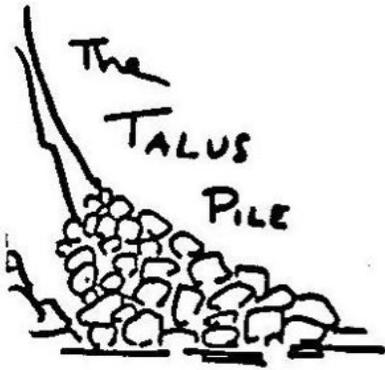


NUMBER 164

February 2019

**CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN  
RESCUE GROUP**  
P. O. BOX 2037  
RIDGECREST CA 93556



### SCREE

Check out our newly revised web page at [clmrg.org](http://clmrg.org).  
Check out the California Region's web page at [crmra.org](http://crmra.org).  
Find us on Facebook – China Lake Mountain Rescue Group

#### **Officers for 2018:**

President - Mike Derkey  
Vice President - Luke Swanson  
Secretary - Cynthia Rumpel/Phillip Cash  
Treasurer - Werner Hueber  
MRA Re - Nathan Simons



CLMRG is funded in part by United Way of Indian Wells Valley and is a member of the Combined Federal Campaign. We benefit from [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)

As part of the **California Region Mountain Rescue Association** accreditation process CLMRG participated in the **Region Technical Rock Accreditation** at the Alabama Hills on 3 March 2018. The event was hosted by the Ventura County East Search and Rescue. Eighteen members participated in the event. Linda Finco was the operations leader for CLMRG, Debbie Breitenstein was the subject (she turned out to be our team's subject) and Mike Myers and Bob Huey were evaluators for other teams. The other members participating were Dave Miles, Dan Bishop, Tom Roseman, Nathan Simons, Luke Swanson, Daryl Hinman, Tom Sakai, Sean Litton, Phil Cash, Bill Stephenson, David Jensen, Dave Doerr, James David (JD), and Cynthia Rempel.

Weather for the day was cold and windy. On the morning of 3 March, we met at the hut at 0500 and got on the road at 0505. We stopped briefly in Lone Pine for breakfast before going up into the Alabama Hills. Subjects were being briefed at 0700 and evaluators and team leaders at 0730. The actual welcome would not be until 0830 with the start of the problems at 0900. Teams were given maps and the location of their problem. CLMRG was in Section F, and our problem was F3. Our evaluators were from Sierra Madre and Altadena. At 0900 we proceeded to our section, and upon arriving were directed to a parking area. The advance team of Miles, Roseman, Simons, Swanson and Litton grabbed their gear. Bishop with the stretcher and litter bag, and Rempel also proceeded in at that time. The rest of the team stayed back until the advance team located the subject and determined what type of a system and gear would be needed for the rescue. The subject was located at 0927. She was down in a gully surrounded by boulders (maybe 15 to 20 feet down). Litton was the primary for first aid and descended easily to her location, where it was determined the subject was immobile with an injured ankle. Rempel was the scribe for

first aid and stayed top side. Due to the location of the subject it was decided a high line with an English reeve to lower into the gully and then raise from the boulders and continue descending down the boulder field would be the best solution to the problem. So while the rest of the team gathered ropes and technical system bags for the high line, Roseman and Simons began work on the main and belay for the top of the highline. We were all at the location of the problem by 1000 and divided into teams with members going to the top to assist with the main, belay, and reeve (Sakai, Doerr, Jensen, JD), and members staying at the bottom to create the bottom anchor and tensioning system for the high line (Hinman, Cash, Stephenson and Bishop). The anchors were set and the high line tensioned and Swanson was lowered on the reeve into the gully around 1030. Other members climbed down with the stretcher to help secure the subject. The stretcher with the subject and Swanson were then raised on the reeve. The highline allowed members to assist Swanson with the stretcher over and through the boulder field. Once to an open area near the trail, the reeve was used to lower the stretcher to the ground. The plan was to put the wheel on the stretcher and continue the descent down the trail, but the subject and evaluators called the end to the problem. We completed the problem around 1100. We broke down the system while the evaluators discussed our performance on the problem. Overall we were given high scores in leadership, our operational plan (using the highline), use of assets (personnel moving to stations as needed), and first aid.

Around this same time there was a call about an avalanche at Mammoth Mountain and the possible need of additional rescuers. Inyo County had already left the accreditation to provide assistance, so we made the decision to send all the team home except myself and Simons who would stay behind and wait for Myers and Huey. That way if CLMRG was called, members could get their winter gear and rescue equipment and be available to commit.

It was reported that everyone was accounted for from the avalanche, and no additional resources were required, so Simons stayed, as originally planned, at the campground to act as an evaluator for the teams testing in Technical Rock on Sunday (something he had committed to). Miles, Bishop, Cash and Jensen would drive back up on Sunday to also assist with the testing and bring Simons home. I received a text from Miles that the team sorted all the gear and secured at the hut around 1500. Myers, Huey and I secured at the hut at 1745.

