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## **NEWS**

Missing area man's whereabouts still a mystery

By ERIC LONG [elong@sungazette.com](mailto:elong@sungazette.com)

After an all-day search Saturday that turned up nothing, investigators and volunteers plan to continue their efforts on Monday to find a Lycoming Township man missing since Friday after his log cabin burned.

Investigators are looking for Michael P. Fink, 58, of 1707 Mill Hill Road. The search might have continued today, but it was decided to suspend it until Monday because of an approaching winter storm, said R. Mark Lusk, Old Lycoming Township police chief.

"We went back (Saturday) and did a two-pronged search," Lusk said.

"We had a team of investigators in the structure and we researched areas that were covered extensively Friday, just to double-check and reaffirm what we found. That came up negative."

So far, no sign has been found of Fink, who was described by Old Lycoming Township police as 6 feet, 1 inch tall, weighing 160 pounds with brown eyes, salt and pepper colored hair, wearing a beard and mustache and having a large belly.

Lusk said search operations were halted at about 5:30 p.m. Saturday for safety reasons.

"We found no additional clues," he said. "We are stumped and we are repeating our plea for anyone who may know this individual to call us with any information."

Lusk said the investigation will continue and said state police fire marshal David Dixon and Lycoming County coroner Charles E. Kiessling Jr. were among investigators on the scene Saturday.

"Monday we will bring our investigation team back together," Lusk said.

"We are not calling it a suspicious disappearance at this point, but if he doesn't resurface by Monday, we will likely call it a suspicious disappearance and a suspicious fire."

He said it is possible Fink went somewhere for the weekend without telling anyone, but if he doesn't turn up Monday, he will officially be classified as a missing person.

Lusk said Fink's brother and about a dozen close friends were among volunteers who aided in the search Saturday.

Lusk said investigators received assistance from the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, whose rangers helped with expertise on a grid search in the field and wooded areas surrounding the house.

"We enlisted the help of about 100 volunteers — friends of our missing resident, volunteer fire personnel and neighbors," Lusk said.

Most of the fire companies in the area that had responded to the fire had volunteers in the search and other companies were represented as well.

"We used four-wheelers, snowmobiles, cadaver dogs, scent dogs, we had police and fire investigators digging at the scene, the state police assisted with helicopters," Lusk said.

"We set up a command post at the scene and the Red Cross assisted with hot drinks and food. The South Williamsport Police Department assisted us, too."

Lusk said he wanted to be sure nothing was missed in the initial investigation and search.

"I put the call out for the search to go back and we got a tremendous response from our volunteer fire and emergency services people," Lusk said.

"It was a very difficult day, but the volunteers were just tremendous."

Anyone with information is asked to call Old Lycoming Township Police.