



NUMBER 165

June 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). and [clmrg.org/members](http://clmrg.org/members)  
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 2019:**

President - Luke Swanson  
Vice President – Sean Litton  
Secretary - Phillip Cash  
Treasurer - Mike Derkey  
MRA Rep - Nathan Simons

**Committees:**

Training – Bill Stephenson  
First Aid – Chet Rosser  
IT, Equipment – Nathan Simons  
Stretcher – Mike Derkey  
Summer Class – Dave Doerr  
Sheriff Capt. – Linda Finco

ESC Rep – Dave Miles  
ASTM – Dennis Burge  
Web Page – Phil Cash  
Talus Pile – Janet Westbrook

Qualifications committee 2019 - Linda Finco, Dave Miles, Luke Swanson



**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)**

**Notes from our Meeting Minutes**

- Ridgecrest Cinemas showed “Ode to Muir” Jan. 26 and we received over \$1000 in donations from patrons. Casa Corona provided refreshments. Thanks, Kelly!
- April 7, annual Girl Scout Encampment – we set up a Tyrolean Traverse/zip line for the girls.
- Lost but Found (a.k.a. Hug a Tree) presented to most IWV Elementary schools
- Summer Class has ±34 registered; overnight trips to Bishop Pass, Sabrina Lake  
Lead - Doerr, Rock – Derkey, Registrar – Kormalink
- Sheriff’s SAR Award Dinner: top contributor – Phil Cash; 55 yrs. – Carol Burge
- New toys – we now have a FLIR to aid in night searches
- MRA Spring Conference in June at Mt. Hood (it snowed) Simons, Derkey  
Great video of the conference, neat equipment, interesting people-see  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsE2gta6M0o&feature=youtu>

As part of the **California Region Mountain Rescue Association of 20 MRA team** accreditation process CLMRG participantend in the **Region Technical Snow and Ice Recertification at Heavenly Ski Resort, Lake Tahoe.** *We passed all aspects of the exercise!* Scenario with skier with injured knee; avalanche search, raising to LZ, snow anchors, avalanche pit, snow anchors, snow shelter, grid probe for buried avalanche victim; and a ride on the Heavenly Gondola!  
The accreditation team was: Finch, Bishop, Miles, Swanson, Niesen, Stephenson, Derkey, Jensen, Cash, Rosser and Pio. Simons was an evaluator for the Riverside team and Huey was an evaluator for the Inyo team. Thanks to Cammenga, Sakai, and Dave Doerr for attending the trainings in support of the accreditation.

## **2019 Operations so far; January to May 2019**

### **2019-01 Kern Co. Search near California City**

Linda Finco received a call from Sgt. Williams (Kern County Sheriff) at 0720 on Friday, 18 January 2019. The Sheriff was looking for 2-4 additional trackers to assist in a search for a missing person in California City. Finco called Dave Miles who was able to commit. Finco decided Calling Post would be the quickest way to get the message out to all members. Dave initiated the Calling Post, found a coordinator and got back with Sgt. Williams for more information. We would get a team to leave the hut at 0800. Miles, Finco and Phil Cash met at the hut at 0800. Sean Litton was there to assist with the gear. Bob Huey, Mike Franklin and Chet Rosser would meet at the hut at 0900 and rendezvous at the Command Post (CP). Dave had additional information of the missing person. We were looking for 11-year-old Riley. She was last seen at her home in California City around 1500 on Thursday, 17 January. She reportedly ran away from home at that time. Riley has run away before, heading towards the highway. California City police initiated the search. When it was apparent that she was heading off into the desert, the Kern County sheriff was requested to assist in the searching through the night. Desert Search and Rescue from Mojave tracked Riley through the night, but lost tracks in the early morning. CLMRG's assignment was to pick up on the tracks and determine a direction of travel and to continue to track Riley.

