

# China Lake Mountain Rescue Group

Talus Pile #114, July, 2000

## TRAINING SCHEDULE

Jul 7-9 Fri-Mon Bear Creek Spire, Ruby Finco  
Jul 10 Mon Meeting/No training Renta/McCormick/Doerr  
Jul 11, 12 Tue, Wed Summer class Class Committee  
Jul 15, 16 Sat, Sun Summer class day climbs Class Committee  
Jul 18, 19 Tue, Wed Summer class Class Committee  
Jul 21-23 Fri-Sun Whitney East Face, Buttress Gates  
Jul 25, 26 Tue, Wed Summer class Class Committee  
Jul 29-30 Sat-Sun Summer class overnight climbs Class Committee  
Aug 2 Wed Summer class party Party Committee  
Aug 4-13 Fri-Mon All Sierra Fourteeners Hinman  
Aug 12-13 Sat-Sun Kern Peak Doerr  
Aug 14 Mon Summer party Finco, T. Mitchell  
Aug 16 Wed Night tracking practice TC  
Aug 17-22 Thu-Tue Rainier Gates  
Aug 26-27 Sat-Sun Carl Heller, Russell Sakai  
Sep 1-4 Fri-Mon Tuolumne Meadows B. Niesen  
Sep 9-10 Sat-Sun Humphreys, Checkered Demon Runkle  
Sep 11 Mon Meeting/GPS (TBD) Rockwell/Rockwell/Rockwell  
Sep 15-17 Fri-Sun North Guard, Brewer, South Guard Hinman  
Sep 23-24 Sat-Sun Middle Palisade Rockwell  
Sep 29-Oct 1 Fri-Sun Open  
Oct 13-15 Fri-Sun Sill Toler  
Oct 16 Mon Meeting/Operations Etiquette (Myers) Westbrook/Runkle/Toler  
Oct 27-29 Sat-Mon Yosemite Valley Finco

SUNDAY ROCK CLIMBING coordinated by W. Runkle

---

**CLMRG is funded partially by United Way of Indian Wells Valley.**

---

## **OPERATION REPORTS**

Tom Sakai

### **00-05 12 Jun 00 Search Mt. Baldy Tom Sakai**

While lingering after our monthly meeting on Monday, 12 June, the pager went off. Deputy Jeff Fahsbender, who had the duty at the Kern County Sheriff's Department (KCSO), was relaying a request, via the Office of Emergency Services (OES), by the West Valley SAR team from San Bernardino. They had been searching for a 49-year-old Asian male last seen on the trail to Mt. Baldy at 1600 on Sunday, 11 June since that morning. They realized they would need more help and initiated a region call-out. We were to report to the command post (CP) at the Mt. Baldy Village fire station by 0600 Tuesday.

Susumu Tamashiro had ridden the chair lift (this is a ski area) to Mt. Baldy Notch (7800 feet) early Sunday afternoon with his wife and son to climb what is known as Mt. Baldy or Old Baldy (officially named Mt. San Antonio). His wife and son turned back shortly after because they were tired. He continued toward the summit. Mr. Tamashiro is 5'6" and

110-125 lbs, wears a size 7 shoe, wears glasses, and has gray hair. He is in good health and physical condition. He wore blue jeans, a white T-shirt, running shoes, and a baseball cap. He had only a half-liter water bottle, no coat, and no food. He speaks almost no English.

Since Sheila Rockwell was standing next to me at the time of the call from Deputy Fahsbender, she agreed to be the coordinator. Karen Botham, in whose home we were standing, helped with telephoning. Dennis Burge, Elaine Riendeau, and Dave Doerr committed to go and meet at the rescue hut at 0300. After gathering the necessary gear, we were on our way. We arrived at the CP at 0610 Tuesday.

When we arrived at the CP, we checked in and were told to have breakfast, get a bag lunch, be ready to be fielded, and wait for an assignment. We did. Because of the large number of teams responding to the call-out, we waited quite a while. MRA teams included Sierra Madre, San Dimas, Riverside, Altadena, CLMRG, and of course West Valley. There were 4-5 other SAR teams from San Bernardino County and Kern County also represented. Most of the teams were airlifted to their assignments, and with only one Huey available for transport, fielding the teams took awhile.

Mike Katkov, of South Kern SAR, joined us to make a 5-person team. Our assignment was to search from the Devil's Backbone ridge (8600-8800 feet), starting about a mile NW of Mt. Baldy Notch, down Manker Canyon, which runs in a southerly direction, to the highway leading to the base of the chair lift (6600 feet). We were driven to the landing zone (LZ) for transport to our assignment and arrived at 0850. Four other teams were already there.

