

Wake County Rescue Squad Histories – Drowning Calls

1950s, 1960s, 1970s

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Introduction

These are research notes from newspaper stories about Wake County rescue squad responses to drownings in ponds, lakes, or creeks in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.

Drownings were common call types for the county's first rescue squads, that included Raleigh (1953), Wake Forest (1952), and Wendell (1962). Boats, motors, oars, hooks, and other equipment were some of the initial equipment acquired by the squads.

In fact, the Raleigh Emergency Rescue Squad was organized partially in response to a body recovery after a drowning on the Neuse River. The city manager requested help from the fire chief, after receiving multiple complaints about the body of a drowning victim that had not been recovered.

See this blog post for link to source documents and additional reading,
<https://legeros.com/blog/rescue-squads-drownings>

1950-1954

1950-08-27

Eastern Wake, Neuse River

Male, 46

Drowned near the railroad trestle southeast of Highway 64, after apparently suffering an attack of cramps while swimming. He was swimming with two others. The drowning occurred about 4:30 p.m. Sixth drowning of year in Wake County.

[N&O, 8/28/50, ZR, 8/29/50]

1951-04-30

Raleigh, Lake Johnson

Male, 32

Drowned after falling from a small fishing boat about 3:15 p.m. The small skiff was reportedly “tilting precariously” due to the weight of two men at one end. The victim’s companion also fell into the water and was rescued by two people in another boat.

[N&O, 4/1/51]

1951-05-23

Eastern Wake, Lake Mirl

Male, 16

Drowned while swimming at the lake on a class picnic and celebrating his sixteenth birthday. The victim’s body was recovered by his classmates.

Zebulon Rescue, Louisburg Rescue, Raleigh Rescue¹

[N&O, 5/24/51]

1951-06-02

Southern Wake, pond

Male, 19

Drowned while swimming with his brother near the spillway of Beal Johnson’s pond. Victim slipped off an inflated inner tube about 1:15 p.m. Third drowning of year in Wake County.

Raleigh Fire Department

[N&O, 6/3/51]

1951-07-26

Knightdale, farm pond

Female, 6 + Male 2

Both drowned in a pond about 20 yards from their farm house around 5:30 p.m. The little boy was playing with his sister in the back yard, when we fell into the pond while wading along the edge. His

¹ This is likely an incorrect citation, instead perhaps referring to a Raleigh Fire Department unit other than the rescue squad, which wasn’t organized until 1953.

sister jumped in to save him. Neither could swim. Seventh drowning of year in Wake County.
[N&O 1/27/51]

1952-07-16

Northern Wake, pond near Camp Durant

Male, 17

Drowned in a pond near Ray's Service Station. The victim's body was recovered by seven Boy Scouts from nearby Camp Durant, after about an hour of searching.

Wake Forest Rescue

[WW, 7/18/52]

1952-09-01

Eastern Wake, Neuse River

Male, __

Drowned after a fishing boat capsized about two miles upstream from Milburnie Dam. The victim's two companions were able to reach the shore. The victim's was recovered one week later, about 75 feet above the dam.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 9/9/52]

1953-06-25

Zebulon, Little River

Male, 18

Drowned after stepping off into deep water, while bathing in the river with three other youths. The victim was unable to swim.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 6/26/53]

1953-07-05

Western Wake, pond

Male, 17

Drowned in Sauls Pond, about one mile east of Highway 15-A near McCullers. He was swimming with five other youths about 4:00 p.m. The victim's body was recovered after the water level in the pond was lowered, by opening the drain line and using a portable irrigation pump.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 7/6/53]

1953-08-18

Northern Wake, Gresham's Lake

Male, 13

Drowned while swimming with his brother. Both were on a raft, when the raft started drifting toward the middle of the lake. Both jumped off the raft, but only the victim's brother reached the shore. His body was recovered three days later.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 8/20/53, 8/21/53]

1954-04-10

Southern Wake, Sunset Lake

Male, 42

Drowned after falling from a fishing boat, after last being seen on shore about 10:30 a.m. His body was recovered three days later.

