

## Bike found, boy missing

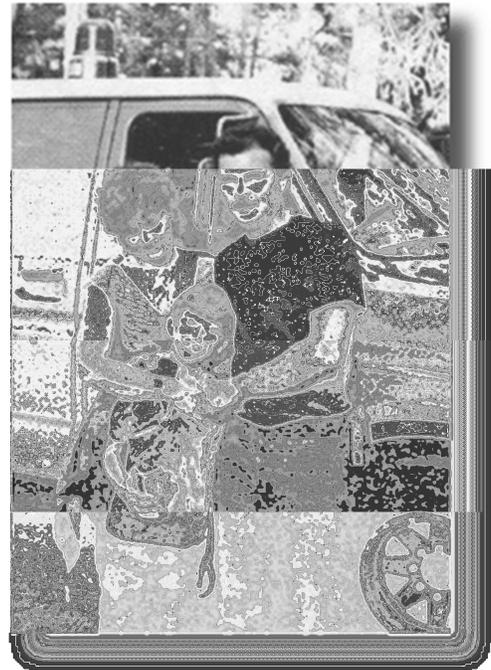
**August 19, 1985**  
**Strawberry Creek**  
**1985-035**

By Kevin Walker

Around 4:00 pm we received a call from the Hemet station of the Riverside County Sheriff's, Department that an Idyllwild youth had been missing since an early morning bike ride with his parents. In the mid afternoon the bike was located near the outdoor theatre at the campus at ISOMATA. Because of the close proximity to the treacherous grotto area of Strawberry Creek, RMRU was called out.

I quickly finished my calls, changed, loaded the rescue van and headed for Highway 74 which winds its way up the mountain. Traffic was light as I drove the mountain road, and I was plotting in my head what would be the best plan of attack when I reached Idyllwild. But as I rounded the curve just below where Strawberry Creek passes below the highway after falling several thousand feet down from Idyllwild, I saw a young boy walking down the side of the road by himself. Quickly I pulled off in a turnout and ran back down the road. I called to the boy and he stopped. Asking him where he came from, he responded from Idyllwild, and that he had been lost all day. As fellow member Rick Pohlers would say, "Bingo, bingo, bingo." We walked back to the van, and I radioed to Deputy Dennis Fogel that I had located the missing youth and that we were enroute to his location in Idyllwild.

As we drove up the mountain, the 11 year old who was covered with minor cuts and abrasions, and was scratching what would definitely turn out to be a poison oak reaction, told me that he had ridden out ahead of his parents and become lost on the small mountain streets. He said that he decided to hide his bike and try and find his way home on foot. Problem was, by his description, he ended up in Strawberry Creek. He said he had slipped many times on the slick rocks in the bottom of the creek bed, one time banging his knee quite hard. Soon we reached ISOMATA where the deputy and his parents were waiting, after a reunion with tears of joy from his mother and a stern but



relieved look from his father the family of three headed home as did I, and the rest of the team that had now been turned around.

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.