

# denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

denver and the west

## Master tracker is one of only 10 in U.S.

The death of a toddler in Poudre Canyon pushed Dave Hake to hone his skills.

By Howard Pankratz  
The Denver Post

Posted: 04/10/2009 12:30:00 AM MDT

Dave Hake was among the first searchers to look for 3-year-old Jaryd Atadero when he disappeared in October 1999 in the Big South Trail area of Poudre Canyon.

Four years later, the little boy's remains were found 500 yards from his last known location, the victim of a mountain-lion attack.

The tragedy motivated Hake to become one of only 10 "master trackers" in the United States.

"It is like I want to follow those tracks and find out what took place. It tears people up," Hake said. "That's what motivated me to learn more."

Michael Fink, a search leader for Larimer County Search & Rescue, said Hake is dedicated, almost

obsessed, with tracking, and he practices it every day.

"He is patient and meticulous," Fink said of Hake, who was awarded the master-tracker designation last month. "Dogs use their nose. Dave uses his eyes."

Hake has trained his eyes and senses to the point that he can pick up on microscopic signs, Fink said.

He is so good that he can determine from the state of the vegetation and the movement of dirt or sand which direction a person is going and how long it has been since the individual was there, Fink said.

He can tell when a person has stopped and whether the individual looked at a particular rock formation or mountain. Hake can then tell whether the person decided to head toward the formation that caught the attention. Hake also can tell whether the person is injured by the way he or she is walking.

"Not only can we see that a person passed through an area but when," Hake said.

Hake is a longtime member of the Larimer County Search & Rescue Team and goes out on 60 to 80 calls a year. He uses his tracking skills in about 40, he said.

Advertisement



## OFFICE LIQUIDATORS HAS MILES OF FILES

OVER 700 USED FILES IN GREAT CONDITION ALL PRICED AT A FRACTION OF THE NEW COST.

GO TO [www.OfficeLiquidators.com](http://www.OfficeLiquidators.com) OR VISIT OUR HUGE SHOWROOM AT 6TH & SIMMS.



SHOWROOM HOURS M-F 8:30-6:00 SAT 10-5 SUN 12-5



CANNOT BE COMBINED WITH OTHER OFFERS 303.759.3375 EXPIRES 5/17/09

# SAVE 25%

ON USED FILES OR GET A STEELCASE 30" 5 DRAWER LATERAL FOR \$139.

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™