



HUNTER

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State Police to organize more search teams and later called Fire Chief Richard Granger of Worthington Fire/Rescue. It was everyone's concern that Rob was elderly and poorly dressed to spend the night in the woods with temperatures dropping into the thirties.

That night and the following morning the Fire Station was the command post for all the technical and volunteer help. The State Police organized with their canine unit, the Police Dept., the Worthington Fire/Rescue, the Environmental Police, Berkshire Search and Rescue, plus volunteers from surrounding towns. From this staging area, everyone signed in and formed teams after the topographical maps had been laid out in sections. Teams of four or five people carried a radio and flashlight and map. By 4 a.m., with no successful find, mutual aid was called from the surrounding towns of Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Hinsdale, Huntington, Peru and Windsor. Close to 90 people were searching. Everyone was hoping to find Rob in okay condition, but were disheartened as the night wore into morning. Those who knew him felt that he would keep his head about him, for he was familiar with the woods as a hunter.

Meanwhile the Bartlett family stayed at Rob and Doris Bartlett's home on West Street. A State Police Officer, whose name Doris couldn't remember, but for whom she had a great deal of respect, stayed with the family, reporting to them as he received radio information.

It was between 7:30 and 8 a.m. when the helicopter people announced that they'd seen an orange hat. According to Phil Challet, a member of the ground search team, "He looked okay. He was smiling and walking out on his own feet." He

was disoriented though, and couldn't understand what the fuss was about. The Berkshire AMR ambulance had been stationed on Sam Hill Road and came immediately to take care of Rob. He was transported to Cooley Dickinson Hospital and held overnight for observation.

Everyone involved was impressed with the organization of the search. All departments worked well together. According to Chief Mason, "Everyone was in the loop. It wasn't just one organization." Fire Chief Richard Granger agreed. The State Police had everything needed at the Fire Station, such as computer, fax, phones and copier. Radio contact was maintained between everyone throughout the night. The Fire Department's Rescue Truck was in constant use bringing out and carrying in search teams. After its all night usage, Chief Granger thought it was the best buy the town had made.

Everyone coming in had something to eat and drink provided by the Fire Department Auxiliary, who woke Tom Cizek at Corners Grocery to get additional foods. Cizek opened his doors for anything needed that night.

Rob Bartlett was doing well Wednesday and was soon to be released from the hospital. Doris thought everyone was great during the entire situation. "He really very healthy, but his mind goes sometimes," she remarked. "It didn't surprise me that he came walking out. He just had to figure what to do until the sun came up." It was with a sigh of relief, she further said, "We're doing a little better today. Everyone has been calling, offering help and sharing concerns." The family agreed if Rob goes hunting again, he goes with a partner. For now the family will be planning a birthday party for Rob, who will be 83 on Dec. 22.