



Missions
July 2017 - March 2018

# Thank You!

To all that volunteer their time and financial assistance....

# Countless people owe their lives



# **OUR SUSTAINING MEMBERS**



# August 16, 2017 - Feburary 17, 2018

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# **RESCUETEAM MEMBERS**



Steve Bryant - Alta Loma | Pete Carlson - Blue Jay

Corey Ellison - Laguna Niguel | Gary Farris - Palm Desert | Michael George - Riverside

Donny Goetz - Los Angeles | Glenn Henderson - Hemet | Eric Holden - Temecula

Tony Hughes - Yorba Linda | Kevin Kearn - Huntington Beach

Rob May - Riverside | Roger May - Riverside | Dana Potts - Corona

Shani Pynn - Riverside | Alex Rilloraza - Corona | Tyler Shumway - Hemet

Frank Snider - Riverside | Ray Weden - Murrieta | Gwenda Yates - Hemet

# **Support Members**

Kirk Cloyd | Joe Erickson | Kaylean May | Brad Scott | Ty Wittersheim



# About Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit

The Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit is a group of volunteers trained and ready to respond to wilderness emergencies.

At any hour of the day, law enforcement agencies, national park and military officials may call upon the Unit to aid an unfortunate victim.

The unit is on constant alert, via text messages, to search for and effect the rescue of hikers, skiers, rock climbers and outdoorsmen whenever and wherever tragedy strikes.

The unit performs about 95% of its missions in Riverside County. However, it has traveled south into Mexico, north into the High Sierras and into Nevada to accomplish its lifesaving missions.

The unit is currently comprised of 23 volunteers, who literally come

from all walks of life. They regularly leave their jobs (or in the middle of the night, their warm beds) to respond to a call for help.



Rappelling - Joshua Tree Training

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# On the Cover -RMRU Annual Night Helicopter Hoist Training

- Hemet / Ryan Airport Operations base - Riverside County Sheriff's Department Aviation Unit Photo: Michael George - RMRU



They do not receive remuneration for time given to search and rescue.

The members make up a small, but spirited, group of mountaineers who spend one weekend each month training to sharpen their rescue skills.

Each member must provide all of thier own equipment at a cost of more than \$2,500.

Beside acting as highly competent rescue workers, members also work closely with schools, clubs, church groups, and Scout troops throughout the area to teach mountain safety. The ounce of prevention may well prevent the untimely pound of cure. In this newsletter issue are summaries of all our missions from July 2017 through March 2018.

Summaries of all our missions dat-Continued on Page 16

# **Mission Reviews**

July 2017 - March 2018

The following pages contain a selection of first hand accounts of RMRU missions written by the team members involved.



RMRU volunteers are on call 24/7, to search for and rescue hikers, skiers, rock climbers, and outdoorsmen whenever and wherever needed.

Dark Canyon Missing Hiker
July 16, 2017
Dark Canyon, Idyllwild
Written by Cameron Dickinson

In the evening of July 16th, 2017, the team received notification of a lost male hiker who was in the vicinity of the Dark Canyon/Azalea Trails area. This would also be the reporting location for our team. Myself and fellow team member Eric Holden would be the first to arrive at our meet up location, soon followed by Tony Hughes and Alex Rilloraza.

Once we arrived, our Sheriff's Deputy would provide us information on our missing hiker, as well as GPS coordinates obtained through hikers pinged cell phone. We learned that our missing hiker was a male in his late teens who had separated from his family during a hike up to the San Jacinto Peak. His mother also called 911, and informed the dispatcher that her son has Epilepsy, and didn't have his medications on him.

As we were grabbing our gear, we could hear faint shouts for help in the distance, echoing down through the steep canyon. This was coming from our subject. The fire department was on scene prior to our arrival and was aware of the subject's approximate location. Because of the steepness of the terrain, the fire department didn't have the technical gear to reach



**Subject at Base with Rescuers** and make the initial contact with our subject.

Eric and I would quickly grab our gear, and off we went. Tony would manage radio communications, and Alex would be on standby. Right from the start we encountered steep, soft, and slippery terrain as we worked our way up through the thick brush. As we went up the mountain we came up to wide cliff that required a careful

scramble, and not long thereafter we reached a ridge which would get us closer to our subject. After a couple call outs, we were able to make voice contact with him. He was approx. 300 ft below us in a steep canyon down near the creek. Soon we were able work our way down to him. He was good health with no injuries, other that multiple abrasions on his legs and arms. He had no fluids with him, so we provided hydration and food. We asked about his condition and seizures. He felt that he was good to hike out on his own. Because of our concerns that a seizure may occur during the hike, the lack of medications, as well as the steeper terrain, we decided to put a climbing harness on and tie him in with a climbing rope. We would essentially belay him up and out of canyon and down though some of the steeper sections. We would eventually work back down to the command post to awaiting paramedics and his family.

### **RMRU Members Involved:**

Cameron Dickinson, Eric Holden, Tony Hughes, and Alex Rilloraza.



# **OES Inyo Search**

July 20, 2017 Inyo County High Sierra Written by Editor

We received a call from Office of Emergency Services (OES) to help Inyo SAR with a search for a missing hiker in the High Sierra. While are members were getting ready to go the hiker was found and the search called off before any of our members had left home.

#### **RMRU Members Involved:**

Michael George and Donny Goetz



# Bautista Canyon - Mountain Biker

July 21, 2017
Bautista Canyon,
Southeast Hemet
Written by Cameron Dickinson

In the afternoon I received a call from our Call Captain Gwenda Yates to see if I was available to perform a hoist of a male mountain biker that needed some assistance. I was available and within a couple minutes I would be on the road driving over to Sheriff's Aviation hanger.

