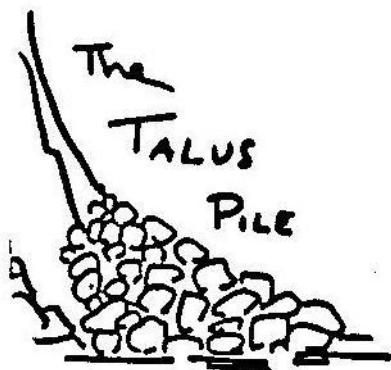


NUMBER 146

April 2010



CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP

P. O. BOX 2037
RIDGECREST CA 93556

TRAINING SCHEDULE

	Apr	2-4	Pyramid, Brown, Eagle, Opera	Rockwell
T	Apr	7	First Aid	Finco
T	Apr	10	Rock Skills - Anchors	Hinman
	Apr	10-11	Open	
T	Apr	TBD	First Aid – Shock (Volume) / SOAP	Doerr
T	Apr	12	Meeting	Finco, J.Green, Simons
T	Apr	16-18	U Notch	Bishop
	Apr	24-25	Kingston Peak	Rockwell
	Apr	30-2	Open	
T	Apr	TBD	Navigation	Gates
T	Apr	TBD	Rock Skills – Ascend/Descend	Hinman

T designates official training activities.

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.

*"Some of the world's greatest
feats were accomplished by
people not smart enough to know
they were impossible."*

— Doug Lawson



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

OPERATION REPORTS

Operation 2009-22 (Search) OES # 2009-LAW-0437

27-28 December 2009

Chimney Peak (Tulare County)

By Dave Miles

Summary:

Operation Leader: Dave Miles.
Subject: A 13-year-old boy.
Outcome: The subject was found hypothermic but alive.
CLMRG members: Dave Miles (Operation Leader), Carol Burge (Coordinator), Bud Gates, Mike Franklin, Paul DeRuiter, Bill Stratton, Jeff Green, Nathan Simons.

Narrative:

On 27 December at 2040, I received a call from Carol Burge looking for a leader for a search for a lost 13-year-old boy near Chimney Peak in Tulare County. I accepted and called Linda Finco who had more information. She said that the boy had become separated from his family while sledding near Chimney Peak and that they couldn't find him. This happened at sunset, and they called the sheriff. We met at the hut just before 2200 and left shortly after. Field members were Bud Gates, Mike Franklin, Paul DeRuiter, Bill Stratton, Jeff Green, and Nathan Simons. We arrived at the Command Post (CP) around 2300. The CP was about two miles off the Nine-Mile road towards Chimney Peak campground. The Kern County sheriff's helicopter (Air 1) was searching the area around the CP and the place last seen (PLS). I met Tulare County Deputy Randy Semic, who gave me the PLS coordinates and said that there had already been some searchers in the area. The boy's name was Matthew; he was wearing tennis shoes, jeans, and a puffy red jacket, and he had a red sled.

Deputy Semic was open for suggestions on how to best use our team. I told him that we had good trackers and that the conditions made it easy to cut for tracks. I split our seven searchers into three teams. My plan was to cut a perimeter around the many tracks in the area and locate a single set leaving the area. I assigned Team 1 (Franklin and Gates) to head south on the road about 100 yards and then follow a contour east around the southern boundary of the area of the PLS. I assigned Team 3 (DeRuiter and Stratton) to go south on the road to the same point and cut for tracks heading north on the west side parallel to the road. Team 2 (Green, Simons, and I) proceeded east to locate the PLS and start cutting north. All three teams started their assignments around 2330. For the first 30 minutes, it would have been almost impossible to hear Mathew if he had responded to our calls because of the noise of the helicopter overhead. After it left, at one point, we thought we heard a response, but it was only an echo. By 0110, we had found a single set of tracks that headed downhill toward Chimney Meadow. Around 0200, we found where he had crossed a creek. This was at the south end of Chimney Meadow where the canyon starts. At this point, Team 3 had finished their cut on the west side of the road and were cutting for tracks to the north of us (Team 2). Radio communications were becoming difficult because of the canyon, so Team 3 headed to the south end of Chimney Meadow to provide a relay for us. We continued on tracks down the canyon.

