

INYO CO. SHERIFF'S OFFICE

SEARCH & RESCUE

SCRAPBOOK

1981



TECHNICAL CLIMBER Greg Elliot rappels off the side of a rock during an S & R practice session. Shown here he carried down a litter used to secure injured persons.



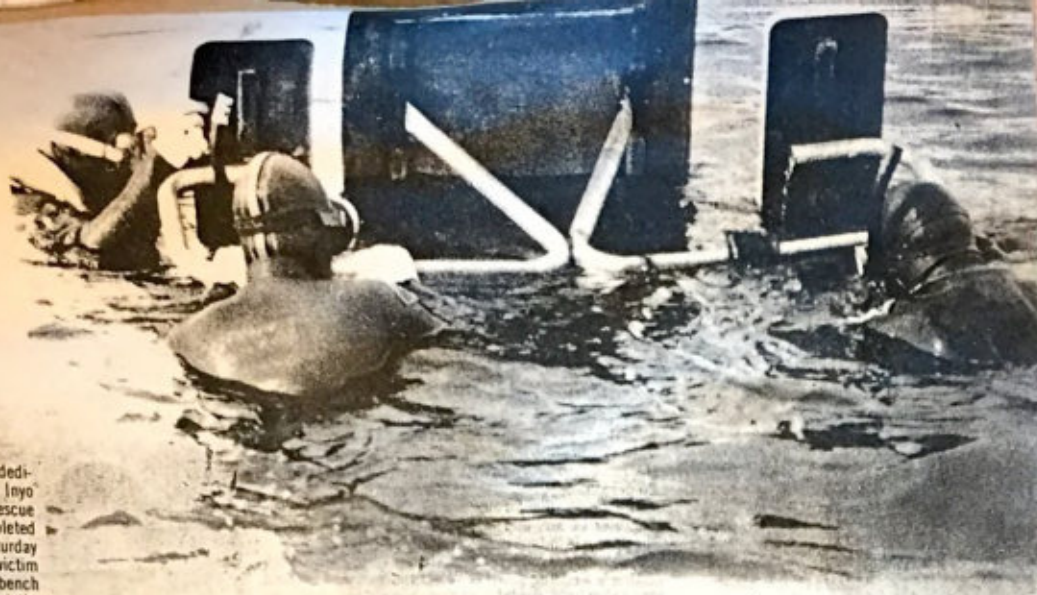
Loretta Foreman handling radio operations



S & R Certified diver Bill Arnold



EXPERIENCED TRACKERS—During an S & R practice session team members (left to right) Bob Karras, Marvin Babylon and Bob Wilson show the right way to pick up a missing person's tracks.



WATER VICTIM—Those dedicated members of the Inyo Sheriff's search and rescue team successfully completed yet another mission Saturday . . . only this time, the victim was a Bishop City Park bench which had been sitting at the bottom of the park's pond for about two months. It may not have been a life or death situation for the posse, but through the help of rescue divers, the City now has its picnic bench (plus a sign that was also down there) back, although maybe a little water-logged and green with algae.
Photos by Patty Fuller



Woman Rescued

A 40-year-old Walnut Grove woman was airlifted out of the wilderness near Lone Pine Lake Tuesday night, a few hours after falling and breaking her ankle.

Jan Castanho was hiking with her husband when she fell, the Sheriff's Department said. He hiked out of the area to get help.

She was taken to Southern Inyo Hospital for treatment.

Rescue units find missing hiker Saturday near Big Pine

A 34 year old southern California man, Kenneth Faust, who had been a guest at Glacier Lodge out of Big Pine, was found last Saturday afternoon safe and in fairly good condition after he had spent the night in rugged, snow covered terrain in the vicinity.

A search was started for the man when he failed to return from a hike Friday afternoon. Initiating the search for the man was Friday night was a team from the Inyo County Search and Rescue unit and a second team the following morning. By noon Saturday more than 30 searchers were in the field.

A US Navy helicopter from China Lake was called in on the air-ground operation and before the day was over members from the June Lake Search and Rescue team, Mammoth Lakes, China Lake, Sierra Madre Search and Rescue teams were involved in the search.

The hiker was found later Saturday afternoon and returned to the lodge. What started out to have been a short hike turned out to be a harrowing experience for the southland visitor.

Participating in the rescue were eight from Mammoth Lakes Search and Rescue, four from June Lake Search and Rescue, several from Sierra Madre Search and Rescue, and many from Inyo Search and Rescue, plus a helicopter from China Lake.

Man survives 1500 ft. fall from Mt. Whitney

A 31-year-old San Jose man who slipped and fell some 1500 feet while climbing down the trail on Mt. Whitney Sunday afternoon survived to tell the tale and as of press time was in the Northern Inyo Hospital recovering from multiple broken bones and other injuries.

According to the Inyo County Sheriff's office the man, Steven Goolsley, was climbing down the trail with some friends when he lost his footing and tumbled down approximately 1500 feet where he finally came to rest. His companions finally reached him and were able to carry

him to Trail Camp at the 1200 ft. elevation. The sheriff's office was notified about 4 p.m. Sunday and they in turn called on the China Lake Naval Weapons Station for assistance. A helicopter from China Lake reached the injured man about 7:30 Monday morning and transported him to the hospital at Bishop about 30 minutes later.

It was reported that the man was conscious Monday. His injuries were listed as a possible concussion, severe lacerations to his forehead, injuries to his neck, ribs, back, hip and pelvis.

43 Rescued In Inyo During '81

In 27 missions in 1981, Inyo County Search and Rescue teams rescued 43 of 46 missing persons, according to a report prepared this week by Search and Rescue Coordinator Dan Lucas.

Seven people died before being rescued in Inyo County last year, according to the report.

Backpackers led the list of victims with 13 — 12 of whom survived. All 10 missing campers survived, and five of six missing climbers survived.

Two of the seven fatalities were victims of aircraft accidents, while two other aircraft victims were rescued alive.

In his report, Lucas stressed the money the county saved through the use of volunteer workers, including reserve deputies and civilian volunteers.

Regular deputies devoted 102 hours to search and rescue operations at a cost of over \$2,000; about reserves spent 100 hours on the missions, saving Inyo \$1,000, and civilians volunteered 1,000 hours for a savings of over \$10,000 to the county.

The use of federal helicopters and federal fixed wing aircraft for over 50 hours saved the county another \$28,000, Lucas reported.

Search and rescue training for regular deputies cost the county \$600, but 5,000 hours of training for volunteers and reserves saved the county \$50,000, he said.

Additionally, out-of-county assistance totalling 500 hours on 20 missions saved Inyo \$10,000, Lucas said.

Here is a breakdown of search and rescue missions in 1981:

Types of Victims	Missions	Victims	Survived	Fatal
Hunters	4	4	2	1
Fishermen	0	0	0	0
Backpackers	9	13	12	1
Campers	2	10	10	0
Climbers	4	6	5	1
Snow Sports	3	6	6	0
Aircraft	2	4	2	2
Other	5	7	5	2

Search continues for missing Saline Valley party

Search and rescue efforts were underway early Wednesday morning after a report of three additional persons missing in Saline Valley—an area which has been hit with heavy snow fall in the last few days, causing many parties to be trapped.

As of press time Wednesday, Deputy Dan Lucas of Inyo County Sheriff's Department and sheriff's posse search and rescue member Jim Randall, along with at least one Bureau of Land Management ranger were enroute to the valley where three southland residents were reported to be missing since Tuesday. A Civil Air Patrol plane was also scheduled to comb the area, according to a sheriff's department spokesperson.

Reported missing are John Kerney, Kim Kerney and John Kaldcott. Search and rescue efforts started after Orange County Sheriff's department notified local law officers of the missing persons.

The three persons are reported to be in a green and white 1979 Ford Bronco.

Lucas, Randall and the BLM ranger left for Saline Valley 4 o'clock Wednesday morning and entered the area by the south entrance which is the route the missing persons were said to have taken.

The Saline Valley/Cerro Gordo area was covered by

four to five feet of snow over the Thanksgiving weekend. Due to these weather conditions, it was reported that at least 70 other vehicles were also stranded sometime during the last week (See related story).

Although no additional snow has fallen since the weekend, heavy fog has also covered the area, making air patrols difficult. As of Wednesday, there was still several feet of snow on the ground.

Inyo S & R finds suicide victim in Death Valley

Members of the Inyo County Sheriff's posse search and rescue team aided in the discovery of the body of a Mission Viejo man found in Death Valley last week and it has been determined that suicide was the cause of death.

According to Deputy Dan Lucas, search and rescue coordinator for the sheriff's department, the body of Vito Poli, 30, was discovered Tuesday after a thorough tracking effort by Lucas and four members of the posse. Poli was found at approximately 3:30 p.m. in a desert area away from the road to Dante's View in Death Valley. One arm had been slashed with a razor.

Lucas reported that the sheriff's department was first notified Monday of a 1976 van, belonging to Poli, that had been parked on the road for several days. A search of the vehicle revealed a receipt for two straight razors and a copy of "Gray's Anatomy."

The victim's mother was also contacted in Mission Viejo and she reportedly had not seen her son for several days at that time.

Starting at the spot where the van had been parked, the search and rescue team picked up one faint set of tracks and from there followed them for three miles. The tracking ability shown by the team members "was amazing" noted Lucas, considering the tracks had been made, it's believed, several days prior to that.

Before discovering Poli's body, Lucas noted that one tracker tipped a rock and found the covers to razor blades.

At the scene where the body was found, there was one page from the anatomy book, a will, and suicide note, said Lucas.

Helicopter used in Saline Valley airlift

Four people stranded in the Saline Valley/Cerro Gordo area from heavy snow fall and fog over the Thanksgiving weekend were lifted out Monday by helicopter—one of at least two search and rescue efforts in the valley where a large number of vehicles have been trapped over the last week (See related story).

A member of Inyo County Sheriff's Posse search and rescue team and Bruce Albert of the Bureau of Land Management went into Saline Valley Sunday night to aid some 75 vehicles that had become stranded in the four and five foot snow drifts that blocked both ends of the valley.

Despite the large number of trapped motorists, the four unidentified persons who had to be lifted out were the only ones until Wednesday to require assistance, according to Bob Karras of search and rescue.

Karras said Civil Air Patrol had flown the area where many were stranded and had sighted two vehicles holding the four persons.

The search and rescue team was advised of the situation by way of a citizens band radio in one of the vehicles, said Karras. Apparently one of the occupants had radioed out and the signal was picked up by a ham operator in Illinois who, in turn, called a relative of the stranded person in California. Subsequently the sheriff's department was notified.

The stranded four were lifted out by a helicopter from China Lake Naval Weapons Center and were dropped off at Lone Pine airport at 4:20 p.m. Monday. There were no injuries.

Another Saline Search

By late Monday, it appeared everyone who had been stranded in the Saline Valley by the heavy Thanksgiving snowstorm had been rescued.

But on Tuesday, at least five more people who were in the valley when the snows hit were unaccounted for.

Inyo Search and Rescue personnel, the Civil Air Patrol, and the National Park Service will be entering the area today to resume the search.

"We're mainly concerned with a party of four people who were due back Sunday but reported missing today," Inyo Search and Rescue Coordinator Dan Lucas said Tuesday.

ing through Saline Valley and the Hunter Mountains and then Death Valley. We're hoping they just held up at Warm Springs but they may have been caught in the snow," Lucas said.

"There is also a young single male traveling alone in the area who was due back Sunday and hasn't returned. We'll be looking for him too," Lucas said.

The searchers will also look for four to five vehicles that were abandoned by people who walked out when their cars became stuck.

As many as 75 vehicles were stranded when the heavy snow hit the normally arid desert valley, but when four people were airlifted out Monday afternoon authorities happily announced that everyone was safe.

The outlook for the five people now discovered missing may not be so optimistic.

1982

Thirty years of service— Inyo's search and rescue

by Patty Fuller

With the swearing in of new officers Saturday night, Inyo County Sheriff's Posse search and rescue team will be marking 30 years of volunteer service to the Eastern Sierra. In those three decades, the active group has evolved from a bunch of hard-riding men looking for missing persons by way of horse and saddle to roughly 25 men and women using advanced equipment and techniques to save victims.

Taking over at the helm will be Jim Randall as captain and long-time member Fred Henke as second in command.

A resident of Bishop for about a year and a half, most of Randall's experience stems from when he lived in the New England area where he received training through the forestry department and the U.S. Air Force. Randall also raises Chesapeake Bay Retrievers and has at least one of the animals in training as a tracker to assist on rescue missions.

Fred Henke has one of the longest records with the posse, having joined in 1964. He has been captain of the group twice—in 1968-69 and 1974-75—and for many years was the only certified diver available for water rescue.

Recently, the newspaper talked with both Henke and another long-time active member, Jack "Frosty" Hutchcraft. Between the two of them, these posse members have been active on the team for over 25 years.

With time like that under their belts, Henke and Hutchcraft have seen the posse go through many changes. Transportation for rescue missions went from horseback to jeeps, and now to rescue vehicles. Membership changed from men only doing the field work with wives in an auxiliary, to now both sexes involved in the many phases of search and rescue.

The posse originally formed in 1948 and was officially incorporated in 1952, which put the group under the county sheriff's jurisdiction. It was at this time that only men were members of the active chapter, while interested wives were in an auxiliary.

Prior to when Henke teamed up, "In the early '50s quite a bit was done on horseback. It was just like a typical western posse," he noted.

"In the early years we had up to 100 members with about 50 women in the auxiliary. We had a lot of outings and the women would tend camp," he recalled. The auxiliary also handled most fund raising events.

For the first few years after he joined, Henke said all the equipment, gas, food, and other items used on searches was purchased by the posse members themselves.

"And any damage sustained to equipment owned by a member, that was their problem. There was no money to reimburse us," he went on to say.

"When I went in, we had to buy everything—our own jeep, plus equipment. Now it's a lot easier," figured Hutchcraft, a 19-year member.

At the age of 82, Hutchcraft is probably the oldest member of the group of volunteers and, although he doesn't go out on searches anymore, he still shows up for parades the posse participates in and gives a hand with security at the Tri-County Fair each summer.

In Hutchcraft's active years he recalled the posse was much more involved in the community and fund raisers, running the Kid's Day events and holding raffles where prizes such as new jeeps and money were given away.

Looking back, Henke said also involvement in community activities was a much bigger part of the posse than it is today.

"We were much more involved with the fairs, parades, providing parking and handling Kid's Day.

"The early 70s was the last time we were officially involved with the Kid's Parade. I hated to see all that involvement go," he commented.

Presently the posse operates with three equipped rescue vehicles maintained by the sheriff's department.

In both Henke and Hutchcraft's first few years in the Inyo search and rescue work, "we bought our own tracks and supplied our own equipment. We also had fund raisers to pay for extra equipment. That's not done much anymore," according to Henke. Presently, the volunteers are still responsible for most of their own equipment.

Training methods for posse members have also changed quite a bit.

"Before we had almost a shot gun approach to looking for victims," noted Henke. "There were just a bunch of people and horses (or jeeps) that combed the area—more of a hit and miss approach."

The change in the way tracking a missing person was handled came in the mid-seventies, said Henke, when an expert tracker came up from southern California for a tracking clinic.

Hutchcraft recalled that many of the searches he was involved with were lost hikers. "Now most of the rescues are in the mountains with mountain climbers. When I came there were hardly any there—just more hikers."

"The worst rescues were trying to find little kids," reflected Hutchcraft. He brought up one search and rescue experience in which a two-year-old girl was lost near Whitney Creek and posse members were out all night looking for the child. It wasn't until the next day that she was found, in the creek. That was about 10 years ago.

In Hutchcraft's first days with the posse, all the active members carried guns and had official badges from the sheriff's department.

Although things have changed for the volunteers, "the job's still the same," figured the longtime member.

At times "it was like being in the army—it got rough sometimes, but I'm glad I was still in it."

"Even now, when I hear about a search I want to get up and go," he added.

And as for the badge "Frosty" was first given in the posse, "I still have the badge they (the sheriff's department) gave me when I joined. They tried to give me a new one several times, but I just keep this one—it's been so many places with me . . . I'll see if it outlasts me," he quipped.



Posse members in 1964, out in the field. Fred Henke, one of the longest members, is pictured at the front right. *Challant Press file photo.*



The 1962 Kid's Day Parade, led down Main Street by posse jeeps—the mode of transportation used for many years on search and rescue missions. *Photo courtesy of Inyo Co. Sheriff's Posse*



Long-time posse member Jack "Frosty" Hutchcraft. *Photo by Patty Fuller*

Search And Rescue

A 27-year-old Mountain View man was rescued from the Palisade Glacier area Monday after sustaining multiple leg fractures in a freak accident. Andrew Nordquist was flown by China Lake helicopter to Northern Inyo Hospital for treatment of his injuries.