Raleigh Rescue, Oxford Rescue

[N&O, 4/11, 4/12, 4/13/54]

1954-04-13

Raleigh, Crabtree Creek at Lassiter's Mill

Male, 32

Found after he was reported missing several days earlier, one mile below the dam. His wife had found a note stating that the victim intended to commit suicide.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 4/25/54]

1954-06-06

Southwestern Wake, pond

Male, 28

Drowned after his outboard motorboat capsized in a pond about two miles off Apex-McCullers Road. The victim and his small son were about 40 yards from the eastern shore of the small pond when it overturned. The father helped save his son from drowning, handing him to boater who had responded. But the victim disappeared underwater before he could be rescued, about 4:40 p.m.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 6/7/54]

1954-07-01

Wake Forest, Neuse River

Male, 43

Drowned while fishing about two miles north of the Neuse Rive Bridge on Highway 98. The victim drowned about 7:45 a.m. while he and two others were rescuing a fourth member of their party, who had stepped in a deep hole and was apparently in danger of drowning.

Wake Forest Rescue, Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 7/2/54]

1954-07-03

Eastern Wake, Neuse River at Milburnie Dam

Male, 47

Drowned while trying to free a snagged fishing hook of another person, about 5:30 p.m. Raleigh Rescue recovered the body within five minutes of arriving, but artificial respiration was unsuccessful because the victim had been in the water for about 35 minutes. Eighth drowning of year in Wake County.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 7/4/54]

1954-10-31

Western Wake, pond

Male, 13

Drowned in Bank's Pond off Reedy Creek Road about 2:00 p.m. He had gone out in a boat and was about 20 feet from shore, when he jumped from the boat and attempted to swim to shore. The victim was attending a picnic with members of a church.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 9/1/54]

1954-10-24

Wendell, Rock Quarry

Male, 36

Drowned after diving some 50 feet into about 60 feet of water at an abandoned rock quarry located about three-quarters of a mile east of Wendell. He and his companion had flipped coins to see who would jump first. The victim's body was recovered by the rescue squad after nearly two hours of searching.

Raleigh Rescue.

[N&O, 10/25/54]

1955-1959

1955-07-29

Raleigh, pond at state fairgrounds

Male, 28

Drowned about 6:30 p.m. in a pond behind the State Fair Youth Center, after wading into a pond to retrieve a duck he had just shot. The victim, who was purportedly a good swimmer, had stepped into a deep hole and did not surface.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 7/30/55]

1955-08-21

Eastern Wake, pond

Female, 21

Drowned in a boating accident in a private pond near Highway 64 between Wendell and Zebulon. The midafternoon accident occurred when the victim was in a flat-bottomed boat with three other men. The boat sank in about ten feet of water. The three men survived.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 8/22/55]

1956-02-22

Southwestern Wake, pond

Male 26 + Male 55

Drowned after their pick-up truck swerved off a bridge on unpaved Johnson Mill Road and entered some 10 feet of water at the American Legion Pond, located about three miles northwest of Fuquay Springs.

Raleigh Rescue
[N&O, 2/22/56]

1956-06-05

Raleigh, farm pond

Male, 15

Drowned while swimming a farm pond off Rock Quarry Road about 2:00 p.m. He drowned in deep water near the pond's dam.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 6/6/56]

1956-06-08

Holly Springs, Bass Lake

Male, 22

Drowned after falling from his fishing boat, after he "had some kind of attack and stood up." The accident occurred about 7:15 p.m. in seven feet of water.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 6/9/56]

1956-07-02

Apex, farm pond

Male, 14

Drowned after his boat capsized in a farm pond, having gone with four other boys to the pond. The accident occurred just before noon.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 7/3/56]

1956-08-16

Fuquay Springs, pond

Male, 19 + Female 16

Drowned in a boating accident in a private pond off Highway 55 at 6:30 p.m. Five people were in an aluminum boat that foundered. Three other teens in the boat survived.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 8/17/56]

1956-08-27

Raleigh, Glascock Street

Male 10 + Male 2 1/2

Drowned in a six-foot hole filled with water in the 500 block of Glascock Street. The younger boy wandered through a steel culvert under the street and fell into the water. His older brother attempted to rescue him and also drowned. Both were pronounced dead about 10:45 a.m.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 8/28/56]

1957-02-__

Zebulon, lake

Male, 10

Drowned in a lake near his home, after being reported missing at 5:00 p.m. He was found the next morning, after an all-night search by some 150 to 200 volunteers.

