

05-28-1990 Texas – William Decker – GW LEO – Boat Accident



OFFICER DOWN MEMORIAL PAGE

REMEMBERING ALL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT'S HEROES

<http://www.odmp.org/officer/66-game-warden-william-barry-decker>



Bio & Incident Details

Age: 43

Tour: 17 years

Badge # Not available

Cause: Drowned

Game Warden

William Barry Decker

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department - Law Enforcement Division, Texas

End of Watch: Saturday, May 26, 1990

Game Warden Decker and Game Warden Bruce Hill both drowned after being thrown from their patrol boat when it hit a submerged stump on Lake Murvaul, in Panola County, at approximately 10:00 pm.

Game Warden Decker had served with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for 17 years. He was survived by his daughter, son, and four grandchildren.

TEXAS GAME WARDEN ASSOCIATION

<https://texasgamewarden.com/game-warden-memorials/>



Game Warden Bruce Franklin Hill

On May 26, 1990, at approximately 10:00 pm, Bruce and fellow Game Warden Barry Decker were patrolling Lake Murvaul in Panola County. There is evidence that their patrol boat hit a partially submerged stump. Beyond that, there is very little evidence to show what actually happened. Both of the Wardens drowned. Bruce was survived by his wife, Gwen, and his daughter Dawn.'



Game Warden William B. (Barry) Decker

On May 26, 1990 at approximately 10:00 pm, Barry and fellow Game Warden Bruce Hill were patrolling Lake Murvaul in Panola County. There is evidence that their patrol boat hit a partially submerged stump. Beyond that, there is very little evidence to show what actually happened. Both of the Wardens drowned. Barry was survived by a son, Brad and a daughter, Shannon.

Game Warden Franklin Hill and Game Warden Barry Decker both drowned after being thrown from their patrol boat when it hit a submerged stump on Lake Murvaul, in Panola County, at approximately 10:00 pm.

Game Warden Hill had served with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for eight years.

Texas Parks & Wildlife commissions new coastal patrol vessel at Port Mansfield

http://www.valleymorningstar.com/news/article_e6e9636e-92cf-58c2-b711-3eb3e1fb8d0a.html

October 26, 2010 Mike Cox/TPWD

Texas Parks & Wildlife law enforcement personnel, local and state officials and invited guests attended the Oct. 23 commissioning ceremonies at the Port Mansfield Chamber of Commerce.

Bruce Franklin Hill, born Oct. 20, 1944 in Texarkana, Ark. graduated from Texas High School in Texarkana. Hill then enrolled in Texarkana Junior College and later East Texas State University. He soon married his wife Gwen and they had a daughter, Dawn.

In June 1969, Hill began his tenure with TPWD. He worked in several parks and eventually became superintendent of Palmetto State Park. Hill always had a desire to be a game warden and 13 years after joining the department, he was selected in January 1982 to attend the 36th Game Warden Academy in Austin. Along with 31 other game wardens, he graduated with honors on May 21, 1982.

Assigned to Panola County, he worked up to the rank of Game Warden III. On May 26, 1990, Hill and fellow Game Warden Barry Decker were patrolling Lake Murvaul when their patrol boat struck a partially submerged stump. Both wardens were thrown from the boat and drowned.

A vessel just like the Bruce Hill was earlier named for Decker. That boat is stationed at Port O'Connor.

Sasser: TPWD water safety video 'Never Happens' is must-see for boaters

<https://sportsday.dallasnews.com/other-sports/outdoors/2014/06/07/sasser-tpwd-water-safety-video-never-happens-is-must-see-for-boaters>

June 2014

Excerpt: A May 26, 1990, nighttime accident at Lake Murvaul in Panola County killed two wardens, Barry Decker and Bruce Hill, after their boat was believed to have struck a stump, throwing them from the boat. Neither man was wearing a PFD.

Jones said that accident resulted in a policy change that required wardens in a boat to wear PFDs.