



## **Injured Hiker Marion Mountain Trail**

**September 10, 2011**

**Marion Mountain Trail, Idyllwild**

**2011-022**

Written by Les Walker

It's Saturday afternoon about 4 p.m. and my wife Cheri and I are getting ready to go to RMRU's 50th Anniversary party. Donny Goetz is also preparing in the cabin across the street and we are all excited about this big event! Then the phone rings! It is from a blocked number so I am always hesitant to answer, but I do. On the phone is Ranger Sue Neary from the San Jacinto State Park asking if RMRU could help in a rescue. She explained that there was a woman on the Marion Mountain Trail with a badly lacerated left leg and that she needed help to get down the trail. I told the Ranger that for us to respond she needed to call our lieutenant or dispatch. Sue told me that she had called all the normal contacts, but they too must have been on their way to the party and unable to reply, so I advised her to call dispatch, gave her the number, and ran over to Donny's cabin. Donny was just about to get in the shower and I said, "Hold that thought my friend, we have a mission". I told Donny the situation and we geared up and waited for the OK to go. Meanwhile RMRU President Glen Henderson and I had been in contact and I had told him of the Ranger's call and he told me to go ahead and respond and assist as needed and that Desert Search and Rescue would be our back up if we needed extra people. When talking with Glen I could hear all the people in the background coming into the party. AHHH good food and friends would have to wait!

Donny drove us up to the trail head where we met up with Cal Fire. They had called in their helicopter but the pilots could not locate the injured hiker. We waited for the copter to do a few more passes and Donny and I decided to go ahead up the trail and see if we could make contact. Meanwhile State Park Rangers Neary and Peck had arrived and I asked them to join us. We headed up the trail knowing it could be a long tough hike, but as luck would have it, just as we reached the first few switch backs of the trail "less than 1 mile up" we came across our subject.

She was in pretty good spirits and had a very good bandage around her left thigh. She asked if we were there to find her, and we said "Yes, we were"! Right away Donny and I started to administer first aid. Donny laid down a ground cover to keep

her off the ground and got her wrapped up in a jacket and a sleeping bag. She was showing signs of minor shock and Donny was on top of it. I was talking with her and asked how she had hurt herself. She explained she had slipped on a root and fell on her backside and her left leg had just caught a small nub of the root and cut her leg open. Her husband had bandaged it up, called 911, and continued down the trail. The bandaging was first rate; her husband had done a really good first aid job. I advised the rangers to call Cal Fire, who were just a mile down the trail, to come up to assist in first aid, while I removed the bandage to see what we had. Yes it was a severe cut, but not bleeding. I cleaned it and held it shut to put a new dressing on it just as the Cal Fire EMT arrived and was able to help me get it bandaged again. Once bandaged and rested our subject was able to walk herself down the trail with our help. The Idyllwild Fire Department ambulance was waiting at the trail head and she was loaded up and taken to the hospital in Hemet for some much-needed stitches.

Donny and I made it back home, did a fast change back into some party clothes, and somehow made it onto the highway right behind the ambulance carrying our subject. We made it to the 50th Anniversary party just in time to be greeted by our team mates, get some great food, and see and listen to an awesome presentation of what RMRU has done over the past 50 years. It felt great to be part of those 50 years, as I have only been part of the team for a few years.

**RMRU team members present:** Donny Goetz and Les Walker.

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.