

## Couple stranded by darkness

May 18, 1986

Snow Creek - San Jacinto Mtns

1986-018

By Glenn Henderson

Michael McCarty, Anita McCarty, Susan Gallagher, and James Ballenberg planned to hike the Pacific Crest Trail from Black Mountain road to Snow Creek Village on Sunday May 18. This is a long and tiring trail that is about sixteen miles long. Anita became extremely tired as the day wore on. When the group got above Snow Creek Village they decided to take a short cut from the trail. This shorter route led them into steep terrain just as darkness fell. Because Anita was exhausted, and the group had not carried flashlights, she and her husband, Michael, decided to stop hiking rather than risk injury by hiking in the dark. Their two hiking partners, Susan and James, hiked on and eventually got to the water company caretaker's house. James telephoned the Riverside Sheriff's Office (RSO) in Banning and notified them of the situation regarding Anita. The RSO then called RMRU into service.

When the RMRU arrived at Snow Creek the Deputy Sheriff on the scene had his spotlights on the rocky ledge where the couple was stranded. It didn't look too far away but not knowing what to expect the RMRU men loaded their packs with an assortment of



Kevin Walker

**BACK TO SAFETY - RMRU members Mel Krug and Glenn Henderson guide Anita McCarty down the steep hillside above Snow Creek near the Palm Springs Water District caretakers residence.**

technical gear before hiking to the couple. After twenty minutes of hiking, Anita and Michael were reached. Michael was fine but Anita was extremely tired and sore. However, Anita was able to walk with assistance. With help and the light of RMRU headlamps guiding the way Anita and Michael slowly hiked to the rescue van. The RSO deputy drove the hikers back to their vehicle. The RMRU men had a quick meal and then headed home about 2:00 am, in time for a few hours of sleep before going to work.

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.