*Linda Finco*

## **2018 Operations:**

### **2018-01 Kern Co, Kern River Search**

Back on 3 June 2017, Juan Torrez went missing while swimming in the Kern River near Lake Ming. Many hours were spent searching for Mr. Torrez throughout the summer with no success. With the river levels receding, the sheriff decided to have one last big search to try to locate Mr. Torrez. A heads up to the county wide search was given back in early January with final plans given on 25 January. Teams were to meet at 0700 on Saturday, 27 January at the corner of Mt. Vernon and Panorama in Bakersfield. Sheila Rockwell coordinated the callout. Members committing to the operation were Linda Finco, Dave Miles, Luke Swanson, Bob Huey, Phil Cash, Bill Stephenson, Tom Sakai, David Jensen and David Doerr.

We met at the rescue hut at 0430 and departed at 0450. We arrived at base at 0650. Sgt Bittle was in charge. Our team was assigned a section of the river between Manor Ave. to Rocky Point Weir. The dive team and mounted team would also be searching in the area. It was decided the dive team would focus on the islands in the middle of the river created by the receding water, and river edges. Mounted would focus on the areas around the high water mark prior to the river receding, and China Lake would focus on the brush and area along the river's edge. We left for our assignment around 0750. China Lake split into two teams, one to search the north side of the river and the other team to search the south side of the river. We were to look for clues, but since the river's edge was littered with debris from homeless encampments and other debris that was brought down river from the summer visitors (ice chests, inner tubes, etc.), we were really just looking for anything that appeared to be of human remains. The brush was thick along sections of the river, so we did our best to search around and through the brush trying to get good coverage, but probability of detection for a small clues (bones) was low. We encountered several homeless encampments, but had no issues. We completed our assignment around 1100 and headed back to our vehicles for lunch.

After lunch, we were given an assignment to search the river edges east from Manor until we connected with teams searching west. About 10 minutes into that search we ran into the other team, so the sheriff reassigned us to search the southern river's edge between Hart Park and the residential properties. We completed this assignment around 1350 and returned to base. The only significant thing found by any team on this search was a

fully clothed mannequin placed in the river. No clues on Mr. Torrez were found. We departed at 1420 and arrived back at the hut at 1620. We secured at the hut at 1630.

*Linda Finco*

### **2018-02 Inyo Co, Search, Recovery in Saline Valley**

On February 7, 2018 we got a call to assist with a search in Inyo county south of Saline Valley. OL Dave Miles got Sheila Rockwell to be the Coordinator and Janet Westbrook helped with the calls. Tom Roseman and Phil Cash committed for the 0530 meet time and Dan Bishop and Conner Warren to leave around noon. The briefing time was 0700 at the Lone Pine airport. Deputy Vic Lawson was in charge.

On 2/5/18, Inyo County SO had received a "be on the lookout" for Matthew Beyl from Mission Viejo, CA. He had left his home and 0315 on 2/1/18, and had used his credit card for gas in Pearsonville on 2/5/18. Around 1000 on 2/6/18 his truck was recognized by an off duty LEO. Two Inyo deputies were dispatched to the truck which was about 6 miles off of 190 on the Saline Valley road. They searched around the truck but were unable to locate Matthew. On 2/7/18, the search was joined by CHP helicopter H-82, but still unable to locate him.

CLMRG joined Inyo SAR at the Lone Pine Airport on 2/8/18 and teams were flown to the search area by H-82 and Kern County SO Air-5. After dropping off the ground searchers around 0915, the helicopters searched the area. CLMRG conducted a wide containment search for tracks around the truck to positively establish the direction of travel. Inyo SAR followed tracks up a wash from the truck. At 1143 Matthew was found deceased from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

We were flown back to the Lone Pine airport and were back at the hut at 1430.

*Dave Miles*

### **2018 - 03 Kern Co, Dove Springs OHV area, Transit**

Linda Finco, received a heads-up call from Dave Miles about the start of an operation and to expect a call from Sgt. Bittle with the Kern County Sheriff. At 1052 Linda did receive the call from Sgt. Bittle. They were looking for off-road vehicles to conduct a search in the Dove Springs/Jawbone Canyon area for two off-road motorcyclists reported overdue. The Desert team was responding with two search vehicles and the sheriff was hoping our team could provide a few more personnel. Sgt. Bittle was on his way over and would meet our team at the OHV parking area at the Dove Springs turnoff. Sheila Rockwell coordinated the callout with the help of Mary Schmierer and Janet Westbrook. Linda set a meet time of 11:30 am at the rescue hut. With the initial callout we got team of Dave Miles and Phil Cash that could meet at the hut and head out at 11:30 am. Dave and Linda would try to follow up with a 2<sup>nd</sup> team if we got anyone else to commit after lunch. At 1219 Linda received a call from Sgt. Bittle that the motorcyclists had returned to their camp. Linda contacted Dave and told him to return to the hut. They secured at the hut at 1239.

*Linda Finco*

### **2018-04 Inyo Co, Mt Whitney Trail Rescue**

CLMRG was contacted by Mark Baldwin (OES) on Saturday 17 February shortly before 2100 to assist with an operation on Mount Whitney. Luke Swanson was the operation leader and Sheila Rockwell was the coordinator. Jeff Green assisted with the call out. Dave Miles, Phillip Cash, Bill Stephenson, and Dan Bishop committed to the operation.