At about 1000, CP got a call from the East San Gabriel Ranger Station, located about 6 miles WSW from the summit, that they had Mr. Tamashiro there. A helicopter was sent to confirm that it was Mr. Tamashiro, and it returned with him to the CP. Apparently, a fireman on his way to work spotted Mr. Tamashiro and reported him to the Ranger Station. A ranger then went to retrieve him and bring him back to the station until he could be picked-up. He was a little dehydrated, but in overall good condition considering his 48-plus-hour ordeal. He drank from streams when available. Around 1045, we were driven back to our vehicles and released from the search. The CLMRG team was on the road, returning home, by 1130 and arrived at the hut at 1430.

---

## OPERATIONS REDUX

**Editor: Refer to Operation Report 00-03 in** The Talus Pile No. 113 of June 2000.  
This is probably the last update on this search that began 16 April 2000.

Mike Myers

-----  
Posted by mtmikey <mailto:mkgolay2@aol.com> on May 30, 2000 at 20:40:32:  
zippo is down from Shasta - 5/30/00

I just received a call from John Burns at 7.30 pm PST. He informs me that John Miskits's body has been removed from the mountain. The weather on the mountain today was rough. Burns said the wind was blowing 50 knots at one point, but it finally cleared this afternoon. Dave Nicholson of the sheriff's office rented a chopper, and the operation began around 3.15 pm PST. Dave and Chris of the SAR team flew up with a helicopter pilot who refused to land on the col and would fly with only two passengers. Dave and Chris were dropped on the col by the pilot, who left the scene to refuel. Dave and Chris then began the investigation and recovery.

Burns reports that Miskits had to be dug out of the ice. Dave and Chris investigated a small camp about 75 feet above where Miskits was found. The camp contained a bivvy sack (I believe it was borrowed if I recall correctly). Grizz Adams said that there was urine inside the sack. Burns indicated that there was no evidence of a snow cave having been dug because the bivvy site was marked clearly with wands and they were basically intact in the snow, which is not consistent with having melted out from on top of a cave (in which case they would have likely fallen over).

Between his body and the bivvy site, Miskits's Petzl Duo headlamp was recovered. I received information from a family member that Miskits's pockets were full of wrappers, but I'm not certain what kind. Burns told me that there was a hand warmer inside Miskits's jacket on his chest. He was obviously trying to stay warm.

Burns reports that at first look, there was no sign of trauma. However, an autopsy will be performed in the next day or so. Bruce and Em did see signs of paradoxical

undressing when we were on the mountain consistent with the latter stages of hypothermia, which is assumed to be the cause of death at the moment, but the autopsy may bear other things out.

Miskits's body was short-hauled off the mountain after he was dug out at approximately 5:00 pm.

---

*The optimist proclaims that we live in best of all possible worlds, and the pessimist fears this is true.*

--James Branch Cabell

---

## **OTHER OPERATIONS**

*Editor: Our roving reporter, Karen Botham, copied this report from a radio news item she heard on*

*5 May while trying to stay awake on US 395.*

On Tuesday, May 9, a 34-year-old woman from San Diego was attempting to climb Mt. Williamson when a rock fell and severed a finger on her left hand. Her climbing partner lowered her down off the east face. They found the finger portion, and the guy tried to stop her bleeding. They made it to base camp at George's Creek. Apparently, the woman was pretty weak and in shock. The two members of their group who remained at base camp hiked out and reported the problem to an Inyo County deputy sheriff. (I didn't write his name down, but I think it was Sgt. Randy Nixon.) A rescue effort began at about 0930 Wednesday. A helicopter from Lemoore attempted to land twice Wednesday night but because of the extremely high winds was unable to land near the victim and instead landed at the Independence airport. A rescue team and an EMT spent the night with the victim. The helicopter made a successful attempt Thursday morning. The woman was flown to Southern Inyo hospital, where she was evaluated and then flown, by the Lemoore helicopter, on to a big hospital in Fresno, where they were attempting to reattach the finger.

---

## **FROM THE ARCHIVES**

*Editor: Carl Heller wrote these definitions of our several kinds of operations for the December 1970 issue of The Talus Pile. Carl's words are presented exactly as he wrote them. Liz Anderson (the editor at the time) wrote the paragraph that follows for that same issue, and Bob Rockwell supplied his current remarks to conclude this*

*article.*

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

**Carl Heller**

It is part of this committee's job to keep records of each member's participation in rescue activities. In attempting to decide the number of operations and number of hours, we have had to make some definitions and assign numbers. Some of these may be of interest to other members and rescue units.

We now recognize five types of activities: Operations, Incidents, Mobilizations, Alerts, and Practices.

