

The logo for the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit (RMRU) is located in the top left corner. It consists of the letters "RMRU" in a large, bold, blue sans-serif font, enclosed within a white rectangular box with a thick orange border.

RMRU

RIVERSIDE MOUNTAIN RESCUE UNIT

The background of the entire page is a high-altitude mountain landscape. It features rugged, brownish-grey rock formations with patches of snow. A small, dark, still lake is nestled in a valley in the middle ground. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.

MISSIONS:

January - June 2017

**MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION
LIFESAVING AWARD -**

RMRU'S MATT JORDON

Thank You!



To all that volunteer their time and financial assistance...
Countless people owe their lives

OUR SUSTAINING MEMBERS



January - August 15, 2017

BENEFACTOR CLUB \$1,000.00 +

Diana Smith | The Webb Foundation | Florian Boyd
Lynda Meacham | Ronald Dye | Riverside Elks

SUMMIT CLUB \$500.00+

Jane and David Allard | Idyllwild Rotary Anns

PATRON CLUB \$200.00+

Idyllwild Rotary | Teresa Lindemulder | Charles Newton
Leanne Monsma | Hatlelid, Inc. | John R. Dew

CENTURY CLUB \$100.00+

Yvonne Levy | Michael Nguyen | Carol Lovatt
Dale Pollard | James Collins | Lennox Family
Chris and Gigi Kramer

SUPPORTING < \$100.00

David Stewart | Thomas Kaczmarek | Marydoris Powers
Benjamin Croweell and Gretchen Angelo | Henry and Karen Sawicki

ACTIVE TEAM MEMBERS



Steve Bryant - Alta Loma | **Pete Carlson** - Blue Jay | **Kirk Cloyd** - La Quinta
Cameron Dickinson - Murrieta | **Corey Ellison** - Laguna Higuell | **Joe Erickson** - San Berdo
Gary Farris - Palm Desert | **Michael George** - Riverside | **Donny Goetz** - Los Angeles
Glenn Henderson - Hemet | **Eric Holden** - Temecula | **Tony Hughes** - Yorba Linda
Matt Jordon - Palm Springs | **Kevin Kearn** - Huntington Beach | **Lew Kingman** - Redlands
Shani Pynn - Riverside | **Rob May** - Riverside | **Kaylean May** - Riverside
Dana Potts - Corona | **Alex Rilloraza** - Corona | **Brad Scott** - Moreno Valley |
Wayne Smith - Riverside | **Tyler Shumway** - Hemet | **Frank Snider** - Riverside
Ray Weden - Murrieta | **Ty Whittersheim** - Hemet | **Gwenda Yates** - Hemet

**MRA LIFESAVING
AWARD**

- Matt Jordon Page 3

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TESTIMONIALS

- Letters Page 29

On the Cover -

**Lone Pine Peak Summit 12,949'
High Sierras.**

John Muir Wilderness

- View to the northwest with
Mt. Irvine 13,786' (left)

Mt. Whitney 14,505' (right)

photo by: Gary Farris (August 2017)



MOUNTAIN
RESCUE
ASSOCIATION

Life Saving Award

Presented to

RMRU's Matt Jordon

For this mission, CHP aviation pilot Jennifer Earle &
RMRU team member Matt Jordon were dually awarded the
Life Saving Award

at MRA's 2017 Spring Conference in Boise, Idaho.

**This is the highest honor in the
Mountain Rescue Association.**

Lost Hiker South Ridge

November 11, 2016

South Ridge Trail to
Tahquitz Peak

Reflections by Matt Jordon

(Visit RMRU.org for mission write-up by
Glenn Henderson)

It's now summer solstice in Port Angeles, Washington [2017] over seven months after the Clive mission in Idyllwild last year. I'm sitting on the bed of room 104 of the Flagstone Motel thinking of ways I can explain that mission and how things went down. It's been a long week here looking for property, the cool coastal weather will be a welcome break from yet another brutal summer in Palm Springs.

After rereading Glenn's write-up, I don't think I can match his amount of technical detail so many months later, but I can recall a few other details. I remember getting a call



**Matt with his award and Jennifer's
received at the MRA 2017 Spring
Conference in Boise, Idaho**

out on a Friday night which I simply had no energy left to respond; it had been another extremely stressful week dealing with Snow Creek drama so I decided to rollout first thing in the morning. Some days spent on SAR, you just have nothing left to give and some

days you do, my day was to be a Saturday. I heard this guy named Clive was missing, somewhere near South Ridge Trail above Astro-Camp in Idyllwild. He'd been out six nights in mid-fall weather leading into what would prove to be a record setting winter. The mountain had been hit hard that week; freezing cold windstorms and lack of food & water could break even the best of them in the best of gear. It would be surprising to find this guy alive. First thing Saturday morning, Glenn and Dep. James broke down the current events at the trailhead, explaining that two teams were currently in the field including members of DSAR and RMRU.

These guys (and gal) had been out all night long and were pretty beat. At this point, Gary and I were sent down to McCall Park to continue the tracking he and Cameron did throughout the night. Clive's cell

Continued on Page 8

Mission Reviews

January - June 2017

The following pages contain a selection of first hand accounts of RMRU missions written by the team members involved.



RMRU volunteers are on call 24/7, to search for and rescue hikers, skiers, rock climbers, and outdoorsmen whenever and wherever needed.

Missing Alzheimer's Person

January 06, 2017

Wildomar Area

Written by Glenn Henderson

First mission of 2017 is a call out for a missing 71-year-old male with Alzheimer's in the Wildomar area at 9:30am. We rolled out to basecamp and started dividing up the area and assigning teams to different areas. This is an area of rolling hills, lots of brush and numerous houses and outbuildings. It had rained the night before, but it had not been too cold. A sense of urgency was felt for anyone out all night. We had been on scene about two hours when we got the call that he had been found in a hospital emergency waiting room. Someone had picked him up during the storm and drove him to the hospital where he was waiting. We packed up our gear and headed home at 1:30pm in the early afternoon.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson, Donny Goetz, Glenn Henderson, Eric Holden, Tony Hughes, and Matt Jordon.

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Two Hikers Stranded

January 22, 2017

La Cresta, Santa Rosa Plateau

Written by Pete Carlson

RMRU was called to help get two hikers who were stuck on the Santa Rosa Plateau. As team members were responding to the basecamp an Orange County Fire Authority helicopter conducted a hoist rescue. Members returned home before reaching the scene.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson, Michael George, Eric Holden, Kevin Kearn and Raymond Weden.

The team was called out to do an evidence search in the East Hemet area. We met at 09:00 at the Hemet Sheriff's substation in Hemet and drove to the search site.



Kevin rescuing Eric

There was a lot of quicksand that had to be negotiated. We searched until 4:30 in the afternoon when it was called off.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson, Glenn Henderson, Eric Holden, and Kevin Kearn.

Evidence Search

January 25, 2017

Hemet Area

Written by Glenn Henderson



Cameron and Glenn Searching



Figure 8 on a bite
Standard "Tie In" Knot

MISSION REVIEWS JANUARY - JUNE 2017

Three Hikers and Dog

February 4, 2017

Tramway Skyline Trail

Written by Eric Holden

Six hours after the team had just finished our annual winter skills training at Grubb's Notch, we were called back out to Grubb's Notch. We were asked to assist with carrying supplies down to a State Park Ranger who was about 800ft down Skyline trail with 3 subjects and a dog. We had a great turn out of almost all the people that were at training earlier that morning.



Sunrise from Upper Tram Station

Once on scene we were told the subjects and the State Park's Volunteer were all warm and comfy and that they didn't need our assistance. The plan was to hoist them out via Helicopter the next morning. Skyline right now is basically one big ice chute. Almost impossible to travel on without gear, and very difficult even with gear. When asked, what the plan was if RSO aviation couldn't do a hoist, the response was to get another Helicopter.

Due to the steep terrain, the Skyline can sometimes be a very tricky place to perform a hoist so RMRU quickly came up with a backup plan. We would be staged at the upper tram with ~2,000 feet of rope, not to mention about 1,000ft

feet of webbing. If the subjects couldn't be airlifted out, we would rig up static lines from above the subjects all the way down to them. We would then be able to clip into the ropes using ascenders and safely hike up the last 800 feet.



Eric in Communication with other agencies

Thankfully the expert crew of Star-9 was could to hoist out all 3 subjects, the dog, and the State Parks Volunteer. We gathered all our gear and headed back down the mountain.

We would later find out the entire story. Turns out one male subject, Justin, had decided to hike in shorts, t-shirt, and tennis shoes with his dog up skyline trail.

"Thankfully the expert crew of Star-9 was could to hoist out all 3 subjects, the dog, and the State Parks Volunteer."

RMRU RESCUER -
ERIC HOLDEN

No other mountaineering gear. A group of three mountaineers found him sitting in the snow, very cold. They gave him food, water, warm clothing and called emergency services. They decided to keep continuing up Skyline as it was getting dark. As they were going up only one of them could

make the top and the other two retreated from the icy conditions to head back down the mountain. On their way back down they met up with State Park's Volunteer and they showed him the location of Justin. The four of them made a makeshift camp and bedded down for the night. The night started very cold as they had limited gear but RSO Aviation were able to drop two large duffel bags of gear filled with food, water, and warm clothing. After that they were all quite comfortable.



Members waiting at Upper Tramway Station in case needed

RMRU would like to give big thanks to Tony and Alex who gave up their Sunday plans to assist in this rescue. Also thanks to the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway who let us spend the night with all the free coffee we could drink.

RMRU Members Involved:

Gary Farris, Michael George, Eric Holden, Tony Hughes, Matt Jordan, Kevin Kearn, and Raymond Weden.

Other Agencies Involved:

California State Parks, Riverside Sheriff Aviation Unit, and Palm Springs Aerial Tramway.



Lost Couple Super Bowl Storm

February 5, 2017

San Jacinto Peak Area

Written by

Wayne Smith and Kevin Kearn

On the morning of 5 February, 2017, Super Bowl Sunday, visiting Canadians, Ben Lindemulder and his wife Leanne Monsma, rode the Palm Springs tram to 8,500' and decided to hike to the summit of San Jacinto Peak (10,800'). Although they were experienced hikers, they had only sneakers and the minimal running clothes they had travelled with, and carried only a small day pack with a little bit of water. The couple were exceptionally fit and had done several 14,000' peaks before. Buoyed by confidence in their fitness and experience, along with the higher daytime temperatures that had softened the icy snow to compensate for their footgear, they managed to make it to the summit. However, they got disoriented and missed the tram trail turn off trying to come down - as so many do.