Prior to my arrival, Sheriff's Aviation had received information from the dispatcher regarding the subject's location and decided to do a flyover to assess the situation. When I arrived at the hanger I was informed by the pilot and technical flight officer that mountain biker was stuck in thick brush with his mountain bike on a steep hillside not too far from Sage Road.

I grabbed my pack that that included basic technical gear and medical supplies out of my vehicle, and off we went.

Once we were overhead from our subject's location, I can see that he was approximately 1 mile from location not far from the awaiting Deputy, below at the base of the hillside. I was lowered down to find our subject in good health, but with multiple scratches on his legs which he received while working his way down the hillside. He expressed that he didn't want to leave his bike behind. Since we weren't too far from the road, I decided to walk him out with his mountain bike. I radioed back to Aviation that I was going to walk the subject out and would get a

"At this point I would provide the subject with a climbing harness and tie him into a rope.."

**RMRU RESCUER -**

**CAMERON DICKINSON** 

ride back to the hanger from the Deputy at the road head.

From my original vantage point, I could see weren't far from the road, but there was lots of thick brush, trees, plenty of poison oak, and two dry creek washes which will be necessary to across with one being particularly steep. I can see this was going to be tough! Since our subject was exhausted from his adventure,

I decided it would be a safer for me to grab his bike, so he can focus "il was decided to leave bike behind and he would come back another day to get it."

**RMRU RESCUER -**

**CAMERON DICKINSON** 

on traversing the steeper hillside down into the wash. The wash provided a cleaner route with less vegetation.

As worked our way down the wash, we came to a point we couldn't go down any further because a 25ft water fall that we encountered. This would require us to scramble up a steeper rocky hillside 20ft up and would traverse the hillside from there away from the creek wash towards the direction of the road.

At this point I would provide the subject with a climbing harness and tie him into a rope, I would scramble up to the top and provide a top belay for our subject, so I could get him over this steep section safety, followed by his bike.

From there it was a matter was getting our subject through the remaining thicket back to the road. The brush was so tall and dense that it made pulling his bike through verify difficult.

We were starting to lose daylight, and at this point it was decided to leave bike behind and he would come back another day to get it.

RMRU Members Involved: Cameron Dickinson



# Sierra Madre Lost Hiker

July 24, 2017 Chantry Flats Written by Michael George

Early Saturday morning my breakfast was interrupted by a page for an Out of County search in Sierra Madre. I called the rescue line and learned there was a search for a gentleman who had been missing overnight. I soon found out from my Call Captain that I was the only one available from RMRU and would be linking up with members from our sister team, Desert Search & Rescue (DSAR). When I arrived at the Chantry Flats Ranger Station I was greeted by 4 members from DSAR. We were just in time as new assignments were just being handed out. We were slated to search a rugged canyon just to the west of us.

"I encountered an unexpected hiking buddy. An adolescent bear who decided to follow me for about 2 miles"

RMRU RESCUER -

MICHAEL GEORGE

Our subject had been missing 24 hours by then, and there was a lot of terrain to cover by then. We were going to be airlifted to the top of the canyon so that we could descend the various trails that made their way down through the brush. But as we were loading our gear into the helicopter we were asked to hold tight, as there was a probable

sighting of our subject. However, he was Nowhere even close to our location. We waited for until it was determined a positive identification had been made.

Our subject had been given a lift home late last night. I can only wonder that the family members the Sheriff's Department had contacted late last night, were not aware that their 'missing' member had returned safely. We were dismissed to go home about noon. Now, feeling that I had missed out of an exciting hike, and helicopter ride, I decided to expend some built up energy. I elected to go on an 8 mile loop up to some beautiful falls. During this hike I encountered an unexpected hiking buddy. An adolescent bear who decided to follow me for about 2 miles, after which I think he got exasperated by my constant stopping and looking around. He left without even saying good-bye. I have to say though, it was the highlight of my day and even trumped the helicopter ride.

RMRU Members Involved: Michael George

# Missing PCT Hiker since April

July 29, 2017 Devils Slide Trail to Deer Springs Written by Pete Carlson

We had found out about a PCT hiker who had not been reported missing until late June. He was from Ireland and it had taken awhile for the Sheriff to hear about it since no one really missed

him at first. He was last seen in Idyllwild around April 8, 2017. He had not picked up his food in Big Bear and had not signed the registrar at the bottom of Snow Creek which a lot of PCT hikers do. This led us to believe that he was between Idyllwild and Snow Creek.

Around April 8 there was still snow on the ground and in places it was 6 feet deep. In late March and April, we had 4 rescues for hikers lost in the snow on the PCT trail in this area. Gwenda dropped Glenn and I off to hike up the Devils Slide Trail to the Saddle and then up the Angels Glide Trail to the Strawberry Cienega Trail and down to the Deer Springs Trail back to the Deer Springs Trail Head where she would pick us up.

We were looking for places someone might have slide off the trail when it was covered in snow. Which took some doing in 80-degree summer heat and a dry and dusty trail. We then took note of these areas for future searches with more team members. This was just an exploration hike to come up with ideas of where to search for someone missing for almost 4 months.

We came up with several ideas for future searches which will be followed up in the future.

#### **RMRU Members Involved:**

Pete Carlson, Glenn Henderson, and Gwenda Yates.



# Joshua Tree Two Missing Hikers

July 30, 2017 Joshua Tree National Park, Maze Loop Written by Alex Rilloraza

On Sunday RMRU was requested to assist the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department with a search of 2 missing hikers in Joshua Tree on Monday morning at o800 when the search for the two missing hikers would resume.