Deputy Victor Lawson was the OIC and provided a briefing over the phone at approximately 2145. A Spot was activated on the Whitney trail which provided a GPS location. The Spot belonged to a party of three, Jimmy Meyers, Richie Meyers, and Will Detmeyer. The reason for the activation was unknown. The group was from southern California and had started the drive on Friday at 0500. They had reportedly arrived at their destination (believed to be Whitney portal or as close as they could drive to) at 1200 on Friday. They were attempting to summit Mount Whitney on Saturday and were planning to camp Friday night along the trail (location was not certain).

The team met at the hut at 2145 on 17 February and drove to the Whitney portal. Deputy Lawson sent someone to unlock the gate along Whitney portal road, which allowed access to drive to the trailhead. Before reaching the trailhead, the team was informed that another individual named Christian was reported overdue along the Whitney trail. The team met Christian's friend driving down from Whitney portal. They had apparently both started hiking up the road below the trailhead early on Saturday but Christian was faster and

went ahead. He was reportedly planning to summit and return the same day. He did not have any overnight gear.

The primary goal was to reach the location of the spot activation (the spot had continued to ping and the location had not changed) and attempt to locate the three subjects. The Deputy needed to know what the situation was and if a helicopter was needed as soon as possible as the wind was forecast to pick up throughout the day on Sunday and would likely prevent a helicopter rescue later in the day.

The team also talked to two hikers walking down the road to reach their car. They had talked to the team of three and reported the situation. The team of three was apparently fine, but had set off the spot in order to help a separate person who was believed to be Christian. This person was reported to have fallen to a location that could not be reached. The team of three tried to use a rope to reach him, but the rope was not long enough. The condition of the fallen subject was unknown.

Our team arrived at the portal at 0100. The team split into two teams. Swanson and Bishop went ahead as a hasty team attempting to reach the subjects as quickly as possible, bringing warm clothing/gear and a rope. Miles and Stephenson followed with a second rope and additional gear. Cash remained with the vehicle to provide a radio relay. Snow covered the trail starting below the portal, but the trail was well packed from previous traffic and was relatively easy to hike along, although a little icy.

However, about 40 minutes into the hike the team ran into a single hiker coming down the trail. The hiker was Christian, who reported that he had been stuck above Mirror Lake, but was able to eventually climb back out and hike down. He appeared to have little winter gear, but he was not injured and seemed to be fine. Christian did not know if the three who set off the spot knew that he had climbed out. He reported that they were asleep in their tent, so he did not talk to them after climbing out. After reporting to Dep. Lawson, Stephenson and Miles returned down the trail with Christian and Swanson and Bishop continued up the trail to contact the team of three. The goal was to confirm that the three hikers were ok and not in need of rescue and also to ensure they knew that Christian had made it out.

The three hikers were believed to be in an orange and white mountain hardware tent. Christian had reported that they were camped by a lake, which was believed to be mirror lake due to the location of the spot GPS. They were located at approximately 0400 in their tent at Mirror Lake. They reported that they were all fine and had only set off the spot to help Christian. They did not know he had climbed out and were surprised that he was able to. Bishop and Swanson returned down the trail and reached the portal at 0625. Christian had been reunited with his friend. The team returned to Ridgecrest and the operation was complete at 0845.

*Luke Swanson*

#### **2018-05 Alert Kern Co. possible downed aircraft**

KCSO Sgt Bittle contacted CLMRG to request a team to join other Kern County agencies to be able to respond to assist in any potential search and rescue efforts associated with the launch of the Virgin Galactic vehicle Space Ship 2 from Mojave. This was to be the first launch since the previous crash in 2014.

Dan Bishop agreed to be the Operation Leader and to be the Sheriff's point-of-contact. The public announcement of the launch was withheld until the morning of April 5<sup>th</sup>. After the success of the event and return of the vehicle to Mojave airport the teams were told to stand-down.

#### **COMMENTS**

An ELT practice should be scheduled in the near future.

#### **2018-06 Kern Co Lower Kern River Search**

On June 30, 2018 the Kern Valley Search and Rescue (KVSAR) team was called out for a search and rescue of a man who had slipped into the lower Kern River at the Keysville campground. They searched that afternoon, but were unable to locate him and called CLMRG to assist on the next day, July 1<sup>st</sup>. At 1520 Dave Miles called Mary Schmierer to be the coordinator and Janet Westbrook helped with the calls. Dave Miles, Dan Bishop and Sean Litton committed to the search.

We met at the hut on 1 July at 0630 and arrived at the KVSAR compound at 0800 for a briefing. Bishop and Dave got assigned to a search team on the west side of the river. Our assignment was to search down river from the place last seen (PLS). Litton was assigned to shuttle rescue vehicles.