The couple had actually wandered off the south side of the mountain when they decided that they were lost and needed assistance. They Googled the State Parks Ranger's phone number and called them directly for help. Park Rangers attempted a rescue, however they determined that the terrain and weather were now too severe. Colder temperatures had made conditions icy as a Pacific storm

was approaching; they turned back and contacted RSO to alert Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit.

An alert went out at about 8:00 pm - just as the New England Patriots tied up the Super Bowl. RMRU members left the most historic game in history not to waste a minute more with the big storm fast approaching. By 10pm, four team members had assembled and were getting ready to head up the tram.

"The couple had actually wandered off the south side of the mountain when they decided that they were lost."

RMRU RESCUER -
KEVIN KEARN

Deputy Todd Garvin from Riverside Sheriff's Office passed information to the team which included the subjects' description and a cellphone "ping" - a coordinate obtained from the cellphone company through triangulation of cell tower signals. The ping put the subjects on the Tram side (north) side of the mountain.

When RMRU team member, Kevin Kearn, learned that they may still have cell phone service, he attempted to contact the subjects and managed to get through to Leanne. Kevin reassured her, told them we would be some hours but to get out of the wind and to stay put. He told them to keep moving to stay warm and not lay down, and to not use their cellphone to

conserve the battery. We would find them. He talked her through using her iPhone "Compass App" to obtain her longitude and latitude. Her GPS position showed that she and her husband were over a mile away from the cell ping that had been driving mission planning to this point. More importantly, we realized that this new GPS position was on the other (south) side of the mountain.

At the top of the tram, Dana Potts established the initial command post. We plotted all points on the maps and decided that the field rescue team, consisting of Kevin, Cameron and I, would first clear the cellphone ping area on the south side at 10,000 feet, then cross over the mountain at 10,600' and descend to 10,000 on the north side to clear Leanne's new GPS reported position in vicinity of the Little Round Valley area. Kevin and Dana made tentative plans that anticipated loss of communications when we went over the ridge - and with the storm hitting soon, made a contingency plan to not attempt to bring the subjects up over the mountain and have them attempt to descend the icy north slopes. We would descend the Marion Mt trail. Kevin, Cameron, and I cross-levelled equipment which also included two pairs of snow shoes for the subjects. We headed off into the darkness with a renewed sense of urgency as chilly winds were already registering gusts over 45mph at the Tram.

MISSION REVIEWS JANUARY - JUNE 2017

At 2300 hours, we were on course to hit the cell ping triangulation point which was close to the summit of San Jacinto peak. The weather conditions were gusty with light snow though the larger storm was forecast to hit at about dawn. The team affixed their crampons and with ice axes in hand and helmets on, set out for the first point. Several miles and nearly two thousand feet of elevation gain later, we searched the first point and found no one.

"The team gave them warm clothing, waterproof pants and jackets, fed them sugary foods, and Cameron gave them hot liquids."

RMRU RESCUER -
WAYNE SMITH

Our three headlamps barely glowed in blowing snow in the cloud layer now and winds increased as we crested the ridge. Confidence was high that the subjects phone GPS coordinates were accurate so the team wasted no time in continuing to that point as fast as we could. With the cold, windy current conditions and the impending storm, the team pushed hard to find the subjects before they succumbed to the extreme conditions.

At 04:15 AM, just before dawn, we made audible contact with the subjects. The coordinates the subjects had given us, led us directly to them. They were freezing cold but elated and in surprisingly good condition. The

couple had covered the snow with pine boughs to protect their uninsulated running shoes from the cold snow covered ground. They had also maintained body heat by walking in place and doing calisthenics.

The team gave them warm clothing, waterproof pants and jackets, fed them sugary foods, and Cameron gave them hot liquids. Within minutes of our arrival, a steady freezing rain began to fall as the main storm hit – coating trees, our packs, gear, and everything with ice. With a choice of either hunkering down or attempting to descend, we decided to descend. Our subjects were motivated and recharged after getting fed and warmed up. We began the long process of hiking them out as the full weight of the storm hit at dawn. We gave the subjects snow shoes and both proved to be very capable hikers/snow shoe hikers. It was still slow going as Kevin and Cameron navigated our 6-hour trek down the mountain to the Marion Mountain campground where Dana would pick us up. Freezing rain eventually turned to cold rain for the remainder of the descent down.

At noon, the group finally reached the campground and were greeted by Dana and an RSO deputy. When asked why they set out into the snow-covered mountains with only jogging gear, they replied that they had expected to be out only a couple of hours - a mistake which nearly cost them their lives.

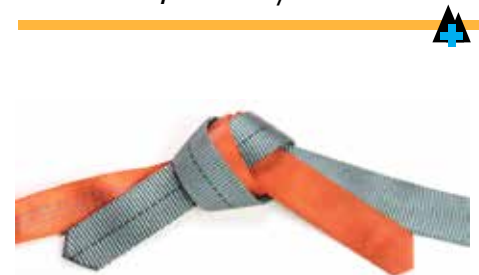
Everyone was in good spirits though now soaked to the bone. Very grateful, and with only minor hypothermia and tired muscles, the subjects were driven back to the base of the tram where their adventure began some 28 hours prior.

RMRU's rescue team, having just come off a mission the previous morning, covered 14.5 miles in crampons and snow shoes in a storm to accomplish this mission.



Tramway Base (L-R) (Dana, Kevin, Subjects center, Wayne, and Cameron)

RMRU Members Involved:
Cameron Dickinson, Kevin Kearn, Dana Potts, and Wayne Smith.



Water Knot

Primary Purpose joining 1 inch flat webbing. Uses include slings, runners, Swiss Seat harness, and "Swami" Belt

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phone signal still was pinging or 'triangulating' in that area so we had to continue looking. Nobody knew if we were searching for a body, but it was starting to look that way. Folks don't abandon their friends and hiking partners for six days before alerting the officials, something seemed fishy here and we were hot on the trail. After another hour or so of tracking through McCall park, there were only a few possibilities. Some fresh tracks polluted my mind and hopeful leads quickly started feeling like dead ends.

Gary was beat and I was getting frustrated so we parted ways and I headed back up to base at South Ridge where Glen was still having no luck searching near the fire lookout. Things were looking grim for Clive, we all knew the chances of finding him alive were slim to none. We poured over maps while handling other things like stuck day hikers and curious passers by. When Glenn told me that Lee Arnson had heard that Clive's group went RIGHT at the parking area when facing uphill, this sparked my mind and made me think that ol' Clive wasn't up South Ridge Trail or down in McCall Park at all. There were a couple noticeable trees just outside the parking lot to the right and we heard through the grapevine that those were the last trees Clive and company ventured through on their way to hunt for Indian treasure. They were there staring at me in the face like pillars — a gateway that I couldn't shake out of my mind. It almost seemed like a doorway that these guys walked through and it let to a completely different direction

The Mountains Don't Care, But We Do!

*Mountain Rescue Association
Motto 1959*

than anyone had searched so far.

I begged (insisted) Dep. James contact the reporting party (RP) to see if we could get a face to face breakdown of the exact events that transpired the day Clive went missing, but from the sounds of it, the RP was sketchy at best. All of what happened and how it happened made me think that even if we got this dudes opinion, it may be basically worthless but you never know in SAR. Its good to ask questions and trust your gut.



Matt receiving his award and at the MRA 2017 Spring Conference in Boise, Idaho

After several hours of waiting for any updates, I decided to just go call Kim and check in with her. We had plans to meet up in Idyllwild that night for dinner and I didn't want to be late. We were starting to think Clive may be buried three counties away by now. Ever been on a wild goose chase? This was that. As I sat there looking over

Garner Valley and Lake Hemet, the RP and a buddy of his walked right by me. I asked them what they were up to because they appeared out of nowhere through the forest — from the opposite direction of the parking lot. They literally walked around a hillside and right by me so we sparked some dialogue. We quickly walked over to Dep. James and Glenn at the van and blurted out that this was the RP! The RP said they had extremely limited time to show us what happened so we immediately had them retrace their footsteps which led through the trees, down the hill off-trail and back onto an old connector trail that led between South Ridge and somewhere down near Garner Valley.

We walked downhill for 10 minutes or so and finally stopped at a large rock on our left. It looked like a good place to look up and back towards Red Tahquitz. This is where the RP stated was the place he last heard Clive. Well, from there — about a mile or more away to the North. It was now or never that we'd find Clive. Yes, it seemed like a long shot to do something stupid like calling out in a place that had supposedly been scoured by the RP over the past five or six days. Remember, we also had two SAR teams doing just that above this area. Nothing was expected but everything was riding on this last callout. One, two, three... "CLIVE!!!!!" we yelled. And — nothing happened. I could see by the look on the RP's face as well as Glenn and Jame's face that this was a huge waste of time. The RP was clamoring to get out of there and kept saying he had to go, he

MRA LIFESAVING AWARD - MATT JORDON

had to go. I couldn't imagine a more important time to be here. This guy was a trip. ONE MORE TIME, I insisted. Just one more time guys — just one more time! One... two... three... "CLIVE!!!!!" — we all shouted with all we had.

And we got a response. Help!!! A faint distant yell — we knew it was him! At that point, Glenn and James high tailed it back to base to make a desperate plea for aviation to scramble immediately. The RP and his buddy took off hiking into the hills to look for Clive and we called back the rest of the teams to return to base. I stayed on that rock to audibly communicate and track Clive. This is a skill we don't always train with but it was one that I was learning 'on the job' so to speak. I did my best to yell for Clive, each time listening carefully for his reply. At first they grew stronger, but after thirty minutes or so they got weaker and fainter until I couldn't hear him any longer. Because of the distance between us, I couldn't tell if Clive was moving or not.



Brushy Location Subject was Found

By this time RSO aviation was in the air and so was CHP fixed wing. We were racing to find Clive before the sunset on day 7. After literally 30 or more minutes of

**Courage
Committment
Compassion**

*Mountain Rescue Association
Current Motto*

searching by air, there was no luck at all. This guy was the proverbial needle in the haystack. We didn't know where to look for him — just a general direction. My best estimation that I could muster was that he was somewhere on a hillside about a mile away between me and Red Tahquitz. Overtime, the plane passed and flew away from me in a circular pattern. I yelled

again for Clive, trying my best to estimate his position by ear between passes. This was not easy and it took quite a while to narrow down what I thought would be his position.