"After completing the search of our assigned search area, we did not locate any signs of the missing hikers"

RMRU RESCUER -ALEX RILLORAZA

San Bernardino County Sheriff's personnel had been searching for the two missing hikers near the Maze Loop Trail in Joshua Tree since their vehicle was found by this trail and the last cell phone ping was in this general location.

During the Monday morning briefing, there were search and rescue team members from several different agencies to include San Bernardino County, San Diego County, and Orange County as well as members from Riverside. At the briefing, all search and rescue members were informed that due to the high heat and humidity on Sunday, a few search and rescue personnel had to be airlifted out that day due to dehydration. The high heat and humidity would continue today, and we were all

advised to stay hydrated during our search.

Since the Maze Trail had been searched by several teams the day before, it was decided to expand the search area for today. Cory, Mike and I were assigned to search teams and left with our teams to our designated areas. Corey and Mike were airlifted by helicopter to their search area and my team was assigned to a wash/canyon north of the Maze Trail and were driven to our starting location.

After completing the search of our assigned search area, we did not locate any signs of the missing hikers. My team was driven back to the command post and was reassigned to drive to the Boy Scout trail and look for any signs of the missing hikers at that location. Again, we did not locate any signs of the missing hikers at this location therefore we drove back to the command post where I met up with Mike and Cory whose teams also did not locate any signs of the missing hikers.

It was approximately 1600 hrs. and the command post supervisor advised they would end the search for the day and San Bernardino County personnel would resume the search in the morning.

#### **RMRU Members Involved:**

Corey Ellison, Michael George, and Alex Rilloraza.



# Missing PCT Hiker Fuller Ridge

August 4 - 5 , 2017 Fuller Ridge and Strawberry Cienega Written by Pete Carlson

Training was going to be looking for the Irish PCT hiker missing since April. Eric and I decided we would go up early on Friday and set up camp and do some searching before the rest of the team came on Saturday. We each carried 2 gallons of water, so we could have a dry camp on the Fuller Ridge and search from there with day packs. With heavy packs we started up the Fuller Ridge Trail around 9am to our camp about 3+ miles up the Ridge. By 11am we had camp set up and after eating some food took off up the Fuller Ridge looking for likely places to search where someone might have slide off the trail in heavy winter snow.

"We each carried 2 gallons of water, so we could have a dry camp on the Fuller Ridge and search from there with day packs."

RMRU RESCUER -PETE CARLSON

We went up to where the trail turns 90 degrees and heads off the Ridge towards the Deer Springs Trail. From here we started back and would climb down drainages and look around. We came to one drainage on the West side that looked promising, so we went down farther then the others.

We found a sleeping bag maybe 400 feet down the drainage. We continued another 400 feet down but found nothing else. We did not think the sleeping bag was his, but we packed it out anyway.

After more searching of drainages, we decided that without going way down each one we would never know if someone slide down or not. Since each one would take several hours to check out we decided to go back to camp and wait for others on Saturday to have teams search them. Once back in camp we found out we had a call out to help with an on-going search in Joshua Tree National Park on Saturday. No other members would be coming to help us.

"we did not find any signs of the missing PCT hiker. We will continue to search different areas in the months to come."

# RMRU RESCURER - PETE CARLSON

We decided that we would stay at our camp for the night, there were going to be many other teams helping in J.T. and the two of us would not make much difference. We also talked to another member Cameron who said he would come join us on Saturday. It was decided we could not do much on the Fuller Ridge with just 3 members, so we would hike out at first light and meet Cameron in Idyllwild at 8am to search the Strawberry Cienega Drainage, which was a perfect assignment for a 3-person team. The 3 of us hiked up the Devils

Slide and over to the Strawberry Cienega Trail. We hike down to the Cienega and just pasted it we dropped over the side and started down towards Humber Park. It was steep in many places, but we found ways to get down everything. We spread out as we came down looking for signs of anyone coming down. It was an enjoyable drainage to descend, but we did not find any signs of the missing PCT hiker. We will continue to search different areas in the months to come. Our thought go out to his Family and Friends and we hope we can resolve his missing case in the future.

### **RMRU Members Involved:**

Pete Carlson, Cameron Dickinson, and Eric Holden

# Missing PCT Hiker August 12, 2017 PCT Fuller Ridge Trail Area Written by Shani Pynn

On Thursday the team was notified that we had a search on Saturday, the 12th, in the Fuller Ridge area for a PCT hiker from Ireland who had been missing for some time. The team had recently conducted trainings in the region along the trail and in some of the drainages. Our assignment for Saturday was to search the upper part of four drainages coming down from the trail.

We were to meet at the Marion Mountain trailhead at 6AM. I met up with Glenn and Cameron at the station and rode with them to the trailhead where we met Corey and the Deputies. Glenn stayed at the

trailhead to run base and Cameron, Corey, and I set out up the trail just before 6:30 AM. We decided to check the farthest drainage first and work our way back from there. We reached the drainage a little after 10 AM. The three of us split up and, staying within view of one another, we canvased the area for signs of the missing hiker. We repeated the process for the



Searchers - Fuller Ridge Trail

second and third drainages and returned to the trailhead shortly before 3 PM. Unfortunately, we found no sign of the missing hiker. Despite the team's best efforts and the various agencies who have also worked to find him, he remains missing as of this date.

#### **RMRU Members Involved:**

Cameron Dickinson, Corey Ellison, Glenn Henderson and Shani Pynn .

# Lost Hiker San Jacinto September 3, 2017 Marion Mountain Trail Written by Editor

While team members were responding to Hemet Airfield to meet with Riverside County Sheriff's Aviation we received word that Cal-Fire Helicopter had handled this call. Everyone returned home.

