

Search for Body Suspended Until River Thaws a Bit More

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
March 5 2019 3:15 PM



ALTON - Ice on the river prevented further searches for the body of Michael Morris, 72, of Godfrey, Monday afternoon.

Alton Fire Chief Bernie Sebold said he met with a recovery team from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Monday afternoon in the Alton Marina. On Monday morning, Sebold said the IDNR had sonar equipment necessary to locate the body, which the Alton Fire Department does not have. On Tuesday morning, Sebold

said the search for Morris's body may continue later this week as temperatures are expected to rise. That decision will ultimately be in the hands of the IDNR as its personnel and equipment will be used for the recovery efforts.

Morris is suspected by authorities of leaping from the Clark Bridge late Sunday morning. Sebold and Alton Police Public Information Officer Emily Hejna said passersby contacted authorities at 11:28 a.m. Sunday to alert them to a person on the outside edge of the bridge. When they arrived, however, they found only a car.

The search for Morris was ended around 2:30 p.m. Sunday due to river ice and high winds, Sebold said. It was being conducted by the Alton Fire Department and Alton Volunteer Emergency Corps (AVEC).

Suicides are on the increase in the United States, according to recent data from the Center for Disease Control (CDC). While many people are suffering with some form of mental illness, there are several resources. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is 1-800-273-8255. Someone can also text "CONNECT" to 741-741 to start a text conversation. While suicide is on the rise, it is also a preventable cause of death. Reaching out and removing the stigma of mental illness are important factors.