

# A Policeman's Hunch and a Black Lab Dog

by Bud Pauls

*When members of Sooke Detachment asked Mr. Pauls, editor of The Mirror, to submit the following article to the Quarterly, he kindly agreed. We're glad he did. All photographs are by courtesy of Mr. Pauls. Ed.*

A system that quickly put out a call for help and organized a search, a policeman's hunch, and a faithful and intelligent dog — those are the ingredients that came together on September 8 to bring a happy ending to an episode that seemed to be moving towards a tragic conclusion with every passing minute.

Two-year-old Jay, son of Richard and Barbara Cleveland, visitors from Texas staying with Barbara's parents, George and Dorothy Doucette, had done what almost every youngster does some time in his life — wandered away with his dog for a walk. And in the way of kids and dogs, they vanished.

Jay and Bull, the Cleveland's four-year-old black Labrador dog, went missing about 10:30 a.m. and when an initial search of the immediate area of the Doucette's home at 2371 Sooke River Road failed to come up with any trace of the pair, the local RCMP and volunteer firemen were contacted.

Word was passed to me at *The Mirror* and I drove up Sooke River Road recalling a number of searches I had been on and remembering none that had a happy ending.

As I came upon a group of firemen, policemen and neighbours, it started to rain. Much of the undergrowth along Sooke River Road is jungle thick. As the

leaves drooped under the rain they curtailed off everything more than a meter or two from the edge of the road.

People began moving about, checking places I had in mind. A system was working, with radio communications mainly between Fire Chief Lorne Fisk, RCMP Const. Adam Vrooman and Allan Le Quesne of the Langford fire department, chief co-ordinator of the search and rescue emergency program.

I stepped off the road, looked into an old car and a boat with a piece of canvas thrown over it. Nothing. Fireman Chuck Parman appeared ahead of me; he had probably already covered the area. Back on Sooke River Road I saw fireman Cal Nault walking up a driveway, moving from side to side, checking the ditch, a culvert, a leaning fence. Up ahead Lorne Fisk jumped from his truck and disappeared into a gully at the side of the road.

RCMP Cpl. Blake Tidsbury pulled up in a police car and invited me to get in. He said that a helicopter and a search dog might not be available until the next day.

I asked him about the "logic" applied in organizing the search.

He said that the first thing to do was to check every shed, parked car, porch, basement, every ditch and waterhole, in a pattern radiating out from where the subject of the search was last known to be. Every road, driveway and path would be checked in the same manner.

If that didn't produce results then the area would be marked off in a grid arrangement and virtually every inch of