According to Jim Randall of the Inyo Search and Rescue squad, Nordquist and three other men had reached the glacier Sunday night and were cascading, or sliding down the ice.

Nordquist left the ice crampons on his shoes while he was cascading at high speed, they cut into the ice and stuck there, twisting and snapping his leg. He suffered a broken tibia below his right knee, a broken ankle, and torn cartilage, Randall said.

A seven-man crew from Inyo County reached the victim and his party at the 12,000-foot level below the glacier at about noon, when he was boarded onto the helicopter.

Injured hiker rescued

A 27-year-old man who broke his ankle while hiking was rescued from the Palisades-Glacier area Monday morning. According to Inyo deputies Andy Nordquist of Mountain View, CA was airlifted out of that area above Big Pine about 9:25 Monday morning and taken to Northern Inyo Hospital for treatment. The hiker had broken his ankle Sunday and had spent the night on the trail although one member of his hiking party was an emergency medical technician.



SIMULATED S & R—About 50 people from various search and rescue groups gathered this weekend in Saline Valley for some in-the-field experience that included an actual rescue of stranded people in San Lucas Canyon. Pictured here, Deputy Dan Lucas (left), posse coordinator for Inyo Sheriff's Department, and Jim Randall, captain (far right) discuss the operation with two members of the rescue team from China Lake.

A web of events in practice S & R...plus actual rescue

by Patty Fuller

It was quite a weekend for Inyo's search and rescue team.

First, the posse received a call of one lost male, with a possible heart condition, missing in the Saline Valley area. Then, the report came down that a friend had gone to look for the man, and he was now missing. But a tracking team discovered three sets of tracks, with one set veering off toward volcanic rock. To compound matters, a rescue helicopter that had arrived was having fuel problems. Meanwhile back at the rescue control base camp, there were radio communication problems due to the heat.

This all may sound like a maze of problems beyond solving, but was all part of a training session in Saline Valley, involving Inyo's sheriff's posse as well as search and rescue teams from Searles Valley, China Lake, and members of the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management. But wait, there's more.

In this simulated chain of events designed for in-the-field experience, searchers also were notified that two minors had fallen in Hunter Canyon and were injured. A team of five, all technical climbers with emergency medical experience were then dispatched to that area at the same time as trackers, a helicopter crew and radio operators were handling the first search.

Involving nearly 50 people, the day combined a combination of search and rescue techniques, including tracking over many difficult terrains, radio communications which had to be relayed through a third party,

rescues off a rocky ledge and a lot of coordination efforts to pull everything off.

Later on, when the practice rescues were completed, the helicopter was on its way back to China Lake, and the others involved were getting ready for a barbecue after the long day, another call came over the radio for a rescue—only this time it was for real.

While the chopper pilot was flying over San Lucas Canyon, he spotted a signal fire started by three people with a small child who'd been stranded with a broken-down vehicle.

The adults, all in their 20's, and the two-year-old were rescued and flown back to the base camp. Arrangements were made that evening for them. The next day, Sunday, one of the rescue units that had been on hand for the practice session returned to the stranded vehicle, got it running, and back to Lone Pine.

For everyone involved in the hectic weekend, "it was an extremely successful operation and it (the simulated rescue missions) went just like actual ones," felt posse captain Jim Randall. "There were difficulties that arose that always seem to come up on the real ones."

Randall said all the events were critiqued afterwards with suggestions for future operations. He noted thanks to all participating, including the other teams, the sheriff's department, BLM and the parks service.

Future training sessions, similar to this one, are planned throughout the year for different areas of the county, said the captain... wonder if they'll all be this complicated.



HELO CREW—The helicopter rescue crew from China Lake played a part in a training search and rescue session held this weekend at Saline Valley. Although the event was designed for practice in the field, the helo crew made

an actual rescue Saturday night when it spotted stranded people in San Lucas Canyon.

Photos courtesy of Inyo Sheriff's Posse



Search & Rescue studies tracking

Mammoth and June Lake Search and Rescue team members and applicants joined their counterparts from San Bernardino, Sylmar, China Lake Naval Air Station and Inyo county over the weekend for a tracking seminar at Tuttle Creek Campground, near Lone Pine. There were also members of the California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management taking the seminar. There was a total of 70 people at the seminar with 17 from Mammoth and eight from June Lake.

The tracking seminar was presented by the Inyo County Search and Rescue team. The chief instructor was Carl Heller from the China Lake Naval Air Station Search and Rescue team. Richard Paust, one of the leaders of the Mammoth team reported on the seminar. "There was a classroom training with slides and lectures, and a discussion of techniques. Then we had several problems to work on."

Paust continued, "There was a night time problem, tracking across a dry lake bed which included gravel and sign cutting from heavily traveled areas." Sign cutting is the skill of finding a track or any disturbance caused by a passing person.

The seminar taught the team members to catch every single track and sign and to use proper caution to preserve any track. The seminar also taught recognition of types of shoes and sole patterns and identification of individual shoes.

Mammoth Lakes currently has an eight man search and rescue team. They are Gene Greenwood, Eric Eiler, Mark Martin, Randy Robinson, Greg Newbry, Dan

Bridger, Dan Peterson and Richard Paust. There are 20 applicants to the team that have been training for the past 6 months. One weekend a month the applicants have been taking part in training sessions. The areas covered included medical, rock climbing, ice climbing, litter lowering and tracking.

"To qualify for the team," continued Paust, "applicants must meet minimum qualifications in skills, physical condition and have some specialized search and rescue equipment. We are developing a call-out list for this summer from the current applicants."

The Mammoth Search and Rescue team will be conducting a full scale winter rescue April 24 and 25. It will take place in the Mammoth Crest-Red Meadows area. There will be a real victim with fictitious injuries. The team applicants will be required to deal with locating the victim, dealing with the injuries and transporting the victim by way of Stokes litter or rescue toboggan. The team will use snowshoes, cross country skis and mountaineering skis.

Paust added that the team is experimenting with small personal computers. They have been using the computers for administrative work, cataloging their resources and feeding topographical maps into the computer for three dimensional readouts. The maps can be used for logistics during searches and to give searchers a different angle on the terrain.

F-4 fighter crashes in southern Inyo; men safe

A military F-4 Phantom aircraft crashed in the Panamint Valley area Friday. Military personnel took over the handling and investigation of that incident and all that remained was a burned spot on the valley floor.

Inyo sheriff's men and Highway Patrolmen did get involved in that incident, however. Those agencies sent out units to search for the downed plane Friday when a citizen reported to the Trona sheriff's office that a military plane did crash. But military people out of China Lake reportedly found the crash scene first and by Sunday had removed the wreckage. It was reported that the pilot and navigator managed to parachute out prior to the crash. They survived, but reports of their conditions remain sketchy.

The plane crashed four miles north of the junction of the Trona-Wildrose and Panamint Roads and east from there.

Sunday, a pilot passing over that scene said that all that remained on the ground was a large burned area.

TRACKING AT TUTTLE CREEK

69 people from search and rescue groups, ranging from Mono county down to Searles Valley in San Bernardino county, participated in a tracking seminar this weekend in southern Inyo county. The event was coordinated by Inyo County Sheriff's Posse, but required the cooperation of several groups in making all the arrangements. A tracking training area was set

up at Tuttle Creek Campgrounds with lectures and slide shows at the Lone Pine High School auditorium. Night tracking, perimeter searching, sign cutting and jump tracking, as well as field practice in locating and identifying tracking were all areas touched in the thorough seminar. Inyo Sheriff's Posse photos



Lone Pine Teenager Rescued

A teenager who had become stuck in a crack in a rocky area after suffering a fall in the mountains near Lone Pine Thursday afternoon was rescued by Inyo Search and Rescue teams Thursday night.

Bill Dodds, 19, of Lone Pine became stuck at about 4 p.m., and rescuers reached him at about 8:30. An hour later, authorities reported that he had been freed and was being transported down from the mountainous area.

Dodds was not injured in the accident.

Rescued from rock ledge

Dale Dodds of Lone Pine climbed up onto a high place and couldn't get back down last Thursday.

In the afternoon sheriff's men got word from Dodds' friends that he needed help. He reportedly climbed up onto a very high rock in the Alabama Hills, but when it came time to come down, Dodds could not make it.

Officers called the Lone Pine Fire Department in search of a very tall ladder. But the fire department did not have a ladder that would reach Dodds.

He was perched about 60 or 70 feet up. Then sheriff's men called for search and rescue people in Bishop. They headed for Lone Pine, climbed up and finally reached Dodds at about 8:30 Thursday night. After more than an hour the rescue team brought Dodds back down to earth. They performed what they call a rappelling rescue in which rescuers use ropes secured high on a cliff, then they edge down in short drops to the ground.

Wreckage From 1954 Spotted

Military authorities believe a wreckage spotted in the Townes Pass area of Panamint Valley in Southern Inyo County Thursday may be a plane that crashed in 1954, the Inyo Sheriff's Department said.

A pilot flying over the area Thursday afternoon spotted the wreckage and reported it to local authorities, believing that it appeared to be a recent crash.

But because of the extremely dry climate, corrosion in the area is an extremely slow process and a very old wreckage may appear much more recent.

The military has known about the wreckage and believes there is nothing of value at the site worth retrieving, according to the Sheriff's Department. No action is planned.

Two men who were on board the plane in 1954 ejected safely, according to the Sheriff's Department.

Search Called Off

A search for a possible missing plane in the Saline Valley area turned up nothing on Friday and Saturday and has been tentatively discontinued.

Jim Randall of Inyo County Search and Rescue said a motorist reported spotting a plane go down in fire and smoke in the Inyo Mountains at about noon Friday, and a commercial airliner reported picking up an emergency signal over the Saline Valley Friday night.

However, Inyo County searchers in the area Friday night and Saturday were unable to locate either an aircraft or a beacon.

Pilot killed in plane crash June 3 identified

The pilot killed in the crash of that military jet last week in the Saline Valley has been identified as Lt. Richard R. Decker, 30, of Lemoore, CA. Dennis McGrath, a spokesman at Lemoore Naval Air Station, where the jet was based, said the investigation into that accident continued on Friday with an investigation team traveling to the site at Hunter Mountain at the 7,000 ft. level in the Saline Valley. Decker had been one of several pilots flying a low-level training mission when that crash occurred. His fellow pilots reported the incident and the recovery operation began.

McGrath said the cause of that accident will not be released for some time—probably several months. He explained that the investigations team will study how the jet hit the ground, study the debris, take extensive photographs of the crash scene and study the tape recorded radio transmissions prior to the accident. The team will also take apart the plane's engine to look for possible malfunctions.

That plane crash had also started a brush fire that burned approximately five acres before being brought under control by the Forest Service, BLM and park service crews.

Man Rescued

A man was airlifted out of the Little Whitney Meadows area west of Lone Pine Monday afternoon. He reportedly had suffered a broken ankle in a fall.

Inyo County search and rescue teams and a Forest Service helicopter were involved in the rescue of the man, who was identified as John Bosch of Orange.

Whitney rescue underway

A search and rescue operation was underway Wednesday morning for an unidentified hiker who was reported to have suffered a broken leg while hiking on Mountaineer Trail on Mount Whitney. The rescue was being conducted by the National Park Service and a helicopter from Lemoore Air Station had been called in to help.

Woman Safe After Three-Day Ordeal

by SANDY HARRISON
SDN Staff Writer

A huge cooperative search involving 70 men and women, eight dogs, and four helicopters ended with the miraculous rescue Tuesday afternoon of a 60-year-old woman who had been missing for three days in the rugged, sub-freezing wilderness north of Piute Pass.

Inga Bertruch of Scottsdale, Arizona, was suffering mild exposure and dehydration and had minor cuts and scrapes, but incredibly was otherwise in good condition. She was treated at Northern Inyo Hospital and released Tuesday night.

She was found at Four Gables at

the 12,000-foot level, about six miles due north of Piute Pass at the Inyo-Fresno county line. "She had apparently lost the trail in the deep snow and heavy runoff, and had hiked through Humphrey Meadows and up the west side of the crest."

The 5 p.m. rescue occurred just as the searchers were calling it quits for the day. A Mammoth Lakes search and rescue team apparently heard her calling, and a helicopter crew reportedly spotted a fresh trail in the snow, which led to the discovery of the victim's whereabouts.

"The woman is in excellent shape and, cussing up a storm," said Harold Brown of the Forest Service helicopter team who flew Bertruch

to Northern Inyo Hospital. "She had her gear with her and some food. She is a pretty tough lady for her age."

She apparently hiked to a steep ledge and could no longer continue, at which time, according to Brown, "she made a wind tunnel and stayed there."

She was flown first to the North Lake base camp and examined by EMTs, and then airlifted to Northern Inyo Hospital.

The successful rescue came as a delightful surprise to the men and women from the many different agencies involved. Many had feared that the woman would not be found

continued on page 3



Inga Bertruch of Scottsdale, Arizona, is assisted by Jim Randall of Inyo search and rescue and mountain rescue personnel following a massive search Tuesday in rugged wilderness north of Piute Pass.

— Rescue

continued from page 1

alive.

"This was the first all-out rescue I've been involved in and it was a great one," said Inyo Sheriff's Deputy Nick Nicholas Tuesday night. "Those guys, all of them, really deserve a lot of credit. It was great to get her out of there alive."

Nicholas visited Bertruch at Northern Inyo Hospital Tuesday night shortly before her release, and confirmed that she was in good condition, but added that she was embarrassed about becoming lost.

"I told her not to be embarrassed, that it could have happened to anyone. It's easy to lose trails in the snow, which isn't typical for this time of year," Nicholas said.

Earlier Tuesday, Loretta Foreman of the Inyo search and rescue team said the search was being concentrated in a rectangular area five miles wide and 15 miles long in Inyo and Fresno counties along the Piute Pass trail. The victim was actually found somewhat north of that area.

She became separated from two hiking companions on Saturday, and was not seen again until her rescue Tuesday afternoon.

Local agencies involved in the rescue included the Inyo, Mammoth, June Lake and China Lake search and rescue squads; while others from as far away as Sierra Madre, Riverside and the Bay Area joined in Tuesday. Helicopters from China Lake, LeMoore Naval Air Station, the Forest Service and the California Highway Patrol were also involved.

Arizona woman survives 4-day ordeal in Sierra

On the verge of giving up on a woman lost for nearly four days high in the Sierra, rescue crews heard cries for help and found 60-year-old Ingrid Bertuck of Scottsdale, Ariz.

Jim Randall, captain of the Inyo Search and Rescue Team, said that the Mammoth-June Lakes Rescue crew heard Ms. Bertuck calling out. That was only minutes before authorities called off the entire search operation.

Randall said the woman was hiking with two men in the Piute Pass area above North Lake. He said that she could not keep up with the men and had agreed to meet them at a camp area. But she never showed up. The men hiked back to look for her, but only found a note saying she had passed by a trail marker.

Rescue crews launched a search. Teams from Inyo and Mono counties joined with those from China Lake and other areas. Helicopters from the highway patrol, LeMoore Naval Base, and the Forest Service combed the mountains.

Some Mammoth rescuers took tracking dogs in Tuesday. Randall said that Ms. Bertuck was lost, had fallen into a lake and wrenched her knee. She ran out of food Saturday night, but built a lean-to and managed to keep herself alive.

Randall said that the woman may have lost her way, in part, because of all the flooding in the high country but as searchers prepared to pull out Tuesday around 5 p.m., giving up on Ms. Bertuck, she screamed out and the dog track team from Mammoth heard her. They radioed a helicopter and the woman was saved. She spent some time in Northern Inyo Hospital, but was reported in good condition.

Another Rescue?

After successfully rescuing a woman missing three days in the wilderness west of Bishop, Inyo search and rescue teams were gearing up for another possible mission late Tuesday night.

A person had reportedly become ill in the Mt. Whitney area and was possibly in need of assistance getting down.

Busy Weekend In Backcountry For Rescuers

by SANDY HARRISON
SDN Staff Writer

number of people venturing into the wilderness than ever before.

Local search and rescue teams completed their busiest week in years over the weekend, going into the backcountry two more times in search of hikers needing assistance.

The two weekend operations brought to six the number of missions for Inyo Search and Rescue personnel in the past week, which Captain Jim Randall called the most hectic stretch in "three or four years."

A Carmichael man identified as George McConnell was hiking with his two sons, 15 and 16, Friday afternoon and left them to hike alone in the Mt. Emerson area near Piute Pass, when he apparently became stuck in a field of snow.

