

Fishermen Revive Baby Found in Creek

Written by Debbie Gregory
Tuesday, July 30, 2013



The Macon County Sheriffs Office received a call on Saturday afternoon, July 27, that a 18-month-old baby had been playing by Salt Lick Creek and had fell in. Two heroic fishermen spotted the baby floating face down in the water, pulled her from the creek and began chest compressions, which saved her life.

Dan Hassard, of Lafayette, and good friend Tom Green of Kentucky, who were fishing below the bridge off Galen Road last Saturday afternoon, couldn't believe their eyes when a small child floated down the creek in front of them.

"The child's parents were camping about 100 yards away and the baby probably fell in around the bridge," said Dan Hassard. "I went in to get the baby and it was the hardest thing I ever had to do in my life. My feet felt like concrete as I tried to reach the small child."

At that point Tom Green, who is the Park Director at Mammoth Cave, said the baby had probably been in the water five or six minutes.

Dan said when he lifted the lifeless baby it felt like she weighed a ton. "She wasn't breathing and baby had already turned blue."

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Trained in CPR, Tom started chest compressions to get the water out of the baby's lungs after Dan got her to the creek bank. "After five or six minutes of CPR, the baby finally began to respond," said Tom. "She coughed up muddy water, took a breath and began crying." The fishermen laid the child on the hood of a car and started rubbing her hands and feet to get her blood circulating and they tried to keep her crying so she would remain awake.

A medical helicopter landed at Driver Road and the small child was transported to Vanderbilt Medical Center where she was listed in stable condition on Monday morning. According to Mr. Dan Hassard, the parents told him the baby was out of intensive care and didn't have any brain damage.

"I didn't really think I needed to go fishing when my long-time friend Dan ask me," said Tom, "but something just kept telling me to go. We were at the right place at the right time and we are just thankful for that."

Added Macon County Sheriff Mark Gammmons, "I would like to commend these two gentlemen for saving this little girl's life and I am glad this didn't turn into a tragedy. Accidents happen, but everyone should take extra precautions because small children can get away in a hurry."

Those responding to the incident were the Macon County Sheriffs Office, Macon County EMS, and the *Macon County Chronicle*. Red Boiling Springs Fire & Rescue set up the landing zone for Air Evac.