Shortly after crossing the creek in heavy willows, we saw barefoot prints. We never found the shoes, but I suspect that they were stuck in the mud when he crossed the creek and that he stepped out of them. Also, within 50 yards of the creek, we found a glove that Deputy Semic later confirmed matched Matthew's. Within the next 50 yards, we found the matching glove. Both were frozen solid. It was now 0250, and the temperature was 15 degrees. Five minutes later, we met the Kern Valley team that had been hiking up the creek from the campground and had just found Matthew's sled in the creek. Matthew had crossed the creek again to the west side. We followed and found a sock shortly afterward. At this point in the canyon, the west side was mostly free of snow. The solid snow covering at the beginning of the canyon had made tracking easy. The bare ground was frozen solid, which made tracking difficult. We found only one more definite track--a clear barefoot print--in a small patch of snow. We thought that having lost his shoes, Matthew was trying to stay off of the snow patches. We kept searching, unsuccessfully, down the creek for any sign.

At 0440, Team 1 joined us about a quarter-mile from the campground. Green and Simons went on to the campground, and Franklin, Gates, and I returned to the location of the last track. At 0530, we took a rest and waited for daylight to continue searching. We began searching again at first light. We couldn't find any more signs of Matthew's tracks. On the way back toward the campground, we met four Kern Valley teams coming up the canyon and gave them our GPS coordinates of the last track. We got back to the vehicle around 0815 and left for the CP around 0830.

On the way back to the CP, we heard radio traffic that search teams were hearing responses to their calls for Matthew. When we got back to the CP, the China Lake SAR helicopter from VX-31 was on the road getting ready to take off. Around 0900, a search team located an extremely hypothermic (core temperature of 88 degrees) Matthew. The China Lake helicopter hoisted him up and flew him directly to Loma Linda Hospital, where a pediatric hypothermia specialist was on hand. We were released around 1015 and were back at the hut and finished at 1100.

The first indications were that Matthew will most likely lose a few toes to frostbite. However, we later learned that would not be the case.

Lessons learned:

- 1) We should have used the MRA radio frequency instead of CLEMARS.
- 2) I need to print search maps with both UTM and LAT/LON grids.

Equipment needed, replaced, or repaired:

It might be a good idea to have a warming blanket like the one we saw at the last recertification test.

Operation 2010-01 (Search)

9 Jan 2010

Inyokern Gun Range (Kern County)

By Tom Roseman

Summary:

Operation Leader: Tom Roseman.
Subject: A 50-year-old man.
Outcome: The subject walked out and was picked up by the Highway Patrol.
Coordinator: Janet Westbrook
Telephoner: Elaine Riendeau
CLMRG members: Tom Roseman (Operation Leader), Janet Westbrook (Coordinator), Elaine Riendeau (Telephoner), Dave Miles, Bud Gates, Debbie Breitenstein, Linda Finco, Mike Franklin, Paul DeRuiter, Dave Doerr, Martha Bodine, Mike Derkey, Eileen Loughran

Narrative:

I received a call on Saturday evening from Sgt. Mark Baldwin of the Kern Sheriff department requesting help in the search for a 50-year old male Mark Zanardo from the local area. Mark had left from home to go to an unnamed high point in the area behind the gravel pit off of Brown Road south of Inyokern to bury his cat. After burying the cat he was having trouble finding his car in the dark. Mark called his wife, but during the call his cell phone died. A Highway Patrol officer picked Mark up walking along Brown Road shortly before 2300. We were called off as we were ready to leave the hut.

Lessons learned:

Always call before leaving the hut!