When he failed to return, the two boys reported his absence to a ranger at North Lake who in turn notified the Inyo Search and Rescue posse.

Meanwhile, McConnell had managed to free himself by retracing his steps, and returned several hours overdue as searchers were preparing to go after him Saturday morning.

Inyo and Mammoth searchers teamed up a short time later to assist a woman who had become ill in the Mosquito Flats area north of Rock Creek in Mono County.

Mary Green, 30, of Altadena was reached first by Forest Service personnel, who assisted her out of the area. She was then taken by Bishop Sierra Ambulance to Northern Inyo Hospital.

She was reported in excellent condition, except for some paralysis for which the cause was unknown. She had suffered no apparent injury, according to Randall.

Randall said the unusually high number of rescue missions this year is apparently due to an increased

Southland man injured while climbing Kearsarge

It was another busy weekend for Search and Rescue workers. On Friday afternoon a 23-year-old Huntington Beach man, Walt Stephey, received a broken hip after he fell 1500 ft. from the top of the Kearsarge Pinnacles. From his room at the Northern Inyo Hospital he said he had been ice climbing at the 11,000 ft. level above Onion Valley and had reached the top of the so-called Kearsarge Pinnacles. He was admiring the view from the peak when he began to slip on the hard pack snow and ice despite the fact he was wearing crampons. Stephey said he tried to dig in with his ice ax but the leash gave way. He then began a horrifying series of what he called barrel rolls as he bounced down the ice and crashed off boulder upon boulder. Besides the broken hip, Stephey also suffered a gash in his head from hitting the rocks but he considers himself lucky to be alive.

A hiking companion, George Humphry, helped rescue Stephey and managed to get him to the group's campsite, then jogged from Kearsarge Lake down to the Onion Valley to seek help. He was later picked up by the Sequoia National Park Service helicopter.

Then on Saturday afternoon Inyo Search and Rescue was called out when a 30-year-old woman suffered what was believed to be a stroke. The woman complained of being paralyzed on one side of her body while visiting the Mosquito Flat area near Rock Creek. Inyo Search and Rescue members carried the woman out to a waiting ambulance.

Climbing Fatality Identified

The man who died in a fall off the east face of Mt. Whitney last week was identified over the weekend as George Evans, 47, of Ridgefield, Connecticut.

Evans' name had not been immediately released because authorities were locating and notifying his relatives.

A spokesman at the Owens Valley Mortuary in Lone Pine said that an autopsy conducted Friday showed that Evans died of "massive multiple injuries," apparently sustained in the fall.

Evans fell about 70 feet off Whitney's east face after rain and hail apparently made the surface icy.

Apparent Whitney Fatality

by SANDY HARRISON
SDN Staff Writer

Inyo County Search and Rescue Captain Jim Randall said late Wednesday night that he had "no hope" of rescuing an injured climber on the east face of Mt. Whitney alive. Another man who fell was rescued.

The unidentified victim had fallen about 1,200 feet Wednesday afternoon and was hanging upside-down at the 13,000-foot level, Randall said.

He was said to be alive but unconscious shortly after the fall.

Rescuers attempted to reach the victim Wednesday night but had to turn back due to darkness.

A second climber who fell was injured but was reportedly rescued alive. The extent of his injuries and his identity were not known.

Inyo and China Lake search and rescue teams were scheduled to go after the remaining climber at 5 a.m. today with the aid of a helicopter. Randall said there is no chance that the man can survive until then.

Forest Service crews spotted the victims and reported the incident to the Sheriff's Department Wednesday afternoon.

Weekend Rescues In Inyo

A climber stranded on Mt. Whitney and a geologist stuck in the Wyman Canyon area were both located and rescued in good condition by Inyo County search and rescue teams in separate operations over the weekend.

A man whose identity was not available Sunday reportedly became stuck Saturday night while free-climbing Mt. Whitney in the Mirror Lake area. He was unable to get down and spent the night on the mountain Saturday.

Inyo rescue crews, with assistance from a China Lake helicopter, picked up the stranded climber and carried him to safety.

On Friday night, a U.S. Geological Survey employee identified as Frank Todd was reported overdue returning from a research trip in the Wyman Canyon area south of Roberts Ranch.

Three people from search and rescue went after Todd and found him stranded in the Wilkerson Mines area. His motorcycle had apparently become stuck in some rocks, but he was not injured.

Rescuers were preparing to search for two hikers overdue from Onion Valley Friday night, but both walked out safely and the operation was called off.

Local search and rescue crews were also requested to help search for a father and son who had been missing in the Blue Lake area of Alpine County since last Wednesday. Both walked safely out of the area Saturday morning, however.

Search & Rescue volunteers start fund raising drive

Inyo County Search and Rescue team, a group of volunteers that saves the county thousands of dollars each year, are starting a fund raising campaign in order to update the equipment and medical supplies needed to assist victims.

Local businesses have donated several items to the posse that will be given away during the Tri-County Fair in July. Tickets for a chance to win these outdoor items are available for \$1 each or six for \$5 at BoBo's Bonanza Coffee Shop in Lone Pine, Mair's Market in Independence, Carroll's Market in Big Pine, Wheeler Boot Repair and Tiger Tote Market in Bishop, among other locations.

To be given away are such items as a winter sleeping bag, a day pack, hiking boots, a jacket, and a gift certificate.

Although the search and rescue group is under the auspices of Inyo County Sheriff's Department, it receives very little money except for gasoline and vehicle repairs. Members—who total about 25 at the present—supply all their own survival equipment and donations go toward radio equipment and rescue vehicles.

According to Deputy Dan Lucas, search and rescue coordinator for the sheriff's department, 50 victims were rescued by the posse last year. Of these people, 44 survived. With figures like this, search and rescue members are quick to note that the volunteer services they provide are not always easy.

The majority of those needing assistance by the posse are backpackers and outdoorsmen caught in foul weather, rough terrain, or who have fallen and cannot get help on their own.

Assistance on these rescue missions has come from China Lake Naval Weapons Center and Civil Air Patrol when needed.

Last year these volunteers offered over 1,000 hours of time to search and rescue. Lucas figured this time saved the county \$10,300, since without the search and rescue team which the sheriff's department is mandated to have, taxpayers would have to foot the bill for deputies trained in search and rescue work.

Money from this fundraiser will go towards the purchase of new equipment and eventually the purchase of a new vehicle, said team captain Jim Randall.



SEARCH AND RESCUE VOLUNTEERS—Members of Inyo County Search and Rescue team volunteer all their time in order to assist victims caught in life threatening situations. In 1981 alone, the posse saved the county thousands of dollars with the assistance it provided. The search and rescue team has started a fund raising campaign in which tickets will be sold for a chance to win various outdoor and camping items. Tickets are available at various businesses in the county and the giveaway will be made at the search and rescue booth at the Tri-County Fair in July. Pictured here is posse member Greg Elliot, rappelling off a cliff during a training session held last year. This skill is one of many members have and use when helping victims. Photo by Patty Fuller

Search-Rescue Seeks Funding

Because funds for the Inyo County Search and Rescue team are limited, members will launch a raffle to benefit the group, S&R member Jim Randall announced Monday.

Randall said that the raffle will be held the last day of the Tri-County Fair and will include a winter sleeping bag, a daypack, a mountaineer stove, boots, a jacket and a \$25 gift certificate. All prizes will be donated or provided at cost, he said.

Randall, along with Sheriff's Deputy Dan Lucas, told members of the media about the volunteer hours put in by S&R members and the type of equipment team members must purchase themselves.

Randall said that S&R members can expect to spend between \$1,500 and \$2,000 for all the gear that is re-

quired for missions. There are about 25 active team members, he added.

Last year, search and rescue went on 27 missions, rescued 50 victims and expended about 1,030 hours. Lucas said that all of this work saved the County about \$10,300, figuring \$10 an hour.

Team members do receive reimbursement from the County for such items as gas and auto repairs, but Lucas said this only comes to about \$1,600 a year in County funds. He emphasized that if there were no search and rescue volunteers, the Sheriff's office would be mandated to carry out search and rescue functions.

"The main thing we want to get across is the amount of money saved by this group of people," said Lucas.

Hiker Rescued

A hiker with a broken ankle was rescued from Mt. Whitney Sunday afternoon in good condition, according to the Inyo County Sheriff's Department. The hiker's identity was not immediately available. The rescue was completed at about 5 p.m. and the victim was treated and then released from Southern Inyo Hospital.

Plane Mishap Family Rescued Unharmed

A fortunate Newport Beach man and his family were rescued unharmed from the Coyote area Sunday after their small plane was damaged during a landing at a closed airstrip in the area.

Anthony Ching Ping Yen, his wife and four children were landing at the airstrip when the plane began fishtailing and then went off the runway, blowing a wheel. No one was hurt.

Search and rescue Captain Jim Randall said that few people know about the old government airstrip near Coyote, which is now considered unsafe and has been closed. However, word of the remote strip had spread to the Orange County area, he said, and recently several pilots have landed at the off-limits facility to take fishing trips.

The strip has a deceptive slope and unusual air currents which create a danger to the unfamiliar pilot. Yen apparently misjudged those factors, Randall said.

Search and rescue personnel rescued the family later Sunday.

Rescue For Injured Youth

A boy with a crushed or broken wrist is expected to be airlifted out of the Donkey Lake area above Lake Sabrina early this morning.

The Inyo Sheriff's Department said that the boy, whose name and age were not available, was on a trip with his father and a large group as part of a Sierra Club outing. A doctor was along on the trip and had provided medical attention.

The boy's father hiked out to request help, and then returned to the scene with search and rescue personnel Sunday night.

Hiker rescued by helicopter

Terry Thorne, 39, of Simi Valley was airlifted from the Golden Trout Wilderness Sept. 1 and treated at Northern Inyo Hospital. Search and Rescue personnel from Inyo answered the summons from Fresno authorities and reached Thorne, who was extremely ill, but not injured.

Rescuers Locate 84-Year-Old Man

by SANDY HARRISON
SDN Staff Writer

A remarkably active 84-year-old man, missing more than 24 hours in the rugged Mt. Whitney wilderness, was located in good condition Thursday night, a joyous Inyo Search and

Rescue Captain Jim Randall announced.

Burr Stalnaker of San Diego had been overdue from a hike since Wednesday afternoon and searchers went in after him Thursday afternoon. He was spotted by a radio relay crew at about 7:30 p.m.

Because of Stalnaker's age, the rugged terrain and the high altitude, authorities had been gravely concerned for his safety.

"He is just fine," said Randall. "He's a little dehydrated, and pretty tired. But otherwise he's in good shape."

"He had become disoriented and wandered over the crest toward Crabtree Meadow, into the National Park."

"But he was bound and determined to climb Mt. Whitney. He's done it many times before. When we found him, he had gotten back on the trail and had made it to at least the 13,500-foot level. He was very near the top," Randall added.

Four Search and Rescue personnel spent Thursday night with Stalnaker after assisting him to a lower elevation where a helicopter can land this morning to bring him out.

"It was just great. That's two great rescues this year," Randall said, referring to Inyo County's successful rescue of a 60-year-old woman who had been lost for three days in the Piute Pass area in July.

Had Stalnaker still been missing today, Randall said, an all-out search would have begun including Mammoth, June Lake and Sierra Madre teams.

"In that area it would be very difficult to find him. It would require blanketing the area with people side-by-side through the rocks and crevices. We're really happy we found him before that," he concluded.

Thirty-five people, including 12 from China Lake Mountain Rescue and a China Lake helicopter, were involved in the successful operation.

Elderly Hiker Stable

The elderly man who was rescued Thursday after being lost in the rugged wilderness near Mt. Whitney for more than a day without camping gear was far more seriously injured during his ordeal than rescuers originally thought.

The story of 84-year-old Burr Stalnaker grew even more amazing over the weekend as authorities learned that, after becoming disoriented and losing the trail up Mt. Whitney, Stalnaker fell and suffered a fractured skull, broken ribs and a separated shoulder, Deputy Dan Lucas said.

He lost his glasses in the fall, leaving him virtually blind, and had left his dentures with his gear, leaving him unable to eat. He had no food anyway, Lucas added.

"He somehow got off the trail and then fell very hard," Lucas said. "He had left his gear behind."

Yet Stalnaker somehow managed to locate the trail and continue toward the summit of Mt. Whitney. He was found by rescuers above the 13,500-foot level Thursday night.

His serious injuries were not

readily apparent, however, because he seemed coherent and was not complaining of any pain. Rescuers originally thought he was suffering only from fatigue and dehydration.

Stalnaker was reported in stable condition at Southern Inyo Hospital in Lone Pine Sunday.

Lucas said he visited Stalnaker Sunday, and "he was in bandages from head to toe. But he didn't seem to be in any discomfort."

That type of ordeal might be expected to deter an 84-year-old man from future expeditions, but it apparently hasn't. "He told me he's going to climb Whitney again next year," Lucas said.

Inyo Prepares For New Search

Inyo County Search and Rescue personnel were preparing Sunday night to look for two men who were reported two days overdue from a hiking trip in the Palisade Glacier area in the mountains above Big Pine.

A few teams were slated to enter the area late Sunday night, with more searchers preparing for an all-out search by this morning. Authorities were also trying to locate a helicopter for the search.

The missing hikers' identities, or any other details, were not immediately available.

Overdue Hikers Turn Up

Two men who were reported two days overdue from a hiking trip in the Palisade Glacier area walked safely out of the South Lake area, a few miles north, early Monday morning.

The Inyo County Sheriff's Department said that Craig Raney, 27, and Fernando Corona, 22, both from Anaheim, had apparently hiked over the crest to the west side of the mountains but were unable to get back up.

The two hikers were in good condition, but had apparently run out of food.

Search and rescue teams were preparing to go after the two men when they emerged.

Palisade Glacier search cancelled

The search for two Orange county men reported to be two days overdue on a hiking trip above Big Pine was called off Sept. 7 after it was learned they had walked out under their own power but had come out near South Lake above Bishop. The men were identified as Fernando Corona and Craig Raney of Orange county. Inyo Sheriff's Deputy Dan Lucas said that the men had been hiking on the Palisades Glacier above Big Pine, intending to descend down the east side of the glacier. However they accidentally went down the west side and then back to the crest. So they spent the night there on Saturday and then spent Sunday hiking and finally came out near South Lake about 3:30 a.m. Monday. Lucas said the two men slept in a restroom at the South Lake trailhead and then in the morning headed down to Habegger's Resort where they phoned the sheriff's department to say they were all right. Lucas said Search and Rescue teams from Inyo, Mammoth and China Lake were already on hand but a helicopter that had planned to fly in from Kings Canyon National Park was turned back before it made the trip for nothing.

Elderly Woman Rescued

A 71-year-old woman who had climbed alone to the summit of Mt. Whitney but had gotten lost on the return trip was airlifted safely out of the area Thursday afternoon, a day after she was due back.

According to Dan Lucas of the Inyo Sheriff's Department, Maxine Scheidner took the wrong trail on her way down from the peak Wednesday and hiked into Sequoia National Forest instead of down the western slope.

Some companions who were waiting for her at a lower elevation notified authorities when she failed to return Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Scheidner had camped

continued on page 3

with another group she had met along the trail Wednesday night and attempted to resume her trip Thursday.

When authorities found her, she was cold, tired and hungry, Lucas said, but otherwise in good condition. She was airlifted out by Forest Service helicopter.

Whitney hiker, 71, grateful

I wish to commend the task force set in motion when I was reported missing Sept. 8 on my climb of Mt. Whitney. I was not lost . . . just took the wrong turn into the John Muir Trail and end up in the meadows where some fine folks shared their tent and fare with me and got me back up to Trail Crest to be met by your magnificent search and rescue team. To each and every member of this search and rescue team, including the helicopter crew, I commend you and thank you. —Maxine Scheidner, 345 El Monte Rd., El Cajon CA 92020. Phone 714-447-7357.

Ed. Note: Mrs. Scheidner, age 71, climbed Mt. Whitney for the cause of Huntington's disease. She was reported missing by her daughter-in-law, Helessa Scheidner.

Woman Crushed By Falling Boulder

by SANDY HARRISON
SDN Staff Writer

A young woman was crushed to death by a falling boulder while mountain climbing in the Rock Creek area Sunday, as her horrified family watched helplessly.

Inyo Search and Rescue teams brought the body of Jennifer Olson, 24, of San Rafael, out of the area to the Inyo County Coroner's office Monday.

"It was a real tragedy," said a somber Dan Lucas, Inyo Search and Rescue coordinator. "It's one of those things that didn't need to happen, and was nobody's fault, but nobody could stop it."

Lucas said that Olson was climbing Bear Creek Spire just inside the Inyo-Fresno county line with her father, brother, and a friend at about 3 Sunday afternoon.

