



Injured YMCA youth

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Little Round Valley
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By Brian Hixson

Just as my brother-in-law and I were completing an evening of working on a Honda Odyssey, my mother called and said there was a rescue and that I should go over to Walt Walker's house for information. Five minutes later I was standing in the Walker dining room listening to Walt go over information with Bernie McIlvoy on the phone. After the conversation was over, Walt told me that there was a possible injured YMCA youth in Little Round Valley. Being that it was now 11:00 p.m. and we had been having good weather, it was decided that it would be best to send in only two members that night to access the situation. And then the following morning a helicopter could fly in and pick up the injured youth. Bernie said he would hike in that night. With that, I said I would be able to hike in with Bernie.

Shortly after midnight I met Bernie at the Fuller Ridge Trail roadhead. Before leaving Riverside, Bernie picked up a team radio out of the #2 van. With the radio along we would have communication with Walt back in San Jacinto, via the SAR base radio located in the Hemet Police Department. There was no moon as we hiked up the Fuller Ridge, which made it necessary to use flashlights all the way in. It was not exactly a scenic hike. After several hours of hard hiking, we reached Little Round Valley. As we hiked into the valley we called out, but got no answer. After about a half hour of that we decided to get a little rest, before daybreak.

A little was correct, in that we slept for about one hour and then the first slivers of morning light could be seen on the ridge tops above us. We left our packs in the upper end of the valley and then split up to see if we could locate the Y group. After about 15 minutes of searching and calling, Bernie spotted someone in a sleeping bag. After waking the groggy camper, we learned that the group in question was camped just out of the valley. As Bernie and I approached the group, it looked as though a bomb had went off. There were clothes and food items laying all around where a group of sleeping bags with warm bodies had spent the night. When we awakened the group, we found what we were looking for.

As Bernie examined the youth, he told us of how he and his friend had been playing the day previous on a snow drift (what was left from a very big winter), and how he had slipped and fell off of it backwards, landing on his back. There was indeed quite a bit of tenderness in the lower back region. With that I radioed out we needed a chopper for an

air evacuation. We did not have to wait very long before we heard the familiar sound of a Bell Jet Ranger. Piloting the chopper was veteran mountain pilot Don Landells. After Don was down in the valley, we carefully loaded the boy into the bird for a quick ride out to Camp Maranatha in Idyllwild.

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.