We met Sgt. Williams at the CP located near the last good tracks. At 0930 Cash and Finco took the lead on the tracks, while Miles continued ahead to a road to cut the perimeter for her tracks. We tracked her to a North-South wash which she then continued to follow for the next 5 miles or so. Huey, Franklin and Rosser arrived and we continued our tracking process of step by step tracking, sending members to leap frog ahead and once her track was confirmed to send the next team ahead to leap frog. She was consistently following the wash, even crossing fence lines. A team from Tehachapi joined the search and found her tracks at an intersection of a road crossing the wash, but then could not locate where they went from there. Miles was able to determine her direction of travel had changed and she was no longer following the wash, but heading northwest towards the Solar Power Plant on Neuralia Road. We sent Tehachapi Team that way to cut for sign and we also redirected Huey and Cash to areas near the Solar Power Plant to cut for sign. Around 1530 we received radio traffic that Riley had been found. As the team from Tehachapi was driving along Neuralia Road they spotted a security guard from the Honda Track compound escorting a young lady fitting Riley's description. They stopped and determined that it was Riley. All teams regrouped on Neuralia Road.

We were able to talk with Riley. She was suffering from mild hypothermia and was hungry and thirsty. Riley stated she was running away from home and chose to follow the wash because she knew it would lead her to the train tracks and she was hoping to hop a slow train out of town. When asked why she left the wash, she stated she was tired and cold and saw the road (probably saw traffic lights on the road), and knew the road would also lead her to the train tracks and it would be easier hiking. She did find a blue barrel to sleep in during the night. And she even stopped again in the morning to rest under a large bush until it warmed up. Deputy Nance, who had taken over as the Incident Commander from Sgt. Williams, had Riley's boots and we confirmed that those were the tracks we were following. We tracked her for over 7 miles and were only about 2 miles from her location when she was found.

Searching for a lost person has its own difficulties, but trying to catch up with a person who does not want to be found makes containment a priority. We tried to contain her when we saw her faithfully following the wash, directing the helicopter to travel the wash looking for her. But by that time, she was already out of the wash and heading cross country towards the highway. Once we determined that direction of travel, it did not take long for her to be contained and found.

Riley's boots..the distinguishing features were the tread on the sole and the front curve on the heel. She had prominent heel digs as she walked through the desert.

OL – Finco; Coord – S. Rockwell; Miles, Huey, Cash, Franklin, Rosser

### **2019-02 Kern Co. Alert for Virgin Galactic test flight**

On Sunday, 17 February, Linda Finco received an email from Sgt. Bittle asking if China Lake Mountain Rescue could provide a quick response team for the Virgin Galactic test flight schedule for Wednesday, 20 Feb. Back in October 2014 the Space Ship Two crashed due to a feathering/braking system deploying too early. Kern County Search and Rescue teams were used to contain the area from many looky-loos until the National Transportation Safety Board completed their investigation. Since we had plenty of time to respond Finco sent an email out to group members stating the first 5 people to respond would join Finco on the quick response team. We got a commitment from Dave Miles, Dan Bishop, Tom Sakai, Phil Cash and David Jensen. Sheila Rockwell stated she could coordinate on the day if further assets were needed.

On Tuesday, 19 February, Finco sent out a text message to all those who committed to remind them to take their ready packs into work and to monitor their phones. On Wednesday, 20 February, at 0718, a couple members read on-line that the flight was cancelled due to weather. At 0722 we got the official word from Sgt. Bittle that the flight was cancelled. The team was notified that the operation was secure and to stand down.

**2019-03 Riverside Co. Alert /search** Missing person near Idyllwild, bad winter storm

CLMRG was contacted by Kern County Sheriff, Sgt. Bittle, on Wednesday, February 20, to assist Riverside County in a search for a missing person. The subject was a 63-year-old white male with possible dementia and oxygen dependence. He was last seen on February 18th at his residence in Idyllwild around 1830. CLMRG was planning to leave early on Thursday morning, however, the search was suspended later the same day (Wednesday, the 20th) due to inclement weather, heavy snow; ending the operation.