[ZR, 3/1/57]

1957-04-28

Raleigh, Joe Lewis Park Creek

Male, 9

Drowned after falling into the creek. Police rushed to the scene and an officer administered artificial respiration. Moments later, Raleigh Rescue arrived. The boy could not be revived.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 4/29/57]

1957-07-14

Southeastern Wake, pond

Male, 14

Drowned after jumping from a boat about 12:50 p.m. The victim was with several other youths who were boating in a pond about two miles off old Highway 70, and six miles southeast of Garner. The victim told his companions that he “wanted to see how deep the water was.”

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 7/15/57]

1957-08-28

Raleigh, pond

Male, 15

Drowned while swimming with his twin brother in Ragland’s pond near the state fairgrounds. The victim apparently suffered cramps, while swimming in deep water in the afternoon.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 8/29/57]

1958-05-13

Raleigh, Longview Lake

Male, 24

Drowned after a pre-dawn “drinking bout” between three men and one woman. The victim bet his companions that he could swim across the lake, which was about 300 yards across.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 5/14/58]

1958-05-25

Fuquay Springs, farm pond

Male 14 + Male 19

Drowned attempting to rescue a boy in a drifting boat in a farm pond about 1 1/2 miles west of Fuquay Spring. At about 11:30 a.m., one of four boys stepped into a boat and untied it. The boat began drifting toward the middle of the three-acre pond. The two victims jumped into the water, to bring him back, but began sinking about 15 feet from shore. The fourth boy tried to rescue the two, was unsuccessful, and ran for help.

Raleigh Rescue, Fuquay Fire
[N&O, 5/25/58]

1958-06-01

Northern Wake, farm pond
Male, 12

Drowned while washing his dog in a farm pond in New Light Township. The responding rescue squad was turned back about a mile from the scene, after learning that the victim's body had been recovered. Was the fourth drowning in Wake County for the year.

Raleigh Rescue
[N&O, 6/2/58]

1958-06-29

Raleigh, Lake Wheeler
Male, 20

Drowned after falling out a 17-foot cabin boat about 5:00 p.m. The victim was riding with three others in the boat and the group had been "cutting up" before the accident. First drowning for newly created reservoir.

Raleigh Rescue
[N&O, 6/30/58]

1958-07-04

Southern Wake, Lake Silver
Male, 13

Drowned in the crowded lake in the early afternoon, which was full of holiday swimmers. His body was found in shallow water, after it had been submerged for 45 minutes or more.

Raleigh Rescue
[N&O, 7/5/58, ZR, 7/10/58]

1958-07-29?

Raleigh, Longview Lake
Male, 30

Was found floating in the lake on August 1, after being reported missing on July 28. His body had been in the water for three days.

Raleigh Rescue
[N&O, 8/3/58]

1958-08-03

Southern Wake, farm pond
Male, 21

Drowned in a pond on his father's farm about seven miles from Apex, after swimming across the pond and while halfway back.

Raleigh Rescue
[N&O, 8/4/58]

1959-03-06

Zebulon, farm pond

Male, 5

Drowned after falling into a farm pond about 2:30 p.m. The victim's father and older brother were "chopping briars" in a nearby pasture, and the victim was playing along the pond bank.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 3/7/59, ZR, 3/12/59]

1959-04-22

Lee County Cape Fear River

Male, 19

Drowned after his fishing boat overturned about two miles above Buckhorn Dam. The following day, the Raleigh Emergency Rescue Squad was assisting with the search along with a dive team from Fort Bragg. Volunteer squad member Robert Battle, 45, drowned during search operations, about five miles below the dam. He had entered the water to swim out and investigate an object on the back of an overturned boat, spotted by a Wildlife Commission plane being used in the search. Battle was unable to make it back to shore. He had a rope around his waist, but the rope wasn't long enough to reach the found object, and he had requested that his fellow squad members let go of the rope. When he became exhausted on the return trip, he tied himself to a willow tree in the river but was apparently too tired to hold his head out of the water. Battle was an employee of the Wake County Sheriff's Department and had worked as a night jailer for four years. He had previously served as a Raleigh police officer.

[N&O, 4/24/59]

1959-08-08

Raleigh, private lake

Male, 75

Drowned after his fishing boat foundered in a private lake near the southeastern city limits.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 8/9/59]

1960-1964

1960-01-30

Southern Wake, lake

Female, 37

Drowned after falling from a wooden walkway and she and her husband crossed a lake near their farm home, near the Wake-Harnett county line.

Rescue services TBD.