We started our assignment at 0900 and were just finishing our assignment at 1100 when another search team called for help. Two of their searchers were having heat related problems. Bishop and Miles got a ride back to the command post (CP). At 1135 Litton, Bishop, and Miles hiked in bringing cold liquids to the searchers suffering from the heat. We assessed the searchers and decided they were suffering from heat exhaustion. We gave them cold fluids and electrolytes. KVSAR boats arrived to take the searchers down river to the CP, but one of them had history of heart issues that made boating him out to risky. KCFD helicopter was called and hoisted him out at 1310. We hiked back out, had lunch with KVSAR, and were back at the hut at 1700. *Dave Miles*

### **2018-07 Kern Co. PCT, north of Walker Pass Alert**

While we were eating lunch after the Kern River search on 1 July, 2018, Sgt. Williams got a call about a missing hiker on the Pacific Crest Trail, a Scott Lantay, "Metric Ton". The reporting party (RP) had received a text from Scott on 18 June 2018 that stated he was starting at Walker Pass. On 19 June, Scott sent another text stating that he was 2.7 miles north of Walker Pass and the trail was "kicking his butt". Since the RP had not received any further texts from Scott, he called the sheriff out of concern for his friend.

Sgt. Williams requested a team from CLMRG to hike the first 3 miles north on the PCT to check for any clues. At 1530, Dave Miles called Mary Schmierer to be the coordinator. She called members and asked those committing to meet at the hut at 1900. This would allow us to avoid the heat and give the members on the Kern River search a chance to return home and repack for the PCT search. David Jensen, Mike Derkey, Phil Cash, and Tom Sakai committed to the search. At 1552, Dave got a call from Sgt. Williams that they had a cell tower ping on Scott's phone on at a tower in Lone Pine on 29 June 2018. Dave cancelled the night hike.

With permission from Sgt. Williams, Dave posted a message on the Facebook group "PCT Trail Angels" that the Kern County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) was looking for information from anyone who had seen Scott since 19 June. Over the next 2 days Dave received a lot of information and reports of Scott all the way to Mt. Whitney.

*Dave Miles 2018-*

### **08 Kern Co, Lower Kern River, Recovery**

On 3 July 2018 at 1406 Dave Miles received a call from Linda Finco. Sgt. Williams had a request from Kern Valley SAR (KVSAR) requesting assistance from CLMRG in the recovery of Jared Andrews who went missing in the Kern River on 30 June 2018. Mr. Andrews had been found by a rafting company. Terry Mitchell coordinated the callout and Linda Finco helped with calls. David Jensen, Mike Franklin, Phil Cash, Tom Sakai, Sean Litton, and Dan Bishop met Dave at the hut at 1530 and we arrived at the command post (CP) at 1640. We were expecting difficult steep terrain and brought technical gear to assist in the recovery. However, it was a moderate sandy slope and KVSAR already had a belay line setup. We joined the KVSAR members at the river and the recovery was completed at 1705. We had dinner and secured at the hut at 2000. *Dave Miles*

### **2018-09 Inyo Co. Bear Creek Spire, Alert**

At 1704 on Sunday, August 12, Mike Derkey sent a text to Linda Finco, Dave Miles and Luke Swanson, notifying us that he was climbing Bear Creek Spire with Jerome Webber, and on the descent, Jerome slipped and fell at around 1415, possibly injuring his tailbone and/or lower back. Either case, Jerome was unable to descend further. Mike left Jerome with 2 light jackets, 2 liters of water, about 800 calories of food, a space blanket and an emergency bivy. Mike descended to Tom's Place and called 911 and sent the text. To hopefully speed up a rescue, Dave called Dep. Nick Vaughn with the Inyo Sheriff Search and Rescue, and Linda started to call the roster for members who would be able to assist in the rescue if requested by the Inyo Sheriff. Linda also contacted Sheila Rockwell to be the coordinator.

Mike did not get the GPS coordinate, but by the pictures he took of the area the subject was about 400 feet below the notch on the summit ridge. Luke was able to determine GPS coordinates. (Luke had just been up in the area a couple weekends ago on our Basic Summer Mountaineering overnight climb). Dave forwarded the coordinates to the sheriff.

Dave Miles, Luke Swanson, Bill Stephenson, David Jensen and Mike Franklin committed to assist if requested by the Inyo County Sheriff. The sheriff was trying to coordinate a helicopter extraction with H40 out of Fresno. Dave stayed in contact with the sheriff. The helo was able to locate Jerome by 1945, but was unable to

extract him before nightfall. It then flew to Bishop to pick up two Inyo SAR members and insert them close to Jerome. At 2050 we received the message that the two Inyo SAR members were dropped off at Lake Italy. They would spend the night with Jerome and complete the hoist extraction first thing in the morning. Sheila called those who made the commitment to take them off standby.

Mike Derkey texted at 0754 on August 13<sup>th</sup>, to tell us that Jerome was at the hospital in Mammoth. Jerome stated he slept for 6 hours, so it appears the rescuers did a great job in keeping him comfortable. *Dave Miles*

### **2018-10 Santa Barbara Co. Hot Springs Road Alert**

Linda Finco, received a call from Kern County Sheriff Sgt. Zach Bittle on Saturday, 18 August at 1131 asking if our team could support a mutual aid request in Santa Barbara County for an on-going search on Sunday. Linda told Sgt. Bittle we would start a callout and let him know how many members we had. Sgt. Bittle said he would keep us posted, but just to go on stand-by for now. Linda contacted Mary Schmierer to coordinate the callout and Terry Mitchell assisted with the calling.

