



Rita Wagner, 78, with her ACR Electronics ResQLink Personal Locator Beacon a few days after the accident in February

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## ACR Electronics: 78-year-old Hiker Planning to Scale New Heights after Nevada Mountain Rescue

*Rita Wagner – “I never go out without my ACR Personal Locator Beacon. It is a life saver!”*

**[A new survivor story from ACR Electronics](#)**

A remarkable 78-year-old hiker is hailing the life-saving benefits of Personal

Locator Beacons (PLBs) after she was rescued from Calico Tanks Peak in Red Rock Canyon, Las Vegas, in February.

Rita Wagner was airlifted to a waiting ambulance by Las Vegas Metro Police Search and Rescue less than an hour after the hiking group's ACR Electronics ResQLink PLB was activated.

A long-time and experienced member of the group, 52 Peak Club, Rita was approaching the peak when she fell backwards after the sandstone rocks broke beneath her, cracking her elbow, injuring her back and suffering severe lacerations.

But, the active senior is now setting new hiking goals just weeks after her ordeal, though she admits she only feels safe when she is carrying her ACR PLB.

"I never go out without my PLB, although I hoped I would never have to use it," said Rita. "I recommend that every hiker carry one. It is a life saver. I often go out hiking on my own, so my ACR is always in my pack. I first bought a PLB many years ago when they were much larger but then bought the little ACR one from REI. I am so grateful we have these devices.

"On the day of the accident, I fell backwards so my backpack took some of the impact, but I was still badly hurt and had a deep puncture wound on my back. The rescue services arrived very quickly after the group leader Chris (Hanna) activated his beacon."

Chris Hanna, who was leading one of two 15-strong groups heading for the peak on the cloudy day on February 19, says there was no choice but to activate the PLB, as it would have been impossible to get Rita off the mountain by walking, plus the weather was turning colder and daylight was a factor.

He said: "She was in great pain and bleeding profusely. There were medical professionals on the hike that administered first aid and quickly determined she was in shock and needed to get to a hospital immediately. I deployed the ResQLink knowing that our fellow hiker was in grave danger. It triggered a response in less than one hour from our highly trained Las Vegas Search and Rescue by helicopter that was able to zero in on our location with ease

because of the dual frequency design. The officer in charge stated they really appreciate the ResQLink Personal Locator Beacon as it makes their job easier and more efficient.

“When I am leading a group, I always try to have the PLB with me ever since an occasion when a hiker had a minor injury and there was no phone coverage. I did not have any way of contacting Search and Rescue other than hiking all the way out of the canyon or driving somewhere a phone would work. I felt very naked and inadequate and needed to find a better way to help in emergencies.”

Originally from Innsbruck, Austria, Rita moved to the United States when she was 21 and relocated to Las Vegas from California in 1989. She learned to hike with 52 Peak Club creator Branch Whitney when in her 70s and in 2012 was the first women in the group to become a ‘53er’ after completing all designated 52 peaks around the Las Vegas area, representing 120,000 feet of elevation gain and 400 miles in distance.

Branch, who is also author of ‘Hiking Las Vegas’, said: “Rita is a very experienced hiker. She only fell backwards a few feet and was fully conscious, but her age played a major factor. Rita fell on what is known as a ‘class 2’ section which shows that accidents can happen at any time and this is why hikers must always stay focused. I would guess the PLB halved the time a rescue would normally take, so it was nice that the group was able to activate it in this case. PLBs are very helpful.”

A few weeks after the accident, Rita is recovering well and is determined to carry on hiking for as long as she can, both alone and as part of a group.

She said: “I am still hurting, but it hurts to sit so I may as well be out walking, though I am staying on the trail for now. I solo hiked last September to Mt. Whitney, the highest mountain in the lower 48 states at 14,508 ft. I have done it now four times and hope I can do it again this year.”

Watch Rita in action here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9LyyTXwwcIQ>

A growing list of survivors who activated ACR Electronics beacons in a life-threatening emergency have joined the [ACR SurvivorClub](#) to share their stories and help raise awareness about the best practices to ensure safety,

both on land and at sea. The full story about Rita's rescue can be viewed here: <https://www.acrartex.com/survivors/stories/2017/rita-wagner-las-vegas-nevada>

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### **Notes for Editors**

A Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) is a compact device which uses the 406 MHz distress frequency to alert the proper authorities in a life-threatening emergency.

It is suitable for anyone who enjoys boating, fishing, hiking, hunting or any adventurous activity and is particularly important for people participating in outdoor activities on their own or in remote areas which may not have phone coverage.

The [ACR Electronics ResOLink PLB](#) weighs just 5.4 oz and measures 4.5 inches in length. It uses GPS positioning, a powerful 406 MHz signal and 121.5 MHz homing capability to quickly and accurately relay the user's position to a worldwide network of search and rescue satellites. It is small enough to be carried in a pocket, clipped to a backpack or stored inside an inflatable life jacket.

Mikele D'Arcangelo, Marketing Director for ACR Electronics, said: "It is really important for anyone going to sea, hiking or climbing in remote regions or participating in a range of other activities at sea and on land to be prepared with a safety plan and to include a Personal Locator Beacon in their safety kit."

For anyone who becomes a member of [ACR Electronics' SurvivorClub](#) after activating their beacon, ACR will replace it free. Ground-breaking initiative SurvivorClub was established by ACR Electronics and has featured almost 200 stories from real-life survivors across the world.

The ACR Electronics ResQLink is priced at \$249.99.

For more information on ACR Electronics' beacons and other safety equipment, go to <https://www.acrartex.com/>.



## **Social media notes:**

- For sharing this content on social media please tag our accounts on Twitter @acrartex as well as the SAR agency associated with the story. Use #savedbythebeacon or #ACRelectronics in your post as well, so we may report your story.
- If you require images such as: survivor images, logos or product images, please reply to this e-mail with your request.

## **For further information, please contact:**

### **ACR Media Relations**

Mikele D’Arcangelo or Nichole Kalil

Tel: +1 954-862-2115/2180

E-mail: [nichole.kalil@acrartex.com](mailto:nichole.kalil@acrartex.com)

[www.acrartex.com](http://www.acrartex.com)

or

### **Saltwater Stone**

Jules Riegal or Clive Bartlett

Tel: +44 (0)1202 669244

E-mail: [j.riegal@saltwater-stone.com](mailto:j.riegal@saltwater-stone.com)

[www.saltwater-stone.com](http://www.saltwater-stone.com)

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**About ACR Electronics, Inc.** ACR Electronics, Inc. a Drew Marine Company designs and manufactures a complete line of safety and survival products. Available products include Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs), Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs), ARTEX Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELTs), Search and Rescue Transponders (SARTs), Strobe Lights, Life Jacket Lights, Boat Search Lights, and other associated safety accessories. ACR's facility Quality Management System (QMS) is certified by TUV USA and is certified in accordance with AS9100C / ISO 9001:2008 standards. Additionally ACR maintains FAA Part 145 Repair Station Certification status. Recognized as the world's leader in safety and survival technologies, ACR has provided safety equipment to the marine, outdoor and aviation industries as well as to various worldwide government agencies since the late 1950's.