## RMRU Members Involved: Michael George and Dana Potts



# Lost Male with Dementia

September 5, 2017 Ortega Highway above Elsinore Written by Editor

While team members were driving to the Meeting place, some volunteers on horseback found the missing man and brought him back to his home. Everyone from RMRU returned home safely.

#### **RMRU Members Involved:**

Cameron Dickinson, Corey Ellison, Glenn Henderson, and Alex Rilloraz.



At 1530 we get a call out for a large rock slide on Tahquitz Rock, Multiple climbers down. Instantly my pulse picks up wondering about the details, how many, how far are they on the rock, etc. Our normal monthly meeting would be cancelled and all team members to report to Humber Park.

We would later find out that Jon Zuniga and his brother were climbing in an area known as the Larks. Rockfall occurred and seriously injured Jon's partner. Unfortunately, Jon was killed by the rockfall. By the time I arrived on scene Cal-Fire had already responded and was able to miraculously airlift out the injured climber. He had been pinned at the legs between a tree and fallen rocks near the top of the Larks. Members from RMRU, Cal Fire, and the Riverside Coroners

hiked up to the base of the climb and recovered the deceased and brought him back down to Humber Park.



Rescuers wiating to start carry out

We have had a few fatalities in this area over the past few years due to loose rockfall. When climbing anywhere near the North Face of Tahquitz take extra caution as there are quite a few loose rocks in the area. We don't know if this was natural rockfall or pulled off while climbing, but we would like to remind all climbers to take the time when working a route to inspect all potentially loose rocks. When in doubt, don't touch it.



Rescuers doing Carry Out
Our thoughts and deepest condolences go out to Jon's friends and family.

#### **RMRU Members Involved:**

Alex Rilloraza, Cameron Dickinson, Corey Ellison, Eric Holden, Glenn Henderson, Mike George, Raymond Weden, Shani Pynn, Tony Hughes, Tyler Shumway, Wayne Smith.

# Missing Elderly Female September 15, 2017 Cabazon Area Written by Eric Holden

RMRU was activated to assist in a search for a missing elderly female with early onset dementia in the Cabazon area. I met up with a few members of DSSAR and we began our search. Within 15 minutes of searching, our missing female was found by a neighbour, hitchhiking to Palm Springs, and returned to her home.

# RMRU Members Involved: Eric Holden

# Other Agencies Involved: Desert Search and Rescue.



Ansel Peak, PCT Written by Glenn Henderson

We got a text message from Call Captain Gwenda Yates at noon that two people had called in that they were lost. Using cell phone technology, dispatch located them on the east side of the Pacific Crest Trail. This is in a closed area due to a forest fire four years ago. Didn't know why they were there but I met Cameron Dickinson at the Hemet Sheriff's substation and picked up one of our rescue trucks and headed to the Lake Hemet Sheriff's substation in the San Jacinto Mountains.

Sheriff's aviation Star 9 tried 4 or 5 times at different times in the afternoon, but the winds were 60 to 70 miles an hour and im-

possible to even get close to the location. From the Lake Hemet Sheriff's Station, we drove to the Zen Center planning on hiking up the trail from the Zen Center to the PCT and then north where we would drop off the PCT to the east. So much for plans as once Cameron and I got on the trail we discovered that there is no longer a trail due to the fire. It is burned and grown over making it impossible to find any semblance of a trail. So, it was cross country and a steep upward climb for over 1000' to the ridge near Ansel Peak.



Looking back down at Zen Center

Once we got to the ridge top and looked down we both thought we were in for a long night. It was again, overgrown and vertical. We figured we had to drop down 1000 feet going cross country and about a mile to where we thought our subjects were. It took almost 2 hours to complete this, but we were rewarded when upon our first call out we got an answer. We could see our subjects on the other side of a drainage still a quarter of a mile away. They saw us and started to work their way over to US.

Good news as they both seemed uninjured. We finally met up with Frank and Cuiman. They said they had ridden the Palm Springs Tram



Rescuers and Subjects on Trail

up to the mountain and hiked to San Jacinto Peak but got lost on the way back down. Yes, I'd say they got lost. They were over 8 miles from where they were supposed to be and in an impossible drainage to ever get out of.

After checking them out, giving them some water and food, we decided to hike straight up and regain the PCT. This was very steep and rocky but proved to be the right decision. As it turns out Cuiman and Frank do a lot of hiking together and were in superb shape. Cuiman was especially motivated to get out as she said, "It was really cold last night, and she had not sleep at all". Also, she had talked to her husband who was frantic that she was lost. It was hard to keep up with her.



Rescuers / Subjects coming up PCT

We finally gained the PCT and followed its faint outline to where we first crossed it going down.

As we reached this point we met up with Eric Holden on top of the ridge. He had hiked up and was running radio relay to keep us in contact with Dana Potts who was running base. Eric led us all back to base, finally arriving at 8pm.



Rescuers and Subjects at Base

We turned Cuiman and Frank over to Deputy Schroder who drove them back to the Palm Springs Tram. The rest of us drove the vehicles back to our garage and home.

# RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson, Glenn Henderson, Eric Holden, and Dana Potts.



# 69-Year-Old Lost

October 28, 2017 Seven Pines Trail Written by Raymond Weden

Shortly after sunset on RMRU was activated to assist a solo 69-year old male who had become lost after accidentally taking the wrong trail junction coming down from San Jacinto Peak.

We were given an approximate GPS location from Sheriff's Dispatch based on his cell phone which he used to call for help. Our subject was near the north fork of the San Jacinto River where the Seven Pines Trail crosses. He was staying put a waiting rescue.

