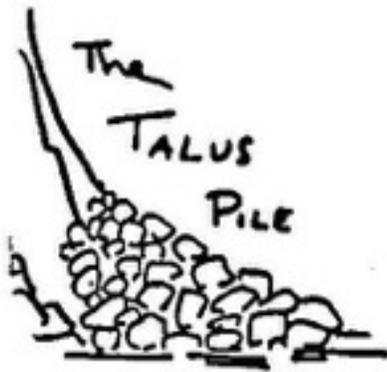


NUMBER 160

June 2016



CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP

P. O. BOX 2037
RIDGECREST CA 93556

TRAINING SCHEDULE

June	1	Technical Skills Night	Derkey
June	10-12	MRA Spring Meeting -Port Angeles, WA	Swanson
June	13	Pre-Meeting: Summer Class	Doerr
June	13	Meeting	Ferguson
June	14/15	Summer class/Five Fingers Hike	
June	17-19	Clarence King	Simons
June	21/22	Summer class/Bouldering	
June	28/29	Summer class/Belaying & Navigation	
July	1-4	Tyndall & Williamson	Simons
July	11	Meeting	Derkey
July	12/13	Summer Class/Climbing	
July	15-17	Summer Class Day Hikes	
July	19/20	Summer Class/Rappelling	
July	23-24	Summer Class Overnight Hikes	
July	26/27	Summer Class/Climbing	
Aug	2/3	Summer Class Final/Class Party	

SCREE

Check our web page at 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.



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

OPERATION REPORTS - 2016

Operation 2016-05 (MRA Winter Accreditation)

4-6 March 2016

Mammoth Mountain (Mono County)

By Linda Finco

Summary:

CLMRG was re-certified by the CalMRA in the area of Winter Snow Rescue.

Narrative:

As part of the California Region Mountain Rescue Association accreditation process, CLMRG participated in the Region Winter Accreditation at Mammoth Mountain on 5 March 2016. The event was hosted by the Inyo County Sheriff's Posse Search and Rescue Team. Four members met at the hut on Friday, March 4th in order to arrive early, register the team and check-in to our rooms at the Mammoth Mountain Inn. The remaining 8 members left Friday around 1700. The weather forecasted light to heavy snow throughout the weekend. The Inyo County Sheriff provided breakfast for all participants (breakfast burritos), which was supposed to begin at 0630, but the poor weather delayed the arrival of breakfast. Due to the snow that fell throughout the night, Inyo County made some changes in the scenarios. The biggest change was the avalanche beacon test would be moved closer to the command post. Teams would still travel to their given GPS coordinates for their winter rescue. While we waited for breakfast, the briefings for the evaluators and leaders kept to the schedule. After breakfast, CLMRG mobilized at our vehicles to gear up. Members participating in the winter accreditation were Linda Finco (leader), Dave Miles, Tom Roseman, Luke Swanson, Gina Niesen, Nathan Simons, Tom Sakai, Sean Litton, Bill Stratton and Dave Doerr. Bob Huey and Dan Bishop were evaluators for other teams and Debbie Breitenstein was our victim. Litton and Miles carried the ropes and winch in sleds, Swanson carried the stretcher, and the rest of the members carried in the technical system bags, edge protection, pickets, first aid and stretcher bag. We met our evaluators (members from Montrose and Santa Clarita), received our briefing from them and proceeded with our problem. Although the ski patrol had reviewed the slopes we would be on and determined there was a very low risk of avalanche, we still wore our avalanche transceivers and started the scenario with a check of everyone's device. We proceeded to our "starting point" for the scenario. CLMRG was one of 3 teams that were located out beyond the Minaret Summit Vista, so we had just over a 2 miles hike to get to our location. We actually hiked into the finish GPS location to unload gear. At 1030 our victim (Debbie) descended with one of the evaluators to the start location. Once they were in place, Litton and Simons descended to the victim location to secure her and determine her injuries. While they descended other members began to work on anchors for the top systems. Based on the GPS locations, we had estimated a little over 400 feet of rope would be required for the raising. Since we just had 300 foot ropes, we knew we would need a mid-station belay. It was determined our victim had a lower leg injury, so Litton and Simons continued to provide first aid and protection from the elements to our victim. We had a Thermarest pad, sleeping bag and Bothy bag (think tent). Once the top anchors were set, Miles went down with Stratton and Doerr one rope length to set-up the mid-station anchors. We had the Petzl ID for our belay and the winch for our main raising on the top. We had to have at least one snow anchor, so we attached the main to a bollard and the belay to a tree using a tensionless anchor. For the mid-station, we used another Petzl ID on the belay and the plan was to use a 3:1 for the main. However as we were lowering Swanson and the stretcher on the main rope through the winch, we realized that with the way we had the winch secured to the anchor we would need to release our tie down mechanism to thread the second rope. This would only take time, so to save time we suggested we just continue to lower on the main and tie a second rope to get the full 450 feet of rope length required to reach our victim. This required us to pass a knot which is not an issue with the winch. Miles concurred and so we proceeded with this plan. Miles descended to the victim's location to help secure her in the stretcher, so Niesen, with a radio, descended to the mid-station to help on the belay. We started the raise and completed our scenario by 1320. We packed up the gear and proceeded back to the Command Post for our avalanche transceiver test. We arrived at the area for our test, but we had lost our evaluators. Turns out they hitched a ride back on a snowcat! While we waited for our evaluators to travel to our location, Miles, Litton and Breitenstein headed back to the vehicles to unload gear. When our evaluators got dropped off we began our search. The scenario used two beacons. We found the first beacon within 3 minutes and had it recovered in 7 minutes. The second beacon was found within five minutes, but it took longer to locate. We probed (and the

