

## Hiker Loses Trail, Calls In On Cell Phone

**April 13, 2002**  
**Palm Spring Upper Tram**  
**2002-005**

By Gene Baune

RMRU was contacted the evening of 13 April 2002 to search for a missing Illinois man, Don, who had called in on his cell phone from the San Jacinto area. The man had hiked from the tram to San Jacinto Peak and become disoriented while photographing the area. He contacted a friend who notified the Riverside Sheriff's Department and the team was dispatched just after 10 PM.

Since this was a training weekend and most members were at the Joshua Tree National Monument, a few team members responded from Joshua Tree and the remainder of the responders were members who had commitments or planned to join the training on Sunday morning.

From the description of what he reported being able to see it was determined that Don was probably on Miller or Cornell Peak. The first team dispatched headed up the Sid Davis drainage towards the peak intending to head up to Tamarack Valley towards Miller Peak and give a yell near Cornell. Upon arrival at Cornell, the team shouted for Don and got a response, however Don was almost 700 feet up so the team had its work cut out for it to reach Don. After a strenuous climb the team made contact, got the victim warmed up, put him in a climbing harness and headed down.



Don and Gene Baune

The following members responded and participated in this search:

Team 1: Gene Baune, Max Brummett

Team 2: Ray Hussey, Brenda DeLuna, Bill Delo, Rick Maschek

Operations: Jim Fairchild

Communications: Darrell Bell

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.