Equipment needed, replaced, or repaired: N/A

Operation 2010-02 (MRA Search & Tracking Recertification)

05-06 March 2010

Malibu Creek State Park (Los Angeles County)

By Mike Myers and Linda Finco

Summary:

Operation Leader: Mike Myers.
Objective: MRA Recertification
Outcome: We passed.
CLMRG members: Mike Myers (Operation Leader), Dan Bishop (Coordinator), Linda Finco, Bob Rockwell, Joe Dunn, Dave Miles, Nathan Simons, Mike Derkey, Tom Sakai, Paul DeRuiter, Al Green, Bill Stratton, Dave Doerr, Bud Gates, Jeff Green.

Narrative:

The MRA Search and Tracking Recertification took place in Malibu Creek State Park on Saturday, 6 March. Fifteen CLMRG members committed to the recertification. We met at the Hut on Friday, 5 March at 1330 and arrived at the Park around 1600. We signed in and got our dormitory assignments. After dinner, we had a briefing of our pre-operation plan back at the dorms and then settled in for the night to prepare for the next day. Rockwell, Bishop, and Dunn arrived at host team Malibu's Command Post (CP) at 0600 to check in as evaluators and victim. The rest of us arrived around 0645 and set up our base camp. Myers, Finco, and Doerr operated the base camp. Our field teams comprised Miles, DeRuiter, and Derkey (Team 1); Sakai, A. Green, and Simons (Team 2); and Gates, J. Green, and Stratton (Team 3). Our day consisted of a search problem in the morning, a break for lunch, and a grid search followed by an ELT search for a simulated crashed airplane and its associated medical problem in the afternoon. We had proctors from San Diego and Contra Costa County.

Soon after 0800, we got our search assignment. Our pre-operation plan called for Team 1 to be the Hasty Team, Team 2 to be used for confinement, and Team 3 to replace Team 1 at the place last seen (PLS) and take over step-by-step tracking so that we (Myers and Finco) at base could send Team 1 jumping ahead. We deployed Team 1 quickly to the PLS. As soon as they confirmed they were at the PLS and reported a direction of travel, we deployed Team 3 to begin the step-by-step tracking. We used an iPhone with topographic and satellite views to give the team leaders an idea of where they were going.

Shortly after deploying Team 3, we sent Team 2 to the PLS to work with Team 1 on perimeter containment and searching. An outside organization was having a search game of its own in our search area. This group was dressed up in medieval costumes, and its members were running around the area throwing cards and packets of birdseed for others in their group to find later. This activity created a lot of noise in the area, so the teams spread out trying to cut for our subject's track. After looking at the initial direction of travel, we reviewed the map and drew containment lines along Malibu Creek and Las Virgenes Road. We then reassigned Team 2 to go to the junction of those containment lines at the south end of the search area to cut for tracks.

We soon lost radio communication with Team 2, so we sent Doerr to the top of a nearby hill to be a radio relay. Field teams could hear our higher power base radio transmissions, but they could not radio information back to us. During the communication blackout, Team 2 used "text messaging" with their cell phones to communicate with us. Cell phones were part of our pre-op plan as a backup for communication. Teams 1 and 3 stayed in the original search area to try to sort through the mess and get back on track or find a clue (five clues were placed along the path of our lost subject). Team 2 cut sign and quickly found a clue followed by more, and they eventually tracked to our subject. With a little help from the CP, Teams 1 and 3 got back on track when they found a clue (Malibu gave us the GPS location of a clue that was out and away from the chaos created by the medieval group.) and closed ranks with Team 2, which found all of the clues. All teams returned to base.

After lunch, Miles led the grid search. All CLMRG members, except for us (Myers and Finco), participated. We stayed in base to set up the ELT assignments, and Doerr returned to the field as a roving radio relay. Our searchers found 100 percent of the clues planted by Malibu and other items in the area that were there before Malibu planted their clues.

We started the ELT search from the grid search area. Doerr stayed in the field as a roving radio relay. The signals were bouncing all over the area, but we were getting a concentration of hits to the south of our CP location. Teams 1 and 2 were in this location and Team 3 was working toward it. During a signal read, Team 3 also observed someone waving at them. They went to investigate and soon found the real site of the simulated airplane crash. All teams got the GPS location and arrived to begin the associated medical problem. The subject had an injured neck, a broken femur, a broken humerus, and pain in the abdomen. The teams stabilized all of the injuries and made the subject ready for transportation. They completed the problem by 1600.

