers they were going on a 13 mile training hike in preparation for another hike in Oregon. The campers watched them from the observation tower and did see them heading out on the trail. The campers said the hikers stayed on the ridge for a while and then they did not see them any longer, but they stated the hikers appeared to be heading in the opposite direction of Delonegha Hot Springs.

We started down the trail and after a short distance we did find one track from which we could capture the whole tread of the print and another track with some distinct features. We noted the patterns and continued on down the trail. About an hour into our assignment, at 1115, we got the call that the two hikers were safe. The hikers hitched a ride and were dropped off at the Chevron station at the intersection of highways 178 and 184. We hiked back to the Oak Flat Lookout. The sheriff had some cold drinks for us and then he headed down to interview the hikers. We stopped at the Chevron station and met the two hikers who were grateful for the search effort. Their 5 hour hike turned into a 24 hour ordeal. They did lose the trail on Saturday and pushed on and eventually realized they were running out of water and not getting close to finding any water or close to any civilization. They camped for the night and got up early to beat the heat and eventually found a water source that they used iodine to purify to drink. They were getting concerned about their situation, but finally made their way out to a Forest Service road where they were able to flag someone down for a ride. Their ride dropped them off at the Chevron station where they called their families to let them know they were OK. We stopped in Lamont for lunch and arrived back at the hut and secured at 1500.

### **Operation 2010-10 (Transit)**

OES#2011-LAW-0287

10 September 2011

Cottonwood Pass (Inyo County)

By Mike Myers

#### **Summary:**

Request came to assist in a carryout for a 56 year old male with a broken hip at Cottonwood Pass. He was evacuated by a helicopter prior to our arrival.

#### **Narrative:**

At 1830, Myers received a call from Sgt Baldwin stating that Inyo Deputy Tim Winkler was requesting assistance with a carryout from Cottonwood Pass. Myers contacted Winkler and learned that a 56 year old male was at Cottonwood Pass with a broken hip, but he did not have any details on what caused the injury. He said there were two other hikers with the victim, and that the victim's pain level was estimated at about 8 on a 10 point scale. He said that a Blackhawk helo had been dispatched from the Fresno area and was going to attempt an evacuation, but due to the extreme weather conditions and the pain level of the victim, he did not want us to delay our departure, and was committed to getting the victim out as quickly as possible.

Myers contacted Terry Mitchell who agreed to coordinate the operation and Debbie Breitenstein helped with the calling. Several team members were still up at Walker Pass conducting the Tehachapi Search/Track Test and were not reachable by telephone, so Myers made a decision to delay the muster at the hut until 2000 in hopes that some of those at Walker Pass could be reached. Dan Bishop, Dave Miles, Paul DeRuiter, Tom Sakai, Tom Roseman and Bob Huey committed to the rescue.

We met at the Hut at 2000, departing at 2015. At 2100, Myers received a call from Inyo Deputy Winkler that the Blackhawk had successfully made the evacuation and had transported the victim to Ridgecrest Hospital. The team was in the Pearsonville area, so turned around and headed home. We made the appropriate calls and stood-down at approximately 2115.

## **MRA National Spring Conference, Eagle, Colorado, June 17-19, 2011**

Report by Bob Huey

As the CLMRG representative, I attended all regular conference activities and the business meeting. The goal of the conference was “to implement a Unified Command of local and MRA personnel to affect a safe efficient response of resources to a variety of venue.” Friday and Saturday included field and Base Camp activities for all attendees.

On Friday I participated in the field operation to complete a rock rescue, packaging, transport and river crossing of a volunteer victim. An initial briefing was made for the operation, detailing organization and tasks. The ICS included an Overhead team, Operations (Tactics), Planning, and Logistics. Tactical Teams were divided into Water Traverse (High Line), Cliff Packaging, and Slope Evac. We were briefed on communication (Area, Incident, and Command staff channels), and Tactics (with emphasis on Safety). Tactical gear was provided by local teams and placed at staging areas for the operation. Tactical Teams were created by attendees and Team Leaders pre-assigned. The Friday operation ran from 0630 - 1700 with lunch provided in the field by the Salvation Army. I volunteered to be on the Slope Evac Team which was led by John Sohl from Weber County Utah. The Packaging Team carried a stretcher and wheel and the Slope Evac Team carried in two 300 ft ropes, anchoring gear (mostly slings for trees and a tubular belay device - which no team had used before).



