

Ill hiker

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Caramba
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By Hal Fulkman

"Two for the price of one" is a worn out cliché but is appropriate to describe this mission. Surely the most expensive aspect of search and rescue, as far as the Sheriff's office is concerned is helicopter expense. The helicopter adds speed and accessibility to difficult terrain. We use it to evacuate injured and sick persons, and to search large areas rapidly. It has proven, over the years to be invaluable to us. Because it is such a valuable tool, RMRU realizes it's responsibility to use it prudently and only to it's best advantage. An opportunity to use the helicopter in such a prudent manner came about one Saturday when the Banning Station of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, received a request for help from a Scoutmaster who had a Boy Scout suffering from heat exhaustion at Tahquitz Meadow and earlier that day the forestry was made aware of an ill hiker at Caramba. The rescue team arrived at Camp Maranatha in Idyllwild and upon setting up base camp it was decided that either circumstance could facilitate the use of a helicopter. The helicopter was summoned by the Sheriff's Department and with Walt Walker and myself aboard with Don Landells flew in to Tahquitz Valley to evacuate the young Boy Scout and fly him down to a waiting ambulance, at Camp Maranatha. We then returned to the high country to locate and recover the ill hiker. The ill hiker turned out to be suffering from an inner ear infection and would not have been able to hike out on his own due to a loss of equilibrium. We quickly helped the hiker into the waiting chopper and then flew back to Idyllwild. The opportunity to consolidate two rescues comes rarely but when it does it cuts our major operating expenses drastically.



RESCUED - RMRU member Hal Fulkman carries Boy Scout John Sutton, of Hemet who had suffered heat exhaustion, away from the rescue helicopter.

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.