The victim and her father, David Olson, were connected by a rope about 200 feet from the summit, with David a considerable distance above Jennifer.

David reached for a ledge and jarred loose a boulder, causing it to fall from its perch. He looked down to see the huge rock crush his daughter. She was killed instantly, Lucas said, from massive injuries.

The party camped in the area Sunday night, and the victim's father

hiked out Monday to notify authorities.

"It was very sad because he obviously was very down and he blamed himself," said Lucas. "I told him it was nobody's fault."

Four climbers from the Inyo Search and Rescue team — Pat Elliott, Bruce Albert, Danny Coker and Paul Neil — were airlifted to the backside of the spire by Forest Service helicopter, climbed the peak and then hiked down to where the woman's body remained.

They reached the body Monday afternoon, attached it to a helicopter by a 200-foot line, and brought it to

continued on page 3

continued from page 1

the coroner's office. The Search and Rescue climbers returned to Bishop at about 8 p.m. Monday night.

"That whole area is really bad," Lucas said. "I was worried to death about our guys. They noticed several large boulders balanced precariously. But a lot of people climb there," he said.

Lucas said the county's climbers did "a terrific job" on the mission.

Rescuers Free 22 From Glacier Area

From SDN staff reports.

"When we came up Saturday to the campground, there was a little water going over the bridge near the lodge. We went to sleep and the next morning the bridge was gone," said Gladys Gilbertson of Paso Robles. Gilbertson was among 22 people rescued Wednesday from the Big Pine Creek area. They had been stranded after floodwaters washed away bridges and asphalt on Glacier

Lodge Road.

The Big Pine Fire Department, Inyo Search and Rescue, the Sheriff's Department, the Bureau of Land Management, California Conservation Corps crews from San Bernardino, and citizen volunteers brought the stranded campers to Big Pine at about 1 p.m. Wednesday in four-wheel-drive vehicles. Since the Glacier Lodge Road was impassable, rescuers had considered airlifting the persons out of

the area. But bad weather made flying too dangerous. "We made our own road," chuckled Jim Bramcko of the Big Pine Fire Department following the rescue. Connie Johnson of Big Pine ex-

plained that a CCC crew worked in freezing, snowy weather Wednesday morning to lay sandbags across Baker Creek so the vehicles could proceed up the canyon. "I've never had an experience like

continued on page 3



Rodger Woggermon was one of a number of California Conservation Corps workers who traveled from San Bernardino to work in flood-ravaged areas of Big Pine and Bishop. This crew was working Wednesday filling up driveways in the Dixon Lane area near Bishop. Chris Cavanaugh photo

continued from page 1

this and I hope I never have another one like it," commented Ellen Neville of Yorba Linda.

"I am glad to be out, but I don't know what I am going to do now," said a weary Raymond Smith, 60, a building contractor from Portola Valley about 25 miles south of San Francisco, who was rescued Wednesday.

Smith, who had been camping in the canyon when the dam broke, said he tried for two days to hike out, floating some of his expensive tools across swollen rivots on logs, but only managed to make it part way before breaking two ribs in falls.

"The whole canyon is full of big boulders and water," added Rosalie Hughes, a resident of Big Pine. "The landscape has completely changed, and I don't think it will ever be the same."

She added, "We lost our boat and other possessions, but our house was spared. It was a terrible experience."

Mike Stewart, a 34-year-old maintenance man from Orange County, had been camping alone near the creek for a week when he tried to drive down Sunday morning.

"All of a sudden, the road wasn't there," he said. "I found out there was no way out, unless I had wings."

So Stewart stayed with his truck and camper at the Glacier Road trailhead until Wednesday, when the Sheriff's Department told him he'd have to leave the vehicles and come down.

As the heavy rains fell Sunday, Big Pine Creek turned from a small mountain stream into an impassable torrent, Stewart recalls.

"It wasn't a creek, it was a river.

It was roaring, and boulders the size of ball closets were coming down," he said.

"I was a little nervous, and I still am," Stewart continued. "I know I'm going to get home, and everything will be fine. But I'm worried about the truck. It's all I own."

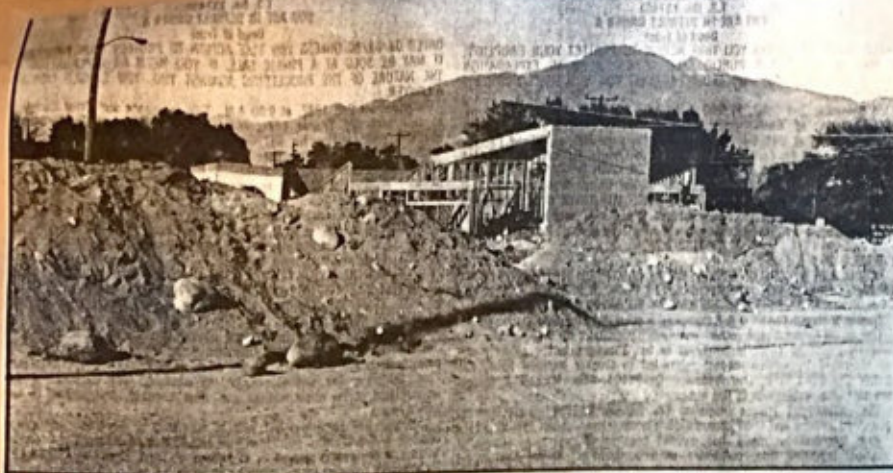
Was he concerned for his personal safety? "No, that was no problem at all," he said. "I knew when the water was rising to move up. But I never imagined that those bridges that had been there for 60 years could just disappear."

Stewart said he has camped near Big Pine Creek during each of the past seven years, "and that campground sure looks different now." After a pause he added, "In fact, the campground is gone."

He said he planned to spend Wednesday night at a Bishop motel. "Then I guess I have to catch a bus to the worst place in the world — downtown Los Angeles."

Weather hampers flood airlifts

Bad weather Wednesday hampered plans to airlift folks from Glacier Lodge area in Big Pine Canyon, and other spots, including Bishop Creek basin. Getting folks out of those zones was planned with 4-wheel drive equipment when routes could be provided.



MOUNTAINS of silt, sand and boulders were bulldozed off Indian Reservation property at the southern entrance

to Big Pine after a tropical storm dumped heavy rains into Big Pine Creek Canyon the weekend of Sept. 27 and 28. Clean up operations still are underway.

Jigger reports on the Big Pine flood

by Grace Perkins

Don Nelson (known to all as Jigger), Big Pine Fire Chief, who took full charge of all operations when Big Pine Creek went wild on Sept. 25 tells what he can remember about the disaster. (It was a disaster to those who were affected, and many were).

Jigger arose at 6 a.m. on Saturday and it was Monday at 1 a.m. before he was able to get to bed again. His first thought was he should check Baker Creek after realizing that it had rained all night, for that had been a trouble spot one time when there had been that type of storm. Water and Power employees had been ahead of him and had opened the overflow gate so things there were okay. He then went to Big Pine Creek and found it was at flood stage. DWP employees had already opened the diversion ditch above the town. Water continued to rise so the county road crew had to cut a channel across School Street so as to save the bridge at that crossing before noon. Several Big Pine Volunteer Firemen had left to attend the fire school held in Bishop that day so Jigger alerted the balance of the firemen to be ready for action as he felt that the school was very important to those attending. About mid-afternoon the creek was plugged with debris at the Walnut Street bridge and was overflowing the banks and bridge endangering the residences nearby. So the firemen and volunteers used the 200 already full sandbags which were stored at the rear of the firehall to divert the water back into its channel. About 6 p.m. after he had alerted Bishop and Independence firemen, Caltrans, Inyo county officials, highway patrol, etc., and had his full crew of firemen on hand, the creek overflowed on to Hwy. 395 at the crossing downtown. Don Morton, farmer, brought his farm loader and it was the first machinery there to try to help divert that big stream from entering The Little Big Pine Restaurant and other buildings on the east side of the highway. Jack Stout in his skip loader and side of the highway. John Marzano with a Cal Teck tractor then appeared to help shove the debris across the street. Caltrans trucks and Water and Power equipment were soon on hand to help unplug the bridge and push mud. Highway patrolmen had come to the rescue and traffic was stopped on either side of town so that the sandbagging and other remedial processes could be done without being hampered with traffic. Many cars and travel campers were stranded in town on the ball park, the service station parking lots and the bank parking lot where they had to spend the night, in fact two-

nights if they didn't want to go back or over Westgard Pass. A youth geology group from Long Beach was camped at Baker Creek. Their bus and driver were located at a motel in town when they were flooded out and the driver had to be roused to gather up his load and bring them to the Town Hall. They were immediately put to work filling sandbags for most of the rest of the night. A conservation crew from Round Valley and Forest Service trucks and personnel and a CCC youth group were all pressed into service to try to cope with the flooding problems. Those CCC youths, who had had training on laying sandbags, got that big wet job while Big Pine youths and all who could be assembled filled the bags and loaded them onto 4-wheel drive pickups whose owners volunteered to haul them where they were needed. (Jigger reminds all of the owners of those pickups who traversed that water and mud should check their wheel bearings and maybe have them replaced). One of their biggest problems was getting sandbags as so few were in the immediate area so when one batch of bags had been completed the fillers would go home to rest or to change wet clothes and then a new crew had to be mustered into service when a new batch of sacks arrived.

The firehall was set up as headquarters and Jim Angelo, Inyo County Disaster chairman, arrived and helped Jigger formulate more plans and then helped to carry them out by always being on hand to give instructions and advice. There were telephone operators and radio dispatchers always on hand to carry out the needed reports and messages to outside areas, all volunteers.

About the time of the overflow downtown the bypass banks gave way and a new channel through the Indian Reservation was started, so operation of sand bagging had to be changed.

Jigger wants to stress the fact that the three Big Pine sheriff deputies were his very special help at all times of the flooding when they provided traffic control and a lot of official support when and where it was needed. After the waters receded, there was the big problem of clearing away debris and mud from all areas affected.

All of the time those people were filling sandbags, pushing debris and mud and getting those bags filled and to the proper places time was flying and people were getting hungry. The Salvation Army and the Red Cross appeared from someplace and provided the first food - except for the tea and coffee which the Little Big Pine Cafe brought out in spite of the fact that they were about to be washed away. The CCC youth group was housed in a fair building in Bishop and their breakfast was furnished there. Their lunch and dinner was provided by donations from Jack-In-The-Box, Tribal Office, Safeway, Carrols, The Goldiggers, United Methodist Women and many, many volunteers including senior citizens.

Inyo County Supervisor Johnny Johnson and Welfare Director Connie Bennet were here each day to give assistance wherever they could. In fact it was

Connie who took charge of seeing that the CCC group was fed their noon and evening meals.

The Big Pine and Starlite Motels furnished towels for the youth group to have showers at the high school which was not flooded because of the quick action with the sandbags.

The Automobile Club of Southern California sent a van to the reservation and helped to deliver water to the homes when their water supply was cut off. Portable toilets were brought in by the BLM trucks and they also sent a water tank and a fire truck for emergency fire control. Department of Water and Power employees and the Tribal Council made the repairs needed and restored the water system to the reservation by Thursday.

As the road up Big Pine Canyon had been closed because of the loss of Lower Bridge and a long stretch of road bed near Upper Bridge those residents and vacationers who were up there were isolated from the rest of the world.

Sunday and Monday a few of the hardier ones walked out and caught the Greyhound for their homes. Thursday a plan submitted by Mike Rossi and Connie Johnson of trying to cross Baker Creek and following an old road up the canyon which connected with the Glacier Lodge road at the switch back was tried. A used piece of culvert was used to make a crossing and 4-wheel drive vehicles operated by the Inyo County Search and Rescue, Big Pine firemen, Caltrans, and the CCC group were successful in bringing out all who wanted to come out, some 22 persons. No one was injured and all were safe and sound.

Some of the new homes located on the west side of Hwy. 395 on the reservation were the ones most heavily damaged. Big Pine people should and do feel lucky that there was no more damage. Many more of us could have had real problems had it not been for the full cooperation of all those fine workers.

As I talked with Jigger Saturday evening and he tried to assemble his thoughts with the few notes which he had taken time to jot down, his head nodded and his eyes kept trying to close. He kept repeating, "I'm sure I've forgotten some who helped but it certainly has not been intentionally, but please do thank all who helped in any little way."

He had taken time Saturday afternoon while the CCC group was still here to conduct a school of instruction on "How to Fill and Lay Sandbags Properly," for future emergency use.

Jigger is a family man with wife Dorothy and two teenage boys to support, so holds down a job with the phone company but he went to his job only one day last week. Helping his Big Pine people was the first thing on his mind. As he left our house he said, "We are so very, very lucky, we did not have to dig bodies from that mud and we do not have to attend a funeral!" Thank God for people like Jigger.

State team to assess Inyo county damage

Members of a state and federal assessment team were expected in Inyo county this week—a team which will tour the flood damage throughout the county to assess the monetary loss.

The findings of this team will probably determine how much state aid Inyo will get. According to Administrator Hanford, these officials will recommend to Governor Brown whether he should ask the federal government to help with disaster aid.

Governor Brown has officially declared Inyo a state of disaster. Hanford said that a second assessment team will probably come to Inyo to investigate private property damage so residents may get some help too.

At their meeting Tuesday, the supervisors quibble over the wording of a board resolution declaring Inyo a disaster area. They considered changing the wording, to emphasize damage in Lone Pine and Big Pine. Some supervisors thought too much was mentioned about the North Lake Dam. But then John Lovett, who is Assemblyman Phil Wyman's aide, reminded the board that the governor already had the resolution and proclaimed Inyo a disaster area. Lovett also offered praise for the work of local officials during the weekend floods.

Supervisor Johnny Johnson praised Big Pine volunteers for their many hours of work. He said it restored his faith in the human race. Supervisor Bob Bremmer specifically asked the news media to thank the highway patrol, sheriff's men, Lone Pine firemen, EMT's, county road department workers, and Lone Pine citizens for all of their work in the midst of the disastrous flooding in southern Inyo county. Supervisor P.D. Cook praised the Bishop police and sheriff's men. Supervisor Lefty Irwin said his constituents complained about law enforcement failing to evacuate the Dixon Lane area in Bishop. Cook later complained about having to pay the Forest Service for work performed during the floods.

If state and federal officials are convinced, however, Inyo can receive the desperately needed financial assistance. It all depends on how the assessment team here views the impact of what most here view as devastating floods.



After a long and bumpy four-wheel drive from Big Pine Canyon to the Big Pine fire station, Dwight Clements, John Neville, Daryl Hood, Seth Gilbertson, Gladys Gilbertson, and Ellen and John Neville rest before heading for motel rooms. This group and others were rescued Wednesday from a campground after floodwaters washed out bridges and asphalt on Glacier Lodge Road. Chris Cavanaugh photo.



SURPLUS—Water which otherwise would have flooded down Bishop Creek and West Bishop roars down this diversionary ditch past Riverside Drive northeast of Bishop and heads its way toward the Owens River and south to LA.

Love And Happy Birthday To Jigger Nelson From Inyo Heights HS And Inyo Outdoor Ed

Editor's Note: This letter was originally addressed to Lloyd Stringer of Continental Telephone in Bishop, regarding one of Continental's employees, Jigger Nelson of Big Pine. A copy was sent to the Sierra Daily News with a request to publish it from its author, Bob McBurney.

Editor:

Do we have a fire department in Big Pine? You bet!

What about our chief, Jigger Nelson? The greatest!

We want you to know just how much we appreciate his unceasing work to save Big Pine from a worse disaster than occurred.

The Inyo County Outdoor Education Center developed a problem the opposite of those in Big Pine.

We had no water flowing through our diversion system, essentially leaving the facility with only the tanker truck two and one-half miles away for fire protection.

When I notified Jigger that DWP had informed me that we might be without water for an extended period

of time, he went to work and enlisted the assistance of Ermet Davis, his father-in-law.

Between them they engineered a way to divert the water back into the facility and coordinated the work crew's efforts to accomplish the task.

Less than 24 hours later we had water, and our fire protection system was fully operational.

I understand that Jigger is working today, (October 4), on his birthday holiday because he took that day last Friday to donate his time to get us the water which was essential to continue operating the high school and sixth grade camp.

We believe that his willingness to serve should be acknowledged publicly so others will know as we do that our chief is the greatest!

