

CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP
P.O. BOX 2037
RIDGECREST, CA 93555

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

March 18	Search Practice	Tom Stogsdill
March 21-22	Inyo/Keynot	Linda Finco
March 27-29	Thunderbolt/Palisades	Chris Ostermann
April,	Tuesdays First Aid Topic III	Andrew Mitchell
April 4-5	Pilot Knob	Andrew Mitchell
April 10-12	Snow Climb	Werner Hueber
April 13	Meeting "Tracking Slides"	Leiser, Hueber Wilson
April 18-19	Owens River Gorge	Larry Seibold
April 25	Mt. Tom - Ice Ax Practice	Daryl Hinman
April 25-26	Snow/Ice Test, West Valley	SBCLinda Finco
April 30-June 1	Denali	Bob Rockwell
May 2-3	Tracking Seminar	Andrew Mitchell
May 9-10	McAdie	Ron Leiser

Skill to do comes of doing. - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Operation Reports

**9 1 - 22 1 0 / 1 - 3 Search
Elk Valley Renta**

This search was started by a pager call from Sgt. Dietrich, Kern County S.O., responding to a request from the California Office of Emergency Services at 1620 hours, October 1. They had lost a hunter in Siskiyou County. A callout was made that day resulting in three commitments (myself, Ron Leiser, and Steve Walker). We met at the hut at 0630 the following morning (October 2) and drove to NAF where we joined 10 members of IWV Search and Rescue, two members of Boron Search and Rescue, and a fourth CLMRG member (Randy Walker). A California Air National Guard C-130 already carrying members of most of the other Southern California MRA teams, picked us up at about 0900.

We landed at Siskiyou County Airport at 1145 where we were met by a CCC van and three CCC 20-person transporters. We arrived at base camp at 1815. The base camp was at a location called Elk Valley in the Six Rivers National forest, Del Norte County.

At base camp we were informed that John H. Smithers had left his camp in Elk Valley on the morning of September 28 to hunt in a nearby meadow. He was to be joined by his sons at the far end of the meadow later that morning but never showed. He was 53 years of age, wearing cowboy boots, Levi pants and a jacket, carrying a 30-06 rifle, and was a two and a half pack per day smoker of Camels.

The weather had been clear and mild with lows in the 40's.

The search activity for the previous four days had consisted of grid searches of the area of the meadow in which Smithers was last seen. Several of the creeks in the area had also been searched. This was done mostly by honor camp detainees with a few forest rangers assisting.

One team was fielded that night. An MRA search dog team was trucked to the vicinity of Siskon Mine, an open pit affair three miles east of base camp, to investigate some tracks reported by forest ranger service personnel.

By 0730 the next morning assignments were handed out. China Lake 1 was composed of me, Leiser, and R. Walker. China Lake 2 was headed by S. Walker with two Ventura

County SAR members attached. Our task was to search the five creeks flowing into Dillion Creek. Dillion Creek's headwaters were just north of the subject's place last seen (PLS), with the drainage curving around to the east, joining Copper Creek one mile north of the Siskon Mine. CL 2 was to search the three creeks entering from the north and CL 1 the two creeks entering from the south. Dillion Creek had been searched before, but the side creeks had not.

At about 0900 both teams left base camp and started walking to the saddle that separated the PLS from the Dillion Creek drainage. The terrain as we headed for the saddle was relatively flat but well forested with moderately heavy underbrush. Once we reached the top of the saddle at 4350 feet the terrain on the north side almost at once became considerably steeper, with many areas around 45 degrees of incline. Progress was relatively slow for us but became somewhat faster when an unmaintained trail was found going in our general direction.

After about two hours of walking CL 2 split off from us to go to the north side of the creek which was 100 to 150 feet below us. After about half an hour contact with CL 2 convinced us that travel in the creek bed was faster than the hillside so we dropped down into the bed.

By 1400 we had traveled about two miles from base camp. We stopped for lunch with CL 2 and a Los Padre team that had been sent to re-search the main Dillion creek drainage. We contacted base and informed them of our progress. They decided we should all return to base camp.

At 1600 while we were still an hour out of base camp the subject was found by a combined MRA/forest service team.

Smithers was found on the west facing slopes in the vicinity of the Siskon Mine. He was on a cliff face and although not in any danger could not go up or down easily. After the searchers got Smithers down he walked to a road head and was driven back to base camp. After five days without food or shelter the only damage evident to Smithers was a missing heel on one of his boots and a slightly

bruised ego!