I radioed CHP aviation: "Bank left!", "Straighten out!", "Bank right!", "Now straighten!" — it was an immediate response by aviation. The pilot was paying close attention and it was like I was controlling an RC airplane with my voice or something... this was cool but we were all feeling the pressure. This guy had to be located before dark and it was creeping in fast. What seemed like dozens of passes went by before I finally decided to give it my best shot. Clive was no longer responding and we had to get him. He was in a spot of the mountain

that was almost unsearchable by foot so we had to spot him by air. This was his last chance and after an earnest silent prayer, I directed CHP aviation to the best lineup I could fathom. The next counter clockwise circle I told the pilot to bank right to line themselves up with a slightly different part of the mountain — a bit higher up than before and it was that final pass that I said: aaaaannndd "he's right below you —NOW!"

That same pass, aviation looked down and immediately spotted Clive waving a white piece of clothing! This was a one in a million chance and it worked! Clive was meant to be found. It wasn't me and it wasn't the pilot, there was another force at work here. It was like that dramatic 1977 scene of Luke firing the torpedo at the Death Star on his last chance. This was a "hail Mary" shot of epic proportions and it worked on the first try! WOW! But I had no time — we'd found him and it was time to run back uphill to the base to prep



Matt and Glenn waiting were the Subject was Found

for the helicopter evacuation from Keenwild several miles away. In the meantime, CHP aviation kept an eagle's eye on Clive in a circular pattern until Glenn and I

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Hiker Mount Baldy

February 9, 2017

Manker Flats Trail Head

Written by Donny Goetz

Wednesday morning, RMRU team members Donny and Michael responded to an Office of Emergency Services (OES) call to assist West Valley SAR team with an active search for a missing solo hiker on Mt. Baldy. The subject had gone to hike the peak on Feb 5th. He had not returned and no one had reported him missing until Tuesday February 8.

Teams were formed and given search assignments by West Valley Command Post (CP) and teams began to be inserted by Helicopter around 7:30 am. The subject was located soon after as the helicopter was carrying a team to the summit. He had taken a fatal fall off the north side of the Devil's Backbone ridge.

RMRU Members Involved:

Michael George and Donny Goetz.



Skyline Broken Leg

February 12, 2017

Skyline Trail below Tramway

Written by Michael George

My evening started out just like any other night. I had just finished grilling a mouthwatering steak to my typical 'burnt to a crisp' flare. Suddenly my phone buzzed with a text from Glenda. The text said to report to the tram in the morning for a search for a missing hiker.

The overdue hiker, as reported

by his wife, was on the Skyline Trail and was last seen quite a few hours earlier. It's a marvelous trail of almost 10 miles, rising from the desert floor to 8400 feet in elevation. It's one of the steepest trails in North America for its length and one of the most dangerous in the wintertime. We were facing decent conditions of semi-hard snow and ice, behind a cloud cover.

"Star 9 informed us of a recent avalanche debris field 500 feet below us, and over one canyon."

RMRU RESCURER -
MICHAEL GEORGE

Cameron and I arrived at the tram the next morning. After loading the tram car with lots of gear, we quickly reached the top, where we started to divide up the gear. We were so grateful to find Sharon, from Desert SAR, already running radio relay for us. Soon we were briefed by the deputy on-scene in regards to our subject, David. He was noted to be an experienced hiker, carrying a daypack, additional clothing, snowshoes, and hiking poles. We headed over to the launching pad at the top of the trail. After a short search, we found tracks leading down that indicated the snow-covered trail. We were faced with a 50-degree slope, and an endless field of trees.

We skillfully descended almost 700 feet. of snow and ice, when we were informed that, Star 9, the Sheriff's airship, was finally in route to assist with the search. It

was windy above the ridge lines, as I saw the aircraft getting buffeted. It took them a long time to finally get down and start searching. By this time the clouds had disappeared and the snow softened. This caused us to posthole more frequently, often falling thru up to our thighs. In addition, there were thousands of ice crystals having fallen from the trees creating a slippery surface. As we were hiking, the wind kept blowing more crystals down, in front of us. After numerous falls into postholes, with both legs, Star 9 informed us of a recent avalanche debris field 500 feet below us, and over one canyon.



Cameron Heading Down
the Skyline Trail

My first thought was that it was triggered by David. We had recently been informed of a man caused slide two weeks prior up by the peak. I asked Star 9 to carefully study the run-out area for

MISSION REVIEWS JANUARY - JUNE 2017

sign of personal belongings. With the wind turbulence, it took the aircraft about 15-20 minutes to carefully descend through the updrafts and downdrafts to really see the run out area. After struggling with crampons for the last time, Cam elected to put on snowshoes, and made considerably better time traversing over to the slide. At this point the helicopter had been buzzing around like a humming bird looking under trees and around rocks. They utilized their new speaker system directing David to come out into the open and try to signal them.



Michael Heading Down the Skyline Trail

Having heard them, David dragged himself, with considerable pain from a broken leg, off his insulated bed of leaves and branches, and out into the open snow where Star 9 saw him. He was laying on his stomach using his pack to keep off the cold snow. He was shivering as

much from the excruciating pain as from the cold snow. He was exhausted and could not move anymore. Star 9 informed us of finding the subject and directed us toward him. He was two small canyons over, to the south, in which we needed to pass through the debris field from the slide.

Cameron was ahead of me, and achieved voice contact with the subject quickly. Soon after that Cameron arrived at David's side, and quickly assessed his injuries. He had a compound break with severe lacerations just above the right ankle. After taking vitals, Cameron established our patient to be stable with high level of pain and somewhat subdued. He immediately began stabilizing the right ankle in anticipation of Star 9 wanting a quick pick up, as the winds had temporarily subsided. The helicopter came in and started lowering the 'Screamer' suit, a vest-like jacket with safety strap.

Cameron, with his usual efficiency, had the patient wrapped up and the screamer suit on in no time. The TFO Eric had the hook lowered again for the hook up. Cameron quickly connected the hook to the screamer suit, with about 4 feet of slack in the cable. Just as soon as the signal was given to start hoisting, the subject, in the blink of an eye, grabbed the hook, opening the gate (not an easy hook to open) and disconnecting himself from the cable. Cam, knowing that the hook will be up and out of sight in a matter of seconds, quickly moved in and reattaches our subject just as the

cable starts to achieve tension.

I am watching the almost flawless hoisting. The helicopter then slides away to the side, and heads down the mountain to the waiting ambulance. While they are gone, we hurry to clean up the site and collect all of David's gear as well as ours. We move quickly knowing that with this calm wind the pilots would want to get us out as quickly as possible.



Cameron with Subject in Screamer-Suit Ready to Hoist

Unfortunately, we didn't have enough time to find his phone that was dropped during his fall, before Star 9 returned. I promised to go back up after the snow thawed to look for it. Cameron is up first, his pack dangling in front of him. He starts off nice but he starts spinning. Not only does he look like he is trying to swim in the sky, he also tries to keep up with the rotation of the main rotor blades. I look up, and soon the pack is flying out, al-

most 90 degrees to him. Thankfully, he slows down enough to grab the skids and straightens up for a perfect entrance to the cabin.

"He had a compound break with severe lacerations just above the right ankle. "

RMRU RESCUER -
MICHAEL GEORGE

I am struggling to put David's and my packs on for a quick hook up. This is going on while I am constantly finding new potholes to fall into. At last I see the hook coming down to eye level. I attach the hook to myself and my pack, and without even taking a new breath nor indicating I am ready, Eric wisps me off my feet and I am heading toward the cabin. I spin a little, but within 30 seconds I was sitting in the doorway with my pack resting on the skids between my legs. We started moving immediately, but it seemed forever before we broke free of the mountain drafts and hit stable air over downtown Palm Springs. Cameron and I were flown back to the deputy coordinating the mission, where we were given a ride back to the tram to collect the rest of our gear.

After Cameron departed to head to work, I decided to head to the hospital where David was taken. I wanted to check on his condition, return some gear, and interview him. When I arrived at the hospital, he was sedated and waiting for the operating room to open. I stayed long enough for him to

wake and then asked him questions about how he was feeling and how he got to be where he was. David told me he came upon the icy portion of the trail and decided to cut to the south and go up and around the dangerous section. He traversed over two gullies, passing over the previous avalanche, at the 7600-foot elevation. This debris field was particularly interesting to me, because it really sent home the solidity of the snow after the avalanche stops moving. It's one thing to read about the snow becoming almost as hard as concrete, and another to experience the hardness of it while traversing over it. Our little plastic snow shovels all the sudden look woefully inadequate.

After traversing a bit, he started climbing up the 55-degree slope. He was following what appeared to be previous steps, stomped into the snowpack by someone before him. He was climbing over a rock, carrying his snowshoes on his pack. He estimates he climbed about 200 feet in elevation before he lost his footing, and fell about 10 feet breaking his leg at this point. He then started tumbling back down the slope, stopping just before hitting a tree. After fracturing his leg, and in much pain, he climbed down and around the tree, and took stock of his injuries. He then realized that he was spending the night.

Unfortunately, he dropped his phone at the tree, about 20 feet above him, and was unable to reach it and call for help. It also explains why we were never able

to reach him by phone him, all he could do was helplessly listen to it ring, and ring, and ... ring. He had the presence of mind to bed down for the night under this tree and amongst some brush. He pulled down and gathered up some nearby tree branches and made an insulated bed that kept him off the snow. With the limited clothing he brought, he was thankfully only moderately hypothermic when the sun broke in the morning. He spent the entire night shivering. Thankfully he had several things going for him that morning. 1) He was situated near the slide area, which is what caught the aircrew's attention in the first place, 2) He could discern the looped message that the helicopter was playing

"With the limited clothing he brought, he was thankfully only moderately hypothermic"

RMRU RESCUER -
MICHAEL GEORGE

over the speakers. 3) He was conscious, and had enough strength to pull himself out into the open where Star 9 saw him. Otherwise, we may have completely missed him.

As we were finishing up our conversation, the nurses came in to prep David for surgery. Wishing him well, I left before the nurses decided I needed Evaluating also. I went over to the gift shop where I purchased a couple Get Well cards on behalf of the team and myself. I ran into his wife, Jane, who at that

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moment looked more composed than David. I learned that David was experienced in backcountry snow travel and normally carried enough gear to spend the night. The day we found him was the third day of their 6-day vacation, and coincidentally Jane's birthday. They were out from the Minneapolis area visiting friends. Jane latter told me that soon after I left the emergency room Dave was wheeled back in having been bumped from the operation room lineup. He would be delayed another two hours.



Subjects ankle after surgery

After his successful surgery, David and Jane sent me a picture of David's foot in an external rod brace. A few days ago, they sent me an x-ray of his latest and hopefully last surgery. He now has a plate, and wants to go hiking again, in the snow. His wife is planning on buying him an Ice Axe for his birthday, before he goes off gallivanting again! After they have a real vacation.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson and Michael George.

