



Chelan County Sheriff's Office

Brian Burnett, Sheriff

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Sergeant Kent Sisson

Incident #: 18C09754 **Injured Climber**

Liberty Bell Mountain

Phone: (509)667-6864

Date: 08/29/2018

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Sheriff Brian Burnett reports an injured climber was rescued after suffering a fall on Liberty Bell Mountain Tuesday morning (08/28/2018). Benjamin Antonio (67yoa) of Yakima, WA was injured when a hand hold broke loose as he was climbing the Beckey's Notch route along the northeast aspect of the mountain - approx. 7,000ft elevation. According to a witness, Antonio's rope system held, but he dropped about 10 – 15 feet before slamming into the side of the mountain causing hip and back injuries. Antonio's climbing partner was eventually able to lower him to an area where he could be stabilized.

A climber in the area, activated a SPOT satellite beacon which initiated the notification to the International Emergency Rescue Coordination Center (IERCC) in Texas, and eventually to the Chelan County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue unit. Due to the texting capability of the satellite device, SAR coordinators were able to obtain information on Antonio's injuries and position on the mountain.

A request was made through State Emergency Management for a hoist capable helicopter to respond to the incident and Chelan County Mountain Rescue personnel were put on standby. The first helicopter deployed to Liberty Bell Mountain was unable to conduct the rescues, so SAR coordinators contacted Naval Air Station Whidbey Island for a rescue response. NAS Whidbey launched a Blackhawk helicopter to the scene by 4:15pm and inserted a medic to Antonio's location. The helicopter crew had to refuel prior to conducting a successful hoist extraction of Antonio from the mountain around 7:00pm. He was transported to Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, WA for treatment. As of Tuesday evening, his condition was stable.

Inquiries concerning this media release may be made to Sergeant Kent Sisson at the Chelan County Sheriff's Office (509)667-6864.

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**Jason Mathews
Johnson**

Undersheriff

Jason Reinfeld

Chief of Special Operations

Rick

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