

## ROCK CLIMBERS RESCUED FROM MINE SHAFT



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Answering reporters' questions Monday after their rescue from a mine shaft, from left: Frank Wainen, Ray Zeglin, Keith Sargent, and James Comesky.

### Plucked from the belly of the earth

The Associated Press

**F**our rock climbers who were reported missing Sunday night were rescued from a Rockaway Township mine shaft early Monday. Family members reported the men missing about 11:30 p.m. Sunday, said Lt. Walter Kimble of the Rockaway Township Police Department.

A police officer found their Jeep along the roadside near property owned

by Mount Hope Rock Products, Kimble said. A search party was sent onto the property, and a police officer heard cries for help coming from 100 feet below the opening to the mine shaft.

The men had climbed down over a protruding ledge, and could not climb back out, Kimble said.

Rescuers dropped ropes down the shaft, and the climbers were able to assist in their own rescue, Kimble said.

The first climber was brought to the surface about 2:30 a.m., and the rescue was completed by 5 a.m.

The climbers were identified as Keith Sargent, 23; Ray Zeglin, 31, and James Comesky, 24, all of Randolph, and Frank Wainen, 21, of Dover.

They were taken to area hospitals with minor injuries.

"They were very fortunate that the weather was not worse," Kimble said.

"It was a relatively mild evening, in the 40s most of the night, and the shaft where they were was a little warmer than the outside air."

The Rockaway Township Fire Department, Picatinny Arsenal Fire Department, Morris County Park Police, Morris County Sheriff's Department Canine Unit, and New Jersey Forest Fire Service assisted Rockaway Township police in the search and rescue.

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