[N&O, 1/2/60]

1960-04-24

Raleigh, Longview Gardens Lake

Male, 15

Drowned while swimming across the "neck" of the upper part of the lake, along with a companion.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 4/25/60]

1960-05-20

Louisburg, Lake Mirl

Male, 16

Drowned while swimming in five-foot deep water with about eight other classmates, during a class picnic.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 5/21/60]

1960-07-__

Wake Forest, Holding's Pond

Male, 45

Drowned while swimming in a pond at W. W. Holding's dairy farm around 7:00 p.m. The victim was swimming across the pond when he started drowning. Two brothers were with him and attempted to rescue the victim.

[WW, 7/29/60]

1960-11-__

Wake Forest, well

Males, 3 and 5

Two boys fell into an open well in the front yard of their home on Route 1 in the New Light community. The 40 foot well had about 15 feet of water. They fell while playing in the yard shortly before 10:00 a.m. Wake Forest Police were called at 11:45 a.m. and retrieved the body of the older child, but had to call Raleigh Rescue to retrieve the body of the second child

[WW, 11/18/60]

1960-11-22

Fuquay-Varina, pond

Male, 52

Drowned after falling into Rowland's Pond while fishing. The victim had "suffered an attack," reported witnesses.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 11/23/60]

1960-12-24

Raleigh, Crabtree Creek at Milburnie Road

Male 17 + Male 17

Drowned after their car lost control on Milburnie Road, traveled down an embankment, and overturned in Crabtree Creek. A third youth in the vehicle self-extricated.

Rescue services TBD

[N&O, 12/25/60]

1961-02-12

Raleigh, lake on Highway 64 east

Male, 29

Drowned in a lake on Highway 64 east, near the Beacon Drive-In theater. The victim and his wife had returned home about 1:00 a.m. The wife left her husband in the car, because he was asleep. At

6:00 a.m., she found no trace of her husband. The car was parked near the lake and police officers theorized that the victim fell into the lake, while trying to make his way from the car to the house.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 2/13/61]

1961-06-17

Eastern Wake, Sunset Lake

Male, 37

Drowned after stepping into deep water while trying to retrieve fishing pole. The four-acre private lake was located a half mile from the Tar Heel Club off Highway 64. Four divers from Fort Bragg, brought by the victim's brother-in-law, assisted with the search

Raleigh Rescue, Knightdale Rescue, Fort Bragg Dive Team

[N&O, 6/18/61, 6/18/61]

1961-08-01

Wendell, water hole on a farm

Male, 7

Drowned after wading into hole on a farm, dug to supply water for a nearby tobacco field

Wendell Fire and Wendell Police

[N&O, 8/3/61]

1961-11-01

Southwestern Wake, lake

Male 47 + Male __

Drowned while fishing in a boat on West Lake, two miles of Raleigh-Holly Springs Road. They were last seen 5:30 p.m.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 11/2/61]

1962-06-15

Eastern Wake, Little River

Males, ages 16, 20, 23, 24, 26

Passenger car with five occupants was apparently traveling at a high rate of speed on Terrapin Road, about a half mile off Highway 96, when it rounded a curve, ran off the road, struck one railing of a bridge, and plunged into the water. Four of the five occupants drowned, along with a 16-year old boy who jumped into the water, to try to rescue them. Several other youths also jumped in the water, but escaped safely. Accident occurred about 11:00 p.m.

Raleigh Rescue, Wendell Rescue, Louisburg Rescue

[N&O, 6/16/62, ZR, 6/21/62]

1962-07-24

Wendell, farm pond

Male, 47

Drowned in a farm pond near Wendell. He and others had been priming tobacco about 3:00 p.m. right before the accident occurred. His body was recovered by rescue squad divers.

Wendell Rescue
[N&O, 7/25/62]

1962-09-09

Apex, farm pond

Female, 28

Drowned in a farm pond about three miles west of Apex on Olive Chapel Road. She lived in a tenant house about 30 feet from the pond. She had called to her boyfriend from the pond, asking "do you love me?" He shouted back "yes" and that was the last that he heard from her. The accident occurred after the two and the boy's father had returned home about 8:30 p.m.