OL – Swanson; Coord – Westbrook; Swanson, Derkey, Stephenson

**2019-04 Kern Co. Alert** – Quick response for Virgin Galactic Test flight

Thursday, 21 February, Linda Finco received a text from Sgt. Bittle asking if China Lake Mountain Rescue could put together a quick response team for the Virgin Galactic test flight that was now scheduled for Friday, 22 February (see OP 2019-02). Since we had a shorter time window to respond I sent an email out to group members, but also got Janet Westbrook to coordinate a callout. We got a commitment from Linda Finco, Dan Bishop, Luke Swanson, Bill Stephenson, David Jensen, Gina Niesen, David Doerr and Chet Rosser.

On Friday, 22 February, Finco monitored the Twitter feed for the Virgin Galactic flight. It was confirmed shortly after 0700 that the flight test was a go for the day. The *White Knight Two* mother ship with *Space Ship Two* under its wing launched around 0817. Everything went well and according to the Twitter feed, Space Ship Two was released from White Knight Two at 0854. If one looked in the sky over Mojave you could see the contrail from the rocket motor ignition and flight into space. At 0908 Space Ship Two landed back at the Mojave airport. Members were notified that the alert was now off and the operation secure and to stand down.

**2019-05 Kern Co. Alert** Missing aircraft Tehachapi Mountains area

On Friday, 22 February, Linda Finco received a text from Sgt. Williams, Kern County Sheriff, requesting assistance for a recovery operation. The sheriff was notified at 2230 on 21 February of an aircraft with an overdue flight plan travelling from San Louis Obispo to the Los Angeles area. The aircraft was located by a helicopter searching in the Tehachapi mountains on 22 February at 1030. One subject was located, but the flight plan listed 3 people on the aircraft. The sheriff was requesting searches for Saturday, 23 February, to search in the vicinity of the aircraft for the other two subjects. We had a scheduled winter training for the next day, so we cancelled the training to support the operation. Mary Schmierer coordinated the callout and Terry Mitchell helped with the telephoning. Dave Miles, Dan Bishop, Nathan Simons, Luke Swanson, Gina Niesen, Tom Sakai, Bill Stephenson, David Jensen, David Doerr, and Chet Rosser committed to the operation. At 2300 Finco received a call from Sgt. Williams stating one of the snow cats was inoperable and our team would not be needed. Finco called all those who committed (and the few folks that did not commit to the operation, but committed to the training on Saturday) to let them know the operation was off and we were going ahead with the training.

Finco did check back with Sgt. Williams on Saturday after our winter training to see if he needed additional assistance, but again he stated our assistance was not needed. The sheriff completed the recovery of all 3 subjects on Sunday, 24 February.

**2019-06 Kern Co. Alert** Lost 6 yr. old near Tehachapi

On Sunday, 24 February, Linda Finco received a text from Sgt. Williams, Kern County Sheriff, requesting assistance on a search for a 6-year-old in Tehachapi. Janet Westbrook coordinated the callout and Dave Miles, Nathan Simons, Bill Stephenson and Phil Cash committed to the operation. At 1412 Finco received a call from Sgt. Williams stating the boy had been found, slightly hypothermic, but otherwise OK. The team was notified the operation was secure and to stand down.

**2019-07 Alert, Sequoia/Kings Canyon**, Missing man on Sierra High Route

On Tuesday, 12 March, Linda Finco, received a call and email from Sgt. Kevin Kimmel, Kern County Sheriff. The Office of Emergency Services (OES) was requesting assistance for an ongoing search in the Sequoia Kings Canyon National Park for 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Matthew Kraft of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division who missed his scheduled return date from a planned 10-day trek on the Sierra High route departing from Onion Valley. The request was for three Type 1 Mountain Rescue personnel to assist in the search. Sheila Rockwell coordinated the callout. Nathan Simons committed to lead the operation. At 1630 Finco received a text from Sgt. Kimmel that the need had been filled and our assistance was no longer needed.