Everyone returned to base, and we got most things put away before a big rainstorm hit. The proctors said we did a very good job in our search management, radio communications, and tracking. They thought we could have been a little more efficient (faster) in stabilizing and treating our subject, but they also said we did nothing wrong.

So with a passing grade on the recertification, we finished packing and went to the BBQ dinner provided by Malibu. We arrived back at the Hut around 2030 and secured everything by 2100.

By Dan Bishop (Evaluator):

I observed the Santa Clarita team. Their command post trailer was well-organized. Despite multiple signal bounces of the beacon during the ELT problem, they continued to work the problem and did not give up. They excelled in the first aid scenario and treated the victim efficiently. They were a solid team and completed their assignments with no major issues.

By Bob Rockwell (Evaluator):

The West Valley team did just fine, adequate or better, on all of their problems. I found nothing to criticize seriously. I was particularly impressed with the leadership at the CP and in the field and the way everyone collaborated with a minimum of talk.

In the CP, they didn't orient their maps on the table with the compass (actually, up was south). But it didn't seem to confuse them.

They were not so methodical on the tracking exercise as we tend to be. They didn't seem to have a plan to find the initial track direction when it wasn't obvious at the PLS. They did send teams to look around for sign and clues, but I didn't see that they cut for sign in a methodical manner. But I was in the CP, and they probably did more that I didn't know about. They did find at least one clue.

They performed their grid search very well. First aid was adequate.

They ran the CP for the tracking problem very well. The leader had four assistants; each followed his role with a minimum of discussion.

Lessons learned:

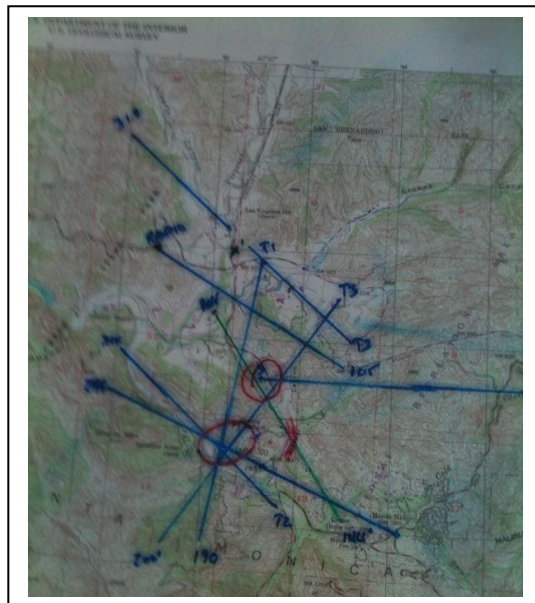
By Mike Myers

I took the picture of our map table (Figure 1) during the ELT search at the recertification. The numbers on each line indicate bearings called in by the field teams.

I would have bet money that the transmitter was in the lower red circle, but it wasn't. It was in the upper red circle. This is a good example of what RF signal reflection can do.

Equipment needed, Replaced, or Repaired:

N/A



GROUP BUSINESS

— YEAR END COMMITTEE REPORTS 2009 —

2009 Operations Summary:

We had 22 operations in 2009. This included the MRA Snow/Ice Recertification. Six were Alerts or Transits where we were not fielded. We were involved in two recovery missions. The remaining operations and incidents were combinations of searches and/or rescues that resulted in 7 subjects being saved. Two of these operations utilized our technical resources.

