

## Two overdueday hikers

**November 25, 2000  
Devil's Slide Trail  
2000-029**

By Glenn Henderson

I got the call from the Sheriff at 9:30 P.M. on Friday evening. Travis and I were in Irvine so I called Walt Walker to get the mission going. We were looking for 2 overdue day hikers, Jason Stock, 28 and Heather Billings, 24. Information was a little sparse as usual in the beginnings of a mission but it was reported that they were going to day hike the Devil's Slide trail.



Upon arriving at home to get our gear, the Sheriff paged again and wanted to know if more than one person was going to show up? I immediately started calling people up. Jim Fairchild was the only one one on scene. I was able to get some of the Idyllwild people to respond. The pagers are a hit and miss situation in Idyllwild. Lee Arnson and Ralph Hoetger responded as did myself and Travis, my son, and three people from Desert SAR. Lee and Ralph started hiking at 12:50 A.M. up the Devil's Slide trail. Travis and I didn't get there until 1:30 and the Desert team sometime after that.

Operations leader, Jim, held Travis and I back waiting for reports from team #1, Lee and Ralph. When Desert arrived they were sent to the South Ridge trail to cut off the southern end of the area that we suspected our subjects were in. Travis and I got some sleep waiting for daylight. We started hiking up the Devil's Slide at 7:30 just as Pete Carlson and his son Will arrived. Lee and Ralph had hiked until 4:00 A.M. and then bivouacked until 6:00. They headed down toward Reed's Meadow and Travis and I were to head to Willow Creek crossing. Pete and Will were right behind us and were to possibly go to the summit of San Jacinto peak. Before we got to the Devil's Slide saddle Lee and Ralph found the two at Reed's Meadow. The were really cold and hungry but otherwise OK. Lee and Ralph gave them some food and clothing and they started hiking out. Travis and I arrived at the saddle and decided to wait for them there as it is less than a mile to there. Pete and Will arrived some time after us. We all met up at the saddle and hiked out to Humber park at about 10:00 A.M.

Jason and Heather were hiking to Tahquitz Peak when they missed the turn onto the Palisades Trail. They walked about a mile down the Pacific Crest Trail before they decided to head north hiking cross county. They wandered around until searchers found them in Reed's Meadow. Jason and Heather were quite gracious in thanking

us and even bought all of us breakfast. Our thanks to them. Travis and I got home at 12:15 P.M. A mission with a happy ending.

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.