Six Mile man's truck takes a dive

THE JOURNAL STAFF

SALEM — No one was hurt Monday morning when a Six Mile man's truck rolled into Lake Jocassee near Devil's Fork. Travis Lance was with his mother, Lynn Coker, when he parked his vehicle. After his emergency brake reportedly failed, the vehicle began to roll toward the lake. Despite Lance's efforts to get into the truck to stop it, it wound up 150 feet from the shore in 60 feet of water.

Oconee County Emergency Services was not dispatched to the scene, though one dive team member working in conjunction with a privately contracted company helped locate the vehicle.

Monday's dive team recovery followed a busy weekend of activity involving members of the county's search and rescue teams.

Three Georgia rafters left Earl's Ford on the Chattooga River at 1:30 p.m. Saturday for what they thought was a trip that would end before dark. What they didn't realize was it is an 8 to 10 hour trip to Highway 76 in Long Creek.

Calls from anxious grandparents activated search and rescue teams from South Carolina and Georgia. At 9:08 a.m. Sunday, with a description of the raft and the three occupants, the Oconee

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County sheriff's helicopter began a fly-over of the river. Three minutes later the helicopter spotted the trio a short way up from Bull Sluice. Ground teams worked their way in, and at 9:42 am, confirmed these were the missing persons and no one was injured. The rafters continued down the river to highway 76.

Included in the search were Westminster Rescue, Mountain Rest Rescue, Oconee County Special Rescue, South Carolina DNR, Station 21, the Oconee County Sheriff's Department, Rabun Georgia Rescue and the U.S. Forest Service.

On Friday evening teams were called out shortly after 7 p.m. for three lost hikers in the Turkey Ridge area of Long Creek. That trio was found at 11:10 p.m. and guided back to their car.

At 2:52 a.m. Saturday, Search & Rescue was summoned again for a missing Alzheimer's patient in Mountain Rest. At 3:35 a.m. the person was located with no injuries.

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Divers suit up to locate a Chevy truck in Lake Jocassee on Monday morning.



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Travis Lance, driver of the truck, and his mother, Lynn Coker, watch as their truck is pulled from Lake Jocassee on Monday morning.