Desert Search and Rescue Team (DSSAR) Members Involved:

Sharon Ollenburger

Hoist Ortega Highway

February 22, 2017

Cleveland National Forest

Written by Raymond Weden

RMRU was called to help a family of four who were stuck on the side of the hill just below The Lookout restaurant on the Ortega Highway. It was approximately 5:45pm when I received the call to head to Hemet Ryan Airport as the family had been located and we were going hoist them out. Upon arrival, the crew of Star 9 informed me this might be a "no go" as the overcast clouds were already pushing in from Orange County. I made a call to have a page go out to the rest of RMRU to be ready for potential technical rescue attempt from the ground if the weather held us back from hoisting. Cameron arrived at the open field on the corner of Grand and the Ortega Highway as this is where the Command Post (CP) was setup with Riverside Sheriff's Office (RSO) and where we would initiate a ground rescue if needed.

As we flew over the hoist area the Pilot, Deputy Calhoun, let me know we need to make quick work as the weather was closing in, but not here yet. I was dropped in to our missing family's location with 4 "screamer suits". When I arrived, there was an 8-year-old male, an 11-year-old female, and their parents. They went on a day hike hoping to hike to The Lookout Restaurant from the bottom of the hill. They were close as we could hear cars from the Ortega above but clearly ledge up. With it now dark, they decided it was too

dangerous to hike down and called for help - this was the right call.

The mother was shivering uncontrollably when I arrived and was showing signs of mild hypothermia. I requested Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to be on standby and determined she needed to go first as the rest of the family were in good health. I placed the screamer suit on her with a helmet and sent her on her way. While Star 9 was dropping her off at the field below where an ambulance from American Medical Response (AMR) was standing by, I suited the rest of the family up.

With the juveniles at the ages they were, I decided I was going to hoist with them. We did a tandem hoist with the 8 y/o male first and myself. We were taken to the CP and then I returned and did another tandem hoist with the 11 y/o female. Finally, I was back and sent the father up and then they sent the hook back down for me. Once I was up with Father in the Helicopter we flew to the CP. We landed in the field to drop off the father and do a quick debrief. A quick flight back to Hemet Ryan and this one was in the books.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson and Raymond Weden.

RSO Aviation: Pilot

Mike Calhoun and TFO (The Other Guy) Eric Bashta.



Massacre Canyon Lost Hiker

February 24, 2017

Soboba Hills, San Jacinto City

Written by Pete Carlson

RMRU was called to help a female lost and stuck in Massacre Canyon and while members were leaving their homes the mission was called off. She had somehow got herself unstuck and walked out.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson and
Tony Hughes

set up base and manage radio relay, while Michael and myself would hike in to reach our missing subjects.



Cameron Hiking up in Storm

Mike and I would start our hike on Marion Mountain Trail, but due to the heavy snows the mountain received this season down to the lower elevations, it was necessary for us to switch to crampons within one quarter of a mile from the trailhead. We had real concerns on the condition of our missing subjects as the temps were below freezing with even lower temps towards the San Jacinto Peak. A new storm system was moving in which added to the concerns. The GPS coordinates that we received place our subjects near the Deer Springs Trail southwest of Little Round Valley. Mike and I would work our way to this location. It was slow going for us as the conditions became more difficult as the incoming storm would provide lower visibility, higher winds, followed by snow. Our crampons were soon replaced with snowshoes.

In the early morning, we arrived at coordinates location. We did a call-out, and heard a faint response. We did another call-out to confirm direction of our subjects, which placed them on the downslope

of the Deer Springs Trail, close to the upper stretch of the North Fork of the San Jacinto River. The downslope was steep and treacherous, so we would slowly and cautiously hike down to our subjects. Soon we would arrive to our subjects, and found them all safe and sound. Our subjects had created shelter and a campfire to keep warm for the night, and had enough cold weather clothing, water, and food to sustain them through the night. We were relieved to find the group in good shape and spirit.



Cameron (Left) Hiking Subjects

As they were packing their gear in preparation for the hike out, they shared their story on how they became lost. Their plan was to hike to San Jacinto Peak from the Marion Mountain Trail, and would hike back down in reverse. Since there was no defined trail as it was covered in snow, they ended up losing direction and ended up down slope approx. 500 feet from the trail next to the river. Their mistake? Not having maps or GPS unit that would provide them a sense of direction and location. They did have a compass, but no maps.

Mike and I would lead them back out, down the Marion Mountain Trail, and arrived at the Marion Trailhead/Campground

Marion Trail Search

February 25, 2017

Marion Mt Trail, San Jacinto Mountains

Written by Cameron Dickinson

At 7:30pm the team received notification of four male hikers in their mid-20's reporting being lost somewhere south of Little Round Valley. One of the subjects could receive a cell signal and called 911 for rescue assistance.

Myself along with Michael and Eric responded to the call, and were driving to meet with the Sheriff's Deputy at the fire station in Pine Cove for a quick briefing of our missing party. The Deputy could obtain and provide GPS coordinates on the location of our subjects, and information as to the location of their vehicle where they had initiated their hike. This would lead us to Marion Mountain trailhead where our base command would be set up. Once we arrived at the trailhead, Eric would

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Subjects and Rescuers at Base

mid-morning. They arrived a little hungry and tired, but relieved their situation was now over.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson, Michael George, and Eric Holden.



Tramway Hike to Peak

February 26, 2017

Tramway – San Jacinto Peak

Written by Gary Farris

On Saturday evening a 911 call was received from two hikers taking refuge in the emergency shelter near the summit of Mt San Jacinto elevation 10,833 feet. After a series of snow storms during this winter season, snow several feet deep completely covered the established five miles, 2,400-foot elevation gain trail from the Tramway station to the summit. By the time RMRU was notified the Tramway was shutting down for the night, so the team met up the next morning.

"While the day was beautiful and clear, we had a real concern of an approaching storm."

RMRU RESCUER
GARY FARRIS

The two men in their twenties had left the upper tram station late in the morning following foot prints left by previous hikers and reached the summit. As they began their late afternoon decent, following their ascent route proved difficult so their retreated to the emergency shelter. With nighttime temperatures dropping below 20 degrees without factoring in wind chill and their lack of crampons to handle icy snow conditions this was probably the best decision.



Tony Heading up to Summit

Fortunately, they had one sleeping bag to share which at least make a very cool night tolerable. Fortunately as well, their cell phone had service from the summit and they were able communicate with the 911 operation; something that is spotty at best.

Riverside County Sheriff's Department requested that RMRU send a team up to escort the 2 subjects f

"Upon reaching the ridge line directly below the summit, winds reached about 40 MPH."

RMRU RESCUER
GARY FARRIS

From the emergency shelter back to the upper tram station in the morning. While Ray took charge of the operation from the upper tram station, Tony and I set out for the summit with our full overnight packs and extra gear for the subjects at about 10 am. We stopped by the Long Valley Ranger Station to check in with them and learned that they were about to send out one ranger, Sam to assist with the rescue. We thought it best to combine into a single team and the 3 of us headed to the summit.

Considering the heavy snow conditions which posed a potential avalanche danger following the normal trail, we elected to ascent adjoining and wooded Miller Peak to minimize the avalanche risk. The down side of this route was the steep icy slopes, 45 degrees in places which meant crampons and ice axes were critical tools for safe travel. While the day was beautiful and clear, we had a real concern of an approaching storm. In fact, Sam's barometer dropped 100 points in only a matter of a few hours. Upon reaching the ridge line directly below the summit, winds reached about 40 MPH.

The subjects were reached and found that between the 2 of them

they had only a single set of snow shoes. This shoe show set's design was ill-suited for descending steep icy slopes which became apparent as we returned the same route we ascended on Miller Peak. Fortunately, Ranger Sam had brought an extra set of good snow shoes and I provided the other gentleman my snow shoes as I was using crampons.



Subjects and Tony in back
Hiking Out

We returned safely to the Long Valley ranger station with headlamps arriving in the dark. Great teamwork with the State Park Rangers and we enjoyed working with them and look forward to doing so again in the future.

RMRU Members Involved:

Gary Farris, Tony Hughes, and Raymond Weden.

State Park Ranger: Sam.

Nine Hoisted from Skyline Trail

March 4, 2017

Tramway Skyline Trail

Written by Eric Holden

Every year RMRU must pass a re-accreditation with the California Region of the Mountain Rescue Association. This test takes the team away from our area and almost inevitably we have a callout. This year did not disappoint. We had just finished the main part of our search/tracking test when we got a call out that there were 9 missing people on the Skyline Trail around the 7,500ft level. Luckily Cameron, Michael, and myself all had our winter gear packed and we made the 2-hour drive to the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway where we met Matt.



Cameron and Michael with
Several Subjects

Turns out Riverside Aviation Star 9 had flown the area and located the subjects. They had all regrouped and now all 9 of them were stuck right at the start of the Skyline Traverse. Hoisting even one person off Skyline can be difficult let alone 9 people. RSO had already made plans and asked for the assistance of CHP's H60 aviation. With both dusk settling in and weather on the way, we were very happy

when they arrived. Matt and I would team up with Star 9 and Cameron and Mike would be with H60.



Matt and Subject waiting for Hoist

I was first to be lowered to the subjects. No one was injured but one of the subjects was suffering from mild hypothermia. As I was getting her and another subject into screamer suits Cameron was lowered in with more screamer suits by H60. By the time Star 9 returned and lowered Matt to the scene, with more screamer suits, we were ready to start hosting them out.

Over the next hour Star 9 and H60 would be running laps between the lower tram station and our location on the mountain. Depending on fuel loads we either sent one or two subjects at a time. I was extremely happy to have 4 rescuers on scene, as trying to both hoist, dress, and prep them would have been very difficult if only two of us were there. Before I knew it, we were sending our last subject up. The aviation teams returned to pick us all up and we met back at the lower tram station and debriefed a job well done.

The Subject's Story: They started hiking the skyline trail at midnight that morning. They made it to the traverse around 10am but then



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couldn't go any further due to the snow and ice conditions. They didn't have (ice axes, crampons, snow shoes, ropes, or helmets) all necessary gear to make the last 800 feet of elevation gain. A couple of them tried to ascend but would only slide back down due to the conditions. At this time they started getting cold and knew they wouldn't be able to make it back down, especially since weather was due to hit later that night or the next morning, so they called for a rescue.