Rescue services TBD

[N&O, 9/10/62]

1963-03-29

Eastern Wake, Neuse River

Male, 17

Drowned after jumping onto the river in to save a 12 year-old girl who had fallen off a sand bar and was being swept downstream. He was fishing on the other side of the Highway 64 overpass, near where the girl had fallen into the water. He raced along the bank, leapt into the water, and rescued the girl, but was unable to save himself. His body was recovered at 4:25 p.m., some 20 minutes after the rescue squad had arrived.

Raleigh Rescue.

[N&O, 4/1/63]

1963-07-03

Knightdale, farm pond

Drowned while swimming in a farm pond with another boy.

Wendell Rescue

[N&O, 7/4/63]

1963-07-07

Eastern Wake, Neuse River at Milburnie Dam

Male, 6

Drowned while swimming at the base of the dam, and after two others were rescued from the river's strong currents. Occurred on a Sunday afternoon.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 7/8/63]

1963-07-14

Zebulon, farm pond

Male, 11

Drowned while swimming with four other youths in a pond about one mile east of town, about 9:30 a.m.

Wendell Rescue

[N&O, 7/16/63, ZR, 7/18/63]

1964-03-17

Southern Wake, pond

Male, 58

Believed drowned while fishing in a pond in the Panther Branch Community. He was last seen about 4:30 p.m.

Raleigh Rescue, Wendell Rescue, Clayton Rescue

[N&O, 3/18/64]

1964-04-29

Eastern Wake, Neuse River at Milburnie Dam

Male, 38

Drowned while swimming with a companion about 10:35 a.m.

[N&O, 4/30/64]

1964-04-19

Southern Wake, farm pond near Willow Springs

Male, 11

Drowned while swimming after fishing in a farm pond near his home.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 4/20/64]

1964-05-27

Wake Forest, Camp Kanata Lake

Male, 15

Drowned after falling from a pier at the lake, about 8:20 p.m. He had jumped from the end of the pier toward a raft that was floating nearby. He missed the raft and struck his head on the raft as he fell.

Wake Forest Rural Fire, Wake Forest Police

[N&O, 5/28/64]

1964-08-12

Morrisville, farm pond

Male, 14

Drowned after he and three companions, who had been worked in a nearby tobacco field, went to an irrigation pond to cool off. He drowned about 6:10 p.m.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 8/13/64]

1965-1969

1965-05-11

Wake Forest, Wake Forest Reservoir

Male 55

Drowned in the reservoir along Highway 98 about 6:30 p.m., when a small fishing boat overturned and sank during an electrical storm. The craft was headed for shore with a second fisherman, who tried but couldn't rescue his companion.

Wake Forest Rescue, Raleigh Rescue, Louisburg Rescue, and Wake Forest Fire
[N&O, 5/12/65, WW, 5/14/65]

1965-05-30

Wendell, farm pond

Male, 44

Drowned while fishing at a three-acre farm pond about a half-mile east of Wendell.

Wendell Rescue

[N&O, 6/1/65]

1965-06-20

Fuquay-Varina, farm pond

Male, 35

Drowned after his car rolled into a farm pond, a half-mile from Fuquay-Varina on US 401. The car had special equipment for the victim, who was paralyzed from below the waist. Mechanical failure caused the car to roll into the water, while it was turning around in the yard. The car began to roll in reverse down a 50-yard embankment. The victim's companion was riding in the passenger seat and jumped clear of the vehicle. The car completely submerged in six feet of water. The disabled driver was unable to free himself.

Raleigh Rescue, Fuquay-Varina Fire, National Guard wrecker

[N&O, 6/21/65]

1965-07-21

Raleigh, farm pond

Male, 18.

Drowned in a farm pond near Bethany Church, while playing with five other youths with a half-submerged boat. The accident occurred about 5:15 p.m.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 7/22/65]

1966-01-07

Garner, Lake Benson

Male, 54

Drowned while fishing in Swift Creek. His body was found just below the dam that night.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 1/8/66]

1966-05-24

Raleigh, Lake Johnson

Male, 18

NC State student was thrown into the lake by his classmates as an end-of-semester gesture and drowned about 10:15 p.m. He was thrown into the lake from a bridge by the boathouse by five other freshmen. All the others had been thrown into the lake on previous occasions, which was part of a "university tradition."

