



Continuation of 1986-046

December 18, 1986
Woodchuck Park, Santa Ana Mountains
1986-047

By Jim Fairchild

Six A.M. Thursday. RMRU was back at the park. The family that went to Santa's Village did not have April in their care. Today there were many searchers representing the California Region of the Mountain Rescue Association, a group from Orange County Search and Rescue, and the RSO Mounted Posse, all working together under RMRU's supervision.

The first order of the day was to conduct a sweep search through, you guessed it, the brush! Thus began several hours of smash, crunch, scratch, and check for ticks while searching. About 9:30 A.M. Western Helicopter Hughes 500D arrived, piloted by an old friend, Pete Gillies. We brush-smashers never saw Pete. We did the machine darting hither and yon, especially up a major drainage on numerous occasions.

In the afternoon, while other miscellaneous assignments were underway, Joe Erickson, John Dew, and the writer set off in Joe's new Samurai car to check dirt roads. This enterprise turned out to be educational and adventurous. But we found nothing related to the search. Our last hour was spent checking dirt turn-outs along the highway. At one of them I found a freshly turned bit of earth that looked like a covered hole. It was heart-in-the-throat time. The hole had nothing in it. So, we are left with a lot of "Whys" and "What ifs," wondering about April's fate. We can only pray for her well-being and eventual re-union with her family.

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.