**RMRU, RSO Aviation, and
CHP Crew
(The 9 Rescuers that Saved 9)**

What to learn from this, Skyline is rated as one of the hardest hikes in America. We have had dozens of fatalities over the years on this trail due to slipping on ice in the winter or heat in the summer. Right now Skyline is one big ice chute and even accomplished mountaineers have issues ascending it. Know your abilities!!!! I had told them about a rescue two weeks ago, were a hiker broke his leg from a fall, almost in the exact spot they were at. They mentioned that they had heard about this but figured they had the skills to make it. This is what we hear all too frequently and luckily these hikers called it quits and could walk away from their ordeal.

RMRU would like to send out big time thanks to both the Riverside Sheriff's Aviation Team and the California Highway Patrol's H60 for their expert flight skills. Without them this rescue would have been 20 times longer and harder.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson, Michael George, Eric Holden, Matt Jordon.

Other Agencies Involved:

RSO Aviation Star-9 and CHP Aviation H60.



Stranded Hiker

March 5, 2017

Soboba Hills, San Jacinto City

Written by Tyler Shumway

I received a text that we had a mission at 4pm while at home. This was my first call out as a new member of RMRU. A hiker was stuck and unable to move from his current location in the Soboba Hills above the city of San Jacinto. He was stuck on a cliff band after he had hiked an unnamed canyon approximately one quarter miles SE of Massacre Canyon. Glenn and I arrived on scene at the corner of Soboba Road and State Street and loaded up our packs and headed up the ridge line around 4:30pm.

After 800 feet of steep hiking and loose rock we could contact the subject.

He was very relieved to have us there and he seemed to be in good spirits. He was uninjured and had provisions for the day. We decided it was safe to traverse back the

way we came and provided the subject with a helmet and safety line. We also had two teams behind us with more equipment in case the situation called for it. Thankfully, we could walk the subject out without incidence. We got back to base with the subject by 7pm.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson, Glenn Henderson, Eric Holden, Tony Hughes, Lew Kingman, Shani Pynn, Tyler Shumway, Raymond Weden, and Gwenda Yates.



Two Lost Hikers

March 19, 2017

Tenaja Falls Trail, Cleveland

National Forest

Written by Shani Pynn

At roughly 10:30 PM on Sunday the team was called out to help two missing hikers lost in the Tenaja Falls trail area in the Cleveland National Forest and we were directed to meet at the Tenaja trailhead. As I was driving to the trailhead I realized the directions I had initially picked would lead me to an access point to Tenaja Falls Trail off of Ortega Highway which was not specifically the Tenaja trailhead. I adjusted my route to go to the Tenaja trailhead and arrived at roughly 12:05 AM. When I arrived Eric and Kevin were already there, along with the Deputy and the subjects' families. I learned that more team members were on their way and that some had initially headed toward the Ortega side of the trail as well. Eric informed me that the young couple

had been located by helicopter and were waiting at their location for us to come and guide them back to the trailhead. He also said the subjects were cold and in need of warm clothing and some family members provided us with additional clothing to bring to them. Kevin, Eric, and I looked at a map of the area and with the subjects' location and it was decided that Eric and I would drive to Fisherman's Camp and then follow the trail on foot to get to their location.

In order to get warm clothing to the subjects as soon as possible, Eric and I headed to Fisherman's Camp to begin hiking to the subjects. Kevin stayed behind to establish base and wait for additional team members to arrive. Eric and I were to radio in when we set off on foot. When we left the vehicle to begin hiking Eric attempted to contact base and we discovered we didn't have clear communication at that location. Since base knew our intended route we continued hiking in and attempted radio contact every few minutes. According to Eric's GPS unit we were roughly 2 miles from the subjects location as the crow flies so we set off at a brisk pace. In case the subjects had moved we stopped to call out to them roughly every 0.25 miles and when we rounded the edges of major slopes. When we were roughly 0.29 miles from the subjects' location our radio communication was reestablished as Kevin had moved his vehicle to near Fisherman's Camp. Eric gave an update of our location and Kevin said the other

team members were standing by. Eric and I continued on the trail and lost communications again after another bend so we made a note of the location so we would know where we could talk to Kevin on the radio.



**Subjects and Shani
(right, background) Hiking Out**

When we reached the portion of the trail closest to the subjects' last known location we called out to them and were able to make verbal contact. The only light source the subjects had was a lighter which we could not see from the trail so we headed uphill, off trail, toward the sound of their voices. When we reached them the subjects were cold and we gave them warm clothes. As they put the clothes on they relaxed and their shivering slowed. They said they had not eaten since the morning and we gave them some snacks and water to give them more energy to keep warm. Eric was able to contact base and reported that the subjects were located and we were providing food, water, and warmth, and we would be hiking out with them shortly. The subjects reported that they had been hiking and gotten lost and tried to follow the water to find their way out. Eventually they hiked to higher ground to get a cell signal and called for help. They said the helicopter had found

them at about 9PM and told them to stay at that location, which they did. Later, as their phone was running out of power, they called dispatch and were told that ground units were being sent in for them.

While the subjects ate and warmed up Eric broke a trail of roughly 80 feet back to the main trail to make hiking out easier. After a few minutes the subjects were ready to hike out and we were able to get back to the trail and hike back to the vehicles without incident. When we arrived at the vehicles, Kevin had his car running and warm and took the subjects back to the trailhead while Eric and I followed in Eric's car. By shortly before 3:00 AM everyone was back at the trailhead and the subjects were reunited with their families.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson, Corey Ellison, Eric Holden, Kevin Kearn, Shani Pynn, and Tyler Shumway.



PCT Hiker Lost

March 30, 2017

Fuller Ridge Trail

Written by Corey Ellison

Thursday morning around 10:30am law enforcement received an emergency call for a stuck Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) hiker near Black Mountain Campground. Subject stated he had fallen down the mountain and could not self-extricate and needed assistance. Riverside Sheriff's Helicopter Star 9 and CHP aviation

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were both able to locate subject, but were unable to land due to adverse weather conditions (High Winds and Clouds). RMRU was activated at approximately noon to hike into the subject.



Gary Hiking up in Wind and Clouds, Fuller Ridge Trail

RMRU personnel arrived at intersection of State Highway 243 and Black Mountain Road and met with a Riverside County Sheriff's Deputy at 2pm. Weather reports showed clear skies with high winds. Information from the Sheriff informed RMRU that subject was suffering from chest pain/shortness of breath. Due to the assumed location of subject (North facing mountain side), mountaineering axes/crampons/helmets were taken along with the other basic rescue gear.

From highway 243 we took vehicles with 4WD and enough ground clearance began the approximately 8 mile drive up a non-maintained dirt road to the Fuller Ridge trail head closest to the provided GPS coordinates from aviation.

Approximately 3 miles from the trail head adverse weather and poor road conditions prevented any further use of motorized vehicles. Team one (Tony, Gary, Tyler, and Corey) were assigned to continue by foot to subject while

the remaining members worked to free the stuck vehicle and shuttle rest of the arriving team members to that point in case team one needed additional man power.

Team one took the road to trail head and arrived at trail-head approximately 5:30pm. Subject's last known coordinates were believed to be 1.5-2 miles East on the North slope along the trail. Progress began to slow about .75 miles down the trail due to post-holing and steep icy slopes.

Team members stopped to put on crampons and helmets before continuing. At 6:30pm new information from base informed team one that subject had made his way up the slope to trail and would be inside of a blue tent. At approximately 7pm Team one contacted the subject on the trail about half a mile closer than subject's last known coordinates.

Subject was a 33-year-old male who was hiking PCT when he found himself inadequately prepared for conditions. Subject stated he had lost all his water and stove when falling down slopes and had exhausted himself climbing back to the trail repeatedly. Primary and secondary medical assessments were performed and found the subject to be medically sound. Subject stated the call operator had misinterpreted his statements, he was out of breath from climbing up slopes after falling down them, not for any medical reason. Subject denied difficulty breathing and chest pain upon RMRU arrival.

Subject stated he was ready to walk out with assistance. Subject's main problem was lack of traction devices for his feet, was only wearing trail-runners which were inadequate for icy conditions. Subject also thirsty and cold after losing water and attempting to melt snow in clear zip-lock bag with his body heat. Subject was provided water, insulating layers, and micro-spikes by RMRU personnel. Team one began to return to base on foot with subject. Subject able to move under his own power. Base was notified that we were heading back to the rescue truck



(Tony, Gary, Subject, and Corey-Orange Helmet) Hiking Out

It got dark on the way back to base and everyone put on a headlamp due to decreased visibility. We reached base at 8:30pm. Subject was driven down to highway 243 in the RMRU vehicle. The Sheriff's deputy obtained a report from subject. The subject was able to obtain a ride to Cabazon from base at highway 243. RMRU then debriefed the mission and all team members started home at 9:30pm.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson, Corey Ellison, Gary Farris, Michael George, Glenn Henderson, Tony Hughes, Matt Jordon, Shani Pynn, and Tyler Shumway

Lost Hiker near Saddle

April 4, 2017

Saddle Junction above

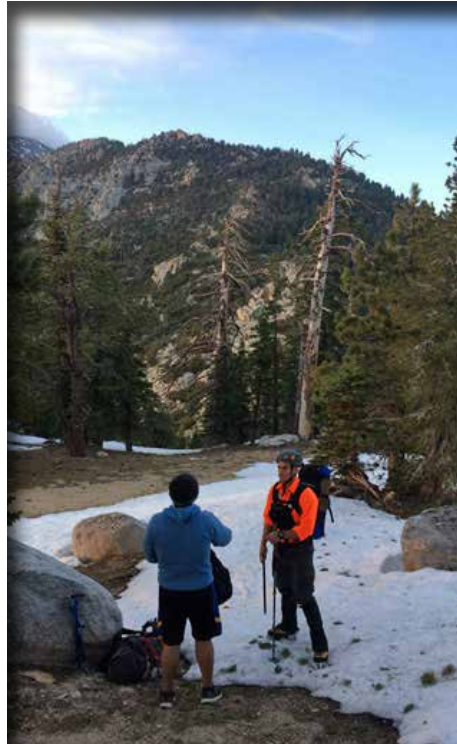
Humber Park

Written by Eric Holden

Another callout, this time to Humber Park. Word was that a PCT Hiker was lost on the trail. I boogie on out and 70 minutes later I meet up with Tyler at Humber. We find out that the hiker is not a PCT hiker, but just a guy on a day hike. He was spotted by the helicopter and his Lat/Long put him very close to Saddle Junction. As we were gearing up Wayne pulled up in his own personal mobile command post. We tested radios and with Wayne running base, Tyler and I quickly headed up Devil's Slide. If the pudding hits the fan and something goes wrong, Wayne is our life line. Within 1 hour we had voice contact with the subject. He was up some icy sections so we donned crampons, ice axe, and helmets. Within 10 minutes we found David.