When I arrived at the Seven Pines trail head, Cameron and Tyler were already there along with a couple of Sheriff's Deputies and with Mike a few minutes behind me.

Prior to RMRU arriving on scene, a State Park Ranger headed up trail to our missing subject. As the State Park Ranger had about an hour jump on us and was already with the subject when we arrived, we decided to get mission ready but hold at the trail head just in case. About an hour later the Ranger and our lost subject made it to the trail head in good condition.

#### **RMRU Members Involved:**

Cameron Dickinson, Michael George, Tyler Shumway, and Raymond Weden.

# Two Lost Hikers

November 4, 2017 Ortega Highway (Candy Store) Written by Eric Holden

We were just finishing our biannual helicopter training when the word came out that we had two lost hikers in the mountains north of the Ortega Highway. Corey and myself grabbed our hasty packs and joined the Star-9 crew to begin our trip out there. As we approached the Ortega Mountains we began to see low wispy cloud, shortening our ability for a possible aerial extraction. We did not know the subject's exact location but after about 15 minutes of searching we spotted the faintest of lights in the distances were no light should be. Turns out it was our subjects.

"We were given an approximate GPS location from Sheriff's Dispatch based on his cell phone which he used to call for help."

RMRU RESCUER -ERIC HOLDEN

As time was a factor we landed across from the candy store, suited up for a hoist, and dropped Corey off to secure the Landing Zone. Within a few minutes the expert crew of Star-9 lowered me right to the subjects. Turns out they had a small dog we did not know about. Luckily it was small enough to fit into my backpack. A couple of screamer suits later and both subjects were up in the helicopter. As I was being hosted up all I could think of was "please let

this dog not rip out of my bag right now". Thankfully the pup was calm and comfy for the ride back to the candy store. The subjects were reunited with their family and I got to show Corey my backpack dog surprise.

Turns out the subjects were hiking and got lost and turned around on the trails. They had little clothing, water, or other gear and when it got dark, they called 911. A map/ Compass/GPS/Cell phone could have prevented the rescue as they were still on the trail, just disoriented.

RMRU Members Involved: Corey Ellison, Eric Holden.



# Family Stranded November 5, 2017 Tin Mine Canyon, Corona

Tin Mine Canyon, Corona Written by Tyler Shumway

Glen and I received a call out at 12:30pm on Saturday afternoon for a hoist in Tin Mine Canyon. We got our gear and met at Hemet Ryan Airport with Riverside County Sheriff's Aviation Unit pilot Eric Basta and Technical Flight Officer Ray Hiers. We were informed that a family of four are stranded in the Tin Mine Canyon area and unable to hike out safely due to steep terrain.

Star 9 flew us to the location of the victims and we were safely lowered on a ridgeline which put us about 50 feet above them. We down climbed to the subjects to find the husband and his two sons. The wife had successfully down

climbed the portion of trail they had come up prior to our arrival and was safe. She was instructed to hike back the main trail to their vehicle on Skyline Drive.

It appeared they tried to climb up one of the north ridges of Skinsuit Trail just south of Tin Mine Canyon. They made it roughly 200 feet up a loose and unmaintained trail when they decided it was too steep to continue further.

Meanwhile, Glenn and I escorted the father and his two sons up 50 feet back to the clearing on the ridgeline for safe extraction. We debriefed and suited them up for a hoist. Star 9 took me and one of the sons first and dropped us off at the Skyline Drive Trailhead.

Star 9 went back for the father and his other son followed by picking up Glenn last. The family was safely back at the road head and the



Dad Going up



Glenn and Tyler with Family waiting for Extraction

wife had also made it back to the trailhead just as the son and father had been dropped off by Star 9.

Thank you to Riverside County Sheriff's Aviation Unit for another successful and safe rescue.

RMRU Members Involved: Glenn Henderson and Tyler Shumway.

**Other Agengies Involved:**RSO Aviation Pilot Eric Bashta and
TFO Ray Hiers.



It was almost 9:00 PM when the page went out, earlier than most that tend to come closer to 11:00 PM. I had originally called in that I wasn't going to be able to make it tonight, I had been awake since 5:00 AM and my girls had a bunch of activities that were still in progress. A second page went out that more people were needed. I shuffled some stuff around and rolled out a little after 9:30 PM.

We had limited information, other than someone was lost near the Dripping Springs campground East of Temecula. I started driving toward the campground. Kevin was also in route but a bit behind me. Both of us being in Orange County, it is unusual for us to be first on scene. However, due to various circumstances, it looked like that was exactly what was going to happen. We got word that Gary was going to swing by the shop to pick up a vehicle on his way from Palm Desert. Cam had just landed in San Diego and would also roll as soon as he got out of the airport.

I hadn't gotten very far down the road when Glenn called and re-routed me to Hemet-Ryan. We still had limited info but apparently Star 9 had spotted the subject based on a phone call he managed to get out to 911 before his phone died. We were going to do a hoist.

I got to the hangar where I quickly spoke to Jerry and Mike from the

Sheriff's Aviation Unit. When I asked them what information we had, they said "Male – Lost" then laughed a bit. They did in fact have a little more info. During their flight over him earlier, it appears he was stuck by a cliff out in a wash. He was also a Marine from Pendleton and his Command was already calling to get details. We had no name, age, health, or other details. If he hadn't moved, we could fly right to him in about 10 minutes.

"We had limited information, other than someone was lost near the Dripping Springs campground..."

