



## Missing Adults and Kids

**June 17-18, 2015**

**Marion Mt. Trail, San Jacinto Mts.**

**2015-030**

Written by Eric Holden

At 2130 we get the call out, 1 adult and 4 missing children out of the Marion Mt Trailhead. I quickly pack up all my stuff and head on out, making sure to grab a couple of extra jackets. While in route I get a text from Cameron that it is just him and I and he is picking up the truck. Excellent, Cameron and I have been on many missions just the two of us, and we operate very well as a team.

We both meet up at the Marion Mt. Campground and get the info from the Deputies, 1 Grandfather, age 37 and 4 kids ranging from age 5 to 17 are all lost on Marion Ridge. Aviation was able to spot them but the trees are too dense for an extraction. They took a Lat/Long reading for us and I plugged it into my GPS. Cameron and I geared up making sure we have enough supplies to support an extra 5 people and we started up the Marion Mt. Trail at 2330 on a dark moonless night.

After our recent mission (19-15) on Marion Mt, our biggest hope was that they stayed put and didn't move. After about 1 mile on the trail we decided to "Follow the Arrow" of my GPS and head straight up steep slopes of the ridge line. It wasn't until we were about 0.2 miles away that we finally make faint voice contact. We climbed over another ridge and once at the top made clear voice contact with the subjects and can see the glow sticks that aviation dropped to them.

A bushwhack or two later and we made it to the lost family. Apparently they had hiked in from possibly Humber Park and eventually got lost. They had no supplies, just a couple of water bottles between the 5 of them that were already drained. I was amazed at the location that they were at as it took us a good amount of effort to get there. A couple of the younger kids were in the early stages of hypothermia, strong shivering but still mentally aware.

Our first task was to warm these boys up! The best way to do this is with clothing, food and water. Cameron passed out lots of high calorie snacks while I decked them out in my finest wardrobe of many jackets. I am a big guy at 6'2" 230lbs and getting these 5 and 7 year old boys outfitted was more like wrapping them in large blankets. In any case after

about 15 minutes of food, water, and warmth the crew was ready for the hike back.



**Kids warming up and eating  
Photo by Eric Holden.**

I follow the GPS back to the trail while Cameron took the rear and made sure no one decided to wander way from are group. The route we came in was steep and strewn with pine needles, sticks, pine cones, and lots of loose dirt. I told the kids that they will slip and fall, this is normal, just make sure to land on your butt and not tumble down the hill. I then proceeded to demonstrate this method of falling. As many other team members will say, I have almost mastered the art of falling. After 90 minutes of hiking we made it back to the command post.



**Cameron and Eric with Subjects at Basecamp**  
**Photo by Unknown.**

To recap: If you go on a hike with your kids, or any hike, bring supplies!!!!!! There are 10 essentials, bringing 1/2 of one is not enough. They had no food, little water, no map, no flashlights or head lamps, nothing but the clothing they hiked in with and that clothing was minimal at best. Hiking in shorts, T-shirts, and shoes with no socks is not the best clothing for hiking. They got very lucky that the weather was perfect. The one good thing that they did do was after calling for help, they stayed put! This made the search go very easy. Had they have moved, we may still be looking for them.

**RMRU Members Involved:** Cameron Dickinson and Eric Holden.

**Sheriff's Aviation:**

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.