His good condition was attributed to plenty of water and ripening berries in the area. Although Smithers was a smoker, he never did light a fire because his matches were lost the first day out. He had been forced to quickly remove his shirt due to an attack by bees or yellow jackets, the matches falling out of the shirt pocket in the process.

We got to a jubilant base camp at 1715, got something to drink, were debriefed and had dinner. We left base camp the following morning at 0845, drove to Arcata and boarded the C-130 for the flight back to NAF, arriving at 1715.

Other CLMRG members participating were Carol Burge and Betty Meng, coordinators; and Linda Finco, who made initial contact with Sgt. Dietrich. Total CLMRG hours: 241.

Comments:

OES did not provide us with all the information we would have liked, such as the exact location of the search, so we could not bring our maps and had to rely on Xerox copies provided by the Del Norte County Sheriff.

The onsite search commander was not provided with information on the type of assistance he was receiving. Therefore any planning for October 3 could not begin until after we had arrived.

**91 -23 10 / 16 - 17 Search
Rainbow Falls Hine**

CLMRG participated in the search for Scott Freedman, a 40 year old male, who was reported missing in the Rainbow Falls area of Devil's Postpile National Monument. Scott was last seen by his companions at the Rainbow Falls observation point at 1300 on 14 October. He was tired and decided not to continue with his companions. Scott was instructed to stay at the falls or follow the trail back to the car- approximately 3/4 mile. His companions spent the afternoon of the 14th searching for Scott before reporting to the ranger station.

June Lake conducted hasty searches on the 15th. When no clues were located, the Office of Emergency Services (OES) was contacted for additional assistance. Over the next two days, up to 80 searchers conducted trail sweeps, sign cutting, tracking, and line searches. Dog teams from WOOF and a CHP helicopter also swept the areas of high probability.

Despite a well- coordinated and directed search effort, no positive evidence of Scott's actions or whereabouts was located. The search was concluded on the evening of 17 October.

This search was truly a multi-organizational effort. The search was run cooperatively by Madera County, Mono County, and the National Park Service. Other search teams not previously listed were Yosemite National Park SAR, Inyo SAR, Malibu Mountain Rescue Team, Fresno SAR, California Youth Authority, California Department of Forestry, and El Dorado SAR.

CLMRG members participating in the search were Bart Hine, Linda Finco, Andrew Mitchell, Bob Huey, Tom Roseman, Chris Antonsen, Jerry Kong, and Robby Dow. Mary Schmierer was the CLMRG coordinator.

**91-24 11/29-12/1 Search
Mt. San Antonio Hine**

Three members of CLMRG assisted in the search for Chris Jordan (37) and Ryan MacIntosh (11). The two had reached the summit of Mount San Antonio (also called Mt. Baldy, 10,064 ft) when they were caught in a sudden snow storm. The white-out conditions caused them to lose the descent route. When it became evident that they were off route, the two constructed a shelter against the wind and built a fire.

Search teams were hampered the following day by 100 mph winds. Even so, they were able to reach the summit area and determine that Chris and Ryan were not in one of the numerous low walled levy sites. High flying helicopters were also unable to locate the pair.

We arrived the morning of the second search day. Our assignment was to cross over Mt. San Antonio and start a two day sweep of the drainage to the north. As we approached the summit in 80 mph

winds, one of the teams that had spent the night on the mountain located Chris and Ryan at the site of their wind shelter. They had let their fire go out the previous day when they saw the helicopter and believed their rescue was at hand.

Both were suffering from mild hypothermia and would have trouble walking out. They were moved to the lee of the ridge for possible helicopter extraction. The helicopter would have to fly low up the canyons to reach the L.Z. This was successfully carried out with two flights to extract Chris and Ryan. Additional flights removed the team making the find.

CLMRG members Tom Roseman, Steve Walker, and Bart Hine then enjoyed a walk back to a road by a route sheltered from the wind.

This was a well planned and executed operation. Our congratulations go out to the base camp team and to the other participating teams.

**91 - 2 5 12/27/92 Mobilization
Shepherd Pass Mitchell**

On the afternoon of December 27 the Inyo County Sheriff's Office (ICSO) requested our help to search for an overdue cross-country skier, Nadim Melkonian. Nadim had planned to go over Shepherd Pass to check on two weeks worth of food he had left hanging from five gallon buckets on a tree at or near tree line. He had planned to come out on Christmas Day and attend a family reunion on 26 December. His car was found at the Shepherd Pass trailhead. Nadim was an expert telemark skier; he had been skiing for 15 to 20 years. He was also a former Yosemite park ranger.