RMRU RESCUER
TONY HUGHES

Kevin arrived a few minutes behind me. I was gearing up with some light tech gear, a screamer suit, a medical kit, water, and some snacks. Kevin an Army Ranger, was very amused when he found out the subject was a Marine and that Mike the pilot, was also a Marine. We got in Star 9 and we were ready to go. There was one small problem. The weather had cooled off and the windows in Star 9 were all fogged up. We had to idle on the tarmac for a bit until the windows cleared up.

After a few minutes we were airborne. About 5 minutes later we were crossing Highway 79 and headed toward a small flashing light in the darkness on the mountainside. The door opened, I got

hooked up, and down I went. The only flat area near the subject was a narrow trail. The surrounding terrain was steep and full of brush. I touched down up slope from the trail and continued to slide about 10 feet down to the trail, giving Star 9 a slight jolt when I slid off the embankment above the trail and bottomed out. The flight crew had anticipated this and were on top of it.

I disconnected and checked William, the subject, for any medical concerns. He was in good health, just a little cold and thirsty. Star 9 went to scope out a landing spot closer to the highway while I got William in the screamer suit and went over what was going to happen. I also got a few details on what had happened. He had set out to hike 26 miles that day and left at 10:30 AM. He had brought very little water, no warm gear, and only a few snacks. His headlamp was still working but his phone had died. He admitted he was unprepared and had underestimated the hike.

"I will not forget it as I rescued a Veteran on Veteran's day while being flown by a Veteran with another Veteran ..."

RMRU RESCUER

TONY HUGHES

I hailed Star 9 on the radio and they were quickly over us once more to hoist us out of there. William went up first, followed by me. In no time we landed in a field across the highway from the campground. I escorted William out of the helicopter and across the field where we met the Deputy that was on scene. I reclaimed the screamer suit and helmet from William, left him with the Deputy, and I headed back to Star 9.

We flew back to Hemet Ryan and landed just before midnight. Overall the mission was textbook with no complications. This was my first hoist after being on the team for over 2 and ½ years.

I will not forget it as I rescued a Veteran on Veteran's day while being flown by a Veteran with another Veteran waiting in the parking lot. Thank you to all Veterans!

RMRU Members Involved: Tony Hughes and Kevin Kearn.



# PCT Hiker Fuller Ridge Down

November 27, 2017 Fuller Ridge Down to Seven Pines Trail Written by Pete Carlson

Looking for something FUN to do on a Monday hike Eric and I decided to explore from top to bottom the drainage where we had found a sleeping bag in August. We meet up at 7am at the Seven Pines Trailhead. We left my car there and took Eric's car up to the Fuller Ridge Trailhead.

At the Fuller Ridge trail head, it was close to 32 degrees, 30-40 mile an hour winds, and we were in the clouds. FUN day for a hike we thought. We took of up the

trail at a good pace to keep warm. As we hiked up we got some hail and snow, but not much. Once we reached the drainage and dropped down off the ridge the wind let up and as we descended the clouds started to clear.

We past our low point from before and started looking around more as we went down. This was a fun drainage to descend with lots of interesting features to get around. In the first part we did not see any signs that anyone had gone down this drainage. But as we got near the bottom we could see where people had hiked here before. We found no signs of the missing PCT hiker.

"At the Fuller Ridge trail head, it was close to 32 degrees, 30-40 mile an hour winds..."

**RMRU RESCUER -**

**PETE CARLSON** 

Once near the bottom it leveled out and we found an old road that we could follow most of the way back to the Seven Pines Trail. From here we took my car back up to the Fuller Ridge, so Eric could pick up his car. All in all, a great day out of doors even if we did not find what we were looking for. We will be back again looking in other areas in the future. Our thoughts go out to his Family and Friends and we hope we can resolve his missing case in the future.

**RMRU Members Involved:** Pete Carlson and Eric Holden.

# Evidence Search Novwmber 29, 2017 Cactus Rest Stop I-10 Freeway Written by Glenn Henderson

The team was activated to assist the Ontario Police Department to search for Julia B. Jacobson and her dog who was believed to be a homicide victim. Julia was an Army Captain who served two tours in Iraq and one tour in Bosnia.

We responded to the Cactus Springs rest stop along interstate 10 east of Indio. At 5:30 am and found a very large base camp set up.

There were around 150 searchers involved including RMRU, Desert Sheriff's Search and Rescue, Search dog teams, San Bernardino Cave Search and Rescue, Mounted posse SAR teams and San Bernardino Sheriff's Explorer teams. It was a very organized search and we were all in the field in a timely manner. Everyone was assigned into teams of 20 or so and we did line searches all day long. At the end of the day we found no evidence of Julia and we were released at 4:30 PM. With so many people on hand I was confident we would find her, so it was a very sombre drive Home.

"There were around 150 searchers involved including RMRU, Desert Sheriff's Search and Rescue, Search dog teams..."

RMRU RESCUER - GLENN HENDERSON

Julia and her dog were recovered two days later at a dirt road, 8 miles east of where we were searching. We are relieved that she was found due to detective work by Ontario Police and our condolences go out to Julia's family and friends

#### **RMRU Members Involved:**

Steve Bryant, Cameron Dickinson, Gary Farris, Michael George, Glenn Henderson, Eric Holden, and Shani Pynn.

# Hiker's Tramway December 19, 2017 Under Tramway Written by Editor

The team was called out to help Hiker's that were under the Tramway near the bottom tower. While the team was getting ready to go the Tramway called back that they had talked the hiker's back down to the lower station.

