



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Grand Canyon News Release

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Grand Canyon National Park Staff Members Commended for Lifesaving Actions

Grand Canyon, AZ. – On October 29, 2008 an unusual reunion occurred in Grand Canyon National Park. Instead of family members gathering from all over the country to catch up and strengthen family ties, National Park Service (NPS) employees met with two people they hardly knew, yet couldn't have been closer to.

On May 8, 2008, Evelyn Plummer called 911 for assistance when, after seeing her husband Edward gasping for air, she discovered he had no pulse. Grand Canyon Regional Communications Center Dispatcher Elissa Torres coordinated simultaneous emergency responses to significant incidents, freeing up Dispatcher Sean Perchalski to work over the phone to provide Evelyn with instructions on how to perform CPR (cardio pulmonary resuscitation.) At the same time, NPS emergency medical personnel were dispatched to the scene. Rangers Eric Keefer and Ben McKay arrived two minutes later and began basic life support measures. A short time later, Rangers Jason Montoya, Brandon Torres and Robert Walters had also arrived and were able to employ advanced cardiac life support measures to defibrillate him and convert him to a life-sustaining cardiac rhythm. Edward was then stabilized and transported via helicopter to Flagstaff Medical Center. Ranger Paul Austin, who had been assisting Evelyn throughout the ordeal, drove her to Flagstaff to join her husband at the hospital. It was not until 45 days later that Edward was finally released from intensive care.

Today, 76 year old Edward "Albert" Plummer is happy and healthy; and on Wednesday, October 29, he and his wife, Evelyn, came back to the Grand Canyon to reunite with and thank their

rescuers and express their gratitude. “How can you thank someone who saves the life of the most important person in your life?... I can only wish them the best life can offer—they deserve it.”

All of the staff members mentioned above received letters of commendation from Park Superintendent Steve Martin. In those letters he wrote: “There is truly no greater accomplishment than the saving of a human life.... The professionalism and skill which you all employed is truly a credit to the National Park Service.”

The Superintendent and staff of Grand Canyon National Park would like to commend the lifesaving actions of Sean Perchalski, Elissa Torres, Eric Keefer, Ben McKay, Jason Montoya, Brandon Torres, Robert Walters and Paul Austin.



The reunion of Evelyn and Ed Plummer with some of the park staff who helped save Ed's life. From left to right: Robert Walters, Brandon Torres, Evelyn Plummer, Edward "Albert Plummer, Sean Perchalski, and Paul Austin holding his son Jack.

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