MRA training	Alerts/Transit	Searches	Subjects Rescued	Recovery	Technical
1	6	8	7	2	2

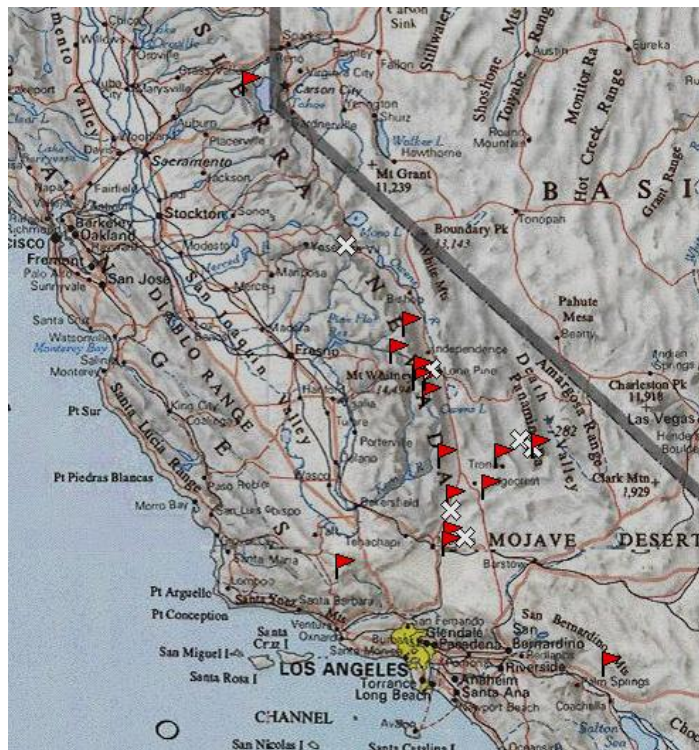
\Sixteen of our Operations were outside of Kern County, Inyo county requested us the most, 10 times. 10 times. The MRA training event was the furthest away in Placer County.

Kern	Sequoia	San Bernardino	Mono	Tulare	Placer
6	1	2	1	1	1

Breaking down the Operations by month shows that April was our busiest. We expended 2010 man-hours during these operations and logged 7674 vehicle miles.

Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	1	4	2	3	2	0	3	3	2	2

We averaged 7 members committing per call-out with the MRA Snow and Ice Recert turn-out of 16 members being the largest of the year. Below is a summary of all the Operations as well as locations (X's denote non-fielded alerts or transits).



