



Missing Mountain Biker Pinyon Pines

**September, 23,24 2009
Idyllwild
2009-015**

By Les Walker

Curt Johnson 54 a Pinyon Pines resident with potential health issues was reported lost on his mountain bike somewhere between Pinyon and Palm Desert along Dunn Road. Approximately 7 pm Wednesday RMRU received the call out for the missing man on his mountain bike.

Lew Kingman, Nick Nixon, Chuck Springer, Randy Yates, Brain Wood and Les Walker responded on scene with Gwenda Yates handling phone communications from the Hemet base.

The Team assembled at the north gate of Palm Canyon Road South and Dunn Road in Pinyon Pines where Riverside Sheriff unlocked the gate and we began the search for Mr Johnson.

We encountered a visible mountain bike track down Dunn Road and continued to follow it in our vehicles until it wondered off track and into a sand wash. From there Team One of Walker and Springer followed on foot with their rescue packs. Nick Nixon came up with the idea of comparing the bike track Team One was tracking with the bike track outside of Mr. Johnson's home. Yates and Wood "Team Two" returned to My Johnson's house to photograph the bike track pattern outside his home and returned to meet up with Team One to confirm track. After having a positive match we knew we were on the right path and continued down Palm Creek wash following Mr. Johnson's track. After 5 miles we found Mr. Johnson's bike abandoned where he continued down the wash on foot. The Team notified the mobile base of Nixon and Kingman of the bikes position and then continued down the path following Mr. Johnson's footprints. We followed the prints over many rocks, down small cliffs and down a few waterfalls over the next 10 miles throughout the night. We took a small break on a high ridge above the canyon at dawn to get a better visual and radio contact with then now DSAR coming up from below. After confirming our location with Kingman, Nixon and DSAR we dropped down into the canyon again to follow Mr. Johnson's track. Approximately one mile from the end of

the canyon, we received a radio communication from DSAR that Mr. Johnson had walked out and was ok, exhausted but ok.

Now at 7:30 am the Riverside Sheriff's helicopter offered the Team a much-needed ride back up the canyon to our vehicles.

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.