

Youth Is Rescued From Mine Shaft

McClatchy Newspapers Service

GARDEN VALLEY, El Dorado Co. — Lowell T. Simpson, 17, of 9128 Linda Rio Drive, Sacramento, was rescued from an abandoned mine shaft after spending seven hours 50 feet below the ground-level opening.

Sheriff's deputies assisted by California Division of Forestry personnel placed Simpson in a harness and winched the youth out of the hole about 6 p.m. Saturday.

Deputies said Simpson and two other youths, Douglas C. Rau, 17, of 2452 Strawberry Way, were exploring the old mine shaft by use of a rope when Simpson could no longer hold on and slipped down the rope. He suffered severe rope burns on his hands.

Sheriff's Lt. Richard Ybright noted that Simpson was fortunate he did not fall farther down the shaft than he did.

"We don't know how far down he would have fallen," Ybright said. He explained that a pile of dirt from a previous mine cavein broke Simpson's fall, preventing the youth from continuing down the shaft.

Simpson, according to Ybright, also suffered abrasions and contusions to his hands and back. He was treated at a Placerville hospital and released.

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Wed, Dec 16, 2020