

04-28-1985 Ozona TX – Wayne Lewis Wahl – LEO Flood Rescue Attempt – Culvert Trapped



<https://www.odmp.org/officer/13730-chief-deputy-sheriff-wayne-lewis-wahl>



Bio & Incident Details
Age: 38
Tour: 8 years, 6 months
Badge # Not available
Cause: Drowned

Chief Deputy Sheriff Wayne Lewis Wahl

Crockett County Sheriff's Office, Texas

End of Watch: Sunday, April 28, 1985

Chief Deputy Wahl drowned while attempting to rescue a man whose car had been washed into a creek. Chief Deputy Wahl tied a rope around his waist and attempted to reach the car but was sucked under water into a 36-inch culvert. His body was found three miles north of Ozona.

Chief Deputy Wahl had been with the agency for 8.5 years.

<https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/129522672/>

April 30, 1985

Crockett County Chief Deputy Wayne Wahl Jr., 38, drowned early Sunday when he was swept into a culvert while trying to reach a car stranded by high water, Sheriff Billy Mills said.

The dead deputy, Crockett County Chief Deputy Wayne Wahl Jr., 38, drowned early Sunday when he was swept into a culvert while trying to reach a car stranded by high water, Sheriff Billy Mills said. Mills said rescuers tried unsuccessfully to pull Wahl to safety with a rope tied around his waist. They then cut the rope, hoping

Wahl would be able to swim to safety on the other side of a culvert, Mills said, but he was swept away. His body was found about 100 yards downstream.

Violent Texas Weather Claims 10 Lives

<https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/216504742/>

April 30, 1985

An outburst of violent weather that claimed 10 lives battered parts of Texas again Monday as rescuers pressed their search for a woman swept away in a flooded creek. Eight of the weekend storm victims drowned, and rising water continued to threaten much of North Texas Monday.

"It's not getting any better," said Dave Martin, a forecaster in the National Weather Service Fort Worth office. A flash flood warning was posted Monday morning for Hunt County, northeast of Dallas, and flood watches were in effect for much of North Texas. A severe weather spotter reported a tornado on the ground 5 miles south of Valera at 1:35 a.m., moving east at 15 to 20 mph. About an hour later, National Weather Service radar tracked a tornado at the Brown-Coleman county line near Trickham. No injuries or damage were reported.

In Rockwall, Fire Chief Benny Gracey, 32, drowned Saturday night while trying to rescue four people trapped in a car swept away by floodwaters.

"If you could have given him a chance to pick how he'd die, he'd do it like that helping people," said former Rockwall Deputy Sheriff Jerry Archer. Two of the people Gracey was trying to save also drowned. A sheriff's dispatcher said Gracey's body was found more than two miles away, and a deputy participating in the rescue was slightly injured when he was swept about a mile downstream.

During the weekend at least 18 tornadoes were reported over Texas.

Meanwhile, the search for Barbara Blair continued Monday with "all available police and fire personnel," said Duncanville police spokeswoman Sue Thompson. "We're hoping that now that the creek is down, we'll be able to find her," Ms. Thompson said. Mrs. Blair was swept away in a flash flood Sunday morning when the family car was washed off a road. Police found the bodies of her husband and their two children near the creek banks Sunday. The weather also claimed the lives of an 81-year-old Shep woman whose house was destroyed by a tornado, three people in Rockwall, including the fire chief; a deputy sheriff in Ozona; a man in Johnson County and an Irving teen-ager killed in a traffic accident.