Tom Roseman, Sean Litton, Bill Stephenson, Phil Cash and Dan Bishop committed to the search. At 1544 Sgt. Bittle contacted Linda and said we were officially requested to respond. The command post (CP) would be located on Hot Springs Rd in Montecito, CA. The search was for 43 year-old, Wayne Habell, a Los Angeles County fire captain who was reported missing on Monday, 13 August. Mr. Habell's vehicle was located about 1400 on Friday, 17 August at the trailhead next to Hot Springs Creek in Montecito. We set our meet time at the hut at 0500 on Sunday. Mary contacted all those who committed. At 0459 we got word of a change in the CP, and at 1753, Mary contacted me to let me know that Nathan Simons and Dave Miles would also go on the search.

At 1806 Sgt. Bittle contacted the team to let us know that Mr. Habell had been found deceased. Mary called all those who committed to stand down. The operation secured at 1835.

#### **Lessons Learned:**

At 0454 I received a call from Bill who was at the hut, and then at 0505 I received a text from Dan who was at the hut. Both members did not get the message that the operation was secured and to stand down. In discussions with Mary the next morning, she stated that her notes showed she called and left voicemails for both Bill and Dan. We think the lesson learned is if you need to leave a voicemail stating the operation is secure and to stand down, a follow up call later in the day is a good idea to hopefully be able to talk to the person directly or another responsible person in the family who will pass on the message. *Linda Finco*

### **2018-11 Riverside Co, Mecca area, Search**

On October 4, 2018 Riverside County requested additional support to aid in a continuation of a search near Mecca, CA for a missing El Centro man, Ankit Goyal, believed to have been caught in a flash flood in Box Canyon on Monday, October 1. Terry Mitchell coordinated the callout and Dave Miles, Tom Sakai, Bill Stephenson, and Dave Jensen committed to the operation. CLMRG met at the hut at 0330 on October 5<sup>th</sup> and made it to the Command Post (CP) at 0715. After the initial briefing we joined with 10 members from the San Diego County team to search large debris deposits in the canyon below the location of the vehicle. Some of the debris was deposited 15-20 ft higher than the canyon floor. We finished our first assignment and had lunch. After lunch we searched some debris fields near the end of the flow. In both cases, we recommended to Riverside to bring in a backhoe to pull apart the larger piles. CLMRG returned to Ridgecrest and arrived at the hut at 2030.

*Dave Miles*

### **2018-12 Riverside Co, Mecca area, Search continuation**

Riverside requested additional personnel for the continuation of the search for Ankit Goyal who was believed to have been carried away in a flash flood (see Operation 2018-11). Carol Burge coordinated another callout. Dan Bishop and Linda Finco committed to search on Saturday, October 06. Leaving the hut at 0330 we arrived at the Command Post (CP) for the morning briefing. Our assignment was to team up with six members of Sierra Madre to conduct a series of line searches near the CP on the debris flow at the exit of the canyon. Many clues were discovered or re-discovered during the search including parts of the subject's vehicle more than 4 miles away from the destroyed car main body. Large pieces of asphalt from the road higher up in the canyon was also

deposited at the end of the canyon. The debris flow spread out over many miles and at places several feet deep. The temperatures were in the low 90's and most of the debris field had dried out. After about 7 miles of searching we completed our assignment at 1530. We returned to Ridgecrest and arrived at the hut at 1930.

*Dan Bishop*



Debris field at the exit of the canyon



Road to Box Canyon freshly plowed.



Note the height of the debris deposited up on the tower supports.

### **2018-13 Alpine Co, Blue Lakes, Search**

Nathan Simons received a calling post voicemail at 1308 on Wednesday, 1 November, requesting an operation leader to lead a team for a search in Alpine County. The subject was 55 year-old Brad Dozier, a very avid hiker, who was reported overdue on Saturday, 27 October. On Sunday, 28 October, his vehicle was found at Upper Blue Lake campground. Alpine County began searching for Mr. Dozier and was now requesting additional resources.

Carol Burge coordinated a callout for a departure on Wednesday evening, but we didn't get enough commitments, so Sheila Rockwell made another callout for a departure on Thursday, 2 November. Six members committed, Nathan Simons, Linda Finco, Bob Huey, Mike Derkey, Bill Stephenson and David Jensen. We met at the hut at 1600 and departed shortly thereafter, arriving at the base camp at Turtle Rock Park campground at 2200. They had heated tents and cots inside the command center. We settled in for the night in the command center.

The next morning (Friday, 3 November) we briefed around 0730 and were given an assignment to search a roughly rectangular area between Granite and Evergreen Lakes. After transiting to the Incident Command Post (ICP), we were informed that they would not release us to the field until we had two radios with their specified frequencies. As we did not have those frequencies programmed into our radios we had to wait for them to find radios to loan us, which took roughly an hour.

Once we had radios and a tracking device from the California National Guard, we transited to parking by Upper Blue Lake and commenced on a trail out to Granite Lake, from which we conducted our sweeps. We were instructed to look for clues and the subject, but not to conduct a grid search or even a strict line search. We managed to cover our area in three passes, and sent a team of two (Derkey and Jensen) to cover a rough semi-technical boulder area that we had initially been unable to search properly.

We found a fresh isolated track heading west that we recorded and reported, but later ruled it out as it did not match a photo of the soles we had seen in the Command Center. It was later revealed that that photo was not of the subject's actual shoes, but of shoes found at his residence and suspected to be a similar tread to the footwear he had on this trip.

