

Walls, MS 9/23/11) The truck of a missing Walls man was pulled from the Mississippi River Friday afternoon, at a place called Bass Landing, less than eight miles from the man's home.

Norman Held disappeared on January 4 after going to get a haircut in Horn Lake.

Authorities did not find any sign of Held near the truck.

On Thursday, an out-of-state volunteer group detected several vehicles underwater at the Bass Landing location, where Held was said to frequent.

"We went there a lot. Every Sunday, especially when we were growing up. We would go down there every Sunday just to watch boats pass by," said Daniel Wilbanks, Held's stepson.

On Friday, a dive team from Lake Cormorant came to assist in the effort to pull Held's 2007 Burgundy Chevrolet Silverado out of the water. The license plate matched that of Held's.

James Canavan, one of the divers with River Services Company Inc., said it took about an hour to retrieve that truck. They pulled a second truck out as well, but authorities have not decided on whether to pull the other detected vehicles out of the water.

Canavan said there was practically no visibility in the murky waters, but they still tried to look for any signs of a body.

"We did a little search after the fact trying to find it. They thought there was maybe a hint there was a body down there. I did a bunch of sweeps, probably swept another half hour or so, looking for it. And never really came across anything," Canavan said.

Even if Held had been with his truck, Canavan said he doubted Held would still be there.

"The currents are probably really swift down there. So if they saw it at one point, 10 minutes later it could be half mile down the river," he said.

Once authorities cleaned out all the mud inside Held's truck, they determined there was no sign of Held himself.

The back window behind the driver's seat was found broken, but the other windows were rolled almost all the way up.

Held's family said they have come to terms with the fact he may no longer be alive.

"Our family has given up on that possibility a long time ago," Wilbanks said.

But at the same time, this discovery does not put them completely at ease.

He added, "I was kind of relieved, but now that we know that they didn't find him, there's still no closure."

The DeSoto County Sheriff's Department said they have no reason to suspect foul play.

They also said they requested for the sonar detection group to come and help three months ago, but the group is in such high demand they were only able to come to Walls in September. <http://www.wreg.com>

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Missing man's truck found

By ROBERT LEE LONG  
Community Editor

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WALLS — DeSoto County Sheriff's Department officials and search crews continued to ply the murky depths of the Mississippi River near Bass Landing where a missing Horn Lake man's truck was discovered late Thursday.

As of late Friday, the body of 64-year-old Norman Held had not been found.

Search crews flushed out the muddy, debris-strewn truck, thinking his remains might be inside.

DeSoto County Sheriff Bill Rasco said the burgundy 2004 Chevy Silverado truck bearing the license plate DA5 150 belonging to Held was pulled from the water just offshore about 2 p.m. Friday.

"This is Mr. Held's truck," Rasco said during a press conference by the river's edge. "It's the truck we've been looking for."

The truck was actually discovered late Thursday by volunteer divers from Illinois which uses sonar to locate objects under water. Team Waters of Moro, Illinois had been requested to come down and search the waters off Bass Landing for Held's truck.

"They've been working diligently in extremely swift current," DeSoto County Sheriff's Department Investigator Alan Thompson said.

River Services Company of Lake Cormorant also joined in the search effort.

Thompson said the river's edge was a place that Held like to visit.

"This was a frequent place he went to see," Thompson said. "He liked to see the peaceful waters flowing."

Bass Landing is the only accessible site on the Mississippi River in DeSoto County.

Thompson said there was no sign of foul play.

"The body either floated out of the window or he had tried to escape," Thompson said.

The vehicle was first spotted between 4:30 p.m. and 5 p.m. Thursday, according to Rasco.

"We knew we didn't have time to raise it yesterday," Rasco said.

The back and side window on the passenger's side were smashed and water had been allowed to swirl through the vehicle since. The river current had ripped off the hood of the vehicle.

The river was high in January and water levels in the spring were higher than in more than 50 years.

The vehicle is believed to have been submerged in the water since Jan. 4, 2011 when Held was last seen. He was first reported missing by a grown daughter when she was unable to reach him.