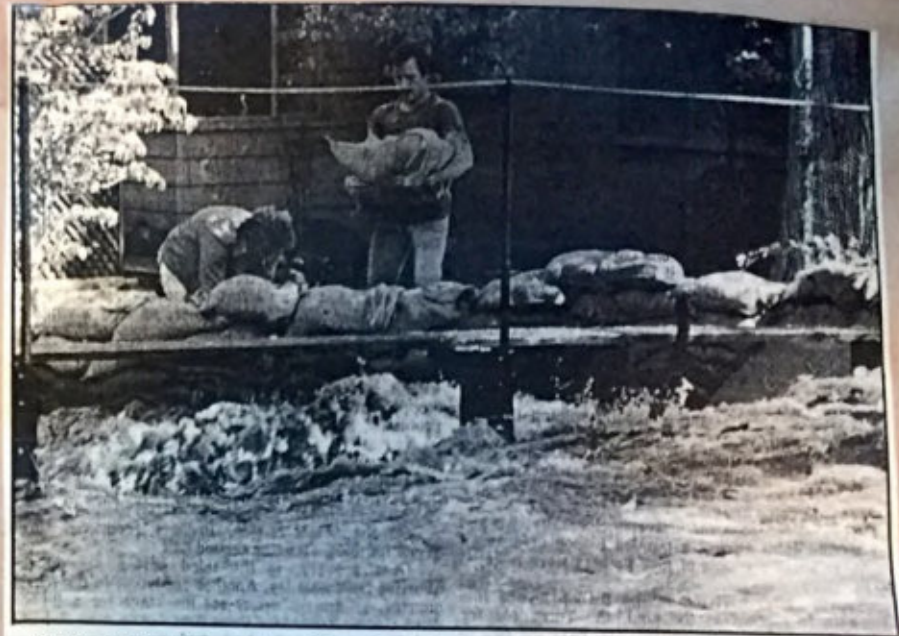
On behalf of all the staff and students of our school and the sixth graders at camp for the next few weeks; Jigger, we love you!

Happy Birthday!

Robert McBurney, Principal
Inyo Heights High School

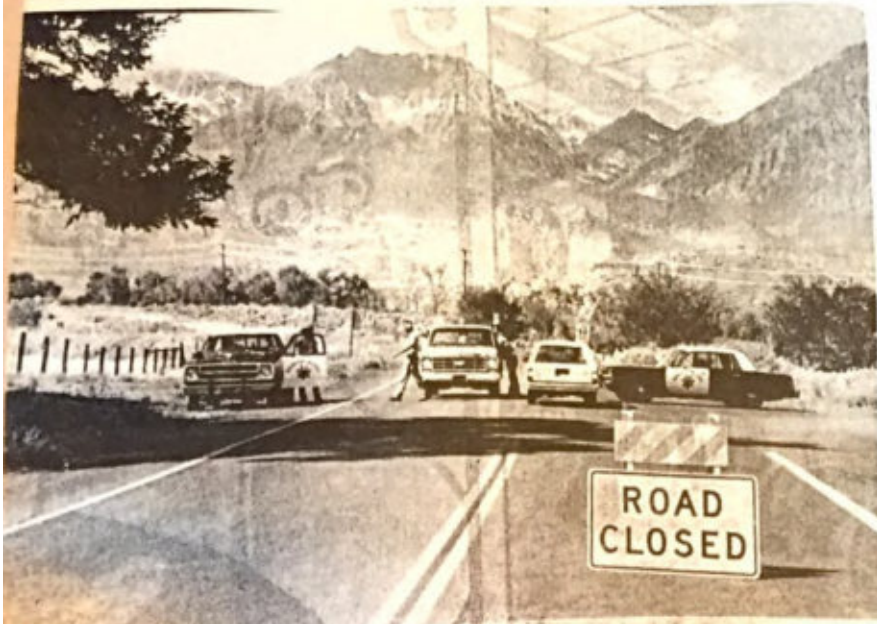


AWASH—Despite the sandbags water gushes over the McLaren Bridge in West Bishop Sunday during the flood. Residents were evacuated from the area early in the day and were not allowed to return until 5 that evening. The expected "wall of water" fortunately did not materialize. (Gordon Wiltsie Photo)



FRANTIC EFFORT—Water roars down Bishop Creek as volunteers work frantically with sandbags Sunday protect-

ing a home in West Bishop. Their efforts proved successful.



ROAD BLOCK—Law enforcement agencies were quick to respond to the flood emergency over the weekend. Here

is a roadblock quickly put up on Highway 168 early Sunday morning. Only emergency vehicles and residents were allowed access.



COOPERATION—Neighbors and other volunteers lend a hand filling sandbags to help save a home along the Bishop Creek area Sunday. Thanks to their efforts, the home and others downstream were saved from major damage.



DOUBLE TAKE—The Bishop City sign on US 6 north of Bishop gave travelers a double take Sunday as water from the Williams Ditch which overflowed formed a large lake providing this odd reflection.

Many records set during recent Inyo county flood

Rainfall and waterflow records fell like matchsticks during the recent storm that swept much of Inyo county thus accounting for the immense amount of damage which is still being compiled.

According to a report given at the Interagency meeting Friday in Bishop by Duane Buchholz of the Dept. of Water and Power a record 6.60 inches of rain was reported at the DWP station at Glacier Lodge on Big Pine Creek during a 30 to 38 hour period. This brought about the devastating 900 cubic feet per second flow that was estimated on Big Pine Creek during the peak of the flooding.

Other rainfall figures reported by Buchholz included the following: South Lake, 3.80 inches; Lake Sabrina, 2.40; Rock Creek, 3.50; Lake Mary Store, 6 inches; Onion Valley, 2.70; Cottonwood Basin, 3.50.

During the flood a number of the Eastern Sierra streams recorded record breaking flows, Buchholz reported. The heaviest flow was reported in Bishop Creek with an estimated 1800 cfps, made by Southern California Edison. The previous maximum was 940. On Sept. 23 only 145 cfps was reported.

Other record flows were reported at Rock Creek with a 325 cfps flow; Big Pine Creek, 900 cfps estimated; and Lone Pine Creek, 385.

North Lake warning in 1931 went unheeded

The September floods in Inyo prompted state officials to investigate the collapse of North Lake Dam above Bishop. In a Los Angeles Times article yesterday, state Department of Water Resources officials are quoted as saying that the investigation reveals that a 1931 warning of a design defect at North Lake Dam went unheeded.

Director of DWR, Ron Robie, said that the warning indicated the spillway was too small and that this fact led to the collapse of the dam. The heavy mountain rains of September proved too much for the defective dam.

State officials place no blame on Southern California Edison, which purchased the dam from another company years ago. According to the Times article, a state report says that the division of dam safety acted "impudently in certifying North Lake Dam and reservoir as safe for operation," considering the 1931 warning.

State officials also say that after the dam collapsed, it was discovered that the dam, which was supposed to be made of earth, contained many decaying logs. Officials now say that it appears the inspection system by the Division of Dam Safety is not as systematic as it should be.

Director Robie has now ordered a review of design records of all smaller dams in the state.

Meanwhile, Southern California Edison Manager Charles Miller in Bishop said that his company has made no decisions on whether to rebuild the North Lake Dam. He said that Edison rarely used the dam to regulate water flow. He said they mostly use South Lake and Sabrina dams for water regulation.

BP fire dept. says Thank You!

On behalf of Chief "Jigger" Nelson and the entire membership, the Big Pine Fire Dept. would like to say, "Thank You" for the support received during the recent flooding in Big Pine.

While it is impossible to name each individual we would like to give credit to several people: Emmet Davis for helping return water to Camp Leys, Mike Rossi and Connie Johnson for blazing a road to connect with Glacier Lodge Road and rescue the people stranded in that area. Law enforcement personnel in town—Jamery Ray, John Eropkin and Dan Kassemos—all your help made things run much more efficiently. The people that donated their trucks to transport sandbags and help fill them—it did make a difference. And don't forget "Kid Power." Students from school were helping to fill sandbags, load trucks, carry bags, and helped clean up their school the next day. To all the people preparing food and sending it to the workers. To all the other agencies that gave support—Caltrans, Forest Service, BLM, Calif. Highway Patrol, Dept. of Water and Power, outside fire departments—the list goes on.

Jim Angelo, for helping to coordinate the many agencies, equipment, and supplies needed to make the job go easier.

The community of Big Pine should be proud of itself and say "Thanks" to everyone for all their support. Again, Thank You to All for your help.

Lloyd Wilson, Secretary
Big Pine Fire Dept.

Naval Chopper Wreck Removed

by SANDY HARRISON
SDN Staff Writer

A U.S. Navy UH1N helicopter which crashed near the top of Mt. Whitney Friday was removed Sunday along with its five crewmen from that area to Lone Pine and then back to the China Lake base.

"It was probably a world record for the successful recovery of an aircraft from the highest altitude," said China Lake Public Information Officer Denny Kline of the 14,400-foot mission.

Apparently, no one was seriously injured, although one man complained of back pain, Kline said.

"We haven't officially described the damage yet," he said, "although it was certainly substantial enough that it couldn't be fixed on the spot."

The cause of the mishap was not immediately determined, he added, although an investigation was underway.

Kline said the crew was on a high altitude rescue training mission when the chopper hit Mt. Whitney within 100 feet of the summit at 9:22 a.m. Friday. He said China Lake has carried out 30 high altitude rescues this year.

Sunday's rescue was carried out by a U.S. Marine Corps CH53 helicopter, which Kline termed "an enormous aircraft."

"If they had drilled a cable they probably could have pulled the top of the mountain off," he said. The rescue craft was piloted by Lt. Col. Larry Reed of Tustin, Kline said.

He explained that the damaged aircraft was disassembled into three pieces and shuttled to Lone Pine in three different trips. "On the first trip, they took the bulk of the aircraft down, then they came back for the rotor tail boom and some of the personnel, and then they came back for the remainder of the 13-man working party," he said. "Afterward, the entire helicopter and all the people were taken to China Lake in one trip. They arrived at 5:30 this afternoon," Kline said Sunday night.

Copter crashes on Whitney; pilots safe, wreck removed

A somewhat bold attempt at a touch and go flight exercise landing high atop Mt. Whitney ended in a helicopter crash for two China Lake pilots last week. After hours of laboring, marines from Camp Pendleton used a very large chopper to lift the wrecked helicopter off the mountain.

It was the first time the marines ever tried such a feat. They had practiced lifting by a helicopter in high altitude, but only put their theories to the test when they hooked up the wreckage and lifted it right off the highest peak in the United States.

Crews brought the wreckage down to the Lone Pine airport and then to China Lake.

The two pilots who crashed had reportedly tried a touch and go landing on the top elevations of Mt. Whitney near a familiar landmark there—a stone cabin. But the helicopter crashed. The two men aboard were not seriously injured, but it was a hard landing.

A chopper from Lemoore Air Force Base rescued the two men and flew them back to China Lake. Then China Lake crews spent Saturday working on their plan to lift the wrecked chopper out of the mountains.

Whitney hiker walks out safely as S&R crews assemble for search

Search and rescue teams from Mono and Inyo counties and several other areas of the state snapped into action Monday to go to the aid of a man reported lost atop Mt. Whitney. But before most of them even reached the scene the hiker walked out under his own power.

Dan Lucas of the Inyo Sheriff's office reported he had called for help from search teams from Mammoth, June Lake, Inyo Sierra Madre, Indian Wells and China Lake since they feared for the man's life due to snow and cold temperatures. Julius Galleos, 21, had been hiking with a friend on Sunday when his hiking partner tired and decided to head back down the mountain and then Galleos disappeared. Lucas said he had apparently become lost and was unable to hike out before dark on Sunday, but then found his way Monday.

The helicopter usually used for local rescues is the one which crashed during high altitude exercises Friday so Lucas had to look elsewhere for help. Personnel from Scott Air Force Base were preparing to send a crew to the area when Galleos walked out.

Some of the S and R crews had already headed to the Lone Pine area for that rescue and ended up making the trip for nothing.

Hiker Walks Out OK

A Southern California man who was overdue returning from the wilderness area near Mt. Whitney walked safely out of the area at about 1:30 Monday afternoon.

Julius Galleos was only about a half-day overdue, but because of a

severe storm expected to move into the area, authorities began preparing a search party Monday.

The operation was cancelled, however, when Galleos emerged in good condition.

Today Avalanche Seminar

On the evenings of November 10 and 11, Wheeler and Wilson Boot, in conjunction with Sierra Ski Touring of Mammoth, will offer an avalanche seminar to benefit the Inyo County Search and Rescue.

This course will cover an introduction to the winter environment, will study the nature of the snow in the snow pack, and effects of weather and climate on that snow pack.

Also covered will be route finding, hazard evacuation, and rescue for the winter traveller.

This two evening seminar will cost \$20 with proceeds going to Search and Rescue.

Interested persons may register at Wheeler and Wilson Boot, 206 N. Main St., Bishop or call 873-7520

Search Delayed; Bishop Man Missing

Weather and snow conditions stopped Search and Rescue personnel from making any progress Wednesday in the case of two campers missing in the Bishop Creek area.

The identities of the pair have not been released, but they are two males, both about 21 years old, from Fresno and Edwards Air Force Base, according to Search and Rescue personnel.

"The weather is the biggest hindrance right now," said Inyo Search and Rescue Coordinator Bud Clayton.

"We haven't been able to send in men because of the avalanche

danger, and the wind has prohibited us from using aircraft."

Given an expected break in the wind today, Clayton said, a Leemore Naval helicopter will be used on an aerial search.

Rescuers have reached the two men's car in the Aspendell area, and the campers have not returned there since leaving on Thursday. They were due out Sunday.

Inyo County authorities are trying to figure out what has become of Charles Fox, 61, a longtime Bishop resident who hasn't been heard from since Monday evening.

According to the Sheriff's Department, Fox was working on his car Monday and was planning to take it on a test drive. When his wife returned home a short time later, he was gone and hasn't returned.

The car is a gold 1978 Subaru wagon, license number 830VXO.

According to the Sheriff's Department, Fox was known as a punctual, reliable man who would not simply go away for an extended period without telling anyone.

Search and Rescue personnel and the Civil Air Patrol are conducting a search of the entire Owens Valley for clues to his whereabouts.

He took no clothing with him, and only a lightweight blanket was reported missing from his home when he left.

The Sheriff's Department doesn't consider Fox' disappearance a case of foul play yet. "We will try to cover the whole area first, and then consider other aspects," said Search and Rescue Coordinator Bud Clayton.

Two Campers Missing

Search and Rescue personnel are expected to resume their search this morning for two people missing in the Bishop Creek area if weather permits.

The two campers, whose names were withheld but who were from the Fresno area, had entered the area Thursday and were due out late Sunday.

They have a tent, sleeping bags and food, said Bud Clayton of the Inyo Search and Rescue squad, but their exact location has not been pinpointed.

Searchers gave up due to bad weather Monday night.

Search to continue for missing campers

Reports of overdue hikers kept the Inyo Search and Rescue Team busy yesterday as they were dispatched to locations first above Big Pine and later in the Bishop Creek area.

Search and rescue coordinator Bud Clayton said 21-year-old Paul Hudson of Fresno and Mike Donaher of Edwards Air Force Base had been hiking in the Palisade Glacier area above Big Pine since Thursday and were supposed to be back on Sunday. Hudson's mother reported the pair missing and said they had planned a long hike through Evolution Valley, Mit Mindel and the Darwin Peak areas. Luckily search team members didn't have to scan that entire area. They found the two men in good condition later in the afternoon.

Another rescue operation was scheduled to continue today for two southern California men missing in the Bishop Creek area. Clayton said search and rescue found their vehicle parked near Aspendell and a team of about eight men searched the area on snowshoes including some backcountry cabins but couldn't find the men. He said they are believed to have a light blue tent, sleeping bags and some food, but they feel their supplies are probably running low by now. The search was hampered by blizzard conditions and 50-mile per hour winds which were expected to continue today. Clayton says if the weather breaks he hopes to get a helicopter into the area today to continue the search.

Man's Body Found

The body of longtime Bishop resident Charles Fox, 61, was found Thursday in his car at the end of a dirt road in the Black Canyon area southwest of Bishop.

He apparently died from breathing exhaust fumes from the car, and his death appeared to be a suicide, authorities said. There was no sign of foul play.

Fox had been missing since Monday afternoon, and his disappearance triggered a widespread search of the entire Owens Valley area Wednesday. The car was spotted by a Civil Air Patrol plane Thursday afternoon, and rescuers reached the area on foot a short time later.

Fox, whom authorities had described as a normally reliable, punctual individual, probably died Monday, according to the Sheriff's Department, who notified his family later Thursday afternoon.

Search cancelled, hiker OK

Inyo County Search and Rescue Team was put on standby Monday when it was thought that a hiker might be missing in the mountains above Independence. The man eventually walked out under his own power, however, and the operation was called off.