Number	Date	Type	Op Leader	Coordinator	Commitments	Location
2009-01	6-8 Mar	MRA	MYERS	BISHOP	MYERS, BISHOP, DOERR, FINCO, STRATTON, MILES, SIMONS, ROSEMAN, GATES, SAKAI, FRANKLIN, DERUITER, BODINE, A.GREEN, DERKEY, J.GREEN	SQUAW VALLEY, PLACER CO.
2009-02	11-Apr	INCIDENT	HINMAN		HINMAN, STRATTON, BODINE, J.GREEN, DERKEY, BREITENSTEIN, LOUGHRAN, ROSEMAN	JOSHUA TREE, SAN BERNARDINO CO
2009-03	14-15 Apr	SEARCH	MYERS	S.ROCKWELL	MYERS, BISHOP, SAKAI, MILES, A.GREEN, ROCKWELL, SIMONS, STRATTON, HUEY, LOUGHRAN	RED ROCK-IYK ROAD, KERN CO
2009-04	20-21 Apr	RECOVERY	SAKAI	S.ROCKWELL REINDEAU	SAKAI, BISHOP, STRATTON, SIMONS	SAN EMIGDIO MT, KERN CO
2009-05	25-Apr	TRANSIT	FINCO	S.ROCKWELL NIESEN	FINCO, BISHOP, MILES, HUEY, SIMONS, STRATTON, AL GREEN, GATES, LOUGHRAN, HINMAN	RED ROCK CANYON, KERN CO
2009-06	16-17 May	RESCUE	MYERS	MITCHELL S.ROCKWELL	MYERS, MILES, A.GREEN, ROCKWELL, HUEY, BREITENSTEIN, J.GREEN, SIMONS	GREAT FALLS BASIN, INYO CO
2009-07	21-May	ALERT	SAKAI	SCHMIERER MITCHELL	SAKAI, MILES, GATES, A.GREEN, ROCKWELL, DERUITER, J.GREEN	CALIFORNIA CITY, KERN CO
2009-08	05-06 Jun	SEARCH	BISHOP	S.ROCKWELL ROSEMAN	BISHOP, MYERS, MILES, A.GREEN, ROCKWELL, BREITENSTEIN, SAKAI, D.BURGE, RENTA, J.GREEN, BODINE	CALIFORNIA CITY, KERN CO
2009-09	17-Jun	INCIDENT	MILES		MILES, GATES, BREITENSTEIN, MYERS, NIESEN, DUNN	WAGON WHEEL, SAN BERNARDINO CO.
2009-10	25-Jun	SEARCH	FINCO	WESTBROOK C.BURGE	FINCO, MILES, ROSEMAN, BREITENSTEIN, GATES, FRANKLIN, STRATTON, SIMONS	CALIFORNIA CITY, KERN CO
2009-11	18-Jul	RESCUE	BISHOP	MITCHELL	BISHOP, A.GREEN, FRANKLIN	PERRIN LAKE, INYO CO.
2009-12	24-Jul	RESCUE	FINCO	C.BURGE RIENDEAU	FINCO, GATES, J.GREEN, DOERR, LOUGHRAN	MT WHITNEY TRAIL, INYO CO.
2009-13	3-Sep	SEARCH	BISHOP	T.MITCHELL	BISHOP, MILES, GATES, HINMAN, SIMONS	SPLIT MTN, INYO COUNTY
2009-14	13-Sep	ALERT	MYERS	C.BURGE	MYERS, BISHOP, GATES, HINMAN, D.BURGE, J.GREEN	MT WHITNEY TRAIL, INYO CO.
2009-15	17-Sep	ALERT	MILES	SCHMIERER S.ROCKWELL	MILES, STRATTON, FRANKLIN, GATES	THOUSAND ISLAND LAKE, MONO
2009-16	15-Oct	SEARCH	BISHOP	C.BURGE FINCO	BISHOP, SAKAI, MILES, STRATTON, BODINE	SEQUOIA NP, BUBBS CREEK
2009-17	27-28 Oct	SEARCH	BISHOP	J.WESTBROOK	BISHOP, SAKAI, MILES, STRATTON, ROSEMAN, FRANKLIN, RENTA, J.GREEN, DERKEY	WHITNEY TRAIL, INYO
2009-18	31-Oct	SEARCH	BISHOP	J.WESTBROOK	BISHOP, MYERS, HUEY, SIMONS	WHITNEY TRAIL, INYO
2009-19	13-Nov	TRANSIT	ROSEMAN	S.ROCKWELL G.NIELSEN	ROSEMAN, FINCO, BISHOP, FRANKLIN, BREITENSTEIN, A.GREEN, STRATTON	SOUTH PARK CANYON, INYO CO.
2009-20	17-Nov	ALERT	ROSEMAN	SCHMIERER	ROSEMAN, FINCO, HUEY, ROCKWELL, BREITENSTEIN, A.GREEN, STRATTON, DERKEY, MYERS	DEATH VALLEY, ANVIL SPRINGS, INYO COUNTY
2009-21	04-06 Dec	SEARCH	ROSEMAN	C.BURGE	ROSEMAN, MYERS, RENTA, ROCKWELL, BREITENSTEIN, A.GREEN, STRATTON	DEATH VALLEY, ANVIL SPRINGS, INYO COUNTY
2009-22	27-28 Dec	SEARCH	MILES	C.BURGE	MILES, FRANKLIN, GATES, DERUITER, SIMONS, J.GREEN, STRATTON	CHIMNEY PEAK, TULARE COUNTY

Equipment Committee (Werner Hueber):

Ford Explorer: The Kern County Sheriff provided this vehicle including maintenance and gasoline to the Group for official training and search and rescue operations. It is a very valuable asset for the Group. The Sheriff purchased four new tires for the Explorer, a new battery and a battery switch. The SMOG check was performed in May. The driver's seat was repaired. Oil, Air, and Fuel filters were replaced and the brakes were inspected.