OL Simons; Coord – Rockwell; Finco

**2019-08 Kern Co. Search** BLM road Ep15 near Burro Schmidt Tunnel

On Wednesday, 13 March, Linda Finco received a call from Sgt. Kevin Kimmel, Kern County Sheriff at 1920. The Kern County sheriff received notification of a SPOT (personal emergency beacon) activation at 1836 requesting assistance. The SPOT was registered to Donald Reed, age 72. Mr. Reed did have medical issues, but we could not be sure why the SPOT was activated. I told Sgt. Kimmel that we could respond immediately with a team to travel out to the coordinates given by the SPOT activation and determine what additional help, if any, was required. I contacted Dave Miles and he met me at my house at 1930. Plotting the coordinates we could see that Mr. Reed was on EP 15 on the north side of the access to the Burro Schmidt Tunnel. I also contacted Nathan Simons, who agreed to contact a coordinator and get a 2<sup>nd</sup> team assembled. Sheila Rockwell coordinated the callout and Mary Schmierer helped to telephone. Simons, Tom Sakai, Bill Stephenson and Phil Cash committed to the operation. This 2<sup>nd</sup> team departed the hut at 1950. At 2010 we were on the dirt road heading towards the coordinates. We were met by two off road vehicles who had been out in Last Chance Canyon for the day. The only other vehicle they saw was a white Jeep about ¼ mile to the south of the intersection at the water tank just ahead. We tried to verify the vehicle for Mr. Reed, but we were out of cell phone coverage. The vehicle location described for the Jeep was not in the vicinity of the SPOT coordinates, so we continued to those coordinates. At 2030 we located Mr. Reed at the SPOT coordinates. All was well. Mr. Reed had the SPOT in his pocket and accidentally activated the emergency request. When he noticed he had activated the SPOT he pressed the OK button ½ dozen times, hoping to let his family know everything was OK. While we were talking with Mr. Reed, we saw another vehicle approaching which turned out to be his brother-in-law, who received the SPOT activation notice. He also received the OK, but when he contacted SPOT, they stated they did not receive an OK, so the brother-in-law decided to head out to the location to verify everything was OK. We departed around 2045. On the way out, we ran into two deputies with the Kern County Sheriff who were responding from Ridgecrest. We told them all was good, that the SPOT activation was by mistake. We then made radio contact with our 2<sup>nd</sup> team who we could see below us on the main dirt road. We told them all was good and to head back to the hut. At 2100 we had cell coverage again and got a call from Sgt. Kimmel to confirm all was good. We also confirmed that the SPOT coordinates were dead on to Mr. Reed's location.

**2019-09 San Bernardino Co. Search** for missing hikers on Mt. Baldy and Cucamonga Pk,

CLMRG was contacted by Sgt. Kimmel on Monday evening, 8 April. A type 1 team was requested to search near Mount Baldy for two missing hikers. Teams were requested for Tuesday or Wednesday. Linda Finco initiated a call out to leaders and coordinators. Luke Swanson took the lead for the operation and Sheila Rockwell coordinated the callout. CLMRG agreed to the Wednesday operational period due to member availability. Nathan Simons and Mike Franklin committed to the operation/ CLMRG met at the hut at 0400 on Wednesday, 10 April, in order to arrive at the 0700 briefing at the Mount Baldy fire station. CLMRG arrived at the Command Post (CP) at 0720 and received assignments. Swanson and Simons were assigned to team 2, a three-person team lead by Ed of the West Valley team, who was very familiar with the area. Franklin was assigned to a separate team that would return to the CP that day. The two missing hikers, Eric Desplinter and Gabriel Wallace, were last seen on Saturday, 6 April, after they separated from the rest of their hiking party while attempting to reach Cucamonga Peak via Ice House Canyon. The group encountered icy conditions, so everyone except Eric and Gabriel elected to turn around. Eric and Gabriel apparently had the needed equipment, (believed to be crampons and possibly ice axe) and therefore continued toward the summit. They separated at the Ice House saddle around midday. Their cell phone did ping a cell tower that afternoon, indicating they were in the region leading to the summit.