After finishing our assignment, we transited back to the ICP to return radios and the tracker, then transited back to the Command Post to debrief. After debrief, we evaluated our options and decided to return to Ridgecrest that evening.

The subject's body was discovered on Saturday, 4 November at the base of the North face of Peak 9626.

*Nathan Simons*

## **2018-14 Butte Co, Paradise (fire area) Search**

Sgt. Bittle, Search and Rescue (SAR) coordinator for Kern County Sheriff put out a text to all team Captains at 1136 on Monday, November 12, giving Kern County teams a heads up that Butte County was in the process of asking for mutual aid assistance through the California Office of Emergency Services (OES) to assist in the search and recovery of fire victims as a result of the Camp Fire. The Camp Fire became California's deadliest wildfire. The fire burned more than 153,000 acres and claimed the lives of at least 88 people. In the community of Paradise, a town of roughly 27,000 residents, more than 13,000 homes were destroyed. The entire town was evacuated and there were more than 200 people unaccounted for.

Linda Finco, initiated a callout using Calling Post to query our team members. Later that afternoon the official request came out. Carol Burge coordinated the official callout. We got a commitment from Bill Stephenson and David Jensen. Our CLMRG members would meet up with other Kern County team members the next day, 13 November in Bakersfield at 1200. Linda coordinated with Stephenson, who would be the in-field team leader for CLMRG. On the morning of 13 November Linda got to the hut and put together equipment for the operation. Stephenson and Jensen departed the rescue hut at 0930. They met up with the other Kern County teams and caravanned together to Butte County, arriving around 2100.

CLMRG along with the other Kern County SAR members searched in the town of Paradise for the next 3 days. The Kern County team was broken into two 10 man teams. Stephenson and Jensen were led by Sgt. Bittle. Most structures were totally burned to the ground. The hazards encountered were downed power lines, below ground septic tanks, fire hot spots and destroyed building hazards consisting of sharp metal, glass, nails, and basements. Also breathing the smoke, particulates, and off gassing from burned material was an issue. Personal protective equipment (PPE) was furnished by the California National Guard: Tyvek coveralls, respirator and rubber gloves. At the end of each day's search we turned in the PPE and we were decontaminated by the National Guard.

The three days of searching involved going house to house in the designated residential neighborhoods. We were looking for and reporting victims, any type of hazards, safes/valuables, firearms, and pets. At each residence, a dog team would first search the area, then the SAR team would do a more in depth search in areas where the dog "hit" on something of interest. The house and structures were searched with raking, digging and/or sifting through the debris.

On another search assignment CLMRG was given a large area of streets to do a house to house search. This search was much like the previous day's search, except it was more of a walk through "eyes only" search with no detailed searching except in probable areas where it was warranted or where a dog might have shown interest.

Although CLMRG did not find any victims, the other Kern County team did find two fire victims. After 3 days of searching, the Kern County teams headed home from Butte County. CLMRG secured at the hut at 1500 on Saturday, 17 November.

*Linda Finco*

## **2018-15 Butte Co. Camp Fire burned area, Continued Search, Recovery**

On Saturday, 17 November, Sgt, Williams from the Kern County Sheriff texted Kern County team Captains requesting personnel for the ongoing mutual aid request in Butte County (see operation 2018-15). The second operation period would depart on Sunday, 18 November and return Wednesday, 21 November. Sheila Rockwell coordinated the callout, and Linda Finco assisted in the coordination efforts. Tom Roseman and Phil Cash committed to the operation.

CLMRG met at the hut at 0900 on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November. From the hut the team drove to Bakersfield to meet up with other Kern County teams at 1200. Sgt. Williams lead the operation. The teams then caravanned to the main base camp at a State Park north of Oroville. Our team deployed on Monday and Tuesday (19-20 November) to Yankee Hill and Concow. We were assigned to engine crews to search burned structures. The Kern County teams got up early on Wednesday morning to drive home. CLMRG arrived back at the hut at 1430 and secured at 1500.

*Tom Roseman*

## **2018-16 Kern Co. Kern River, Search**

This search, in conjunction with the Bakersfield Police Department and Kern County Sheriff Office, was to determine if further evidence could be found in reference to the 18 August 2018 discovery of a severed human arm

found in the Kern River downstream from the soccer fields near Hart Park. Recent DNA testing has concluded that the arm, concealed in a duffel bag may be that of Micah Holsonbake, from Bakersfield, who was reported missing on 23 March 2018. Some media reporting has suggested that Mr. Holsonbake's disappearance may be related to the disappearance of Baylee Despot on April 25<sup>th</sup> and the murder of James Kulstad on April 8<sup>th</sup>, all three individuals reportedly knew each other. Dan Bishop, Dave Miles, Nathan Simons, Philip Cash, Bill Stephenson, David Jensen, Chet Rosser, and Nick Pio committed to search on Saturday, December 22 with Terry Mitchell and Janet Westbrook acting as Coordinators. Leaving the Hut at 0645 we arrived at the CP near the intersection of Highway 178 and Rancheria Road in time for the 0900 briefing. Our assignment was to sweep the south bank of the Kern River from Ming Lake to Hart Park. Two members from the Southern Kern team joined our 8 Members as we leap-frogged through at times brushy embankments. Much of the terrain was too overgrown to properly search the shallows of the river; however we did call the Sheriff drone operators to investigate items of interest. Overall, the thick brush along with the relatively high-water flow (285 CFS) as well as the overcast conditions contributed to the low probability of finding any evidence. We spent 3 hours searching before we returned for lunch provided by Bakersfield Police Department. By 1430 we were released and were back at the Hut at 1630. No further searching of the area is currently planned. *Dan Bishop*

We had 16 Operations plus our Technical Rock accreditation in 2018.

