

# Missing Persons?



Before these fine people come looking for you, be sure you are missing. (Mark Rackay/Special to the MDP)



### Tips from the Posse

By Mark Rackay

One of the most common missions search and rescue people encounter are lost or missing persons. This doubles over into most of us involved in law enforcement as well. I am sure that anyone who is, or has ever been, involved in searches would agree that the most difficult search is for someone who does not want to be found. Let me expand on that.

Most people who head to the mountains, and stumble across Mr. Murphy, of Murphy’s Law fame, wind up lost, injured, or both. These people *want* to be found. When they hear a searcher call their name, they answer. These folks will light fires in the hope of being found and often use a distress whistle to help rescuers locate them.

Then, there are those who do not want to be found. Runaway teenagers are the most difficult. They runaway for many reasons, but one thing for certain, they do not want to be found. When you are on the spoor of a runaway, they will actively move away from you, hide from you, mislead you, anything just to not be found.

Another area involves elderly people with diminished mental capabilities, such as dementia. They sometimes walk away, or sneak away, from nursing or assisted living facilities, heading to parts unknown. These can be very difficult searches indeed because rescuers often have no idea whatsoever where the person might be heading.

There can be other types of searches for lost persons that don’t end up quite as expected. Take the story of a Turkish construction worker from Inegol, Turkey, named Beyhan Mutlu.

According to the *Daily Mail*, Beyhan set off on an evening of drinking with his friends, presumably to celebrate receiving his paycheck for the week. His first mistake was not letting his wife know he would be late coming home from work. His

second mistake was starting the evening drinking session fairly early in the afternoon.

After way too many glasses of man’s best friend, Beyhan heading to the woods to find a nice quiet place to sleep it off. Finding such a place, he pretty much passed out.

His wife, who was apparently concerned Beyhan’s supper was getting cold, tried calling his cellphone, without an answer of course. Some of his friends and other family members had similar results. The next morning, a full search and rescue party was called out and took to the woods looking for Beyhan.

Beyhan woke from his night of debauchery, and began a trek out of the woods, probably with bloodshot eyes and a hang-over like you see in aspirin commercials. He stumbled across the search party and began searching right along with them.

He apparently had no idea who they all were looking for until someone in the party called out his name. He replied, “I am here.

He was taken aside by the rescuers to give a statement, “Don’t punish me too harshly, officer.

My father will kill me. Police drove him home to an angry Mrs. Mutlu who probably delivered a more serious punishment than the authorities administered.

Then there is the story of a missing woman in Iceland, who found herself. According to CBS, Revkjavik Grapevine, the not so missing tourist on a sight-seeing trip with a busload of other tourists, were exploring the Eldgja canyon in the country’s southern volcanic region. She even participated in her own search.

The mix-up occurred when Grapevine broke off from the tourist group to change clothes, and possibly answer nature’s call. When she returned to the bus in a different outfit, the rest of her tour group did not recognize her. Then when a description of the “missing person” was offered; Asian, in dark clothing and speaks English well, she did not recognize herself, so began to assist the others in the search.

Hours later, the search party finally realized that the woman they were looking for was with them all along, and the search was called off. The Chief of Police, Sveinn Runarsson

stated, “The woman did not recognize the description of herself and had no idea she was missing.”

We had our own case of *I’m not lost*, here in Montrose, as the posse was called to respond to a search for a missing hunter. The man had prepared properly for the trip. He had a teenage daughter at home, and he was to call here every evening at a set time, and relay to her his camp location and specific area he would be hunting the following day. In the event he missed a call, she was to call the Westco dispatch, and relay all the information to them so that help can be summoned.

The young girl did a fine job of relaying all the information. Within an hour, the MCSP was on scene in the purported area of his camp. With a dozen searchers and 2 deputies, a full-scale search began, until someone checked the man’s tent. He was inside the tent, sound asleep and had no idea he was lost.

As the story unraveled, apparently the man *did* make his scheduled phone call home to his daughter. Unfortunately, the daughter was on the phone talking with one of her friends, and the call went to voicemail. On

voicemail, the man left a detailed message of his location, and the area he planned on hunting the following day. The daughter neglected to check the voicemail for messages, and it resulted in the finding of a man who was not lost.

I am not sure which of the searches would be the most difficult. It is a toss-up between the I don’t want to be found and the I didn’t know I was lost crowd. Then there is the story of the guy who found his own way out and simply went home. He didn’t know he was missing, and a full-scale search operation was underway, until he read the paper the next morning.

Mark Rackay is a columnist for the Montrose Daily Press, Delta County Independent, and several other newspapers, as well as a feature writer for several saltwater fishing magazines. He is an avid hunter and world class saltwater angler, who travels around the world in search of adventure and serves as a director and public information officer for the Montrose County Sheriff’s Posse. For information about the Posse call 970-765-7033 (leave a message) or email [info@mcspi.org](mailto:info@mcspi.org)



## WINTER CLEARANCE

Entire Stock  
Men’s & Women’s  
Winter Jackets 40% off

10 SOUTH SELIG AVE MONTROSE, COLORADO 81401 970-249-4226