

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIORnews release

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

For Release Wednesday, June 24, 1970SECRETARY HICKEL TO GIVE INTERIOR DEPARTMENT VALOR AWARD
TO EIGHT EMPLOYEES

Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel will bestow the Department's valor award on eight employees June 30 at ceremonies in Washington, D.C.'s Constitution Hall. The event also will honor 94 Interior employees for distinguished service.

The Department's gold valor award will go to the following:

Dennis A. Long (to be awarded posthumously), Marquette, Mich., a National Park Service employee, who lost his life August 6, 1969, after saving a young woman from drowning in the rough waters of Lake Superior at Isle Royale National Park, Michigan. The rescue efforts tired Long and he was swept away by strong currents. Long resided at 355 E. Hewitt Ave., Marquette.

Lane J. Bouman, 640 Livingston Ave., Missoula, Mont., a Bureau of Land Management natural resource specialist, who risked his life to rescue a 10-year-old boy from the swift-flowing, icy waters of the Blackfoot River, east of Missoula, July 4, 1968.

Roger B. Griffith, Route 2, West Alexander, Pa., who made a perilous night-time ascent of Mount Huascaran, highest peak in the Peruvian Andes, August 20-21, 1969, in futile efforts to rescue John Hudson, a Brooklyn, N.Y., climber, killed in a 600-foot plunge down a glacier. Griffith, on vacation from his job as a biologist with the Federal Water Quality Administration offices in Wheeling, W. Va., spent a total of 23 hours on the mountain in the rescue attempt.

Leonard J. Schmitt, Jr., 45 S. Dover St., Lakewood, Colo., and Douglas O. McKeever, 3210 N. 29th St., Tacoma, Wash., Geological Survey employees, who braved the threat of exploding fuel from a helicopter in rescuing a fatally injured pilot, Gerald W. Bills, III. Bills had taken the two Survey men to the remote Salmon River Breaks Primitive Area in north-central Idaho July 23, 1968. The helicopter went out of control after Schmitt and McKeever alighted. It flipped over, pinning the pilot. Although the aircraft was afire, Schmitt and McKeever freed Bills and pulled him to safety. Moments later the entire craft was engulfed in flames. Bills died shortly after being rescued.

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Eddie B. Robertson, 501 Ottawa St., Grayling, Mich., a Geological Survey employee, who rescued a 7-year-old boy from the flood-swollen Pigeon River at Afton, Mich., July 30, 1969. Robertson was making a stream measurement from a nearby bridge just as a canoe carrying two boys and their father crashed into a tree, throwing them into the torrential stream. Robertson plunged into the river and brought the younger boy safely to shore and helped the other boy out of the water at the river's edge.

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Ray Nasetoynewa, a Hopi Indian employee of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Tuba City, Ariz., who manned a bulldozer many hours in the snow-laden Gray Mountain region of Arizona to reach four Navajo children, trapped several days in a hogan. They were without food, and fuel supplies were low. Nasetoynewa started the hazardous trip the night of December 18, 1967, and reached the snowbound children the following day.

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Louis W. Robinson, 1902 Powhatan Rd., West Hyattsville, Md., a private in the United States Park Police Force, who risked his life to aid Sgt. Robert L. Householder, Metropolitan Police Department, Washington, D. C. Householder was disabled by a shotgun blast from a man under siege in a Washington residence February 21, 1969. Private Robinson, assisted by Pvt. Lawrence Pasco of the Metropolitan Police, maneuvered a patrol wagon between Sergeant Householder and the residence. Using the vehicle and his own body as a shield, Robinson then helped Sergeant Householder to a place of safety. The gunman, who had killed two persons, finally took his own life.

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