

## Missing Hiker

**October 12th, 2005  
Apple Canyon, Garner Valley  
2005-030**

by Grace Manues

"WAKE UP, this is not a dream!" came one of many messages. Steve Bryant, the duty call captain, was right about that.

At approximately 2100, Chris reported that his friend, Doug, was overdue and probably injured. From his boss's cabin, Chris could see Doug sitting on a rock for several hours (raising the concern that Doug was injured). When Doug did not return by nightfall, Chris queried his friend (via flashlight) as to whether he should call 911. Doug's response was one flash for yes.

RMRU fielded Team 1 (Will Carlson/Jim Manues) at 0230. They headed for the peak, the overdue hiker's original destination. Cold winds, steep terrain, and brushy off-trail hiking made for a long night. That, combined with the unusually low turnout, prompted helicopter-snubbing Will Carlson to request ...wait a minute, what was that... air support??! Alas, gusty winds made that impossible.

A second team (Grace Manues/Patrick McCurdy) started out at 0700. After a false start, we headed back to Base Camp to reconfirm our assignment. About that time, Doug (dressed in camouflage pants, not blue jeans as reported, and definitely not injured) approached us.



Photo: Patrick McCurdy

Grace Manues with missing hiker, Doug.

Doug had simply lost the trail and wisely hunkered down at nightfall. He had no flashlight. He never saw Chris's signal, let alone responded to it, and was nowhere near where Chris reported seeing him sitting on a rock. Apparently, the RP received the first ever signal from an extra-terrestrial, a passing airplane, or perhaps just his imagination run wild.

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.