#### **RMRU Members Involved:**

Corey Ellison, Michael George, Donny Goetz, Glenn Henderson, Eric Holden, and Kevin Kearn

# Lost Day Hikers January 26, 2018 Saunders Meadow, Idyllwild Written by Tyler Shumway

I received a call out for two lost hikers at 7:45pm on Friday. Coordinates were given by the Sheriff department as two officers were already on scene. We were to meet on Forest Service Road 5S21 which is May Valley Road. just off Saunders Meadow. The coordinates we received put the Sheriffs about 1.5

miles down the service road where it intersects with the South Ridge Trail. This portion of trail is a single track used frequently by mountain bikers.

Michael and I arrived on scene to find two sheriff vehicles unattended as well as the subject's cousin who was there voluntarily as he had received a phone call from them stating they were lost. Luckily, we had service within the area and were able to obtain the Sheriffs cellular number to make contact. The Sergeant and Deputy were able to locate the two subjects roughly 1 mile up the trail and stated they were on the way back down.

Michael and I geared up and started heading up the trail to meet them on their descent. Half a mile in we found the Sergeant, but he was neither with the Deputy nor the two subjects. He stated that they had split up due to rough terrain and the Deputy and subjects were down in a deep ravine in dense brush. I called the Deputy on his cell and confirmed that he was with the two subjects and that he was off trail and was unsure of where he was. Using his radio, he was able to provide us with a coordinate which put him half a mile and 500 vertical feet further up the mountain in heavy brush.

They were however, very close to the yellow post camp sites on South Ridge so I instructed him to continue uphill until reaching flatter terrain and to stay put. Michael and I drove back to Saunders Meadow and up Forest Service

Road 5S11 which meets up with the South Ridge Trailhead and the yellow post sites. Just as we were driving up to the camp sites we spotted the Deputy and the two subjects. No one was hurt, we gave them food, water and warm clothing. I then drove them back to where the Sheriff's vehicles. Mission was over at 11:30pm.

### **RMRU Members Involved:**

Corey Ellison, Michael George, Tony Hughes, Alex Rilloraza, and Tyler Shumway.



# Lost Female Hiker March 10, 2018 Horse Thief Creek

Written by Editor

The team received a call to assist DSAR (Desert Search and Rescue) with a lost and now stranded female hiker in the Horse Thief Creek area of the Santa Rosa Mountains. While members were driving to the basecamp road head we got another call that the woman had been reached and was being hiked out and we were no longer needed.

#### **RMRU Members Involved:**

Michael George, Tyler Shumway, and Gwenda Yates.



# Missing Person March 13, 2018 Sage Area

Written by Glenn Henderson

We received a callout from call captain Gwenda Yates for a search in the Sage area for a mid-20-year-old that may be suicidal. We re-

sponded at 2 PM. We were led by deputies to a remote area where a bloodhound had lost the subjects scent.

The three of us split up and searched an area of approximately half a mile area. We picked up sign of someone walking up and down a steep brushy canyon. The print looked like a cowboy boot and followed it to the paved road where it disappeared. We returned to the deputies and asked to go to the house to see if we could get a definite print of our subject.

The deputies led us to the house. Our subject's girlfriend and father came out and said that he had just showed up and was in a barn nearby. The deputy interviewed him at length and the subject wanted to be taken in for a psych evaluation which the deputy did. And the prints we found were from the girlfriend. She had been out looking for him earlier.



We all returned home glad that it turned out well and we hope that young man gets the help he needs.

#### **RMRU Members Involved:**

Glenn Henderson, Eric Holden, and Tyler Shumway.

Continued on Page 18

#### **ABOUT RIVERSIDE MOUNTAIN RESCUE**

ing back to 1969 can be found on our Website at RMRU.org.

# RMRU is always looking for new members!

We are an all-volunteer, non-profit team of rescue volunteers who are always looking for qualified people to join our team of dedicated rescue members. As a member of the Mountain Rescue Association, we are not your average search and rescue team. In addition to what is expected of most SAR teams, we specialize in high-angle rope rescue and extended back country and mountain rescue missions. If



Joshua Tree Training / Rescue

you think you have what it takes to be part of an elite mountain rescue team, please join us at one of our monthly meetings normally held the Wednesday of every month. While the regular meeting begins



Riverside County Fair Technical Recuitment Event

at 7 pm, a training season begins at 6 pm and is a great opportunity to meet one on one with team members. We meet at Sheriff's Office Valley Vista substation at 43950 Acacia Street in Hemet.

Email info@rmru.org ahead of time to make sure there will be someone out front to meet you.

We look forward to meeting you!

Even if you can't join us in the field, your contribution can help make a vital difference in our mission to save lives.

RMRU is a completely volunteer search and rescue team that covers Riverside County and assists other SAR teams in other counties and states. 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.

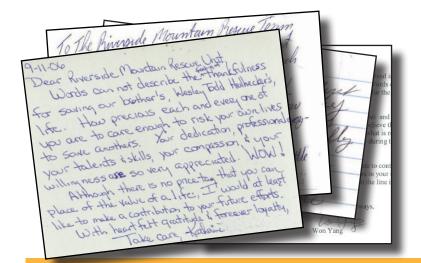
Your donations allow us to keep our training and team gear updated and help us to save lives. This includes our rescue trucks and recent acquistion of a new communications van.



Hemet Dam Face Weed Clearing

Donations of any size are appreciated, however if you would like be a sustaining member, please fill out the form below. We also take PAYPAL donations at info@rmru.





