



Three overdue stranded hikers

June 19, 1978
Tahquitz Canyon
1978-029

By Walt Walker

RMRU members met at the Banning station of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department (shortly before dawn) to plan the search operation for a trio of adult overdue hikers.

It was finally decided to start one group of searchers at the mouth of Tahquitz Canyon. Another group would ride the first morning tram and hike to Caramba and then descend the canyon. A third group was held back in hopes that a military helicopter would soon arrive.

The good news came that a twin turbined Huey was on the way from Edwards Air Force Base. The third group drove over to the Banning Airport and dropped me off to meet the bird. They then drove to the Palm Springs Airport.

When the bird arrived I mounted an exterior antenna for the RMRU radio I had and we were quickly airborne. On the way I briefed the pilots on the situation. We started searching from Caramba and in about 15 minutes we located the missing men at the 4,500 foot level.

We descended to Palm Springs to off load extra equipment. When we arrived back again to the stranded hikers, the pilot hovered the big bird, while the paramedic descended to the ledge via a winch and cable. Using the winch and cable, and two trips, the mission was completed. Many thanks from RMRU to the Air Force crew and their powerful machine!

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.