Franklin was assigned to a team tasked with searching the Lytle Creek drainage. Getting to the start of the assignment required a 20-30-minute trip back up Interstate 210 to the I-15 to the starting point in the Bonita Ranch RV Campground. There were four searchers on this team. In addition to Franklin, there was Jim, the group leader, from San Bernardino County, and two others, Sue and Laurie, from San Diego. The team began hiking at about 0930. The terrain was rocky and once the canyon narrowed, many creek crossings were necessary. The team turned around at 1330, which was the predetermined turnaround time. The team got back to the campground around 1700 and drove back to the fire station. Franklin checked out and left around 1800 and drove home.

Our team 2 was assigned to hike to the summit, set up camp, and search a large area around the south side of the summit on Wednesday and Thursday. The team started hiking at 0830. The Ice House Canyon trail was free of snow until the Ice House saddle. The trail to Big Horn saddle was snow covered. Snow conditions were good for crampons. Several hikers encountered with micro-spikes had turned around due to the terrain. Our team scanned the northwest side of Cucamonga Peak regularly as we progressed. From Big Horn saddle to the summit, the trail was mostly snow covered, although some areas were patchy. There were some steep sections depending on the route chosen. The large gully heading southwest from Big Horn saddle appeared entirely snow free. Team 2 stayed with Team 1 at Big Horn saddle until 1400, where Team 1 headed down the southwest gully and Team 2 headed for the summit. Team 2 reached the summit at approximately 1600. The team searched one of the ridges descending to the south of the summit. No fresh tracks were discovered and the team returned to the summit by around

1800. Soon after returning to the summit the team learned that Team 1 was following two sets of tracks. Based on this clue, a helicopter was sent into the area and two people with a fire were located, which turned out to be the missing hikers.

Team 2 was then told to pack up camp and return to the CP. At about 1930, before leaving the summit, team 2 was informed that the helo would pick them up at the summit landing zone (LZ) in 1 hour. The helo arrived at around midnight. It was below freezing and windy on the summit, so it was challenging to stay warm without unpacking bivy gear. The helo was unable to land on the summit, but the team was able to climb in while the helo hovered close to the ground. The team reached the CP at 0030. Swanson and Simons stayed in a hotel and returned to Ridgecrest on Thursday, 11 April. We secured at the hut at 1400.

OL – Swanson; Coord – Rockwell; Swanson, Simons, Franklin

**2019-10 San Bernardino Co. Alert** – same as Op #9, Search for missing hikers, Mt. Baldy area

Riverside County was requesting additional resources for follow on operational periods. Dave Miles agreed to lead a team for the Thursday/Friday operational period, 12-13 April. Sheila Rockwell coordinated the callout and Gina Niesen, Bob Huey and Bill Stephenson committed to the search. At 1900 hours on Wednesday, 10 April, CLMRG received word the hikers had been found OK and no additional resources were required.

**Epilogue** The two missing hikers were apparently in good condition. Gabriel apparently fell 200 feet on the snow near the summit. Rather than returning to the trail, they decided to descend down the gully. The gully proved to be more difficult than they anticipated. They survived with four Power bars and found water in the gully. They apparently made a rope from their jackets in order to get past technical obstacles in the gully. They did not have a headlamp, but did have fire starters, some kind of signal light, and a signal mirror. Even with a fire, they reported the helo hovering above and missing them earlier in the search.