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 5/25/66]

1966-06-07

Northern Wake, Dunn's Pond

Male, 13

Drowned in a 10-acre pond on Six Forks Road, six miles north of Raleigh. His body was found in 10-foot-deep water a few feet from the dam.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 6/8/66]

1967-07-21

Fuquay-Varina, farm pond

Drowned in a farm pond near town. He and a second person had been working in a tobacco field, and both went swimming at the end of the day's work. The victim got into deep water and disappeared below the surface.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 7/22/67]

1967-08-06

Raleigh, Lake Wheeler

Male, 30

Drowned while swimming and after apparently developing stomach cramps.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 8/7/67]

1967-09-09

Fuquay-Varina, pond

Male, 15 + Male 15 + Male 16 + Male 19

Drowned after their car ran off the road on Highway 55 about a mile north of town about 11:00 p.m. A fifth boy, age 19, survived and swam to shore.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 9/10/67]

1967-09-16

Garner, Lake Benson

Male, 16 + Male 16

Drowned after falling out of their boat.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 9/17/67]

1968-04-16

Raleigh, Lake Raleigh

Female, 43

The body of the Dorothea Dix hospital patient was found floating near the dam. Her death was ruled a suicide.

[N&O, 4/17/68]

1968-05

Eastern Wake, pond off US 64 near Knightdale airport

Male, 10

Boating accident occurred about 1:00 p.m. when three boys in a boat paddled to the middle of the pond.

Wake Forest Rescue, Wendell Rescue
[WW]

1968-06-28

Southern Wake, farm pond

Male, 8

Drowned in a farm pond off Old Stage Road.

Raleigh Rescue.

[N&O, 6/29/68]

1968-07-07

Zebulon, pond

Male, 2

Drowned after falling down a ten-foot embankment into a three-acre pond.

Rescue services TBD

[N&O, 7/8/68]

1968-08-17

Rolesville, rock quarry

Male, 20

The victim and three other NC State students were swimming at the abandoned quarry. The victim jumped from the rim of a 55-foot cliff about 3:20 a.m. His companions heard the splash, but he did not answer after called for him. The others climbed down some ledges, to get closer to the water, and dove in and tried to find their companion.

Rescue services TBD

[WW, 8/22/68, N&O, 4/18/68]

1969-05-10

Rolesville, rock quarry

Male, 21

The NC State student was one of sixteen others at the quarry at the time. He dove into about two feet of water from about four feet above the water level, at about 3:30 p.m. His body was recovered by a Wake Forest diver, after rescue squad members dragged the lake for more than hour.

Wake Forest Rescue, Wendell Rescue.

[N&O, 5/11/69, 5/12/69, WW, 5/15/69]

1969-07-18

Southern Wake, farm pond

Female, 7

Drowned after falling into a deep hole, while wading in a pond at a farm off Old Stage Road.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 7/19/69]

1969-09

Garner, Lake Benson

Male 16 + Male 16

Drowned after they fell out of a boat while fishing.

Raleigh Rescue

1970-1974

1970-04-08

Wendell, farm pond

Male, 64

Drowned in a farm pond on Route 2. Officials ruled his death as a suicide.

Raleigh Rescue, Wendell Rescue

[N&O, 7/9/70]

1970-05-18

Eastern Wake, Neuse River at Milburnie Dam

Girl, 12

Drowned after falling into the river below the dam about 7:30 p.m. At the time of the incident, the river was too swift to launch a boat, and rescue operations were postponed until the morning.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 5/19/70, 5/20/70]

1970-05-09

Knightdale, pond

Male, 15

Drowned in a pond near Wilder's Grove, after falling out of an inner tube about 4:00 p.m. He was unable to swim.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 5/11/70]

1970-09-05

Eastern Wake, Neuse River at Milburnie Dam

Male, 31

Drowned while fishing at Raleigh Beach near the old dam. He was apparently trying to cross the water behind the dam when he fell into a deep hole about 4:45 p.m.

Rescue services TBD

[N&O, 9/6/70]

1971-08-__

Wake Forest, pond

Male, 49

Drowned while fishing around midnight, in a private pond about four miles northwest of town.

Wake Forest Rescue

[WW]

1972-04-18

Raleigh, Lake Johnson

Female, 24?

Drowned after telling three male companions that she was going swimming about 3:00 p.m. The victim failed to return to the picnic shelter, and her companions found her clothes on the bank.

They called the sheriff's department a couple hours later.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 4/19/72]

1972-08-__

Wake Forest, pond

Male, 55

Drowned in a pond at L. K. Walker's farm, outside of Wake Forest.