Alert	Mobilisation	Transit	Search	Rescue/Recovery
4	0	1	7	4

Nine of the requests to assist came from agencies outside of Kern County. Our biggest effort was assisting with the search and recovery operation in Butte County after the Camp Fire.

Kern	Inyo	Santa Barbara	Riverside	Alpine	Butte
7	3	1	2	1	2

In 2018, the operations were evenly spread over the year.

Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	3	0	1	0	0	3	2	0	2	3	1

## 2018 Committee and Training Summaries

### 2018 Training Report Summary

238 Hours First Aid Training  
 22 Hours CPR Training  
 17 First Aid Training Events  
 - 4 CPR Training Courses  
 - 2 First Aid Courses  
 - 2 Wilderness First Aid Courses

Provided first aid stations and care for the Over the Hill Track Club Ultra 50K and the High Desert Classic Mountain Bike Race

### 2018 Training Numbers

3109 Hours  
 14827 Miles  
 129 Training Events  
 - 34 Mountain Climbing Trips  
 - 28 Rock Climbing Trip  
 - 32 Rescue Training Events

- 14 Tech/Hut Nights  
 - 4 Stretcher Practices (including joint training with Inyo SAR)  
 - 4 members were swift water rescue swimmer certified

**Summer Class:**

Summary: We began the class with 34 people on the roster and 27 finished.

Of these, 23 earned full certificates and 4 earned survivor certificates.

Summer Class Day Hikes: 15 students participate

Bear Creek Spire: 10 students & 4 instructors

Dragon Peak: 6 students & 4 instructors

Overnights: 18 students participated

Cirque Peak: 4 students & 3 instructors

Snow Crown: 8 students & 3 instructors

Trail Peak: 6 students & 3 instructors

CLMRG 2018 Public Education							
Date	Subject	Hours	Miles	Location	Members	Group	Size
January 29, 2018	block and tackle	4	10	James Morrow Middle School	David Jensen	Middle School	30
February 16, 2018	ESDP Breakfast	4	5	Mickelson Lab	Cash, Jensen, Simons, Swanson	ESDPs	20
April 6, 2018	Girl Scout Highline	4	150	Trona	Loughran, Sakai, Doerr, Litton, Stephenson, Jensen, Simons, Swanson, Franklin, Loughran; Guest: Robert Jensen (Photographer)	Girl Scouts of America	34
April 28, 2018	Outreach	22	5	China Lake Naval Base	Litton, Finco, Mitchell, Stephenson, Niesan, Doerr	NAWS China Lake Community	300
May 7, 2018	Lost But Found	4	10	Saint Ann's School	Roseman, Finco, Loughran, Burge	Saint Ann's School	60
May 3, 2018	Lost But Found	3	10	Cub Scouts troop 848	Bishop, Loughran, Burge	North Noma Maman Church	12
May 22, 2018	Lost But Found	3	5	Richmond, 1206 Kearsarge St	Finco, Loughran, Burge	Richmond Elementary School	120
May 23, 2018	Lost But Found	3	10	Faller Elementary School	Niesan, Loughran, Burge	Faller Elementary School	200
May 24, 2018	Lost But Found	3	10	Inyokem - 6601 Locust	Roseman, Loughran, Burge	Inyokem Elementary School	60
June - Aug	Summer Class	650	300	100 W California Ave.	Doerr, Cash, Miles, Simons, Swanson, Derway, Niesan, Stephenson, Litton, Finco, Franklyn	Summer Course Class	35
November 17, 2018	RDC First Aid	45	20	Cerro Coso College	Tom Roseman, Tom Sakai, Dr. Bill Ferguson, Sean Litton, Phillip Cash, Chet Rosser, Robert Jones	High Desert Cyclists	200
December 2, 2018	OTHTC First Aid	42	50	Cerro Coso College	Roseman, Cash, Stephenson, Miles, Litton, Ferguson, Sakai, Simons	Over The Hill Track Club	250
December 17, 2018	Donor Thank You Cards	16	0	n/a	Westbrook	Supporters of CLMRG	32
Various	Web Site	60	0	n/a	Cash, Westbrook, Simons	Internet	
Various	Seven Tea Cups	20	200	Seven Tea Cups Canyon	Miles, Litton, Simons, Others	Families	17
Various	Miscellaneous	20	20	Various	May	Various	100
<b>Totals</b>		<b>903</b>	<b>805</b>				<b>1470</b>