Purchases: Petzl helmet "Elios with Vision Face Shield", four avalanche probes, replaced the damaged stretcher rope, AA batteries, Kong carabiners, foam pad and heat packets for the stretcher, four rope protectors, eight Petzl Prusik Minding Pulleys, six 10.2 mm ropes for the summer class, 100 batteries for the tracking lights, one large fluke, one small fluke, three 24 in pickets and four 36 in pickets.

Hut: Completed annual cleaning and Public Works repaired the door damaged by the wind. A base physical security representative surveyed the hut. A new evacuation plan, emergency personnel, and contact list have been posted. The Navy (NAVFAC) directed us to get a \$2M liability insurance before the lease can be renewed. Our current lease expired on 26 Nov 2009. An initial estimate from IWV Insurance is \$820 to \$900 per year. Mike Myers is working this problem with the Navy and the Sheriff. Kern County has a "Self Insurance".

Mike was able to extend the lease to 31 December 2009. He also was successful in solving the liability insurance problem. The Sheriff agreed to add the Navy liability requirements to the Kern County Self Insurance.

Maintenance: Bill Stratton repaired the winch handle. Linda Finco recharged the radio batteries. Paul DeRuiter checked the generator. Bob Rockwell is repairing the North Face Himalayan Hotel tent. Dave Miles has put new labels on the stretcher gear bags and will add a contents list as soon as he gets all the new gear marked. For now the important thing is to know which bags are needed for a technical operation. For a single pitch (main and belay), you need all of the #1 bags. A secondary set of gear is contained in the #2 bags. The primary set is all inside the large duffel on the floor and the secondary set is on the bottom shelf. All of the labels are visible.

First Aid Committee (Linda Finco):

The group introduced a new series of trainings in addition to our annual CPR and First Aid training. The trainings focused on specialized equipment and wilderness first aid issues. Topics covered in 2009 included oxygen equipment and use, cold weather injuries, victim packaging, and specialty splints. All members completed the American Red Cross CPR and Community First Aid training or an equivalent. No new first aid equipment was purchased in 2009, but we will be looking at updating our oxygen equipment in 2010.

Public Education Committee (Elaine Riendeau):

Twenty members of CLMRG made public education presentations to over 1900 people in 2009. CLMRG gratefully acknowledges gifts from the following friends during 2009, Robert Trousdale, John & Marilyn Wick, Mario & Yolanda González (In Memory of Dave Dykeman), Merre-Lyn Dow (In Memory of Robbie Dow), Lois Adamsen (In Memory of Carl Heller), Sierra Odyssees, Bishop Physical Therapy, CFC and United Way.

Emergency Services Committee (Janet Westbrook):

We attended most of the monthly meetings in 2009. We occasionally reported on our more interesting rescues. The city knows our capabilities should there be a problem in Ridgecrest.

Summer Class Committee (Dave Doerr):

The China Lake Mountain Rescue Group (CLMRG) has taught the summer Mountaineering and Mountaineering Safety class for the last 50 years. The three most important reasons for doing so are: (1) to help others to discover the joys of the mountain experience, (2) to help those who do enjoy the mountains to do so safely, and (3) to find people who may be interested in joining the CLMRG. The course consists of 7 weeks of lectures and then practical applications of the lecture material, and two Sierra mountain climbing trips (one day trip and one overnight). This year's class started with 41 students and 32 students completed the course. It is estimated CLMRG members put in over 500 hours in supporting the class.

Sheriff Committee (Mike Myers):

The Kern County Sheriff made some personnel changes in the Volunteer Services Division in Bakersfield this year. Lt. Dave Barker was transferred to the South Area Substations and was replaced by Lt. Bart Camps. Sgt Gary Rhoades retired from the Sheriff's Department and was replaced by Sgt. Mark Baldwin (Rescue 1). Lt. Barker and Sgt Rhoades did an excellent job in their roles within the Volunteer Services Division and will be missed. Sgt. T.J. O'Larry becomes Rescue 2 and Sgt. Dan Edgerle has been added to the Division to supervise the Civilian Support Unit and Explorers. For 2009 the Sheriff recognized the following members for their volunteer service in CLMRG: Carol Burge - 45 years of service, having joined the Team in November 1963, Werner Hueber - 20 years, and Dave Doerr and Bud Gates both had 10 years. Congratulations to these individuals and a special thanks to their families.