David is a musician from the L.A. area staying in Idyllwild to get some more inspiration and decided to go on a hike up to Tahquitz and lost the trail after the Saddle. He was cold, but had food and water. We quickly started back down the trail and made it back to base about 45 minutes after dark. And of course, 5 minutes later Cameron shows up with our RMRU command post only to have to turn around and head back home.

What went wrong: The subject went on a hike, into the snow, without the proper gear. He lacked warm clothing and anything to



Subject and Tyler above Saddle Junction

keep from slipping on the trail. He also had no map, compass, GPS, or knowledge of the area.

Always remember your 10 essentials! 10 Essentials

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson, Eric Holden, Tyler Shumway, and Wayne Smith.



Stranded Family

April 8, 2017

Joshua Tree National Park

Written by Eric Holden

We had just finished our Technical Rock training at Joshua Tree. Most of the group went home for the night but a few of us decided to camp out. It was about an hour before dark when someone from JOSAR (Joshua Tree Search and Rescue) drove up and said all their members went home and wanted

to know if we could assist with a technical rescue, of course we said yes!

Tyler, Corey, Tony, Gary and myself geared backup and headed out. When we arrived on scene there was an adult male laying on the ground of the parking lot with his leg up on a fence. He was the father of the stuck family. They had been scrambling when they got into a dicey area. The father kept going and took a fall injuring his ankle. I did a quick medical and wrapped his ankle. I highly suggested he go see a doctor after we get his family off the rock face.

After about 30 minutes we had 4 members of JOSAR and 5 of RMRU ready to deploy into the field. We did some route finding and quickly got to the top of the gully where the family was stuck. Dave from JOSAR would be the man over the side and I would be running operations at the top of the rock. Our two teams worked extremely well together as we both use the same lower/raise devices. Dave scrambled down to the first subject and while he was getting her harnessed/helmeted up, we setup anchors and prepared a rope to lower the subjects.



Subject and Tyler above Saddle Junction

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We first lowered the female, but due to the age of the youngster Dave performed a "Pick Off" maneuver in which both he and the youngster were attached to the rope. We lowered Dave and the child in a very textbook like manner. With the sun now gone, we donned headlamps, removed all our gear, and headed back to camp.

This was a great showing of how well two teams can work together to get a mission accomplished. Our hats off the all the professionals from JOSAR as their game was quite top notch and it was our pleasure to assist them.

RMRU Members Involved:

Corey Ellison, Gary Farris, Eric Holden, Tony Hughes, and Tyler Shumway.

JOSAR Members Involved:

Dave, and lots more before the mission was completed. Wish I could remember all their names

ing and he has been missing since Friday.

As I waited for the sun to rise team from all over California were showing up. We had searchers from Los Angeles, Riverside, San Diego, Kern, Fresno, and more. From RMRU we had myself and Michael George. Mike would end up on a ropes team searching canyons while I was teamed up with Cave Team member, John. Our assignment was to search from the peak to Dawson Peak, and then to Pine Mt. We would be inserted by Helicopter to the peak.



Summit of Pine Mt.

While we were waiting for the helicopter to land, another SAR team member started having chest pains and ended up collapsing. Luckily, we had 10 searchers waiting to be inserted and it turned out we had two nurses, a doctor, and multiple EMTs. All quickly rushed to provide assistance. With the Helicopter coming in we put together a litter and moved him from the LZ to safety behind some vehicles.

San Bernardino County Fire's Helicopter landed and their medic was quickly able to assess that our fellow SAR brother was having a heart attack. We loaded him into the helicopter and they quickly brought him to the Hospital. Last I heard he was doing well. Back

at the LZ we would have to wait another 90 minutes for the helicopter to refuel and come back. After waiting a while, we got word that our helicopter had been diverted to an active shooting that happened at a local San Bernardino Elementary School. L.A. county would eventually assist with their helicopter to insert all of our teams to the peak.

Originally, we had planned on being airlifted in at 0800, it wasn't until 1300 when we finally were able to start our assignment. We started searching our area to the North of Mt. Baldy and found the conditions to be extremely icy.

We had to don our crampons and ice axes. We quickly found a single set of fresh tracks leading towards Dawson peak. John and I followed these tracks up Dawson peak and over to Pine Mt. The sun was setting and luckily, we could get a ride back to base from the expert flight skills of San Bernardino's Aviation team who landed on the snowy peak of Pine Mt.

Unfortunately, Sam would be found deceased the following day on the North Side of Mt. Baldy. Whoever we were tracking was not Sam. Our thoughts go out to all those that knew him and were inspired by his presence on the mountain. May his spirit rest peacefully on the mountain he loved so dearly.

LA Times Video of Seuk Doo Kim "Sam" LA Times Video

RMRU Members Involved:

Michael George and Eric Holden.

Mt. Baldy Search

April 10, 2017

Mt Baldy

Written by Eric Holden

Late Sunday night we got an OES callout. Type I searchers needed for a missing hiker on Mt. Baldy. I drove to the Command Post nice and early and was the first searcher to arrive. Our subject was Seuk Kim, better known to all as Sam. Sam is a Mt. Baldy Legend, all that hike there know him. He has summited the mountain over 700 times. It was now Monday Morn-



Injured PCT Hiker

April 26, 2017

Fuller Ridge Trail

Written by Gary Farris

The team received a mission call out late Wednesday afternoon for a Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) "through hiker" reporting an ankle injury. Most "through hikers" seeking to complete all 2,659 miles of this Mexico to Canada trail are normally passing through our region this time of year. In less than 3 weeks, this was our second call out to rescue an injured PCT hiker in the same Black Mountain / Fuller Ridge area.

I met up with Glenn and Tyler at the HWY 243 and Fuller Ridge Road Junction, loaded up my gear in the team truck, then we drove up together for a very slow, almost 1 hour, and bumpy 8 mile drive up this severely damaged dirt road. The good news was, unlike our Mission about 2 weeks ago, the road was clear of snow all the way to the Fuller Ridge / PCT Trail Junction which saved us about an extra 2.5 mile hike. The bad news was our subject was located at least 4 miles up the PCT, well past our last subject's location from 3 weeks ago.

Michael George had been assisting our aviation unit personnel earlier in the day locating potential helicopter landing zones in the Idyllwild area so was first on the scene and headed up the trail before our arrival. While Glenn worked operations from the team truck, Tyler and I up started up the Fuller Ridge Trail at about 6:30

pm. It wasn't long before we hit snow slowing our progress. With the heavy snowfall, this year in our local mountains the snow still covered about two-thirds of our 4 plus mile hike to the subject. We were blessed with an awesome sunset and the city lights of Hemet far below as we crossed a ridge to the south side of the mountain.



Tyler and Michael with Subject and his Tent

During our ascent, Tyler and I passed several other through hikers asking them if they saw the injured man. Most stated they had and described his condition as "reclusive" or "semi-responsive". After about another mile we caught up with Michael and continued under headlamps searching for the subject. Within perhaps another ½ mile we reached the subject. With these various "through hiker's" descriptions of the subject in mind we were pleasantly surprised that the subject was in excellent spirits, and in very good physical condition apart from his ankle. He was more than adequately stocked with food, water and gear. He even had a high-quality satellite

based emergency locator beacon / tracking unit with text messaging capability.

The subject explained that his injury occurred when he missed a trail switchback. Once he recognized his error, he was returning to the trail when he slipped over some loose rocks and severely sprained his ankle. He described it as "blowing up to the size of a grapefruit". He setup his tent near the PCT and fortunately a water source was nearby. He communicated via text on his satellite unit to adult children his situation and his plan to stay put and rest his foot. As the days passed, 5 days in total (yes 5 days) the swelling had diminished but the subject came to the conclusion that he would need assistance in hiking out. At this point he contacted emergency services requesting assistance. High winds prevented helicopter

"this extremely well prepared PCT hiker who made an error very common to anyone walking a trail, missing a switchback"

RMRU RESCUER -
GARY FARRIS

hoist evacuation and the weather forecast in the morning predicted more of the same. We asked the subject if he wanted to wait until the morning to hike out but stated that after 5 days of sitting around and his ankle much better decided he was ready for an evening decent. After packing up this gear and distributing most of it between our three team members to

lighten his load we began a slow walkout to the trailhead.



Cory, Tyler, Subject, Michael(Back), Gary, Glenn, and Cameron
About one third of the way back we were joined by Cameron and Corey who came up once they got off work. Perfect timing as we were about to traverse to the north side of the mountain and back into the snow. Sections in the snow our subject needed a lot of assistance descending the steeper sections. We arrived back to the trailhead at about 2:30 am and then drove back to the road junction at HWY 243 to debrief the subject with the Sheriff's Deputy. This was wrapped up at about 4 am and we all headed to our respective homes.

In summary, this extremely well prepared PCT hiker who made an error very common to anyone walking a trail, missing a switchback and continued to walk straight. After becoming injured he did the correct thing in setting up a safe camp and then waiting to see if he would be able to get out on his own. Once he knew he would need help he called for it.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson, Cory Ellison, Gary Farris, Michael George, Glenn Henderson, and Tyler Shumway.

Lost Tramway Hiker

May 23, 2017

Tramway to San Jacinto

Written by Matt Jordon

The usual time of Tram callouts are just after the last car arrives back at the valley station, right about the time the sun has set and the temperatures drop for the evening. It should come as no surprise then whenever team members are tired, showered, and batting their heavy eyelids after a long workday only to get a text message that there is another overdue hiker, lost somewhere on the mountain. This was just one of those nights.

"By 4am, we had made it back to the Mountain Station where we bedded down for the night in the ballroom area...."

RMRU RESCUER -
MATT JORDON

The heavy winter provided late season snow patches and crisp mountain air which awaited Cameron, Shani and myself after we converged in the quiet valley station lobby. The word was that two hikers went up and only one came down. The subject was an 'experienced hiker' -- and the goal was the peak. Of course: The hikers separated on the way up and the now lost hiker couldn't find his way back. The best info we could gather was that the lost hiker did make it to the peak, but then he hiked downhill about four miles and was last reported to be at a slight uphill area -- somewhere, anywhere.

My best estimation after learning the approximate timeframes and distances, as well as mixing in my basic knowledge of the mountain problem areas (including less than ideal signage) was now pointing toward Wellman's Divide and Strawberry Cienega. Since we only had three rescuers respond immediately for the held over tramcar, we decided to leave Shani alone in the radio room while Cam and I swept the Round Valley trail up to Wellman's Divide. We left late, around midnight and completed callouts and good communication with Shani along the way. After an unusually exhausting slog up to the divide, we again called out and made the best estimation of our time limitations and possible back up plans for a possible morning rescue. The time now was 2am.

