

Depressed and moody man missing

**August 5, 1986
Hurkey Creek
1986-030**

by Bob Sairs

The telephone rang about 8:00 Tuesday evening August 5th. It was Rob Gardner in-forming me we had been called out for a search for a missing man, but wouldn't start until the following morning at 6:30.

I met Rob in Palm Desert at 5:30 Wednesday morning and we drove to Hurkey Creek Park to meet the rest of the team.

After we assembled, it was decided to set up base on Apple Canyon Road near the entrance to Roosevelt Camp, and next to a very large field that continued down Garner Valley.

Kevin Walker then assigned three teams of two (Jim Fairchild - Henry Negrete, Bernie McIlvoy - Steve Bryant, and Kevin Walker - Rob Gardner) to begin the search, and I remained at base to man the radio. Just after the search began we learned from the parents of Mr. Weatherbie, through the Sheriff's office, the subject had been depressed and moody over his health, and had left home on July 30th. His car had been reported seen by the park ranger about the same date. It was also learned the subject had previously gone off by himself, and had been "missing" for 18 days before returning. This information along with the wide-open area where the car had been parked made it difficult to establish just what direction the subject might have taken. The three teams, however, continued to search the immediate area for some sign to indicate where the subject might have traveled. Unfortunately, nothing concrete was found, and all teams returned to base about 9:30 A.M.

After some discussion the decision was made to drive on up Apple Canyon Road to see if any kind of sign of the subject could be found. This also proved fruitless.

Due to "all" the circumstances: the subject's history, the open area where he left the car, and the time elapsed from the subject leaving his car until the search was initiated; the decision was reluctantly made to abandon the search. The team then returned to Idyllwild for lunch.

All things considered it was a frustrating as well as fruitless mission, but at least an

effort was made by RMRU.

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.