**2019-11 Kern Co. Search** at Spanish Needle for lost hiker

On Sunday, April 28, Linda Finco, received a call from Sgt. Steve Williams, Kern County Sheriff at 1607. The Kern County sheriff received a call reporting a missing person in the area of Spanish Needle. Finco contacted Dave Miles who agreed to start the operation. Finco told Miles she could lead a second team later that evening. Sheila Rockwell coordinated the callout and Miles, Dan Bishop, Mike Franklin, Bill Stephenson and Phil Cash would be the advance team. Tom Sakai and Chad Sprong would leave later with Finco. The initial report was a little confusing but a team of three were hiking from the Chimney Peak Campground to climb the North Needle from the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT). At the saddle to the peak, one member, Adrian, decided to stay with the gear while the other two ascended the peak. From there Michael wanted to continue on over and climb Spanish Needle, while the other, 24-year-old, Johnathan, decided to descend and wait at the saddle with the 3<sup>rd</sup> member of the party. When the Michael came down from Spanish Needle, it was discovered that Jonathan never made it to the saddle to meet Adrian. There was concern that he might have fallen in his descent and been injured. They talked to other hikers on the PCT and one volunteered to hike out to the Chimney Peak campground and meet our team members and Michael and Adrian would wait at the saddle in case Jonathan did make it back. Miles decided he and Stephenson would meet this reporting party, Aaron Korashan, at the campground, but send Bishop, Franklin and Cash to ascend to the PCT from Jack Cannell's Ranch on the west side of the PCT in Long Meadow. Then Finco, Sakai and Sprong would meet up with the Kern Valley Search and Rescue team at the ranch to plan additional assignments. The first teams departed the rescue hut at 1725. The second team departed the hut at 1830. Miles and Stephenson interviewed Aaron at the Chimney Peak campground at 1820 and then started hiking south on the PCT to the saddle. The second team met up with the Kern Valley SAR members at the ranch around 1900. The other teams from China Lake were still making their way to the saddle to interview the hiking party. It was decided to send a team from Kern Valley to hike the PCT south from the Point Last Seen (PLS), while we waited to contact Jonathan's hiking partners. Around 2040, Miles and Stephenson met up with Jonathan's hiking partners, followed shortly by Bishop, Franklin and Cash. They went to the PLS and after discussing the possible scenarios, they determined Jonathan most likely mistakenly descended the steep gully east of Spanish Needle after he separated from his hiking companion. This gully leads down towards Sand Canyon above Pearsonville. The decision was then made to have the two China Lake teams descend the gully looking for Jonathan, and the other searchers would reposition base camp in Sand Canyon and search up the drainage. We did send a team to talk to the people at the store in Pearsonville, just to ensure no one came in asking to use a phone, or requesting help. Then we sent teams from China Lake and Kern Valley up the drainage searching possible exit locations in and around Sand Canyon. Around 0300 we received a radio transmission from the team in the gully that they found fresh tracks that they believed to belong to Jonathan. They had one perfect print in the sand and it did not make sense that anyone else would leave a print in that location in the last day. Also during the night, a helicopter from China Lake's VX-31 flew the area with a bright spotlight trying to locate Jonathan. No additional clues were found.

At 0400, Finco contacted Rockwell to request additional personnel. David Jensen, Chet Rosser and Andrew Cammenga responded. They would meet at the hut at 0600 and come up to base in Sand Canyon. The sheriff also had additional searchers from Tehachapi responding in the morning. The searchers descending the drainage completed their search and hiked out to the Sand Canyon trail head at 0730. After a debrief, it was decided to send Jensen, Rosser and Cammenga back up the drainage to the waypoint of the print to more thoroughly search the area looking for clues. The other team members returned to the rescue hut. At 1111 we received notification that Jonathan had been located by the Kern County Fire helicopter. Jonathan was in good condition, so they flew him back to the base camp in Sand Canyon for a debrief. Miles drove Jonathan back up Nine Mile canyon to meet Adrian and Michael. Our final team secured at the hut at 1416.

