



## Ill Man Missing 24 Hours

March 28-29, 1970  
Meadowbrook  
1970-004

by Mike Daugherty

An explanation of how we spent Easter. A quite Saturday afternoon filled with domestic chores is suspended by the ringing of the telephone. It's Al calling to relate that the Riverside County Sheriff has asked for assistance in locating a 41 year old man lost near Meadowbrook, a small town between Perris and Elsinore. Walt is at the Open House air show at March AFB and has not yet been reached. Subsequent telephone calls find only a few RMRU men at home. As Al and Don roll to the scene, two more calls for assistance arrive, one a woman lost near Dripping Springs Campground in the Cleveland National Forest while the other involves a suspected drowning. More attempts to reach Walt and other team members are interrupted by a call notifying us that the lost woman has been found. Finally I manage to get off the telephone and Ron and I depart for Meadowbrook. On our way past March AFB, we encounter an automobile accident involving some injuries. First things first, so we stop and give aid. After stabilizing the situation, dressing a few superficial wounds and splinting a suspected fracture, an ambulance arrives and we are on our way once again. About this time Walt is finally reached and begins a long struggle with the traffic in order to get off the base.

The prospects for success in the search at Meadowbrook are not bright. The subject is a very ill man who has been missing more than 24 hours. Having a large area to search we decide to call in the San Diego Mountain Rescue Team for assistance. In late afternoon we discover tracks which carry us into the sloping, rocky shores of Railroad Canyon Reservoir and into the darkness of night. By the small hours of the next day we have lost the tracks and find ourselves regrouped at base. After consultation we decide to retire for a short night's rest on the hard floor of the Elsinore Sheriff's substation.

Shortly after dawn we are welcomed at breakfast by the unpleasant news that there are two separate parties lost in the Joshua Tree National Monument. So.... we call the Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team for additional manpower and with part of the San Diego team we depart for the desert. By the time we reach Cabazon, both parties at Joshua Tree have been found and we retrace our path back to Meadowbrook arriving at base just as Sierra Madre pulls up.

Now about 40 strong we spend the day in an intensive sweep search of the area and attempting to use our bloodhound to follow the vanishing tracks discovered the night before. Neither effort bears fruit, but in midafternoon the sweep line finds something it wasn't looking for. In an area as warm with rattlesnakes Rae Anderson of the Sierra Madre Team has the abject misfortune of

being bitten. He is rushed by jeep and Helicopter to USC County Medical Center where his condition is at first grave and improves only very slowly. With great caution we resume the search but by late afternoon we reluctantly decide to terminate our efforts.

A lot of lawns didn't get mowed and a lot of Easter dinners went uneaten and it isn't always immediately obvious that it makes a difference. But as the Roadrunner says "its just like the old firehorse, when the fire bell rings....."

RMRU is a volunteer search and rescue team that covers Riverside County and assists other teams with search and rescue efforts in other counties. Each member purchases their own equipment and takes time off work, without compensation, to participate in search and rescue missions. Team equipment is purchased from contributions from the community. We are a non-profit organization and are funded by [donations](#) from people like you.