It all started last week when a hiker, Randy Johnson, stopped by the sheriff's office in Independence and left a note saying he was going hiking in the Onion Valley area and would return on Monday and would again check in with the deputies. Johnson failed to show up, officials grew worried, considering the weather conditions in the area. Sgt. Dave Lewis and Deputy Steve Erslund traveled to the top of Onion Valley road in a four wheel drive vehicle, they reported it was snowing heavily and that the road was very icy. They found Johnson's truck at the campground but could not locate him. They returned and put search and rescue on standby, but a few hours later Johnson walked into the sheriff's office safe and sound.

Campers Missing

There was no sign Thursday of two campers who were several days overdue in returning from a trip in the Bishop Creek area.

The pair, described as two men about 21 years old, entered the area about Thanksgiving Day and were due out last Sunday. Heavy snow and winds hindered the search earlier in the week, but an aerial search was conducted Thursday without success.

Inyo Rescuers Help Find Hikers

by SANDY HARRISON
SDN Staff Writer

Mike Conaher and John Hudson are going to be all right, and they have Inyo Search and Rescue, the National Park Service and other agencies to thank for the fact that they are even alive.

Donaher and Hudson, both 21, were rescued near Wanda Lake in Kings Canyon National Park Friday morning after being lost for eight days in the snowy wilderness west of Bishop.

The two men, from Fresno and Edwards Air Force Base, had entered the wilderness from the Bishop Creek area Thursday and were due out Sunday.

But they apparently became disoriented in the heavy snowfall and got lost.

Thinking they were hiking southwest toward Bishop, the two men actually proceeded along a different ridge and headed southeast into Evolution Valley.

The bad weather persisted through the early part of the week, thwarting rescuers. High winds stopped air searches and potential avalanche conditions hindered ground crews.

Rescuers got a break Friday when the weather cleared, and Donaher and Hudson were rescued well south

of the area they intended to hike. They were described as in "pretty tough shape" when they were rescued — suffering from severe hypothermia, frostbite and exposure. But they were later reported in good condition at a Fresno hospital where they were taken by helicopter immediately after their rescue.

Skiers Rescued; Both OK

Two men who were six days overdue from a cross country ski trip in the Sierra west of Independence were located and rescued in Sequoia National Forest Tuesday, tired and hungry but otherwise in good health.

According to Dave Walizer of the Civil Air Patrol, Ed Berry of El Portal and Dr. Will Spiegelman of San Francisco were rescued in the Big Arroyo Canyon area about 15 miles west of Mt. Whitney at 2:50 p.m.

Their tracks had been sighted during a Civil Air Patrol aerial search, and National Park Service ground crews were then directed to the location.

The two cross country skiers had apparently become disoriented and lost, Walizer said. They were far to the south of their intended destination and were still heading south, instead of west, when they were found.

Five aircraft from the Civil Air Patrol spent 13.8 hours in the air searching Tuesday, and were joined by helicopters from the National Park Service and the LeMoore Naval Air Station. The Park Service had searched the ground from the west, while Inyo County Search and Rescue teams went in from the east.

The two men were flown to Sequoia Park headquarters at Three Rivers late Tuesday afternoon.

Two missing skiers found

Two men, overdue some six days from a cross country ski trip in the mountains west of Independence were spotted and rescued Tuesday; tired and hungry but in good health apparently.

The men, Dr. Will Steigelman of San Francisco and Ed Barry of El Portal were rescued in the Big Arroyo Canyon area about 15 miles west of Mt. Whitney Tuesday afternoon.

According to Dave Walizer of the Bishop CAP their tracks were sighted during a CAP aerial search and ground crews were then directed to the two men. Walizer said that the men had apparently become disoriented and finally lost. They were far to the south of their intended destination.

Five CAP planes spent more than 13 hours in the search Tuesday and were joined by helicopters from the National Park Service and the LeMoore Naval Air Station.

Inyo S&R News

Inyo County Sheriff's Posse, Inc., Search and Rescue, held its annual election of officers for 1983. Congratulations to the winners.

The Installation Dinner is scheduled for Saturday, January 8, 7 to 8 p.m. cocktails, with dinner at 8 p.m., Sierra Embers, Bishop.

Those to be installed are: President (Captain)—Jim Randall; Vice President—Bruce Albert; Secretary—Clay Kelsey; Treasurer—Chuck Murdock; Board of Directors—Bob Wilson (1983-84); Bud Clayton (1983-84); Pat Elliott (1982-83); Chuck Murdock (1982-83); Bob West, (1982-83).

On November 20, the Posse conducted a training session on downed aircraft, followed by a barbecue and critique.

Participants included: Inyo County Sheriff's Posse, S & R, 10 members; Mammoth Lakes Search and Rescue, three members; China Lake Mtn. Rescue Group, one member; Dave Walizer, Civil Air Patrol; Leon Brune, Inyo County Coroner; Deputy Dan Lucas, Inyo County Sheriff's Office, Search and Rescue liaison; Jim Angelo, Inyo County Disaster Services Coordinator; and Joyce Schwinn, R.N., who supplied the "victims."

Thanks to Inyo County Sheriff's Posse, Inc. team members Chuck Murdock, Chris Keller, and Clay Kelsey for putting the successful training session together.

On November 10 and 11, Wheeler and Wilson Boot, in conjunction with Sierra Ski Touring of Mammoth Lakes, conducted an Avalanche Seminar.

There were approximately 45 participants, and a portion of the proceeds were donated to the Inyo County Sheriff's Posse, Inc., Search and Rescue.

Thanks to all those who turned out for a good seminar, and for the donation to support our organization.

Happy skiing

Two men rescued after week long ordeal

Two men rescued last Friday afternoon after five days in the backcountry above Bishop Creek remained hospitalized in Fresno over the weekend, recovering from the effects of their ordeal.

Paul Hudson, 21, and Mike Donaher of Edwards Air Force Base were located on Friday afternoon by a helicopter from LeMoore Naval Air Station as it was returning to the other side of the Sierra. An Inyo Sheriff's Deputy said the two men were located outside of the original search area where planes and helicopters had flown for two days looking for the missing hikers.

A nurse at Valley Medical Center in Fresno said Sunday afternoon that the two men remain in stable condition, suffering from frostbite, exposure and the effects of hypothermia.

The nurse said the two men remain under close observation because the exact extent of their frostbite damage is not yet known.

Hudson and Donaher had been listed as missing since last Monday when they failed to return as planned from a hiking trip in the LaMark Coll area above Bishop Creek. Their vehicle had been located parked near Aspendell and ground crews had searched the area on foot until avalanche danger became too great. Foul weather had prevented the use of helicopters earlier in the week but as soon as the weather cleared both the Navy and CHP had scanned the area.

Ridgecrest Couple Remembers

by Rose Certial
Ridgecrest Daily Independent
Editor's Note: This article is reprinted in the Sierra Daily News with the author's permission. It originally appeared in the Daily Independent October 6.

Claude and Beverly Wood had been looking forward for a long time to their eight-day backpack to the backcountry west of Bishop.

In celebration of their 33rd wedding anniversary, the Ridgecrest couple carefully planned their vacation to take in some of the most beautiful lakes and rugged peaks of the Sierra. The two have been into backpacking for 20 years.

Little did they know when they started out from the trailhead on Sept. 18 under gray skies that Hurricane Olivia would put a crimp in their plans, dumping rain and snow on their open-ended tube tent for three days straight. The Woods' "vacation" ended dramatically 13 days later with rescue by a China Lake Navy helicopter.

Cold, wet, hungry and off-course, the Woods discovered later that they had spent an extra night listening to the snow whip around them — unknowingly camped a quarter-mile from would-be rescuers.

Claude, 55, and Beverly, 53, were reported missing by their children when they failed to return to Ridgecrest as scheduled from the backpacking trip. As ground and air teams organized a search, the Woods continued hiking, looking for a place to cross a rain-swollen creek that blocked their exit from the mountains.

Their trip began on a Friday, at the Mosquito Flat trailhead at Rock Creek, about 20 miles northwest of Bishop. It was their wedding anniversary.

"Sleep in truck. Cold," wrote Beverly in the diary she kept of the trip.

According to their itinerary, their path was to have taken them over Mono Pass, across Mono Creek to Mills Creek, Lake Italy, Bear Creek Spire, Dade Lake and the Valley of Little Lakes.

They got beyond the creek and had reached a pass below Bear Creek Spire.

Thursday, 9-23: Cold. Boots dry; toilet paper not. Across polished ridges and up sheer granite side of valley — hands and knees in loose, sliding stuff. Magnificent views — stunning ... wrote Beverly in the diary.

"We could see the storm coming up fast from the south," Claude said in an interview Tuesday. "The place we were heading for was covered with snow and ice. Not a good place to get caught in a storm."

So the two retreated from the pass, retraced their steps and found they could not get across Mono Creek.

"It was a raging river," Claude Wood exclaimed. The log that they had crossed over was now under water. Waves leaped 15 feet into the air of a creek that cuts through a narrow gorge, he added.

Friday, 9-24: Disaster! Real storm came up — wind and icy sleet whipping in ends of cheap tent, got bottoms of sleeping bags wet and some of our clothes; could be serious.

The two set up their yellow plastic tube tent and waited for the rain to let up. It poured for 48 hours straight.

"It never stopped, night or day," said Claude. "It was heavy, steady and pretty chilly."

"We stayed warm all the time," his wife added and described how they wrapped the dry halves of each down bag around their feet and shoulders. Things were starting to look discouraging. This was not what the vacation was supposed to be. "I just wished the damn rain would stop," Claude added.

The two began rationing food.

Saturday, 9-25: ... Developed a "What if" game that became major occupation: "What if it rains for several days?" Helped to make plans for whatever possibilities might happen. And we made lists of things we are going to take next time (new tent, good rain suits, heavier boots) — all the time wondering just a bit in the very back of our minds if there was really going to be a next time. Should have been out today; worried mostly about the kids getting worried.

The storm cleared briefly Sunday and wet gear was laid out in the sun to dry.

"We knew we had to get to higher ground where the creek would be smaller," Claude said. They walked on, seeking a log that was not iced over. The rain and snow turned into sleet.

Wednesday, 9-29: Bitter cold; leaden skies. Claude's things didn't dry, nor did our boots (nor the stupid toilet paper) ... Found safe log to cross on upstream and made it without getting wetter. Now only about five or six miles to go. Hurried like mad — not fast enough. Clouds catching up. Snow now, cold and colder ... Creeks all over the place. Icy and slippery — boots wet, getting cold. Clouds settling down — can't see many feet ahead. Better stop while we're still on trail. Can't keep fire going in heavy snow. Got tent up and put sleeping bags together to be warmer. Depressed — thought we'd be out by now. Cold.

All day snow. All night snow. Since the couple could not make it over the 12,000-foot Mono Pass without snow gear, they decided to turn around and go west, to lower elevations where it would be warmer and they might come across help from other hikers or packers on the John Muir Trail. Eventually, they hoped to reach a telephone and other accommodations at Lake Edison, east of Fresno.

An inventory of food turned up two instant breakfasts, two tea bags, one candy bar and some dried fruit, according to Beverly's notes.

Everywhere they went, they left notes that said where they were going for anyone who might be looking for them. Each tied a yellow ground-

cloth to the pack of the other that could be quickly pulled off and waved in case a helicopter went by.

Thursday, 9-30: ... It's beautiful — can't help seeing how beautiful the forest is in the snow. Start back; creeks terrible to cross — ice an inch thick on logs and rocks. Boots wet again. An open place in the forest — I hear a chopper? We grab our flags and wave like crazy! He circles twice and flies away. We're ecstatic and wait — now what?

What's the protocol of being rescued? We decide to move on and find where he landed; then we decide to stay put. Twice we start out and come back. Finally we're so frustrated we begin to think we imagined the chopper.

A cruel mirage? The Woods started back down the trail, following their original plan to reach Lake Edison. (Later, they were told by the pilot that he at first thought the two figures clad in bright red rain-suits were part of the China Lake Search and Rescue group camped nearby.)

The woods reached a wide clearing and waited. Soon, the orange and white helicopter piloted by Lt. Cmdr. Chip Lancaster returned and landed in a swirl of snow.

The Woods were flown to Rock Creek, which was abuzz with activity. Since Tuesday, the trailhead where the couple had left their vehicle had been turned into a rescue center. In addition to the estimated 25 members of the China Lake group in the field, more help was being mobilized by the Inyo, Sierra Madre and Mono Search and Rescue teams. After they were fed a warm meal, the Woods learned that they were literally surrounded by teams of rescuers who had crossed Mono Pass in a snowstorm to look for them.

"They had a team above and a team below, a team on every route we could have taken," Claude Wood said. Ironically, the Woods were told they had gotten on the wrong trail and had spent a chilly Wednesday evening about a quarter-mile from a China Lake team encampment.

"Those guys are tops in my book," Claude said. Go back?

Crews searching for two missing hikers

Search and rescue efforts continued Wednesday for a 50-year-old couple from Ridgecrest, Claude and Beverly Wood, who have been reported missing since Saturday while on a hike in the High Sierra.

Search and rescue units were in the Rock Creek roadhead area Wednesday and were expected to go in by foot if a helicopter called in was unable to fly because of the inclement weather.

Deputy Dan Lucas from the Inyo Sheriff's office who is coordinating the search said the weather was hindering the search operations with high winds and blowing snow.

The couple, according to their two sons, who are now with the search party, had planned a 10-mile loop trip out of Rock Creek, back through Mono Pass and then back to Rock Creek. They reported their parents both experienced hikers but food, by now, may be a problem.

"You bet," both responded. "This time with a better tent," she added.

Thursday, 9-30: And all that blue sky and sunlight and everything. What a great world! What a great bunch of people! What a 33rd wedding anniversary! (Except for that damn toilet paper; it never did get dry!)

No Injuries

Couple Rescued

by SANDY HARRISON
SDN Staff Writer

A Ridgecrest couple was spotted and rescued in excellent condition Thursday morning, five days after they were scheduled to return from a backpacking trip in the Rock Creek area.

Claude Wood, 52, and his wife Beverly, 50, were spotted by helicopter at 9:20 a.m. on the west side of Mono Pass in Fresno County, said Inyo Search and Rescue coordinator Dan Lucas.

The two, described as very experienced hikers and campers, had left the Rock Creek area Saturday, August 18, and were scheduled to return a week later.

However, after crossing Mono Creek on the Sierra's western slope, the couple became stranded when heavy rains turned the stream into an impassable river last weekend.

The Woods decided to hike westward toward Lake Edison instead of trying to cross the crest again, Lucas said.

Two Campers Still Missing

Search and Rescue personnel combed the Rock Creek area Wednesday in snow, wind and very cold weather for a missing Ridgecrest couple now five days overdue from a hiking trip.

But there was no sign of Claude Wood, 52, and his wife Beverly, 50.

Inyo Search and Rescue coordinator Dan Lucas searched the trail Wednesday, going both directions around the circular trail the Woods had planned to take.

Inyo, China Lake, Mammoth and

Sierra Madre searchers are scheduled to resume the search today with help from a China Lake helicopter. If the weather permits, Lucas noted that the couple are experienced hikers and, if they can keep warm, they could be in good shape. They have hiked in the area before and are familiar with the terrain, he said.

The couple's sons told authorities Tuesday that their parents had not returned from their lengthy backpacking trip.

He said he spoke with the hikers for about a half-hour after the rescue, after which they returned home.

Up to 40 rescuers from Inyo, Mammoth, China Lake and Sierra Madre teams participated in the effort, along with a China Lake helicopter.

Couple found in Sierra alive, well and happy

The search for a Ridgecrest couple, lost in the stormy High Sierra since Saturday, ended happily late Wednesday afternoon. They were spotted by an observer in the Navy helicopter, from China Lake, participating in the search.

Claude and Beverly Wood are alive and well as they returned to Mosquito Flat, in Rock Creek Canyon, where their car was left parked. They were driven home by one of their sons today.

Deputy Dan Lucas of Inyo County Sheriff's office was in charge of the search and rescue mission that included a team of volunteer experts from Mammoth, China Lake and Los Angeles. Lucas praised their efforts, noting that the search took the team into Fresno County—over the Sierra crest—where the search ended.

Lucas confirmed earlier reports that the Woods, experienced mountain hikers, had left an itinerary of their hike in their car. The deputy praised that idea saying it was "most helpful" and urged other hikers to do the same before taking off into rugged country.

Appreciation For Inyo And Mono Search And Rescue Squads From Ridgecrest Couple

Editor:

Our recent adventure in the Sierras (ending 30 September) showed us more than rain and snow; it showed us how great people are!