By 4am, we had made it back to the Mountain Station where we bedded down for the night in the ballroom area overlooking the backcountry. Minding that the last word before the lost hiker's phone died was that he was four miles away from the peak, we agreed that this guy could literally be anywhere by now. We had to wait until daybreak to give it another shot -- possibly from Humber Park up the PCT or maybe even somewhere near Deer Springs. For now, we had to get some rest.

One of the best parts about overnight missions up the tram is the unique experience of bivouacking in the ballroom. It may be as close as it gets in Southern California to being trapped in the film The



Shining where Jack Torrance is hopelessly isolated in the Overlook Hotel. This night, I recall hearing knocking from what sounded like the exit door into Long Valley. This happened twice and Cameron confirmed this the next day. All in all, big raccoons and wearisome imaginations could very well be the culprit.

Thankfully by first light, Glen, Alex, and Kevin were ready and willing to sweep the trail back up the peak as we just got word that the subject had met up with some PCT hikers and was now at the infamous stone survival cabin. We advised him to stay put until we sent a team up to make sure there were no more mistakes that would complicate another day. As Shani, Cameron and myself made the first car down, Glen, Alex, and Kevin were getting ready to go get the subject. An hour later, the mission was over as the subject was walking out safely.

The lessons here to hikers are: Don't get separated from your hiking partner(s) and always have a mutual backup plan that includes proper gear. The lessons for rescuers are: Pay close attention to the latest (ever changing) information and use your network of team members to successfully complete the mission.

RMRU Members Involved:

Alex Rilloraza, Cameron Dickinson, Glenn Henderson, Matt Jordan, Kevin Kearn, Shani Pynn.

Two Lost Hikers

May 28, 2017

Angels Glide Trail

Written by Cameron Dickinson

The team received a call-out on a Sunday night at approximately 9:30pm regarding two hikers who became lost sometime after reaching San Jacinto Peak. Within 5 minutes after receiving the call, I was out the door and in route start the search. Five other team members would also respond to the call. After receiving GPS coordinates of the location of our lost subjects, it was determined that base command would be set up at Humber Park Trailhead in Idyllwild.



(Cam, Shani, Subjects, Tony, Michael, Raymond) back at base

Once I arrived, I would be greeted by our Riverside Sheriff's Deputy who would brief the team with information on our missing subjects. Team members Ray and Shani would soon arrive. Since Ray would manage radio communications, Shani and I would be the first team out in the field to initiate the search. Our Deputy provided us with key information about our lost subjects as well as the GPS coordinates of their location.

We were looking for two male subjects in their mid-20's. Their initial plan was to hike from the Tramway to San Jacinto Peak,

and return to the Tram the same way they came up. As they were heading back down from the peak, they made a wrong turn in the trail intersection and ended up further south on the Angels Glide Trail heading towards Idyllwild. They realized they were lost and it was getting dark, they were out of food, water, had no cold weather clothing, and a dead cell phone battery. Luckily, they came across some PCT (Pacific Crest Trail) hikers that were camping out for night, who offered them some food and water. The PCT hikers also called 911 and provided GPS coordinates of the location our lost hikers.

Shani and I would begin our hike. Approximately 15 minutes later, our second team consisting of Tony and Michael, would head up the trail behind us. Another team member Dana Potts had arrived and would manage base along with Ray. After 2.5 hours of hiking we would reach our subjects.

"They realized they were lost and it was getting dark, they were out of food, water, had no cold weather clothing, and a dead cell phone battery. ..."

RMRU RESCUER -
CAMERON DICKINSON

They were in good condition, however one of the male hikers did have some knee pain which we were able to provide some temporary relief by compressing/supporting with elastic bandage wraps. They did have a large campfire going to stay warm, but

MISSION REVIEWS JANUARY - JUNE 2017

we had to quickly extinguish as it is illegal to have campfires openly in our local mountains. Since we had already reached our subjects, our second team would hold their position in Saddle Junction and act as radio relay between us and base, as it's somewhat difficult for us to get direct radio communication to base from our location with the subjects.

We would hike back with our subjects and soon met up with Team 2, where we would all hike back together down to Humber Park Trailhead. Our lost hikers made it back safely, however exhausted from their ordeal.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickinson, Michael George, Tony Hughes, Dana Potts, Shani Pynn, and Ray Weden.

Lost 66-year-old Hiker

June 8, 2017

Marion Mountain Trail

Written by Shani Pynn

At roughly 11:45 PM on Thursday night the team was called out to help with a hiker in the Marion Mountain Trail area who had become lost. The team was directed to meet at the Marion Mountain trailhead. As I was driving to the trail I got a call from Glenn, who would be running base for the mission and he informed me that the hiker was equipped to spend the night at his location and we would be starting our search at first light. As I was still close to home I went back to get a few hours' sleep and then drove to the trailhead to meet the team at 6 AM Friday.

When I arrived, Glen, Michael, Corey, and Kevin were at Marion Mountain campground with the Deputy. Kevin briefed Michael, Corey, and I that our subject, a man in his mid-60s, had hiked up on Wednesday and stayed overnight to Thursday as part of his planned trip. He then had taken a wrong turn on the trails somewhere, become lost, and called his daughter who, then, contacted the sheriffs to have us called out.



Glenn Running Base in the New Communications Van

At this time, we did not have any more information on his location and Kevin called and left a message on the subject's cell phone asking him to call 911 if he got the message. We then relocated to the trailhead and began walking up Marion Mountain trail. We set out as a four-person team with the intention to separate into two teams at Deer Springs and check the Fuller Ridge and Deer Springs trails on our way back to base if necessary.



Hiking out



(Shani, Subject, and Corey) on trail near where subject found

Since we had been informed the subject was in good health we all carried only essential minimal gear to be able to cover more ground faster. We checked in with Glen at base every half hour with our location and status. While hiking up, we did call outs to the subject roughly every 10 to 15 minutes as the calm weather was good for carrying voices and we hoped to be able to contact him if he was on a nearby trail.



(Michael, Kevin, and Subject) at food break

Shortly after 8:30 AM, when we were about a half mile from Deer Springs, we contacted our subject, who had heard our last two call outs and been moving toward us along the trail. Kevin radioed in to base that we had located our subject so Glen could let any other team members and Star 9 know that we would be able to walk him out with the people we had. The subject was in fairly good spirits and had had food and water earlier in the morning. We gave

him some more snacks and some water and Gatorade and waited with him for a few minutes before hiking out.

He told us he had spent too much time up at the peak of the mountain and had taken a wrong turn on the trails on his way back. He ended up on Fuller Ridge and went down that trail for a couple of hours. At this point he called his daughter to let her know he was lost, but okay. Then he found a sheltered spot to spend the night and tried to find his way again in the morning. We thanked him for making sure she knew he was okay spending the night as that allowed us to begin our search in the morning when we could be safer and better rested.

After our short break, we started back down the trail and were able to hike back down to the trailhead by roughly 10:15 AM without incident. There, we met up with Glen and the Sheriff, who had relocated to the trailhead as well.

RMRU Members Involved:

Corey Ellison, Michael George, Glen Henderson, Kevin Kearn, and Shani Pynn.

Vail Lake Hoist

June 15, 2017

Vail Lake Riverside County

Written by Eric Holden

While digging an irrigation trench in my backyard I got the call that we needed a person for a helicopter rescue out of Vail Lake. I quickly put down my pick ax and put on my team shirt. While in-route I

spoke with Tyler and knew he was also on his way. I met with RSO aviation at the entrance to Vail Lake and we quickly set off to the scene.

It turns out that Cal Fire already had the subject loaded into their litter and were making their way by foot over to their bird on the ground. After a few circles above them it was determined that we were no longer needed. RSO aviation put me back on the ground where I met Tyler, ever eager to assist but with no place to go.

RMRU Members Involved:

Eric Holden and Tyler Shumway

Search Missing Person

June 18, 2017

San Diego County

Written by Raymond Weden

The evening before Father's Day, June 17th, RMRU was called to assist with a search for an 85-year-old man. Mr. Taiheng Sun had been reported missing on Thursday June 15. The local San Diego SAR team had been searching hard but requested as many hands for a big push on Sunday and were asked to report at 7am that morning.

Teams from all over California descended on San Diego to assist in this search. Over 50 searchers combed the hills outside of Mr. Sun's residential community he had been known to hike on a regular basis. The temperature was about 100 degrees with no shade, but we are used to those condi

"Teams from all over California descended on San Diego to assist in this search "

RMRU RESCUER -

RAYMOND WEDEN

tions (though they are not ideal). The interesting circumstance here was the area we were searching was an old bomb range. There were signs of exploded ordnance everywhere. Unfortunately, there were no signs of our missing subject. After a long hot day of searching no teams reported seeing any positive sign of Mr. Sun.

As of writing this Mr. Sun has not been found. Our thoughts are with the family and friends of Taiheng and we still hold out hope for a positive outcome.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickenson, Eric Holden, Tyler Shumway, and Raymond Weden.

Dehydrated Climbers

June 24, 2017

Tahquitz Rock

Written by Tyler Shumway

I was having dinner with family when I received a call out to Humbler Park at 7pm for a possible heat related illness. Upon arriving at Mountain Center, I got a call from Gwenda to report to Keenwild Heliport for a hoist with Riverside County Sheriff's Aviation Unit. Star g was able to get a location

MISSION REVIEWS JANUARY - JUNE 2017

on the subject which put him right in the middle of the North Gulley descent route on Tahquitz Rock. Climbers use this route for descent after climbing Tahquitz rock.



Red Circle is where the hoist took place

After gearing up at the heliport base Star 9 picked me up at 8pm. The Pilot and (Technical Flight Office) TFO pointed out the exact position of the subject and were able to safely lower me right to them. The subject was already in good company with Cal Fire and a member of State Parks who had hiked up from Humber Park to the subject. They got to his position 30 minutes prior to my arrival and had provided medical aid. They were two male climbers in their mid to late 20's and they had just finished White Maidens Walkway which is a long and varied route up Tahquitz rock. Temperatures were in the middle 90's that day in Idyllwild and on the rock face temperatures could very well have reached close to the 100 degrees.