There was a Safety Officer at Base, as well as in the field monitoring all activities. All teams worked well together and communicated well in executing the operation. A high line was planned to ferry personnel across a river which was high due to snow melt and rain on that day. Before the high line was ready, some personnel and equipment were ferried across the river by rafts. The high line was not in place until the victim was lowered to the river, so some resources were not available for the operation, but all operational teams were able to adapt to this situation and complete their tasks.

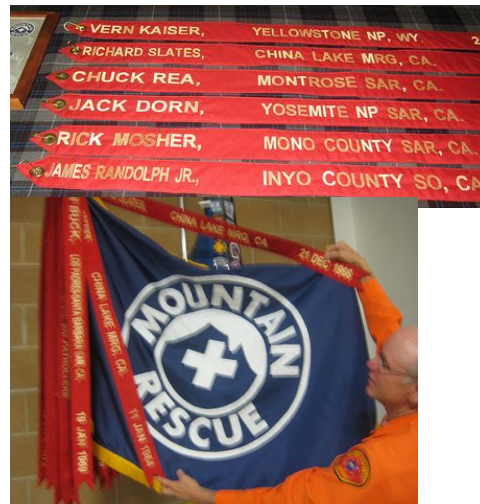
After the victim (a hang glider) was lowered from the sand stone cliff he was packaged and passed on to the Slope Evac Team. We lowered him down the hill side in a stretcher with a wheel using four stretcher attendants. We lowered with a main line anchored by trees and a belay line when needed. We did trade off stretcher attendants with the other two teams, and used ropes from the Cliff team for lower belays. The rock did not lend itself to anchoring at the bottom of the cliff, but trees were available for anchors. The slope was muddy clay with loose rock, which made travel up and down interesting.



The tubular belay device was easy to use. Scarabs were also available, and used on subsequent belays. There was some discussion about using “human anchors”, with which I was unfamiliar. We did not use this system, but it was described as using 6 or more people to lower the rope without anchoring into any rocks or trees. It rained off and on throughout the day, but there was no lightning. It was not cold. After the de-brief we toured the Colorado National Guard High Altitude Army Aviation (Helicopter) Training Site (HAA TS) near Eagle.

Saturday morning at the 0630 briefing, two concurrent operations were announced for the morning and the afternoon. The operations were 1) A Cliff rescue and “guiding line” evacuation and 2) A downed aircraft with ELT search. The Base Operations coordinated both activities concurrently and had a larger staff than the single operation on Friday. There were separate ICPs and Field Teams for each of the operations. We were assigned new teams from the previous day and new leaders for each operation. The Cliff rescue field operation organization consisted of the IC, Hasty Team, Rock Team, Litter Team, Guiding Team, and a field Safety Officer. The IC was Mike Otto from the Weber County, Utah team. I was on the “guiding line” team, which was led by a Colorado team member. Many teams had not used this system, so there was learning by all. This system of evacuation from the base of the cliff in the muddy terrain for a distance of 600 ft was easier than using the wheel, and potentially uses fewer resources for stretcher attendants. Longer ropes (600 ft) were used and had to be carried to the cliff top and bottom, as well as more gear (pulleys and hardware for 3-5 in one mechanical advantage systems. I carried half of the 600 ft rope to the bottom of the slope, thankfully only 1/2 mile and 300 ft ascent. All anchors were again set with webbing around trees. We completed our assignment in four hours.

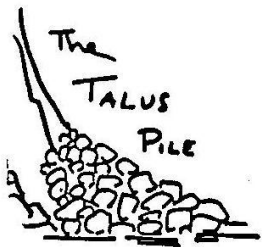
The team I was assigned to did the Aircraft Search in the afternoon. We were given a 15 minute briefing on how to use the LPER and divided up into 6 car teams with 2-3 members in each vehicle. We were led by a 3 member ICP who coordinated between the field and Base. The ICP was run by Rick Lorenz from Olympic MR, assisted by Antonio Arizo (Ventura) and another Colorado team member. We followed a recent actual scenario from an incident in the region. The operation was stopped by 1500 hrs followed by a de-briefing (we did not find the transmitter, but there was a convergence of lines close to the site).



The Banquet consisted of acknowledgement of presentation of banners of those who died in the line of duty, memorials for those who had passed over the past year, presentation of Awards for Courage/Bravery and awards for Service within the MRA.

Family members of a popular local member, Tim Cochran, who died prior to the Conference were present, as well as family members whose son died on a trip with a MRA member last summer. I participated in adding the in the line-of-duty banner for CLMRG member Richard Slates and accepting the award for Arold Green for Lifetime Achievement.

I attended the business meeting on Sunday. For more details, see the official minutes at [MRA.org](http://MRA.org).



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Ridgecrest CA 93556

Address Correction Requested

