

Search has a happy ending

KIM BRADLEY
Toronto Sun

A MASSIVE eight-hour search for a 9-year-old Toronto girl with Down syndrome who ran away from a Milton farm yesterday ended happily early this morning when two volunteers found her safe and sound.

The little girl was found around 1:20 a.m. by a local couple who had joined about 150 others in the search for the missing girl, police said.

"She was asking for her mother," said Halton police Staff Sgt. Bob Waller. "This one has a happy ending."

The volunteers joined emergency search and rescue crews

Girl disappeared during Milton farm visit

from Halton, Peel, York and Hamilton on Andrews Scenic Acres farm at 10th Side Rd. near 4th Line after hearing that

Madeline "Kate" Flanagan had gone missing earlier in the day.

Kate, Halton police believe, was frightened off the farm she had been visiting with her family by a barking dog and is believed to have run into a field.

Emergency crews were called around 5 p.m. after Kate's parents searched the area but couldn't find her.

She was last seen wearing a

pink T-shirt and blue striped pants. She has Down syndrome and thinks more like a 5-year-old than a girl her own age.

Kate and her family, who are from North York, had been visiting Andrews Scenic Acres, an amusement farm that has an orchard, a hay maze and sits on about 40 hectares of land.

Difficult search

The area has several ponds, swamps and is heavily treed, making searching in the dark very difficult," said Halton police Const. Al Bryer.

"It's very difficult terrain," he said.

Last night, Kate's panicked parents remained at the com-

mand post, being comforted by other family members while the desperate search for their little girl continued into the early hours.

The York Regional Police helicopter, which is equipped with an infrared camera, was being used, as were several canine search teams from Halton and Hamilton police forces.

Firefighters from Halton Hills and Milton fire departments, CN police, and volunteers from several rural organizations were also out on all-terrain vehicles and on foot scouring the area.

According to Environment Canada, it was about 10C in the Milton area at midnight.

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