Training Committee (Eileen Loughran):

In 2009, members trained a total of 9672.5 total hrs with 1766 for skill training and 7906.5 for group mountain trips. The biggest month for skill training was March as we were getting ready for our winter recertification test for the MRA. October was the biggest month for mountain trips.

SHERIFF'S APPRECIATION DINNER

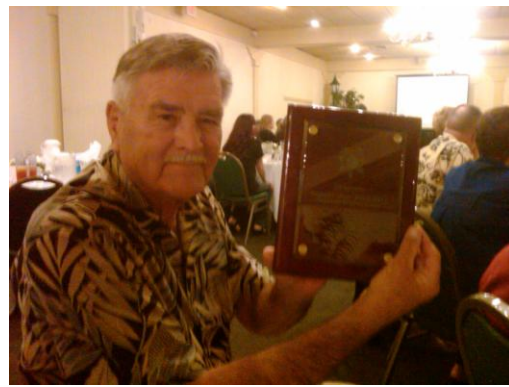
By Mike Myers, Team Captain

Group members Mike Myers, Al Green, Tom Roseman, Debbie Breitenstein, Bob Rockwell, Sheila Rockwell, Bob Huey, Nathan Simons, Jeff Green and family and friends attended the annual Search and Rescue (SAR) Volunteer Appreciation Dinner at Hodel's Restaurant in Bakersfield on Saturday, 27 March 2010.

Debbie Breitenstein was named the top contributor for 2010 for her 13 year effort in the search for a missing family in Death Valley (story below). Other members receiving recognition for years served in SAR were Bob Rockwell, 40 years, and Bill Ferguson, 15 years.



Debbie Breitenstein, 2009 Top Contributor

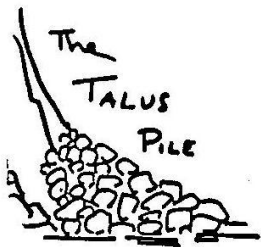


Bob Rockwell, 40 years in SAR

In July 1996, Cornelia Meyer (28) and her son Max, who was not quite 4 years old, along with Egbert Rimkus (34) and his son Gerog (10) were vacationing in the United States from Dresden, Germany. On or about July 22, 1996, the four disappeared. Their last known location, based on a credit card purchase, was at the Furnace Creek Store in Death Valley on July 22. On July 22, 1996, the temperature in Death Valley was recorded as 124 degrees. Within a couple of months, the rental car agency listed their vehicle as stolen and the four were listed by Interpol and FBI as missing persons. In October 1996, a Park Ranger spotted an abandoned vehicle in Anvil Springs Canyon, deep into the remote Southwest corner of Death Valley which turned out to be the one rented by the missing Germans. More than 100 searchers spent several days combing the area for clues, but very few were found, and nothing that could lead investigators to what might have happened to the four. Their disappearance has been termed by some as, "A mystery of the Mojave."

Theories about their disappearance flooded the internet. Debbie, however, refused to believe any of these theories, and held fast to her belief that they were still there in Death Valley – somewhere. Over the next thirteen years, she organized several training exercises in the area where the four disappeared, and she maintained complete records of search areas and strategies used through the years. In November 2009, a wallet containing positive identification of Cornelia Meyer, along with some human remains, was discovered by two search and rescue volunteers from Riverside, CA who had been thoroughly briefed ahead of time by Debbie on the areas already searched. Shortly after this new discovery, the Inyo County Sheriff sent a deputy from Bishop to Ridgcrest to pick up all of the maps and other data that Debbie had collected. The data was used to help formulate a new search plan that was eventually conducted in early December last year. At the conclusion of this new search, it is believed that the remains of one, and possibly all four of the missing Germans had been located.

The Inyo Co. Sheriff is now waiting for the final evaluation of forensic evidence that was recovered during this last search.



China Lake Mountain Rescue Group
P. O. Box 2037
Ridgecrest CA 93556

Address Correction Requested