evaluators gave us some feedback on that) without any luck and eventually dug down to the buried bag. The second beacon was recovered just under 13 minutes. Both beacons were contained in a small duffel bag, so probing was not very effective. We finished around 1430 and headed back to the vehicles where we unloaded gear and then met in the lobby of the Mammoth Inn for our debrief.

The evaluators gave excellent scores to our team in leadership, technical expertise, personal and group equipment (a lot of comments, all positive, on our winch), conditioning (comfort and ability to work in winter conditions...it should be noted that it snowed for most of the day and although it was windy on the hike in and out from our location, our problem was down off the summit in the trees, so we were protected from the severe wind), medical (they were impressed at everything Litton pulled out of his “tiny” bag to treat the victim) and planning. Areas that needed improvement were communications (the evaluators thought every member should have a radio), and our probing technique. We got acceptable scores for our mid-station system only because we chose not to set a mid-station main so that skill was never demonstrated! The debrief concluded at 4 pm. One vehicle with five members loaded up to return to Ridgecrest. The other 8 members stayed to return on Sunday. All members were home and the hut secured by 1500 on Sunday, March 6th.

Lessons Learned:

We used the winch to lower Swanson and the stretcher. This was not necessary. The slope was less than 30 degrees most of the way down, so the lowering was slow and tedious. A boot axe belay or a Munter hitch would have sufficed to get the unloaded stretcher down to the victim.

The evaluator commented that we did not probe correctly when we pinpointed the location of the buried beacon. We did practice the technique of concentric circle probing, but we practiced with the beacon wrapped in a large ensolite pad. The beacons we were probing for were in a small duffel bag, so we did start randomly probing when nothing was found (it is recommended to probe out in concentric circles from your start point at 25 cm (10 inches). Even with this technique the odds were not in our favor to find the small duffel with the probe. We actually found both beacons by giving up on the probing and just digging in the vicinity. But it is a skill we do need to practice more.

Some improvements on gear for our next winter operation or accreditation: The victim needs more top cover insulation, especially in stormy conditions. Our victim said she was cold for most of the raising. An extra sleeping bag would work. The tarp needs to be attached to the litter to ease packaging.

GROUP BUSINESS

Public Education:

- Talus Pile:

If you currently receive a paper copy of the Talus Pile, please consider letting us send you an electronic copy via email instead. Just send an email to publiced@clmrg.org and let us know. As an all-volunteer, non-profit even little steps help us keep expenses low. Thank you!

- Summer Mountaineering Class:

Registration started May 1st for CLMRG’s annual Basic Mountaineering & Mountaineering Safety class. Class starts Tuesday, June 14th and ends August 3rd with no classes the week of July 4th.

The class consists of 7 weeks of lectures on Tuesday evenings and practicals at various local sites on Wednesday evenings taught by CLMRG, all for a \$35 class fee. The course includes a weekend day hike/climb (July 16-17) and an overnight hike/climb (July 23-24) into the nearby Sierra Nevada Mountains at skill levels ranging from introductory to fairly strenuous. Our team leaders lead these hikes, assisted by members of the group, with an emphasis on safety and enjoyment. Class is limited to 40 participants to allow time for everyone to practice skills during the Wednesday sessions. Students are required to have access to the textbook “Mountaineering: Freedom of the Hills” (8th Edition). For more information, see our website at www.clmrg.org. Although it was originally devised to train and recruit members for the group, and still continues to be a great source of members for our group, the class is open to anyone over 14 with a general interest in learning how to safely do basic mountaineering and rock climbing. If you know of someone that may be interested, please let them know.

- Girl Scout Encampment – Wednesday, April 6th.

