

Search at June Lake

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June Lake
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by Jim Fairchild

Upon learning there was a region-wide call for mountain rescue man-power, Ray Hussey and the writer were soon driving out to Moreno Valley to meet our illustrious new team president, Kevin Walker. He soon zoomed up in a red sports car and handed us a radio. We zoomed northward into the setting sun over a hot high desert.

We telephoned the Sierra Madre SAR periodically to reaffirm the mission was still "on." Darkness fell and we continued on our way, not knowing anything about the mission except that someone was missing, and that we were to go to the June Lake turnoff, a drive one way of about 325 miles. Our progress along Highway 395 was about 75 mph, when we were swiftly passed by a van from the Altadena SAR Team. I got out of Ray's pick-up to check on why we weren't moving, big surprise, we were moving!!! Then I tried to get our radio out of its bag, put on the antenna and microphone, turn it on, and call Altadena before they sped out of radio range. This brilliant plan was foiled by the absence of a microphone.

Not too far south of our destination Ray thought he saw the Sierra Madre van heading south. This meant the mission must have been secured quite recently. Sure enough, at the command station at the aforementioned turnoff we learned that the missing male adult had been found. He had headed exactly 180 degrees the opposite direction he should have when returning from a climb of Mt. Davis - just north of the famous Ritter-Banner Massif.

Memories of the excellent fare provided at "The Stove, 11 a quaint restaurant in Mammoth Lakes, impelled us over there for supper. Also stirred were memories of another northward dash that ended in Lone Pine for supper, the subject of a rescue having been saved moments before our arrival.

So, we headed home, catching a few hours sleep near the cinder dome at the turnoff to Fossil Falls.

Ah! But wait! Even frustrating long drives have their rewards, or, awards, even citations. Ray and I were driving along the highway, both dozing, just south of Inyokern when a vehicle behind I us started flashing its headlights, then turned on

a nasty red light. You guessed it, your indomitable rescue heroes were properly stopped, asked "why," and written-up.

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.