Rescue services TBD

[WW, 8/17/72]

1972-10

Wake Forest, pond

Male, 47

Drowned in a farm pond near his farm home about three miles south of town.

Rescue services TBD

1973-04-01

Raleigh, Crabtree Creek

Male, 6

Drowned in the creek near Oak Park Drive, about four miles upstream from Crabtree Valley Mall. He and his family were riding in a canoe in the swollen creek when it overturned. Two nearby residents rescued the boy's sister, who was clinging to a tree. The mother and father swam to safety. Raleigh Rescue, Durham Highway Fire, plus some 300 other rescuers including local rescue squads, sheriff's deputies, and USMC reserve members subsequently combed the creek and its banks.

[N&O, 4/7/73, 4/10/73, 4/16/73]

1973-07-01

Eastern Wake, Neuse River at Milburnie Dam – Two males, 24, 25

Drowned while riding a makeshift raft created from three inflated truck tire inner tubes upstream from the dam. They were caught in the current and swept under the falls. Their companion was rescued, climbing to a tree limb. The accident occurred on a Sunday night. Subsequent search attempts were impacted, because the current was too strong on the rain-swollen river to enable rescue boats to be deployed. One body was recovered two days later, near the dam. The second body was recovered at the Highway 64 bridge, on the third morning after the accident.

Raleigh Rescue, Wendell Rescue, Wake County Sheriff

[N&O, 7/2/73, 7/3/73, 7/5/73]

1973-07-29

Garner, Saul's Pond

Male, 23

Drowned in a pond off Old Stage Road about 5:00 p.m.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 7/30/73]

1973-07-31

Apex, farm pond

Male, 16

Drowned while swimming with two friends in a farm pond three miles south of town. The victim had apparently become tangled in three branches at the bottom of the pool.

Apex Rescue

[N&O, 8/1/73]

1973-08-15

Eastern Wake, Neuse River at Milburnie Dam

Male, 40

Drowned in the river below the dam about 8:30 p.m.

Raleigh Rescue, Wendell Rescue

[N&O, 4/16/73]

1973-08-__

Eastern Wake, Neuse River at Milburnie Dam

Male, 19

Drowned after he and two others were swimming in the water above the dam, and he and a second youth were caught in strong currents and pulled over the dam. During the subsequent dragging operations the following day, one of the rescue boats overturned and a second rescue boat almost overturned. The rescuers were pulled from the water safely.

Wake Forest Rescue, Raleigh Rescue, Wake Forest Fire, Six Forks Fire, Falls Fire

[WW, 8/9/73]

1974-05-01

Raleigh, Crabtree Creek

Male, __

Drowned in Crabtree Creek. Victim was a youth of diminished mental capacity.

Rescue services TBD

[N&O, 5/31/74]

1974-05-11

Raleigh, Lake Raleigh

Male, 66

Drowned in the lake and found four days after he was reported missing, and after his shirt and a pair of glasses were found at the dam the day after he was reported missing.

Raleigh Rescue

[N&O, 5/16/74]

1974-06-09

Southern Wake, Simpkin's Pond

Male, 16

Drowned while swimming with three other boys about 3:00 p.m. br /> Raleigh Rescue
[N&O, 6/10/74]

1974-07-17

Raleigh, pond

Female, 62

Drowned in a pond off Holly Springs Road, after apparently wandering away from a picnic for patients at Dorothea Dix Hospital.

Rescue services TBD

[N&O, 7/18/74]

1975-1979

1975-05-26

Northern Wake, pond

Male, 18

Drowned in pond near the Neuse River and Bayleaf Baptist Church about 5:30 p.m. He was swimming with a second person.

Wake Forest Rescue

[N&O, 5/27/75]

1975-06-02

Garner, Lake Benson

Male, 59

Submerged vehicle at Lake Benson, after his car struck a wooden bridge railing at Lake Benson Dam and entered the water. His body was recovered by two passing motorists who dived into the water. The accident occurred at night.

Rescue services TBD

[N&O, 6/3/75]

1975-06-21

Wake Forest, pond

Male, 23

Drowned while attempting to swim across a private pond near Highway 98 about 8:30 p.m. He had been fishing all day with two others. Rescue boats and divers searched for at least four days, to find the victim's body.

Rescuers from Wake Forest, Garner, Zebulon, Wendell, Fuquay-Varina, Youngsville, Durham, and Fort Bragg.