CLMRG continued its 50 year tradition of setting up a high-line for LA area girl scouts during their weeklong desert campout. Nine members - Tom Sakai, Tom Roseman, Jeff Green, Dave Miles, Gina Niesen, Sean Litton, Mike Franklin, Linda Finco, and Eileen Loughran participated. We had a smaller group of girls than we've had the past few years due to the schools shifting their spring break weeks. During set-up, 5 NOMADS (those beyond campers but not quite old enough to become staff) observed the process with members providing a discussion of the set-up and answering questions. We sent 27 girls, 5 NOMADS, and ~6 group leaders across. Troop leaders thanked us profusely for our continued support. Lesson learned: After realizing we'd forgotten a 20 ft rope for the tag line (used to pull the girls across if they don't quite make it to the end of the high-line), we used webbing instead. The webbing was not as effective and blew around in the wind. A rope is a much better option.

- The 2015 Lost, but Found program:

During May, members went out to 4 schools (Richmond, Pierce, Gateway, and Montessori) giving 5 presentations to our local kids speaking to them about how to keep from getting lost and if they do, how to help SAR find them quicker! Teams of 1-2 members go out to the school, show a video put together by the National Park Foundation, and then do some demonstrations to reinforce what was shown on the video and if time, do a short Q&A. The kids can come up with some interesting questions. Parent handouts were provided for over 1300 families. The program continues to be well received. Thank you to all the members who gave presentations this year - Tom Roseman, Sean Litton, Linda Finco, Gina Najera-Niesen, and Dan Bishop and to Carol Burge for providing the logistics support!

SAR Appreciation Dinner:

The annual dinner to recognize SAR volunteers was held on April 9th. Dave Miles was recognized as our Top Contributor for his efforts on stretcher setup and support Technical Rock Accreditation. The Sheriff changed how awards were calculated this year so no one received a time in service award.

— YEAR END REPORTS 2015—

(the 2015 Operations report appeared in the previous Talus File)

-Training Committee:

The chart below details CLMRG's training hours completed in 2015 by month with a breakout by type.

Month	Hours	Miles	Events	Event Type				
				Search	Rescue	First Aid	Rock Climbing	Mountaina
Jan	106	460	7	2			5	
Feb	304	1580	15	1	3	2	8	1
Mar	922	2140	11	1	1	1	3	5
Apr	254	920	5	1		1		3
May	118	590	4	1			1	2
Jun	94	740	4				1	3
Jul	400	1440	6					6
Aug	387	2300	11				2	9
Sep	174	1670	11	1			7	3
Oct	293	1460	13	1		2	8	2
Nov	136	930	10	1		3	3	3
Dec	171	1160	8	2	1		3	2
Total	3359	15390	105	11	5	9	41	39

-Equipment Committee, 2015 Annual Report

Vehicles

The Kern County Sheriff is providing the Group with an Explorer and a Suburban. Expenses for gas and maintenance are covered by the Sheriff's Department.

Major equipment purchases:

With a grant from the Boeing Company and donations, the Group purchased rescue and search equipment for \$7,387 including:

- One Aztek System for raising and lowering a rescue load
- Three ELT systems for locating aircraft emergency beacons
- One Satellite phone to communicate in locations where radio and cell phone transmission is not possible
- Three avalanche beacons for locating avalanche victims

Hut:

China Lake Public Works continued to provide maintenance support for the Hut where the Group stores our search and rescue equipment.

Passings - Sadly, we report the death of a past member.

Thomas A. Stogsdill, Tom to his friends, was born June 22, 1933 in Rolla, Missouri, child of James Wesley Stogsdill and Anna Augusta Stogsdill. He passed away peacefully on April 28, 2016.

Tom joined the China Lake Mountain Rescue (CLMRG) group in September 1974. He served as President and as an Operations Leader during his time on the team. Tom was active with Public Education, serving as lead instructor for the Summer Basic Mountaineering and Mountaineering Safety Course, and being a presenter for the Hug-A-Tree program which teaches children what to do if they find themselves lost in the wilderness. Tom was also very active with the Mountain Rescue Association in the California Region serving as secretary, vice chairman and chairman. In recognition of his active participation with CLMRG, Tom was given the recognition of Honorary Member upon his retirement from the group in April 1995.

Not only did Tom enjoy rock climbing and mountaineering, but he also was a certified pilot, qualified as a test engineer (back seat in Navy aircraft), became certified as an international scuba diver, earned his amateur Extra radio (HAM) license and was a volunteer examiner for prospective HAMs.

Tom retired at 55 from the Naval Air Warfare Center, China Lake where he worked as an engineer and Program Manager for the Department of Defense. Tom retired to pursue sailing and sailed in the Caribbean, the Alaskan Passage, the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and the Sea of Cortez, which led him to La Paz, Baja Sur, Mexico where he anchored his sailboat and became a full time resident.

Tom's motto/philosophy: "Live life to the fullest." He often said, "You only pass this way once." and "No second chances." As his family stated, Tom was a happy soul...he had no regrets.



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