#### **2019-12 Kern Co. Search near Burro Schmidt Tunnel**

On Saturday, May 18, Dave Miles received a call from Kern County Sheriff (KCSO) Deputy Josh Nance at 2025 hrs. The Sheriff was requesting our assistance in a search for a missing 13-year-old boy in the area of the Burro Schmidt Tunnel. Ryan and his family were riding their motorcycles in the area and they decided to walk through the tunnel. Around 1915 Ryan said he wanted to hike back to the entrance over the top of the hill, (there are several trails that do that) which his family agreed to, but after they exited the tunnel and waited a short period for Ryan, he never arrived. After a quick search the family called KCSO since it was starting to get dark. Miles and Phil Cash departed for the tunnel at 2055 as the hasty team while Linda Finco coordinated the callout for additional searchers. Miles and Cash arrived at the tunnel at 2140. The family stated that the place last seen (PLS) was the south exit of the tunnel so the team hiked through the tunnel to locate Ryan's track. Several different tracks were located, but none led out anywhere. Miles and Cash returned to the saddle east of the tunnel entrance to meet up with the rest of the team that had just arrived to the search area. Mike Derkey, David Jensen, Nathan Simons, and Andrew Cammenga met at the saddle, while Tom Sakai and Chet Rosser were tasked to search along Garlock Road. Miles had Ryan's dad stay at the saddle with his truck's bright off-road lights shining south downhill towards Garlock Road in an attempt to attract Ryan. Searchers returned to the tunnel entrance and ruled out the tracks from the two deputies and took a picture of the riding boots the family had that the team thought were the same as what Ryan was wearing. At 2340, three teams were sent out on different routes to search for the boot identified as possibly belonging to Ryan. A few tracks were located on the top of the ridge, but due to the rocky terrain teams were unable to continue on track.

The family wanted to help with the search so Miles had several of them drive roads around the area with the hope that Ryan would notice the lights. Teams searched all the roads in the area, cutting for tracks. Miles and Cash also searched along the entire ridge in an attempt to find more tracks. Around 0315 it started raining and continued until around 0600, which had an impact on tracking. Around 0430 the search teams were exhausted and were released to return to the hut. Miles and Cash drove down to Garlock Road (south of and several thousand feet below the tunnel exit) to scope the hills searching for Ryan with binoculars as it got light. Around 0600 Miles and Cash returned to the hut. Miles met the next team to help with the search at 0700 in order to brief the team.

Linda Finco called Tom Roseman on the evening of May 18th to see if Tom would lead the follow-on operation for 13-year-old Ryan starting Sunday morning. Sheila found Debbie Breitenstein and Gina Niesen, both committed to the search. The team met at the hut at 0700 and Dave Miles briefed them on what the teams had done the previous night and gave Tom some recommendations for search areas for Sunday. The team then headed out for the Burro Schmidt Tunnel deciding to access the tunnel from Highway 14. When they arrived at the turnoff, a Sheriff vehicle was at the turnoff with his lights flashing. Roseman walked over to talk to the Sheriff and learned that Ryan was in the back seat of the vehicle. Ryan had been picked up on Garlock Road. Roseman asked the Deputy if he could talk to Ryan and the Deputy gave consent to do so. Ryan stated that he spent the night hunkered down after he became lost. He had a functioning headlamp that he set on flashing mode all night while he took shelter in a hole he dug with a rock and covered with brush, which is why he didn't see any of the searcher's lights that night. In the morning he noticed the sheriff vehicle cruising on Garlock Road and walked down to the road

#### **Statistics so far:**

12 ops, 8 in Kern Co. 2 for San Bernardino Co. 1 for Riverside Co. 1 for Sequoia/Kings Canyon  
Alerts – 7 fielded teams – 5 Lost kids – 3

So far June has been busy with people falling into the Kern River and getting in trouble on Mt. Whitney.