

Hiker found safe on South Sister

A two-day search for a missing hiker on South Sister ended well on Monday.

Gerald Derrickson, 38, from Portland, was located by trail-runners and after being contacted by search and rescue personnel was able to walk out on his own to be reunited with his family.

The Deschutes County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Unit resumed a search for Gerald Derrickson early Monday after suspending the search overnight on September 11. Sixteen sheriff's office SAR volunteers were assisted by an Oregon Army National Guard Blackhawk helicopter crew as well as members from the Oregon Air National Guard 125th Special Tactics Squadron.

At about 11:34 a.m., a SAR volunteer near the Devil's Lake Trailhead was notified by a trail-runner that she and her partner had located Derrickson on the Wickiup Plains trail, about 1.5 miles from the Devil's Lake Trailhead. Derrickson was reportedly cold and thirsty, but otherwise in good condition. The trail-runners, who had recognized Derrickson from the flyers posted in the area by SAR volunteers, had provided Derrickson with a sweatshirt and water and were guiding him to the Devil's Lake Trailhead.

Additional searchers were re-directed to Derrickson's reported location on the Wickiup Plains trail and contacted him a short time later. Derrickson's overall condition was confirmed and he was able to walk out to the Devil's Lake Trailhead under his own power, where he was reunited with his family.

After interviewing Derrickson about his route of travel, it is believed he mistakenly traveled off of

the west side of the South Sister climber's trail, taking him farther west into the Three Sisters Wilderness and Wickiup Plains area. He was eventually able to locate the Wickiup Plains trail and later observed by the trail runners.

Derrickson did not have a light source or GPS device with him, which led to him traveling off trail.

The Deschutes County Sheriff's Office reminds those that recreate outdoors to prepare for their activity. Some considerations include proper clothing for day and night conditions in your environment, even if you do not expect to be out overnight. Ensure you have adequate water and food, topographical trail maps,

extra batteries or charging options for phones or GPS units. Bring a light source and a signaling device. Seek out information regarding the area and what may be encountered, such as current and projected weather conditions as well as terrain in the area. Tell someone where you are going, what you will be taking with you and when you plan to return.

The South Sister Trail, although not requiring technical expertise if you stay on the trail, is a challenging hike for most individuals. Anyone attempting to summit South Sister for their first time should avoid going by themselves or beginning too late in the day, which would lead to a descent in the dark.

A flying car...



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

An ultralite aircraft gave its pilot and passenger a bird's-eye view of Sisters last weekend. The flyers were treated to the sight of local streets filled with festival-goers enjoying the 21st Sisters Folk Festival.

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