

129th Public Information Detachment
Camp Rapid
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Camp Rapid---Three South Dakota Army National Guardsmen lost their lives in two seperate incidents Friday night in the flood waters of the Black Hills near Rapid City.

2Lt. Gary M. Engelstad of the 740th Transportation Company from Milbank and PFC Freeman Franklin Phillips from the 235th General Supply Company in Rapid City lost their lives while on a mission checking the Nemo Road.

Six men from the 740th Trans Company and six from the 235th Gen Supply, lead by Capt. Robert Mallow left Camp Rapid about 9:30 Friday night.

They were flagged down by a woman needing help in getting her three children who were trapped on the other side of the creek. The group couldn't cross at that point and continued on up the road.

A pickup truck coming down the road reported seeing a car going into the creek. The driver thought there were people in the car because the dome light had come on.

The crew found the car and 2Lt. Engelstad, PFC Phillips, 2Lt. John Parke and PFC Gary Reinhold secured themselves with ropes and went into the creek. They found the car empty.

On their return the water rose and the current got stronger forcing the four men into a tree. In the next twenty minutes the water climbed between 15 and 20 feet.

The four decided to untie themselves, jump and swim to shore. Suddenly the water took the tree. Lt. Parke jumped and managed to swim to shore, he looked back and saw the tree with three men still hanging on going down the creek.

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PFC Reinhold related that all three of them held onto the tree until it hit another one and they were knocked off.

Reinhold went under and came up in a pile of debris, grabbed a log and continued downstream. At that time he saw Engelstad and Phillips on another log going downstream. This incident took place at about 10:30 p.m.

When Lt. Parke reached shore he and the rest of the crew began looking for the other three men. Reinhold reached shore on the other side of the creek. The crew could hear him shouting, but could not reach him. He found his way to a farm house and was cared for later.

2Lt. Gary M. Engelstad was 26 years old and is survived by his wife Evelyn and a two year old daughter. He enlisted in the Guard on November 22, 1965 and was commissioned July 25, 1971.

PFC Freeman Franklin Phillips was 21 years old and is survived by his wife Constance. He enlisted on September 13, 1971.

The third man lost that night was First Sergeant Myron H. Corbin from Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 147th Artillery in Webster.

He had left Camp Harding in the Badlands to spend the weekend in Rapid City. He was last seen at about 9:30 p.m. in the downtown area and is believed to have lost his life trying to rescue others.

1SG Corbin is survived by his wife Delores and Four children. He enlisted in the Guard on February 16, 1949.