Since only one CLMRG member besides myself committed to go, I called Sierra Madre for assistance. By the time they called back and said they would be sending four field team members, one more CLMRG member agreed to go.

At 1900 I called the ICSO to inform them we would be leaving and was informed that Nadim had just walked out.

Nadim's actual route was over Kearsarge Pass, Forrester Pass, and out Shepherd Pass to his vehicle. This was a distance of 30 miles. Nadim had hitched a ride to Onion Valley.

Donors

The members of CLMRG extend our warmest thanks for donations from the following friends:

**John and Ruth Gerhart
T.M. and Virginia Stirling
Traute B. Peterson
Dorothy Gould
Lois Adamsen
James and Kathryn Wilson
Clifton J. Chandler
Sierra Peaks Section of the Sierra Club**

Annual Reports 1991

Summary of 1991 Operations

Total Operations -	25	Requesting Agencies	
Rescues	6	Inyo County	11
Recoveries	2	Kern County	2
Searches	8	Riverside County	2
Alerts	4	Mono County	1
Transits	1	Mariposa County	1
Incidents	0	Amador County	1
Mobilizations	4	Tulare County	2
		Death Valley Natl. Mon.	1
Operations by Month		San Bernardino County	2
January	1	Baja California	1
February	1	Del Norte County	1
March	2		
April	2	Total of 27 victims	
May	1	OK	9
June	4	Injured	8
July	3	Not found	5
August	2	Dead 5 (2 hikers, 3 climbers)	
September	5		
October	2	Total person hours	3,262
November	1	NWC excused hours	859
December	1	Total vehicle miles	11,159

Public Education Committee - Bob Huey

Month	Who	What	# People
March	NWC Air Show	Demo	
	Girl Scout Primitive Encampment	Demo	50
April	Boy Scouts	Rappelling at Great Falls Basin	8
	St Ann's School	Hug A Tree	31
May	Girl Scouts	First Aid skills	12
	Southern Sierra Mountaineers	Self rescue skills	20
	Monroe School First Aid Class	Wilderness rescue/first aid 5 0	
	John Muir Middle School (Bay area)	Outdoor safety	12
	Groves School	Hug A Tree	150
June	Boy Scouts	First aid Skills	120
	Emmanuel Christian School	Hug A Tree	60
	Norma Square Day Care	Hug A Tree	104
	Montessori School	Mountaineering Safety and Equipment	40
August	Maturango Museum	Mountain Safety	20
	NWC Youth Center	Ascending/descending demo	75
	Military Comptrollers' Society	Mountain Safety and Rescues	20
September	Day Care	Hug A Tree	50
September	VX-5 Safety Standdown	Mountain Safety and Rescues	300
November	Monroe School	Mountain Rescue and Evacuation	50

First Aid Committee - Andrew Mitchell

Twenty-five persons completed Advanced First Aid and 38 persons completed CPR in courses taught by members of the CLMRG First Aid Committee in 1991.

Equipment and Supplies Purchased in 1991 - Tom Stogsdill

ITEM	Cost \$
Outdoor Rescue Rope Bags (4)	9.40 ea
Clog HMS Twist Lock Biners (24)	10.95 ea
SMC Brake Bar Rack	15.65
SMC Brake Bars (5 small)	2.20 ea
SMC Brake Bar (Large end)	3.90
Stretcher Ropes (4 Blue Water)	72 ea
11mm Climbing Ropes (4)	75.50 ea
Yates 48" daisy chains (4)	9.60 ea
Belay gloves (4 pair)	
Omega Pacific Locking Biners (24)	3.45 ea
Sky Blazer Smoke 60 sec (24)	5.50 Ea
Practice Stretcher Ropes (2)	72.00 ea
CMC Stretcher Rope Bags (6)	
Radio (ICOM IC-V 100)	650.00
Magnetic Sheriff Signs (4)	17.00 ea
Equipment Slings	
Cams, Chocks, Oval Biners	
Tool Kit for Hut	
Batteries	
Pool of 1 inch Tubular Sling Material	