When two storms, flooded creeks, and unseasonal snow lengthened our week-long backpack trip to a wet, cold, and slightly hungry two-weeks, the response of your community was terrific.

We'd like to be able to list here the names of every individual who was involved in the effort to locate and help us, but it simply isn't possible. Believe us, though, it was all appreciated and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

A very special thanks to Dan Lucas and his group of experts who provided their time, skill, knowledge, and expertise to help us, at a time when your community had serious problems of its own.

Also to the Mono County Search and Rescue Team who also turned out in snow and ice; your concern and involvement was greatly appreciated.

It is a comfort for all of us who use the Sierras for recreation to realize that such dedicated people are there when you most need them.

Many thanks to all of you!

Claude and Beverly Wood,
Ridgecrest

1983

Search Team Statistics

by SANDY HARRISON
SDN Staff Writer

The Inyo County Search and Rescue team was called out 50 times during 1982, and went on 30 missions involving 63 victims, according to statistics released Monday by Search and Rescue Coordinator Dan Lucas.

All but two of the 63 victims survived, Lucas said. The two deaths were both mountain climbers — a Connecticut man who fell from Mt. Whitney, and a Southern California woman crushed by a falling boulder.

Backpackers were the most common rescue victims (14), followed closely by climbers (13), as wintry conditions persisted in the backcountry well into the unusually cool summer.

Two rescues stood out as particularly amazing in 1982.

Inga Bertruch, 60, of Arizona was found after surviving four days in the rugged, sub-freezing wilderness near Piute Pass in July. Her rescue climaxed a huge cooperative effort, involving 70 men and women, eight dogs and four helicopters.

Then in September, 84-year-old Burr Stalnaker was rescued after a 24-hour ordeal near Mt. Whitney. He had fallen and suffered broken ribs, a fractured skull and separated shoulder, but had amazingly managed to continue hiking.

Lucas estimated that the rescues cost Inyo County \$3,715 in time and training to regular deputies, but saved the county far more money through other services.

Federal helicopters, Civil Air Patrol aircraft, reserve deputies and Search and Rescue personnel, and out-of-county assistance gave the county nearly \$250,000, Lucas reported.

Inyo Sheriff's Posse installs new officers

Installation of officers highlighted a dinner meeting of the Inyo County Sheriff's Posse Search and Rescue team last Saturday night.

Heading the organization for the coming year are Jim Randall, president; Bruce Albert, vice president; Clay Kelsey, secretary; Chuck Murdock, treasurer; and directors, Bob Wilson, Bud Clayton, Chuck Murdock, Bob West and Pat Elliott.

The entire organization met earlier in the day for a demonstration at the Bishop Airport by a helicopter and crew from Lemoore Air Station. Members of the Mammoth Search and Rescue team also participated.

S & R installation dinner Jan. 23

Inyo County Sheriff's Posse, Inc., search and rescue will hold its 1982 installation dinner Saturday, Jan. 23 at the VFW Hall, 484 Short St., in Bishop. The officers to be installed are Jim Randall, president; Fred Henke, vice president; Jackie Randall, secretary; and Charlie Shore, treasurer.

Woman hiker breaks hip

A woman in her 50's suffered a broken hip Tuesday in a hiking accident in the Death Valley area. According to the Inyo Sheriff's Dept. the unidentified woman had apparently fallen while hiking in an area of Tecopa/Shoshone near where that archaeological dig is going on to unearth the skeleton of a mammoth.

Flight for Life helicopter rescue service out of Las Vegas was called in and airlifted the injured woman to Nevada for hospitalization.

Saturday S&R Training

Inyo County Search and Rescue is having a helicopter training exercise Saturday, January 8 at the Bishop Airport Hut.

All members and invited guests should arrive at 12:45 p.m. for classroom exercise.

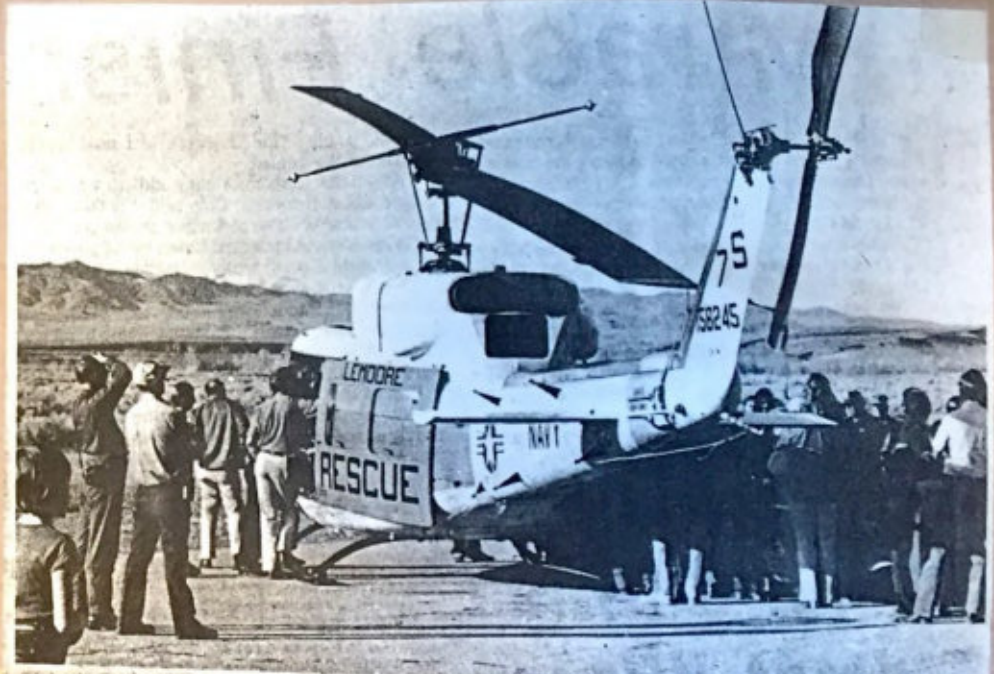
The public is invited to view the exercises from 2:30 to 3 p.m.

Lemoore Naval Airbase personnel will be there with a helicopter.



TRAINING EXERCISE—A search and rescue helicopter from Lemoore Naval Air Station flew to Bishop this past Saturday and took part in an extensive training exercise held at the Bishop Airport. Taking part in the demonstration were members of the Inyo County Search and

Rescue Team and the Mammoth Lakes Search and Rescue. Pictured here is the helicopter used in rescue operations throughout Inyo-Mono and members of the crew demonstrating many of the safety and rescue devices on board the craft.
Don Calkins photo



Inyo County Search and Rescue personnel had a helicopter training exercise Saturday at the Bishop

Airport as interested members of the public watched. Lemoore Naval Airbase personnel brought the

Inyo S & R Wants New Radio

Jim Randall of Inyo County Search and Rescue will ask the Board of Supervisors Tuesday to provide Search and Rescue with one of the emergency radios recently purchased by the County as part of its disaster preparedness plan.

Randall, who will speak to the Board at 10:05 a.m. in Independence, made this request a few weeks ago through Supervisor Dee Cook. The Board declined to take action on the request and some Supervisors noted that the Sheriff's Department would have some of these radios, which would mean Search and Rescue personnel would have some access to the units.

Under departmental items, the County Administrator will ask for discussion of the Board of Supervisors' Revenue Committee's recommendation concerning increase of the County occupancy tax.

More Inyo 'Disaster' Radios

by CHRIS CAVANAUGH
SON Staff Writer

By a 4-1 vote Tuesday, Inyo County Supervisors authorized the Health Department to purchase eight new radios for use in a disaster or other emergency situation.

Although the money for these radios is available in the current Health Department budget, which means no new expenditure by the county is required, Supervisor Lefty Irwin still didn't agree that County Health Officer Dr. George Kibler's department should be provided with these radios.

Kibler's request also stated that he had sufficient funds in his budget to purchase a radio for Inyo County Search and Rescue.

Irwin first made a motion to approve Kibler's other requests for appropriation of funds for typewriters and calculators. That motion did not include allowing purchase of any radios, except for the Search and Rescue radio requested by Jim Randall a few weeks ago. That motion was defeated 4-1.

Supervisor Larry Calkins then

made the final motion to approve the seven radios for Kibler, the radio for Search and Rescue and the office equipment. Total cost of these items will be \$9,459.

"We're going to clog up the frequencies," lamented Irwin after the meeting. "Other department heads are waiting in the wings with their requests. And Mr. (Jim) Angelo (County Coordinator Disaster) and Mr. (Mike) Hanford (County Administrator) have been using these radios for conversation on their way home from work. I'm afraid we're defeating the purpose for which these radios were intended."

During the meeting, Irwin had said: "The more of these (radios) we get on the air, it'll be just like CBs."

However, Sheriff Don Dorsey told the Board that he didn't think the radios had been handed out "in a reckless manner." He added that he was responsible for Channel 1, the Sheriff's frequency.

"If there is abuse, I'll make sure those radios are removed from those people," said Dorsey.

Inyo board okays radios for disaster communication

The Inyo County Board of Supervisors voted this week to equip county health department vehicles with radios for better communication on a daily basis and in the event of a disaster in the area.

The board took the action on motion of Supervisor Larry Calkins. The vote was 4-1, with Supervisor Lefty Irwin casting the dissenting vote.

Irwin voted no after telling his colleagues he thought too many people could have access to the frequency upon which the communication network would operate. Health Officer Dr. George Kibler said, however, that the network could operate on a number of different channels in disaster situations and thus limit public access to health department communications.

Cost of the equipment was estimated at \$9,459.

The funds will be health department funds returned to the department last year, as the result of county termination of a requirement that the department pay a fee into the county motor pool for replacement of vehicles.

The funds won't be needed to buy new vehicles this year because the department had received a grant to buy three automobiles, Mrs. Jeanette Graves, department spokesperson, told the board.

As a result of the board action, the department's animal control officer vehicles will have radios; the Death Valley nurse will have a radio as will the Death Valley Health Center and Dr. Kibler's vehicle.

The health department will also buy a radio for the search and rescue team.

Sheriff Don Dorsey told board members that his department will take steps to halt any abuses on the radios by unauthorized persons.

Rotary honors 50-yr. member, the late H.A. Van Loon

Capt. Jim Randolph of Inyo County Search and Rescue will address Bishop Rotary Club next Tuesday noon at Sierra Embers.

Last Tuesday True Everhart of Continental Telephone was guest speaker, explaining phone company deregulation. The meeting was adjourned in memory of 50-year club member H.A. Van Loon, who had 47 years perfect attendance in the club.

Dewey Weatherford reported on last week's golf tourney and made the following awards: Worst etiquette, Don Rigney; worst drive, Bill Piggott; worst putter, Troy Oney; biggest drive, Tom Turney; worst set of clubs, Newey Clement; worst score, Austin Keithley; most balls in the lake, John Camphouse; most lost balls, John Runkle; least improved golfer, Jim Wilkes.

The club's Valentine party will be 6 p.m. Feb. 11 at Dave and Pat Wiltzie's.

Sunday Skiing 'Snowed Out'

The second day of the Bishop Chamber of Commerce Second Annual Cross Country Ski Event on Sunday was called off due to heavy snowfall.

Several races were scheduled for Sunday, including 5K and 10K races sanctioned by the United States Ski Association. The races will be rescheduled, said Chamber Manager Mike Bradley Sunday, but a date won't be chosen until later this week.

Saturday was a day for learning the basics of cross country skiing with instructors and equipment available for beginners. Organizers reported a good turnout for most of the day, but snow did start to fall in the afternoon.

SKI EVENT CANCELLED

Due to a blustery snow storm which swept the area last weekend the Bishop Chamber of Commerce Cross Country Ski Event slated in the Bishop Creek area was cancelled last weekend. The event will be rescheduled.

Annual cross country ski event set Feb. 5-6

Saturday and Sunday February 5th and 6th marks the date for this year's annual Bishop Cross Country Ski Event. The event now a two day activity will begin by introducing the entire family to the great outdoor sport of cross country skiing. Free equipment and instructions will be made available for a limited time to all interested in learning.

On Sunday the two day activity promises to bring out the intermediate as well as advanced Nordic Skier to a day of competition in the 5K and 10 Kilometer races sanctioned by the United States Ski Association. Race time is scheduled for 10 a.m. novice, intermediate and advanced skiers are all welcome to compete for honors. Trophies, plaques and great prizes will be presented to several different categories, in the Men, Women and Children races in Sunday's event.

This year's two-day event will be held in the Bishop Creek area, near the Bishop Creek Lodge just off Highway 168.

This Chamber of Commerce event is being presented in association with the Outdoorsman, The Bishop Creek Lodge, Gillespie Distributors Miller Brewing Company, Wheeler Boots, Herron Sporting Goods, and Garner Sports.

Thanks To All Who Helped At Chamber Cross Country Ski Days

Editor: ORBUS

The recently held Chamber of Commerce Cross Country Ski Days was an outstanding success in spite of the weather-caused delay. We wish to thank all of those who helped make it such a success.

During the first day novice event, many children and adults alike had the opportunity to try the sport for the first time. Thanks to the factory representatives and volunteers who provided equipment and instruction at no charge.

During the second day, beginners through advanced skiers competed in race events culminated by a drawing in which all participants had a chance to win one of a number of beautiful prizes; again made available by factory representatives, local sporting goods stores and beverage distributors.

Those people deserving a special thanks are: Dennis Orbus, Jerry

Camino, Dick Warren of the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Ski Association, Outdoorsman, Bishop Creek Lodge, Wheeler-Wilson Boot Repair, Garner Sports, Gillespie Distributing, KIBS, KIOQ, Sierra Daily News, Challant Press, John Young, Inyo County Search & Rescue, CalTrans, Inyo County Road Department, Brown's Supplies, Automobile Club of Southern California, Bishop Swim Team, Linson Signs, Susie Burak, Allen Petrasanta, Hank Levine and the many Chamber volunteers.

We are looking forward to another successful event next year to provide an enjoyable activity for many, as well as encourage additional winter revenue for the Bishop business community.

Lloyd Anderson,
LeeAnn Rasmussen,
Event Co-Chairmen,
Bishop

Bishop Youngster Drowns In Pond

A two-year-old Bishop boy died at a Long Beach hospital Sunday, one day after being pulled unconscious from a pond near Shepard Lane in West Bishop.

The youngster was identified as Ron Beach, the son of Dick and Roseanne Beach of Bishop.

Rescuers from the Bishop Police and Inyo Sheriff's Departments pulled the small boy from the pond at 9:40 a.m. Saturday. He had no heartbeat and was not breathing, according to the Sheriff's Department.

"An off-duty EMT from the Police

Department administered CPR and restored a heartbeat," said Sgt. Dan Lucas of the Sheriff's Department. "But I guess breathing was never restored to normal."

Lucas did not know how long the boy had been in the water when his father discovered him there.

He was rushed to Northern Inyo Hospital and later airlifted to Long Beach Memorial, where he died Sunday. His family was with him at the time.

There was no immediate word on services.

Funeral held Wednesday for Bishop child who drowned

Funeral services were held Wednesday for two-year-old Bron Beach, the Bishop child who died Sunday night at Children's Hospital in Los Angeles after falling into a backyard pond at his West Bishop home.

Bron, the son of local school teachers, Dick and Rosie Beach, had been rushed to Northern Inyo Hospital by Bishop police who administered CPR to the young boy who was not breathing. He was later airlifted to Los Angeles where he remained in the intensive care unit at Children's Hospital for about 24 hours prior to his death.

A Mass of the Angels was held Wednesday at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in Bishop with the Msgr. James Malloy and the Rev. Don Smith of The Neighborhood Church officiating. Burial followed at Pioneer Cemetery.

Rotarians hear of Search, Rescue

Capt. Jim Randall of Inyo County Search and Rescue addressed Bishop Rotary Club Tuesday, explaining work of the unit which conducted 70 searches last year. The big one was July 4 weekend when they rescued a lady. Total value of that search, including all the volunteer hours, was estimated at \$85,000. Actual cost was \$6000, indicating the great worth of the unit's contribution in behalf of humanity and the taxpayer.

The Rotary board of directors has announced a \$500 annual scholarship has been arranged in the name of the late Herbert Anthony Van Loon, club past president, who had 47 years perfect attendance.

Next Tuesday Program Chairman Chuck Fryxell will present Randy Pector, executive director, Inyo-Mono Association of Governmental Entities, as guest speaker.

More than 70 attended the club's Valentine party Feb. 11 at Dave and Pat Wiltzie's.

Missing Since Sunday

Skier Dies In Rock Creek Fall

by SANDY HARRISON
SDN Staff Writer

A Santa Monica man was killed, apparently late Sunday, after falling 400 feet off Bear Creek Spire in the Rock Creek Drainage.