# **Testimonials**

Our Reward are the people we help



# Dear Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit,

Words cannot describe the feelings and thankfulness for saving our brother's life. How precious each and every one of you are to care enough to risk your own lives to save another's. Your dedication, professionalism, your talents and skills, your compassion and your willingness are so very appreciated. WOW!! Katherine

## To the Riverside Mountain Rescue Team,

Thank you for taking time out of your night on Friday to search for my friend Heidi, and I when we lost the trail on the way back from San Jacinto Peak. While I know it is something you gladly do – and enjoy – I do apologize for taking up your time because I made a very horrible mistake. You guys are awesome! Tom

## Dear Sirs,

I wanted to express my sincere gratitude to everyone involved in the search and rescue from Cabazon Mountain. Words can never even begin to express the new found appreciation and admiration I have for the jobs that each and every one of you do.

I really appreciate the quick response to your Rescue Unit and the coordination with the Sheriff's department. Because of your quick action I believe that I am here today and with my family and now have a new outlook on life and what is really important, and I thank you for that. Thank you for staying with my family during this time. Your compassions for humanity really shows. Best Regards Always, Won

# Dear Friends,

I just celebrated my first anniversary of being saved by your dedicated volunteers. My hats off to you especially Sully who went way beyond the call of duty. Keep up the good works. God Bless Al

# Dear Sirs,

I would like to thank you on behalf of my husband and granddaughter for the assistance you gave and my son's family last night and this morning. My husband and I are not hikers (although my husband is a retired Marine) so this is something we don't ordinarily do. When we got stuck up in the forest overnight we knew we would have to fend for ourselves, but we also were pretty certain that our son and daughter-in-law would call for help. They did and you were magnificent.

I also want to thank the volunteer search and rescue team, which was following us even though we never saw them. I know that having such a group is your area gives your residents and guests a great sense of security. I know that they are not under your command, but would you please forward our thanks. Kim

# Hut Rescue March 28-29, 2018 San Jacinto Cabin Written by Glenn Henderson

The team received a call from dispatch at 6:30 for a Pacific Crest Trail through hiker that had fallen on ice on the trail to the summit of Mt. San Jacinto. She had twisted her knee and could not put any weight on it. She was in the stone hut with five other hikers on the top of San Jacinto. Star 9, (Sheriff's aviation unit) called for two members to respond to Hemet Ryan airbase to affect a hoist rescue of the 45-year-old injured woman. Eric and I responded and met up with pilot Chad Marlett and TFO (technical flight officer) Ray Heirs at the airbase.



TFO operating Hosit for Eric to Lower

We loaded up and took off for the summit. The winds were supposed to be 12 MPH or less. As we neared the summit at 10,800 ft. we started to be pushed around. I thought this to be a bad sign and it was. As soon as we got ready to lower Eric first on the hook the winds pushed us around making it impossible to safely continue. Since she had people with her plus food, water, sleeping bag and pad, and it was not a critical injury we decided to return in the morning when the winds would die down. We were

able to contact her and tell her what was going on. Chad and Ray were on duty until 1 AM and were to return 8 hours later at 9 AM.

"We hooked her up and Ray lifted her to the door and flew her to the lower Palm Springs Tramway parking lot ..."

RMRU RESCUER -GLENN HENDERSON

We all met up at 9 AM and started up to the hut. We flew straight to the hut and there was no wind but at 10,800 ft. we would need to burn off some fuel to be able to hover steady enough to lower Eric and myself. We flew around and burned off 10 gallons of fuel before Chad was able to steady the helicopter enough for Ray to lower Eric and then myself to the ground.

We met our subject, Konstanz, who was from Austria. We explained that we were going to put her into a "screamer" suit and she would be lifted to the helicopter. She would not get completely into the helicopter but sit with Ray in the open door attached by the hook. This was to try make it



Looking down at Hut near summit

easier for her to not try and crawl into a seat. We hooked her up and Ray lifted her to the door and flew her to the lower Palm Springs Tramway parking lot where she was met by an American Medical Response ambulance and transported to the hospital. Chad and Ray flew back and picked us up and we returned to the airbase without incident.

Ps. Konstanz contacted me to thank all of us for our service and that nothing was broken but she would be a while recovering. Great news!



Subject in Screamer Suit going Up

RMRU Members Involved: Glenn Henderson and Eric Holden

# Courage Committment Compassion

Mountain Rescue Association

Motto



# **ABOUT RIVERSIDE MOUNTAIN RESCUE UNIT**

# FOUNDED 1961 MEMBER MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION 1963 GOVERNING BODY: RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

MEMBERS: ORIGINAL: 6 | CURRENT MEMBERS: 32 ANNUAL BUDGET: ORIGINAL \$200 | CURRENT \$15,000 MISSIONS: TOTAL OVER 2,000 | AVERAGE PER MONTH: 3.33

TRAINING CALEND	AR	RMRU BOARD MEMBERS	
Team Training		2018	
- San Jacinto Day Hile	April 07	Eric Holden - President	
- Daytime Helitac	May o9	Glenn Henderson - 1st Vice-President	
- MRA Conference,		Kevin Kearn - 2nd Vice-President	
Nordegg, Alberta, Canada	June 8 - 10	Ray Weden - Secretary	
- Tracking	June 16	Tony Hughes - Member at Large	
- Technical Rock	July 14	<b>A</b> .	
- Mock Mission	August 3 - 5	Newsletter Editor - Gary Farris	

# **BECOME A SUSTAINING MEMBER**



# SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Your Donaton is deductible from both your state and federal taxes RMRU tax ID number for Not-for-Profit status 95-2497048

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<ul><li>O Benefactor Club</li><li>O Summit Club</li><li>O Patron Club</li><li>O Century Club</li><li>O Supporting Club</li></ul>	\$1,000 + \$500 \$200 \$100 \$25	43950 Aca	Mountain Rescue Unit acia Street alifornia 92544	

# Help save a life.

**Join RMRU** 











Courage.
Commitment.
Compassion.



