



Two young men stranded

September 3, 1985
Chino Canyon
1985-040

By Walt Walker

While the team was searching during Mission [1985-39](#) we were advised via the Sheriff's frequency that two young men were stranded in the vicinity of the tram. We were further advised that the State Park Rangers were going to try and locate the pair.

As the old saying goes "ignorance is bliss," as we completed [1985-039](#) we had not heard anything and assumed no news was good news. We also assumed that we would not be needed. It was mid-morning the next day when we found out our assumptions were incorrect.

The RMRU pagers broadcast the news that we were needed to search for the missing pair. When we arrived at the bottom terminal of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway we were met by Capt. Ray Canova of the Banning office of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department. He introduced us to the informant who had been a member of the hiking group.

The informant described how the three young men had hiked cross country from the vicinity of Caramba towards the tram. The missing pair had become stranded on a cliff that looked into Chino Canyon and the informant had hiked out for help. We decided that the quickest way to handle the situation was to use a helicopter. Don Landells was contacted and in a very short time arrived with one of his Bell Jet Ranger helicopters.

We put the informant in the front with Don, and I climbed into the back and buckled up the seat belt. The powerful bird lifted off and we were on our way up Chino Canyon. The informant pointed out the area where he had left the pair and Don flew back and forth. While doing this I spotted some movement about 1000 feet down canyon and advised Don. We descended and found the pair waving a space blanket. There was a car sized boulder just above the two youths and Don put one runner down on it and I climbed out onto the rock. Don lifted off in the bird and returned to base to let off the informant.

Looking the situation over I was able to spot a route that the two young men could climb up to where I was standing. I shouted down to them and told them to get their packs and climb up. When they got up to me I told them how to slowly climb into the helicopter and buckle up. When Don returned he once again put one runner down on

the rock and I assisted the pair into the bird. When they were buckled up I gave Don the signal to lift off. He flew them to base and after they were out RMRU member Glenn Henderson climbed into the back of the bird and Don flew back to the boulder. While Don held the bird in position on the rock I passed the packs to Glenn and climbed aboard. In little more than a couple of minutes we were back at base.

We were happy to see that the two young men were safe and that we would not have to perform a rescue on a rocky cliff. After a quick lunch we all headed home.

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.