When they started the descent route one of the climbers noticed his buddy was becoming very fatigued and state of mind was altered. He immediately recognized the symptoms as a heat problem and was able to get a cell signal and call for help. Per the subject and Cal Fire he was having bouts of vomiting and altered mental

status which was indicative of Heat Stroke. Upon my arrival Cal Fire had already given him a liter of fluids by IV and his condition was improving. Subject also stated the they had 3 liters of water and that still was not enough to stave off severe dehydration. The climbing partner however, was not experiencing any heat related symptoms.

"He immediately recognized the symptoms as a heat problem and was able to get a cell signal and call for help"

RMRU RESCUER -
TYLER SHURNWAY

Light was fading and given the subjects symptoms I put him in a screamer suit and requested star 9 for a hoist. The subject was safely hoisted and returned to Keenwild for further medical attention. Star 9 returned shortly after that to pick up me up while it was decided that Cal Fire and State Parks would hike out with the climbing partner. Back at the Heliport I met up with Cameron and the RMRU Rescue Truck who were standing by in case I needed help or gear from the Rescue Truck. The mission was over by at 8:45pm. This was my first hoist with Riverside County Sheriff's Aviation Unit and I want to thank all parties involved for the successful mission.

RMRU Members Involved:
Cameron Dickinson,
Tyler Shumway, and Shani Pynn

Recovery Fallen Climber

July 08, 2017

Tahquitz Rock

Written by Pete Carlson

It was supposed to be a day of joint technical training on Suicide Rock with RMRU and DSAR (Desert Search and Rescue). We started hiking up the climber's trail to Suicide Rock at 8am with packs full of ropes, technical gear, and a litter. We had just reached the beginning of the dirt trail when we heard a helicopter circling over Tahquitz Rock. When we looked up we saw it was the Riverside County Sheriff's Star-9 and we knew it was be a mission. Sure enough when we made contact they reported a body had been found near the base of the rock and we would be needed to help with the recovery.



Wrapping a Tree as Anchor

We returned to the Suicide Rock Trail head and move our cars up to the Tahquitz Rock Trailhead. Within minutes a Sheriff's Deputy arrived on scene and told us that two climbers had called 911 to say they had found a body at the base of the Trough. We did not know what gear we would need so we took everything that we had been going to take on training. Tony was assigned to run the mission and be basecamp. Ray stayed back to hike the Coroner in once they arrived at base.



Lowering subject down Third Class Rock to Trail

A slow and steady hike of 35 minutes got us up to lunch rock where we meet the two climbers who had found the body. They led us over to the Trough where about 100 feet above the trail was the fallen climber. It was now 10am. The two climbers that found him had been to Suicide Rock for the first-time last week and this was there first time to Tahquitz Rock. They had been going to do the Trough today, but after finding the body decide they were not feeling like climbing today. We told them thanks for helping and to come back again that Tahquitz is a great place to climb.



Carry out down Climbers Trail

It appeared that the climber had been free soloing and by the items that we found above him (first aid

kit, hat, knife, food, and one shoe) that he had been at least 150-250 feet above where he was found. We guess that he was up in the fifth class climbing when he fell.



Litter always on Belay

We set up an anchor on a tree and attached a rope and got the litter up to near the climber. We then had to wait for the Coroner and a Deputy who arrived around noon. Once on scene we belayed the Coroner up the Third-Class terrain to the climber where she examined the body and all the lose gear and took lots of photos. The Rescue members then gathered up all the lose gear into a bag. With the Coroner's help, we prepare the climber to be loaded into the litter.

Then we belayed the Coroner back down to the trail and put the climber into the litter to be lower back to the trail at the base of the rock. Once on the trail the Coroner did detail check of the deceased and found a driver's license that identity the climber as George Wu. We then added a wheel to the bottom of the litter so we could wheel it back to the parking lot.

It always takes hard work to get the wheeled litter down the climber's trail, but with 15 rescue members to all take turns we were able to belay it down to the Ernie Maxwell Trail it about 1 hour. Once back at base we sorted gear and put it back into the rescue truck and then went to (Lunch-Dinner) at 3pm in Idyllwild before heading home. Our thoughts and condolences are with the family and friends of George Wu.

RMRU Members Involved:

Cameron Dickenson, Pete Carlson, Corey Ellison, Gary Farris, Michael George, Donny Goetz, Glenn Henderson, Eric Holden, Tony Hughes, Tyler Shumway, and Raymond Weden.

DSAR Members Involved:

John Eddy, Sharon Ollenburger, Joe McEuen, and Jason Roberson.

Riverside County Sheriff's Involved:

Aviation Unit, Coroner's Office, and several Sheriff's.

Testimonials

Our Reward
are the people we help



Dear Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit,

Words cannot describe the feelings and thankfulness for saving our brother's life. How precious each and every one of you are to care enough to risk your own lives to save another's. Your dedication, professionalism, your talents and skills, your compassion and your willingness are so very appreciated. WOW!! Katherine

To the Riverside Mountain Rescue Team,

Thank you for taking time out of your night on Friday to search for my friend Heidi, and I when we lost the trail on the way back from San Jacinto Peak. While I know it is something you gladly do – and enjoy – I do apologize for taking up your time because I made a very horrible mistake. You guys are awesome! Tom

Dear Sirs,

I wanted to express my sincere gratitude to everyone involved in the search and rescue from Cabazon Mountain. Words can never even begin to express the new found appreciation and admiration I have for the jobs that each and every one of you do.

I really appreciate the quick response to your Rescue Unit and the coordination with the Sheriff's department. Because of your quick action I believe that I am here today and with my family and now have a new outlook on life and what is really important, and I thank you for that. Thank you for staying with my family during this time. Your compassions for humanity really shows. Best Regards Always, Won

Dear Friends,

I just celebrated my first anniversary of being saved by your dedicated volunteers. My hats off to you especially Sully who went way beyond the call of duty. Keep up the good works. God Bless Al

Dear Sirs,

I would like to thank you on behalf of my husband and granddaughter for the assistance you gave and my son's family last night and this morning. My husband and I are not hikers (although my husband is a retired Marine) so this is something we don't ordinarily do. When we got stuck up in the forest overnight we knew we would have to fend for ourselves, but we also were pretty certain that our son and daughter-in-law would call for help. They did and you were magnificent.

I also want to thank the volunteer search and rescue team, which was following us even though we never saw them. I know that having such a group in your area gives your residents and guests a great sense of security. I know that they are not under your command, but would you please forward our thanks. Kim

could scramble our gear and haul ass to the chopper. We flew down the dirt road from South Ridge — my beater truck (a 1970 Chevy Luv) was banging around and I was still bursting a lung from the uphill run back to base. After a quick launch from the helicopter base, we doubled down on Clive, taking about 20 minutes to visually spot him in his black and grey outfit in a dense 15' - 100' tall forest of giant Manzanita and mature Fir and Pine. We were circling tighter and tighter; if I wasn't wearing a seat-belt, I'd have fallen straight down through the helicopter!



TFO Eric Hannum getting ready to fly

We were now trying to locate Clive by air while trying to follow moving directions given by air. It was complicated and somewhat nauseating — fun though! "WE GOT HIM!" Eric with RSO Aviation yelled out! I was lowered right into a huge patch of deadfall about 50' away but this was the only place I could land. I scrambled uphill and reached out to Clive who was laying there like a dead man.

Clive looked dead but he managed to reach out his hand to me, when we grasped hands I told him that everything was going to be

"...by the tear he managed Clive could barely believe what just happened to him. He was overjoyed to be alive."

RMRU RESCUER -
MATT JORDON

all right! With the chopper flying above me and the wind howling, I asked Clive what day it was and said: "Friday!" — it was Saturday. Clive had endured seven days without food, water, appropriate gear or shelter. It was a bad part of the mountain and he was lucky to be alive! I managed to help him up just long enough to thread the screamer suit on him before Glen made his way down too. We were going to get Clive out but my greatest fear now was that he was going to have a heart attack on the way out.

Clive collapsed again onto the brush, he couldn't stand but I hooked him up properly and got a helmet on his head right before his haul out by RSO. It was a dramatic stroke of luck at just the right moment. With personal experience, this wasn't luck at all — this was divine intervention. This was a miracle that we got him. Clive was meant to be found. We watched him pulled up and away.

Glen and I sat there in the brush, watching the sunset in the distance. The fall colors and the dancing light seemed like the perfect finish to one hell of a week that Clive must've endured. We were so happy to have got him.

We were giving each other high fives and thumbs up to Jennifer, the eagle-eyed CHP pilot who spotted him. "This was great!" I took a final photo of the spot Clive was found in — just on the other side of an old dead stub in the middle of nowhere San Jacinto. It was his spot to die and I could tell by the tear he managed that he could barely believe what just happened to him. He was overjoyed to be alive. That was the last time I saw Clive.

At the end of the day, we rendezvoused at Keenwild after Clive was taken the hospital. We watched one of the most beautiful sunsets just after we landed as we removed our gear from the helicopter. All ended well that day and everyone was very thankful we pulled it off before dark. One more night in the woods and nobody thought we'd ever find Clive alive. With divine oversight and good help, we did.

RMRU Members Present:

Cameron Dickinson, Gary Farris, Mike George, Glenn Henderson, Tony Hughes, Matt Jordon, and Ray Weden.

Desert Search and Rescue (DSAR) Members Present:

Sharon Ollenburger, Mike Smith, Jacob Paull, and Joe McEuen.

Riverside County Sheriff Officers Involved:

Deputy James and Star 9 TFO Eric Hannum and Pilot Mike Calhoun.

CHP Members Involved: Fixed Wing Officer Jennifer Earle.



ABOUT RIVERSIDE MOUNTAIN RESCUE UNIT

FOUNDED 1961

MEMBER MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION 1963

GOVERNING BODY: RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

MEMBERS: ORIGINAL: 6 | CURRENT MEMBERS: 32

ANNUAL BUDGET: ORIGINAL \$200 | CURRENT \$15,000

MISSIONS: TOTAL OVER 2,000 | AVERAGE PER MONTH: 3.33

TRAINING CALENDAR

Team Training

- Technical Rock: July 04
- Lone Pine Peak - High Sierras Aug 04 -06
- GPS / Map / Compass Sept 09
- Technical Rock: Oct 07
- Night Helitac Nov 04
- Christmas Party Dec 09

RMRU BOARD MEMBERS

2016

- Gwenda Yates - President
- Eric Holden - 1st Vice-President
- Cameron Dickinson - 2nd Vice-President
- Ray Weden - Secretary
- Kevin Kearn - Member at Large

Newsletter Editor - Gary Farris

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- ☐ Summit Club \$500
- ☐ Patron Club \$200
- ☐ Century Club \$100
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Commitment.
Compassion.