**ALERTS** involve phone calls so the telephoner's and operation leader's time will be counted.

**MOBILIZATIONS** will include any activity from the time of reaching the Hut until leaving the roadhead. Thus if we don't actually set foot on the mountain, a **MOBILIZATION** will be counted. Time for each member will count from the phone call, or roughly from one-half hour before reaching the Hut.

**INCIDENTS** are missions not necessarily involving mountaineering training, but involving our members helping someone (assisting a traffic accident victim or bandaging a campfire burn in the Sierra might be classed as **INCIDENTS**).

**OPERATIONS** are any assistance of a search or rescue nature performed in the mountains. (The most trivial might involve helping a youngster off a boulder in 15 minutes. In that case the 15 minutes counts. If the assistance involves the entire weekend the entire time of the trip will be counted although people went out for the purpose of a pleasure climb.) The most clear-cut **OPERATIONS** occur when the group is called out by some official agency.

**PRACTICES** will involve any group trip or training activity.

The **OPERATIONAL** activities are divided into searches, rescues, and body evacuations. **PRACTICES** can include stretcher training, mountaineering, and rock climbing practice, familiarization climbs and many others. The committee tries to record how much practice all members are getting.

The results of adding up the entire group's activities for 1970 (are) 18 operations, 4 mobilizations, 5 alerts, and 0 incidents so far this year. We do not count victims for alerts or mobilizations. On operations that we have been on, there have been 21 victims of whom 16 lived, 3 were dead and 2 are still missing. A total of 2750 man-hours has been spent.

Our method of adding operations, victims and man-hours is far from perfect, but it is better than we have done in previous years. Hopefully it will be continued and will provide a real measure of how much our activities increase or decline from year to year. Certainly any suggestions for improvements will be welcome.

**Liz Anderson**

Right in step with Carl's philosophy on experience, we'll quote from the **ROADRUNNER** in the RMRU Newsletter: "Suppose you are the Operations Leader

for a difficult mission. Fifteen men arrive, ready for action. You must know each man's previous experience, strengths and weaknesses, abilities on technical terrain, in tracking, first aid, and so on. Assignments must be made in the light of what you know. Would it not be much easier for you if every RMRU member continuously and diligently sought to improve his present skills and develop new ones so you would have fewer negative considerations when making assignments?"

**Bob Rockwell**

Identifying operations correctly is important because they are often what we look at when going back for statistical historical data for one reason or another. A few months after Carl submitted his article, he subdivided the Mobilization category so that once we leave the Hut, it is a Transit. Those who knew Carl are not surprised that yet another one of his organizational contributions to CLMRG is still pertinent 30 years later. The only change is that we now use the term "Operation" to include all of the categories except Incidents and of course Practices. Note that Carl allows one-half hour to get to the Hut after receiving the call.

---

*Keep your face to the sunshine, and you cannot see the shadow.*

--Helen Keller

---

**2000 OFFICERS**

President Mike Myers 375-6801 MyersMB@navair.navy.mil  
Vice-president Bob Rockwell 375-2532 rockwell@ridgecrest.ca.us  
Secretary Eric Toler 446-6100 TolerET@navair.navy.mil  
Treasurer Steve Florian 371-3996 FlorianSJ@navair.navy.mil  
MRA Representative Werner Hueber 375-2165 hueber@ridgecrest.ca.us

**2000 CONTACTS**

Public Education Terry Mitchell 375-0168 MitchellTA@navair.navy.mil  
Training Walter Runkle 377-5931 RunkleWD@navair.navy.mil  
Equipment Werner Hueber 375-3073 hueber@ridgecrest.ca.us  
First Aid Ellen Schafhauser 375-4043 locoweed@iwvisp.com  
Qualifications Bob Rockwell 375-2532 rockwell@ridgecrest.ca.us  
Tom Roseman 375-1030 RosemanTW@navair.navy.mil  
Tom Sakai 375-7404 tsakai@ridgecrest.ca.us

Sheriff's Office Al Green 375-9189 agreeen@ridgecrest.ca.us  
ASTM Representative Dennis Burge 375-7967  
Emergency Services Linda Finco 375-7951 FincoLJ@navair.navy.mil  
Summer Class Bob Huey 375-0168 huey@ridgenet.net  
Stores Carol Burge 446-7038 cburge@ridgecrest.ca.us  
*The Talus Pile* Loren Castro 375-3279 lfc32@earthlink.net  
  
Web Page Janet Westbrook 375-8371 jwest@ridgenet.net

---

## **SCREE**

All telephone numbers in *The Talus Pile* are area code 760 unless noted otherwise.

*Climb the Mountains and get their glad tidings.  
Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees.  
The winds will blow their own freshness into you.  
And the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves.*

--John Muir