



Missing Professor & Student

June 10, 1976
Boulder Basin, Black Mountain
1976-030

Hal Fulkman

On June 10, 1976, RMRU responded to a request by the Banning Sheriff's Office to aid them in a rather bizarre search. Upon arriving on the scene I was met by Captain Canova who gave me all the available information on the mission.

Forty year old college professor, Kurt Auth, and his twenty-one year old student girl friend Susan Woelfl, both of Orange County, were missing and presumed to be in the Boulder Basin campground area.

The original missing persons was filed by the girl's mother. According to the mother the girl had gone to Auth's apartment to break off their relationship. The Orange County Sheriff's Department found Miss Woelfl's car as well as her purse and wallet at Auth's apartment. Auth's car was not at the apartment. A small caliber hand gun was also missing.

A friend of Auth's told the Sheriff's Office that Auth liked to hike in the Black Mountain area and from this information his car was located at the campground.

Everything about the mission seemed ominous and not the least was the weather. Previously it had been typical mild June weather. But the day of the mission a freak storm blew in dropping snow, ice, and a very cold rain.

Four team members had arrived before me and were already in the field. Their assignment was to search the perimeter of the park for it was doubtful the couple had traveled any great distance.

I relieved Captain Canova at the radio while I was waiting for another member to show up to form a two man team. A short time later the first two teams returned to the van to mark the area covered and to decide their next assignment. Because darkness was approaching the search was suspended for the night.

Because of the accessibility of the terrain, Captain Canova decided he would have his own men search the park the next day and if they could not turn up anything RMRU would once again be called to search the drainages and higher elevations

surrounding the park. RMRU was not recalled.

At 1500 the next day, on a rocky ledge, three-quarters of a mile from the car, the two victims were found. Both were dead, an apparent murder-suicide. Both were killed by a small caliber hand gun that was found next to Auth's body.

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.