Norman Held, 64, is a father of four and grandfather of three.

Held did not show signs of Alzheimer's Disease or dementia. His daughter Rose Hall last talked to her father on the phone January 3.

Hall called her father the next day, but he did not answer. That was the last day anyone saw Held.

Held got his hair cut at B.J's Barber Shop in Horn Lake around noon on January 4.

"He told the barber he was going home to watch a football game," Rasco said.

There has been no sign of Held since.

Hall called her father again, but there was still no answer. Hall called the DeSoto County Sheriff's Department and drove from her home in the Little Rock area to the North Delta town of Walls.

DeSoto County Sheriff's Department spokesman Dick Hackett said the subsequent search of the muddy waters off Bass Landing had revealed at least five other submerged vehicles.

A Dodge Dakota was pulled from the water about 4:30 p.m. Friday.

More vehicles remained to be pulled to the surface.

Thompson said search and salvage teams would remain at the site this weekend.

<http://www.desototimes.com>

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Search on for missing man

By ROBERT LEE LONG  
Community Editor

Published: Tuesday, September 27, 2011 1:05 AM CDT

WALLS — DeSoto County authorities are now in the fifth day of searching for clues in the missing person's case of 64-year-old Norman Held since his 2007 burgundy Chevy Silverado was pulled from the Mississippi River on Friday.

"We're checking out some more things involving the vehicle and seeing if it might reveal any more clues," DeSoto County Sheriff's Department Investigator Alan Thompson said Monday.

As of late Monday, the body of Held had not been found. Search crews flushed out the muddy, debris-strewn truck on Friday in hopes his remains might be inside.

The pickup truck bearing the license plate DA5 150 belonging to Held was pulled from the water just offshore about 2 p.m. Friday.

The vehicle is believed to have been submerged in the water since Jan. 4, 2011 when Held was last seen. He was first reported missing by a grown daughter when she was unable to reach him.

Norman Held, 64, is a father of four and grandfather of three.

Held did not show signs of Alzheimer's Disease or dementia. His daughter Rose Hall last talked to her father on the phone January 3.

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"He told the barber he was going home to watch a football game," Rasco said.

There has been no sign of Held since.

Hall called her father again, but there was still no answer. Hall called the DeSoto County Sheriff's Department and drove from her home in the Little Rock area to the North Delta town of Walls to assist in the effort to help find her father.

"There are just a lot of scenarios with this case," Thompson said.

While there has been no sign of Held, authorities have made a few discoveries since Friday when a search revealed at least five other vehicles submerged just offshore at Bass Landing.

Thompson said a Dodge Dakota registered to a DeSoto County individual which was discovered just off Bass Landing in the Mississippi River on Friday was reported stolen in 2006.

<http://www.desototimes.com>

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River recovery -- Truck belonging to missing Walls man found in Mississippi

The Commercial Appeal (Memphis, TN)  
September 24, 2011 | Yolanda Jones

Permalink

Authorities pulled Norman Louis Held's pickup from the Mississippi River Friday but failed to find any sign of the Walls man who has been missing for eight months.

"We still have not found a body, and there is not a whole lot we can do unless we get some new information," said DeSoto County Sheriff Bill Rasco. "He will still be listed as a missing person."

Held, 64, of Walls was last seen Jan. 4 at a local barbershop, where he told his barber that he was going home to watch football after his haircut.

His daughter reported her father missing the next day.

DeSoto County officials said his red pickup, a 2007 Chevrolet Silverado, was missing from his home in the 6000 block of Slash Pine.

Rasco said the department has been working the case since Held's disappearance and put out an alert about the missing man this week.

He said volunteers using a sonar found the truck in the river at Bass Landing in Walls late Thursday afternoon. Divers from Memphis were called to the scene Friday morning, and the truck was recovered.

Initially, authorities said there was a body in the truck, but after clearing out debris and river silt, found the truck was empty.

"Like I said, there is not a lot left for us to do," Rasco said. "We have searched the river and the only thing we have to show right now is the truck."

Commercial Appeal

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