



## Three Teen Runaways

**February 12, 1976**  
**Cherry Valley**  
**1976-007**

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The pagers went off on a Thursday night about 8:00 and we were told that three juveniles had run away from home in Cherry Valley.

I immediately thought of teenagers and knew that three runaway teenagers would be hard to find. I wondered why RMRU was called because Cherry Valley is basically farmland.

Upon arriving at the scene around 2100 hours (9 p.m.), we discovered that the three juveniles were not teenagers at all, but rather two girls, aged 10 and 8, and a little boy 3 1/2 years of age. They were dressed in Tshirt and pants with no jackets. Around 11 a.m. they had taken one sleeping bag, 8 or 9 sandwiches, three very large lollipops (like those from Disneyland) and, as far as we know, NO water, and left home. They left a note informing the parents they would be back Tuesday and not to call the police.

Several groups of people were utilized in the search in addition to RMRU. Four-wheel drive vehicles were deployed through Bogart Park and other obvious places where little children might go. Walking manpower drew the assignment of knocking on doors and waking residents to inquire if they had seen children fitting this description and would they again search their premises which they willingly did. The Riverside City helicopter with the high intensity searchlight responded to the call and after flying about 20 minutes, spotted a campfire in a small canyon above Bogart Park. Upon concentrating the searchlight on the campfire area, they could see three little children with one sleeping bag nearby. A jeep that was in the area was directed to the spot by the personnel in the helicopter.

When the children were picked up and brought back to Base Camp, Sheriff's Capt. Canova asked the 3 1/2 year old boy, "Were you afraid?" His response was "No!" The Captain then said, "You wouldn't do this again would you?" to which the little boy replied, "Sure!"

I hope this is not looking forward prophetically to a repeat performance!

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.