SCREE

CLMRG Officers for 1992

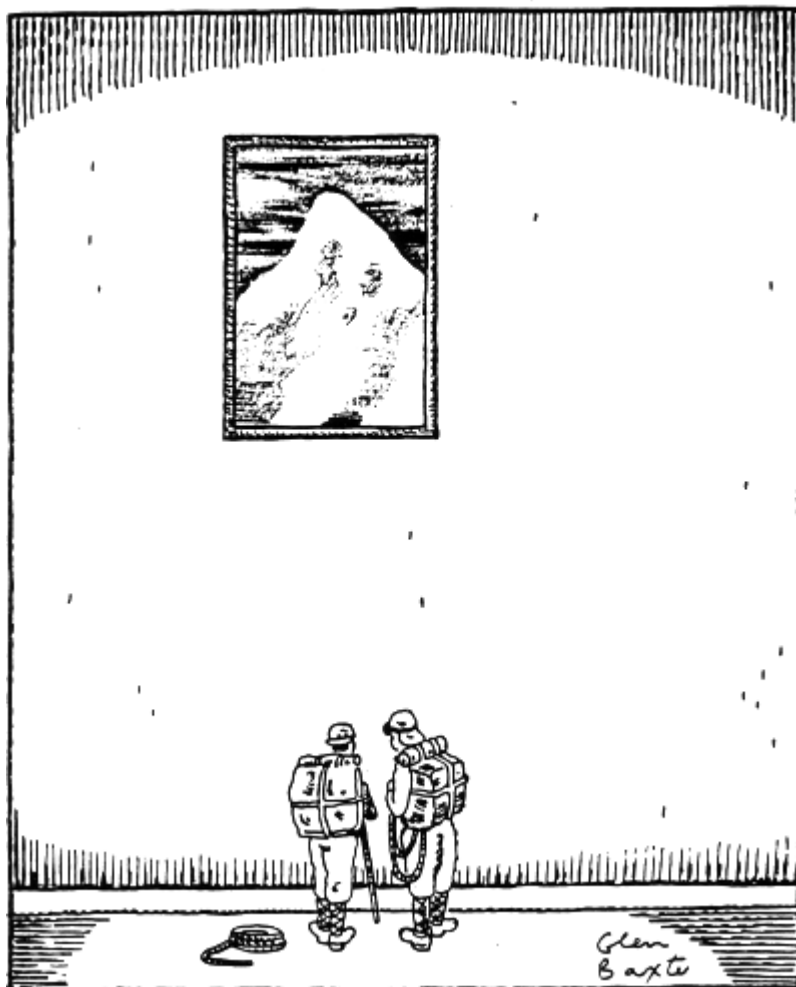
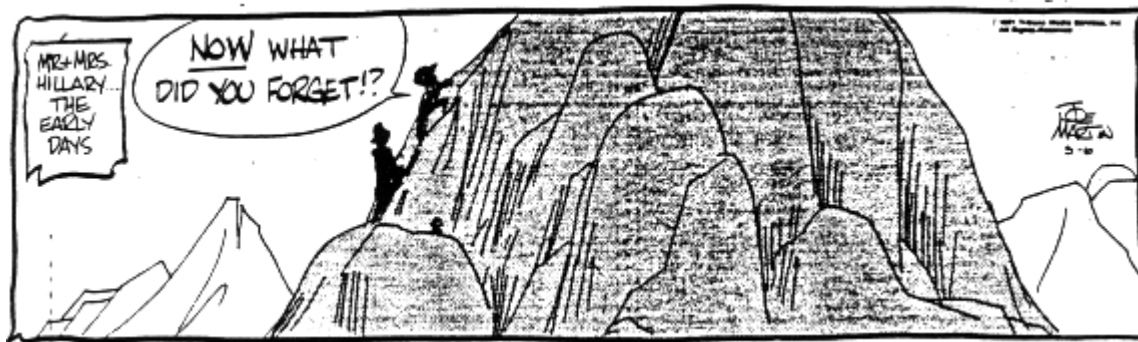
President	Bart Hine
Vice-President	Linda Finco
Secretary	Chris Antonsen
Treasurer	Dianne Lucas
MRA Representative	Ron Leiser

Committee Chairs for 1992

Public Education	Chris Ostermann
Training	Frank Buffum
Equipment	Dennis Burge
First Aid	Dianne Lucas
Qualifications	Al Green
	Daryl Hinman
	Bob Rockwell



The Talus Pile is edited by Carol Burge



IT WAS TO BE QUITE A CHALLENGE.
WE HAD NEVER ATTEMPTED A
TWO MAN ASCENT OF A FRAMED
WATERCOLOR SKETCH BEFORE.