Rescuers found the body of James Richardson, 37, in a remote area Wednesday.

Inyo Search and Rescue coordinator Sgt. Dan Lucas said Richardson is the fourth person to die on Bear Creek Spire in the past

three years. Most recently, a young woman was crushed to death by a falling boulder last summer.

Richardson, who had been staying with friends in Bishop, went cross country skiing alone Sunday.

Lucas said that a group of skiers spotted Richardson Sunday afternoon, and reported seeing him take off his skis and begin hiking. Later, they discovered that his camp had not been returned to, Lucas said.

The cross-country guide told the

Forest Service about the sighting Monday, but that agency had issued no wilderness permits for single skiers over the weekend.

Two people from Rock Creek Mountain Resort followed Richardson's ski trail Tuesday. Lucas said, to the 13,713 foot summit of Bear Creek Spire. The tracks led off the edge into a steep, remote, and relatively inaccessible area, Lucas said.

"It's definitely not the type of area we consider skiable," Lucas added. "We don't know if he was skiing or hiking at that point."

Richardson's pack was found nearby, and Wednesday morning Inyo Search and Rescue personnel, along with a Lemoore Naval helicopter, searched the area and found Richardson's body near the east side of Bear Creek Spire. "He had apparently fallen about 400 feet and was probably killed instantly," Lucas said.

Richardson had probably hiked and skied about three miles before falling, Lucas said.

Bear Creek Spire is located about 15 miles southeast of Tom's Place on the Inyo-Fresno County line at the Sierra Crest above the Rock Creek drainage.

Searchers find body of unidentified hiker

An Inyo Search and Rescue team found the body of a young unidentified hiker early Wednesday afternoon in the Rock Creek basin.

The victim, believed to be the son of a Prof. Richardson of Houston, Tex. was reported missing Tuesday after guests at the Rock Creek Lodge had found his tent and cross country skis. He had been seen earlier in the day at his tent and then had apparently hiked into the wilderness.

A helicopter from Lemoore Naval Station was dispatched to lift the body down to the Rock Creek Lodge, where the sheriff's department had established a search command post. The body was to be transported to the Bishop mortuary.

FS Employee Airlifted

Forest Service personnel airlifted a cross country skier out of a wilderness area in the White Mountains late Thursday, after the woman had become stuck without

supplies.

The skier, reportedly an off-duty Forest Service employee, was able to radio for help. Her identity was not immediately available.

Inyo S&R Calendar

Inyo Search and Rescue calendar:

- March 6—Rope handling practice, 1230, Buttermilk.
March 10—Rope handling training, 1930, Posse Hut.
March 11, 12 and 13—Training session, Death Valley's Furnace Creek. An inter-agency SAR exercise hosted by the National Parks Service in Death Valley National Monument.
March 17—Rope handling training, 1930, Posse Hut (green ropes will be provided).
March 24—Board meeting, 1930, Posse Hut.
April 23 & 24—CLMRG-INYO SAR Tracking training, Tuttle Creek and Lone Pine.

ITEMS TO NOTE

The By-Laws have been updated. The Board of Directors has decided that:

1. The minimum acceptable uniform for team members shall be an orange shirt, hat and an anorak with appropriate patches.
2. "Any member of the Posse who has not paid his or her dues by the general meeting of March of each year shall be considered as not renewing his or her membership."

Today Bishop AARP

The regular meeting of the Bishop Chapter 1514 American Association of Retired Persons will be held at the Senior Citizens Center, 506 Park Ave., Bishop, March 4 at 1:30 p.m.

A fine program has been arranged by Julia McKean and Mabel Woodcox.

Jim Randall representing Search and Rescue and Dick Moxley, Tri-County Fair administrator will be presented checks. Leonard Sluyter will show slides of the Pacific Northwest, some of the places that will be seen on the June 30 to July 19 A.A.R.P. tour.

Plans are being made for a driver training course to be sponsored by the Chapter.

A.A.R.P. welcomes all senior citizens to the meetings. Refreshments and bingo follow the business meeting.

S & R Exercise

About 140 individuals representing public, private and volunteer agencies will participate in a disaster drill Saturday at the Death Valley Monument Airport. Inyo County Disaster Services Coordinator Jim Angelo said this week.

According to Angelo, among the agencies to be represented are the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, Inyo County Sheriff's Department, County Health Department, County Office of Disaster Services, the local Red Cross, units from China Lake Naval Weapons Center and members of the Civil Air Patrol from both Bishop and Ridgecrest.

Four helicopters from the Marine base near Barstow will also be used in the drill, which involves emergency response to a downed aircraft sometime between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.

An Icy Dive At Convict Now, To Help Save Lives Later

by DAN MANKIN
SDN Staff Writer

"It's not exactly a sport that you would want to drive around the country and dive in frozen lakes, but it was very enjoyable." That was Mono County Sheriff's Deputy Terry Hier's reaction to his first dive under the frozen waters of Convict Lake Thursday as part of the Department's ice rescue and underwater recovery training program.

Hier was the first of about 20 divers from several different counties to brave the icy waters. Before entering he was understandably nervous, but after it was all done he said he thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

"It was real pretty," he said, "nice and green and visibility was 30 to 40 feet. The ice was nice and flat

on the bottom; it has air bubbles and they almost seem to just radiate the light. It was very pretty, I've wanted to see what the underside of the ice looks like for a long time."

Thursday's training session was the final day of a three day program which involved over-the-ice rescues, underwater rescue and recovery, and classroom instruction. Instructor Damon Rust, a professional diver and former policeman and fireman in Fort Collins, Colo., said he was "very pleased" with the performances of his students.

To obtain the special training, Mono County entered into a cooperative agreement with Inyo, San Bernardino, Placer and Amador counties. Boating and Traffic Enforcement Officer Dan Peterson had heard of Rust's reputation and initially brought up the idea of con-

tracting his services for the training program. Rust represents a company called Dive Rescue out of Fort Collins, and travels around the country instructing classes similar to this one.

Mono's dive team captain Deputy Duane "Hap" Hazard explained that each team is divided into divers and support personnel. Noting that the support personnel represent about 90 percent of the success of the rescue operation, he explained that it is their responsibility to make sure the diver's suit is sealed, that the air regulator doesn't freeze, and to remain in constant contact with the diver through signals using the tether line attached to the diver.

Mono's support team consists of Deputies Don Urquhart, Terry Gardner, and Rick Scholl, Animal Control Officer Tom Votava and

Corrections Officer Mike O'Brian. The divers are Hazard, Hier and Peterson.

The support team is equipped with special suits which will protect them from the cold should they fall through the ice. "They will not get wet, they will be buoyant and we will be able to recover them with very little risk to them or danger to us," said Hazard.

The dive team is fully equipped with special ice diving equipment which considerably reduces the risk to the diver, Hazard said, but noted that there is no perfect ice diving equipment on the market as yet, and some risk still remains.

Although Mono's dive team has been called out on rescues in the past, they have never received any formal training other than to

continued on page 3



Mono Deputy Terry Hier lowers himself into the icy waters of Convict Lake during an ice diving and rescue seminar Thursday. Timing Hier's dive is Mono Deputy Duane "Hap" Hazard, left, and Deputy Don Urquhart keeps a firm hold on a tether attached to Hier's diving suit. The group, consisting of Inyo Search and Rescue personnel and other California Rescue teams, had to cut through over three feet of ice before making the training dives.
Dan Mankin photo

— Dive

continued from page 1

become certified divers. As such, they found out they have been very fortunate that they have survived some of those rescues.

Undersheriff Bud Mann explained, "Damon Rust really brought it home on some of the very tragic incidents that have occurred this last winter all over the country with numerous rescuers dying, as well as all the victims, simply because of poor procedures like going out on the ice with a ladder and the whole works going in and the rescuers being dressed in regular street clothing.

"The whole emphasis is on being properly equipped to do it," Mann continued. With the protective suits and following the proper procedure, rescuers can get a victim out within three minutes."

Mammoth and June Lakes search and rescue teams will also be trained in over-the-ice rescue, but all the underwater recovery incidents will be handled by the special team of Deputies.

Murdock Services Today

by SANDY HARRISON
SDN Staff Writer

Memorial services are scheduled this afternoon for Bishop banker Chuck Murdock, one of the town's most community-minded businessmen, who died suddenly from a massive heart attack at his home early Friday morning. He was 53.

Murdock died almost instantly in his sleep at 2:35 a.m. without regaining consciousness, according to the County Coroner's office.

His death, because of his constant community activity, easy-going manner, and seeming good health, left local business and community groups stunned.

"People like Chuck mean a great deal to both the business people and the community at large," said a saddened Bishop Chamber of Commerce Manager Mike Bradley after learning of Murdock's death.

"We are in a time when volunteerism is extremely important," Bradley said. "When you have business people like Chuck who are so involved and willing to give their time, it really makes a Chamber effective."

"There was never a time when we could call on the community for help and Chuck wouldn't be one of the first involved. That's just how he was," Bradley said.

Bradley said that the remainder of Murdock's term on the Chamber Board will be filled by appointment after the remaining directors and the Executive Board consider recommendations from himself and Chamber President Joe Green.

Murdock came to Bishop in 1980 to

continued on page 3



CHUCK MURDOCK
1929-1983

— Murdock

continued from page 1

manage the local branch of Valley Federal Savings, replacing former Chamber President T.K. McCutcheon, who moved away.

He quickly became a Chamber of Commerce Board member and was named president of the Chamber's Ambassador Club, which recruits and welcomes new members.

He was an active member of the Bishop Lions Club, District Chairman for the Boy Scouts of America, and was elected secretary-treasurer for Inyo County Search and Rescue after volunteering for that strenuous and often dangerous work.

He was an avid tennis player and active in church events as well.

Born Charles Cullen Murdock in Beaver, Utah, on May 17, 1929, he is survived by his wife Bitsy, son Douglas of La Crescenta, daughter Debra of Eugene, Oregon, and three brothers.

Murdock's family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations be sent in his name to Inyo County Search and Rescue or the St. Timothy's memorial fund.

A memorial service is scheduled for 1 p.m. today at St. Timothy's Church in Bishop. The Reverend Christopher Kelley will officiate.

Chuck Murdock Remembered

Editor:

We know why he came to the Owens Valley, because there is more beauty than just Mt. Whitney, Mt. Tom, the Buttermilks, or the Minarets.

The real beauty in this valley is its people. You can scale its peaks, walk its valleys or stare at its beauty, but you can't beat its people. Chuck Murdock knew that—he

loved this valley, he marveled at it, but he knew that its heart was its people.

To all of you in the Owens Valley, thank you for sharing it with Chuck; thank you for caring about Chuck.

God Bless All Of You

The staff of
Valley Federal Savings

Charles C. Murdock

Funeral services were held Monday, March 7 for Charles C. Murdock, 53, following his death March 4 at his home. The Rev. Christopher P. Kelley of the St. Timothy's Episcopal Church officiated at the service, held at the church. Burial was private.

Mr. Murdock came to this area two years ago. He is survived by his wife, Bitsy Murdock of Bishop; a son, Douglas Murdock of La Crescenta; a daughter, Debra J. Murdock of Eugene, Ore.; a brother, DeWolfe Murdock of Highland, CA, Wilson Murdock of Redlands, CA and Tom Murdock of Jacksonville, FL.

Mr. Murdock was secretary-treasurer of the Inyo Search & Rescue Team, district chairman of the Boy Scouts of America, and a member of the Bishop Lions Club and board member of the Bishop Chamber of Commerce.

Lost Skiers Return

Six missing cross country skiers who had become trapped in a storm high in the wilderness above Lake Sabrina last week, hiked out last Thursday night.

Inyo Search and Rescue Captain Jim Randall said one man was suffering from severe frostbite to his toes. The others were in good health.

The skiers, all from the Los Angeles area, became stuck in a blizzard Tuesday near Lamarck Lake, about four miles west of Lake Sabrina at the base of Mt. Darwin. Fortunately, they had entered the wilderness properly equipped to wait out the storm.

When the weather cleared late Thursday, they hiked east through the narrow Lamarck Pass, narrowly escaping an avalanche they apparently triggered themselves.

"That's a rough area to get through in these conditions," Randall said. They were really very lucky to make it out."

Six Skiers Missing

Inyo searchers were preparing Thursday to begin looking for six cross country skiers two days overdue from a trip to the North and Loch Lomond lakes area.

The six people, all from the Los Angeles area, were described as experienced backcountry snow travelers and skiers. They are reportedly well-equipped to camp in the area for an extended period.

If they don't return by this morning, searchers will reportedly start looking.

Boy Scout Camporee set April 15-17 at Lone Pine

A Desert-Inyo-Mono Camporee of the Boy Scouts will be held April 15-17 at the Tuttle Creek Campground near Lone Pine. In making the announcement, Joe Crimi, district commissioner, said there will be a program of competitive events.

They were listed as:

Search for lost mine—Each patrol will need a compass. The gold is gone but there may be a problem that only your patrol can solve. Closest to Claim Stake gets top score.

Fire burning and dousing—Wood provided. Patrol should have an axe or knife. Wood preparation is very important but not timed. The time starts when the fire is ready to start.

Search and rescue—A plane is down and crew must be found. Trailing them could be very difficult. A patrol can work together and solve this one. The camping skill award will have the answers for this rescue event.

Communications—The patrol will divide into two groups and be separated by some distance. Voice communication is not allowed, most any other method is. They will be given a short message to communicate to the other group. Score is based on accuracy.

First aid—Patrol will need to be up on bandages, splints and emergency equipment.

300 scouts to attend camporee this weekend

An estimated 300 Boy Scouts of the Inyo-Mono and Desert Districts will be holding a camporee this weekend, April 15-17, at the Tuttle Creek campground in the Alabama Hills west of Lone Pine. It will be a joint venture with Inyo-Mono hosting the event and Desert providing the program.

Scouts will be attending from Mammoth in the north to Boron in the south, west to Lake Isabella and east to Trona.

Arrival time Friday is 4 to 8 p.m. Patrols will check in and be assigned to camp sites. Saturday there will be the opening assembly and start of competitive events. On Sunday there will be flag ceremony and religious services. The camporee will close at 10 a.m.

Scheduled to attend is Dick Carrasco, of Lone Pine, oldest scout master in the area.

Inyo Dist. Commissioner Joe Crimi has invited the public to attend, hours 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

High Winds Prevent Rescue Of X-C Skier

Gusty winds have prevented authorities from rescuing a cross-country skier with a broken leg in the Mt. Whitney area, the Inyo Sheriff's Department said Tuesday.

Gary McCorpin, 40 of Mission Viejo, is stranded near Little Meyson Lake with a broken femur, he suffered in a fall, deputies said.

Two members of the search and rescue team had reached him on foot by late afternoon, but a China Lake helicopter couldn't get into the remote area because of the winds. If conditions permit, and if a helicopter is again available, they'll try to airlift McCorpin out again this

morning. The forecast, however, is calling for additional gusty winds today.

The Sheriff's Department was notified via CB radio at about 1 p.m. Tuesday that McCorpin was injured and unable to get out. Companions had hiked out to the Whitney Portal store, where they radioed for help, according to the Sheriff's Department.

Injured skier rescued from Mt. Whitney area

Gusty winds threatened to cancel the operation for several hours, but Monday a man with a broken leg stranded in the Mt. Whitney area was finally airlifted out to get medical help.

Gary McCorpin, 40, of Mission Viejo broke his left leg while cross country skiing in the area around Little Mayson Lake at the 10,000 ft. level. A helicopter rescue team from China Lake Naval Weapons Center had to turn back on Sunday afternoon, again due to turbulence and winds.

They decided to try again Monday morning but almost scrapped the operation before it started. However, Inyo Search and Rescue team members who hiked up to be with McCorpin overnight finally convinced the pilot and crew that the weather was actually calmer up on the mountain than it was down in the valley.

About 10:30 Monday morning the rescue team managed to fly in and lift the injured man into the chopper. He was taken to Southern Inyo Hospital for help and from there he was transferred to a hospital closer to his home in Orange County.

Injured Skier Rescued

A Mission Viejo man who was stranded near Mr. Whitney with a broken leg was rescued Monday and is now recuperating at a southern California Hospital.

Gary McCorpin, 40, was rescued by a China Lake Naval Weapons Center helicopter at about 11 a.m., after several Inyo Search and Rescue members hiked into the snowy wilderness and spent the night with him.

At 7 a.m., China Lake officials said the weather was too bad to attempt the rescue, but within a few hours winds had calmed, and McCorpin was brought out to Southern Inyo Hospital in Lone Pine. He then took a charter plane south.