

Jan. 9, 2010

Search for missing snowmobiler called off

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The Gazette

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Police and family members are calling off the search for Martin Davis, a Shueyville snowmobiler who's been missing for almost a week.

"He's been gone since Sunday, we decided that we as a family, we weren't going to put anybody else at risk," said Barry Davis, Martin Davis' brother. "We want people to know that we're very grateful for all the support we've been given."

Martin Davis, 52, who lives about three miles north of Shueyville, left home Sunday and told family he'd be back by 5:30 p.m. The best guess from police and the family is that his snowmobile fell through the ice on Coralville Lake.

"We think he might have gone across the lake and maybe fell through," said Barry Davis, who is also the University of Wisconsin wrestling coach.

Volunteers, family, sheriff's deputies, a State Patrol aircraft and a helicopter combed the woods and hundreds of miles of snowmobile trails along the Linn and Johnson County borders early in the week, but found nothing. The search was suspended before the snow hit Wednesday. Six inches of snow and a steady wind by Thursday didn't help the chances of finding Davis.

"Any tracks of his would have been obliterated by now," Linn County Sheriff Brian Gardner said, who has called off the active search for Davis.

Several snowmobile trails cross the water, and the ice is not perfectly solid, Gardner said.

"Is it a possibility he fell in? Yes. Is there much we can do at this time, based on the weather and everything? No," Gardner said. "He could have fallen through a hole and the hole could have filled back in by now."

Authorities have tried to contact Davis' cell phone, and it is off. His credit cards have not been used, Gardner said. When he left Sunday afternoon, Davis left the lights and television on at his house, and the door unlocked.