MRA ACCREDITATION	3-Mar	TECHNICAL ROCK	L.FINCO	T.MITCHELL	D.MILES, T.ROSEMAN, D.BISHOP, L.SWANSON, N.SIMONS, B.HUEY, M.MYERS, D.JENSEN, P.CASH, B.STEPHESON, S.LITTON, T.SAKAI, D.BREITENSTEIN, D.DOERR, J.DAVIS	ALABAMA HILLS/INYOCOUNTY/Accreditation in Technical Rock
-------------------	-------	----------------	---------	------------	--	--



— YEAR END OPERATIONS REPORT for 2018—

**Summary Chart of 2018 Operations:**

	2016 Dates	Type	Leader	Coordinator/ Telephoner	Members	County
2018-01	27-Jan	SEARCH	L.FINCO	S.ROCKWELL	D.MILES, L.SWANSON, B.HUEY, T.SAKAI, P.CASH, B.STEPHENSON, D.JENSEN, D.DOERR	KERN RIVER/KERNCOUNTY/Search for Juan Torrez who went missing in the river on 3 June.
2018-02	7-8 Feb	SEARCH	D.MILES	S.ROCKWELL/J.W ESTBROOK	T.ROSEMAN, D.BISHOP, P.CASH, C.WARREN	HIGHWAY190/INYOCOUNTY/Search for a missing person
2018-03	12-Feb	TRANSIT	L.FINCO	S.ROCKWELL/M.S CHMIERER, J.WESTBROOK	D.MILES, P.CASH	DOVESPRINGS/KERNCOUNTY/Search for two missing off road motorcyclists.
2018-04	17-18 Feb	RESCUE	L.SWANSON	S.ROCKWELL/J.G REEN	D.MILES, D.BISHOP, B.STEPHENSON, P.CASH	MT.WHITNEY/INYOCOUNTY/Response to an activated SPOT. Initial report was the SPOT was activated for a stranded hiker.
2018-05	4-5 April	ALERT	D.BISHOP			MOJAVE/KERNCOUNTY/Request to assist in any potential search and rescue efforts associated with the launch of the Virgin Galactic vehicle Space Ship Two from Mojave
2018-06	30 Jun-1 Jul	SEARCH	D.MILES	M.SCHMIERER/J. WESTBROOK	D.BISHOP, S.LITTON	KERNRIVER/KERNCOUNTY/Search for a missing person who fell into the river.
2018-07	1-Jul	ALERT	D.MILES	M.SCHMIERER/C.B URGE	M.DERKEY, T.SAKAI, D.JENSEN, P.CASH	PCT/KERNCOUNTY/Request to search for clues on reported missing hiker on the PCT
2018-08	3-Jul	RECOVER Y	D.MILES	T.MITCHELL/L.FIN CO	D.BISHOP M.FRANKLIN. D.JESNSEN, S.LITTON, T.SAKAI, P.CASH	KERNRIVER/KERNCOUNTY/Recovery (missing person OP 2018-06)
2018-09	12-Aug	ALERT	D.MILES	S.ROCKWELL/L.FI NCO	L.SWANSON, D.JENSEN, M.FRANKLIN, B.STEPHENSON	BEARCREEKSPIRE/INYOCOUNTY/Standb y to assist in the rescue of an injured climber.
2018-10	18-Aug	ALERT	L.FINCO	M.SCHMIERER/T. MITCHELL	D.MILES, T.ROSEMAN, D.BISHOP, N.SIMONS, S.LITTON, B.STEPHENSON, P.CASH	HOTSPRINGSROAD/SANTABARBARACO UNT/Request to assist in the search of a missing man.
2018-11	5-Oct	SEARCH	D.MILES	T.MITCHELL/C.BU RGE	T.SAKAI. P.CASH, B.STEPHENSON	BOXCANYONMECCA/RIVERSIDECOUNTY /Request to assist in the search of a man missing after a flash flood in the canyon.
2018-12	6-Oct	SEARCH	D.BISHOP	C.BURGE	L.FINCO	BOXCANYONMECCA/RIVERSIDECOUNTY /Continuation with the request to assist in the search of a man missing after a flash flood in the canyon.
2018-13	1-2 Nov	SEARCH	N.SIMONS	C.BURGE/S.ROCK WELL, T.ROSEMAN	L.FINCO, M.DERKEY, B.STEPHENSON, D.JENSEN	BLUELAKES/ALPINECOUNTY/Search for an overdue hiker.
2018-14	12-17 Nov	SEARCH/R ECOVERY	L.FINCO	C.BURGE/S.ROCK WELL	B.STEPHENSON, D.JENSEN	PARADISE/BUTTECOUNTY/Mutual aid request to assist in the search and recovery of fire victims in the Camp Fire.
2018-15	17-21 Nov	SEARCH/R ECOVERY	T.ROSEMAN	S.ROCKWELL/L.FI NCO	P.CASH	PARADISE/BUTTECOUNTY/Mutual aid request to assist in the search and recovery of fire victims in the Camp Fire.
2018-16	22-Dec	SEARCH	D.BISHOP	J.WESTBROOKT.M ITCHELL	D.MILES, N.SIMONS, P.CASH, B.STEPHENSON, D.JENSEN, C.ROSSER, N.PIO	KERNRIVER/KERNCONTYSearch for a man who drowned in the river near Hart Park.

Chimney Lake Mountain Rescue Group  
PO Box 2037  
Ridgecrest, CA 93556  
Address Correction Requested