[WW, 6/26/75]

1975-07-03

Southern Wake, pond

Male 42 + Female 36

Found floating in a small pond a few yards from their house, about three miles south of Apex. The bodies were badly decomposed.

Rescue services TBD.

[N&O, 7/4/75]

1975-08-15

Raleigh, Lake Wheeler

Male, 38

Drowned while swimming with four other friends around midnight.

Rescue services TBD

[N&O, 8/16/75]

1975-08-__

Eastern Wake, well

Male, 21

Likely drowned after falling into a 30-foot well at a home on Hodge Road, near Poole Road. He had been reported missing by his parents and was found about a week later. The victim was not wearing any clothes.

Wendell Rescue

[N&O, 9/11/75]

1975-11-06

Eastern Wake, pond

Female, 61

Drowned after falling from a small boat on a four-acre pond on their property off Milburnie Road, in the afternoon.

Wendell Rescue

[N&O, 11/7/75]

1976-04-08

Southern Wake, Swift Creek

Male, 49

Drowned after diving into the creek to retrieve his fishing pole. The accident occurred about 1:45 p.m. His body was recovered from a 30-foot deep hole in the creek, beneath the bridge on Highway 50. Three other people were fishing under the bridge at the time of the accident.

Garner Rescue

[N&O, 4/9/76]

1976-07-16

Raleigh, Lake Wheeler

Female, 16 + Female, 18

Drowned while with another woman, who was subsequently reported missing and later also found.

Rescue services TBD

[N&O, 7/17/76, 7/18/76]

1977-05-14

Eastern Wake, Neuse River at Milburnie Dam

Male, 24

Drowned after diving into the water at Raleigh Beach. It occurred about 6:00 p.m.

Rescue squads from Wendell, Garner, Zebulon, Raleigh and Wake County EMS.
[N&O, 5/16/77, GLF, 5/19/77]

1977-05-23?

Fuquay-Varina, farm pond

Male, 40

Found in a farm pond on Holland Road, having apparently drowned. The victim had been last seen about 9 a.m., two days earlier.

Fuquay-Varina Rescue

[N&O, 5/26/77]

1977-07-22

East of Raleigh, pond

Male, 11 + Male, 13

Drowned in a pond on Buffalo Road, east of Raleigh. The two were with three other youths, who had gone to the pond to go fishing. The drowning occurred about 4:45 p.m.

Wendell Rescue, Knightdale Rescue

[GLF, 7/28/77]

1977-08-15

Raleigh, Walnut Creek

Male, 2

Drowned after apparently wandering away from home. He was last seen around 3:00 p.m. His body was found about 4:45 p.m.

Rescue services TBD

[N&O, 8/16/77]

1977-09-24

Raleigh, pond

Male, 64

Drowned while fishing alone in a small private pond near New Bern Avenue

Raleigh Rescue, Wendell Rescue

[N&O, 9/26/77]

1978-06-27

Southern Wake, pond

Male, 16

Drowned in a farm pond in southeastern Wake County near Highway 70 about 3:30 p.m. He was swimming with several friends, when they tried to swim across the 330 yard-wide pond.

Clayton Rescue

[N&O, 6/28/78]

1978-09-09

Southern Wake, pond

Drowned after apparently falling down an embankment and into a small pond between Old Stage Road and Fayetteville Road, about five miles south of Raleigh. His body was discovered a day later.

Rescue services TBD.

[N&O, 9/12/78]

1979-04-15

Zebulon, pond

Male, 15

Drowned in a farm pond shortly after noon, attempting to help his brother and sister after their boat overturned in a 1 1/2-acre pond near the Carol Heights development.

Rescue services TBD

[N&O, 4/16/79]

1979-06-10

Northern Wake, Beaver Lake

Female, 28 + Male, 3

Drowned after their 12-foot motorboat overturned. There were five occupants aboard and the female victim's husband were changing places in the boat, when the boat turned over. None of the people aboard were wearing life preservers. The other three were rescued by another boater.

Rescue services TBD

[N&O, 6/12/79]

1979-10-17

Southern Wake, well

Male, 15 months

Drowned after falling into an abandoned well near his home in the Williams Crossroads community.

Garner Rescue

[N&O, 10/17/79]

Abbreviations

- [GLF] - Gold Leaf Farmer
- [N&O] - News & Observer
- [WW] - Wake Weekly
- [ZR] - Zebulon Record