**Star of Life**

**Region VI**

On October 29, 2016 at 11:04 in the morning, a call comes in to Marshall

County 911 dispatch that even a seasoned dispatcher is not ever prepared for.

June Dickson, Angie Thomason, and Robin Malinak were on duty that day.

The call is for a 2 year old male drowning victim, unknown time underwater,

with CPR in progress. June Dickson takes the call from Racheal Daws, the

victim’s mother. Between June’s questions Racheal repeatedly sobs, “My . . .

my baby’s dead! My baby’s dead! Please, please help me!” June used to be a

school bus driver and Racheal was one of her regular riders back then, but for

confidentiality reasons June cannot reveal her identity to Rachel now,

although her heart is breaking for this young mother’s grief. The three

dispatchers are on the radios contacting Marshall County EMS, Bedford-

Farmington Volunteer Fire Department and Marshall County Sheriff’s

Department. Because it’s a kid that’s down, a dispatcher notifies the Air Evac

Lifeteam 09 crew, based in Lewisburg, to auto-launch to Pre-Existing Landing

Area #4.

Steve Lentz, a neighbor, came running the moment he heard Racheal’s

screams after she finds her son, Brantley, lying on the bottom of the pool.

Steve begins CPR and directs Racheal to call 911. Junior Volunteer Firefighter

Scott Shirley is the first responder to arrive and together they switch to two-

rescuer CPR.

Marshall County EMS Supervisor and Paramedic John Reese is moments

behind. When he sees the cold, blue, toddler with his arms and legs dangling

limply at his sides, he is taken aback. Reese has been doing this for a long time

and quietly thinks, “Oh, my gosh! I don’t think we can help this little one.”

EMS Medic 44 with Paramedic Lavenia Green and Advanced EMT Terry Porter

are notified that the victim is a 2 year old and CPR is in progress. Marshall

County Medic 42 with Paramedic Bryan McElroy and Advanced EMT Trey

Brock are close behind and complete the team. An oral airway is placed.

Assisted ventilations with a bag-valve-mask using 100% oxygen are begun.

“Oh, my God. He is so cold!” The team scoops the child up while continuing

CPR and carries Brantley Daws’ lifeless body into the back of Medic Unit 44.

Once inside, the team quickly secures the stretcher and goes to work drying

off the cold, cyanotic, and unresponsive child. With the cardiac pads in

place, the monitor shows electrical activity in the heart, but there is no pulse

with it. It’s what is called pulseless electrical activity, or PEA. CPR continues.

A needle is inserted through the skin into the bone marrow of Brantley’s right

tibia, the bone below the knee, and IV fluids are started. The crew attempts to

place a breathing tube into his trachea, but because of the pool water welling

up into his mouth from his drowned lungs they can’t visualize the vocal cords.

But, they are getting good chest rise and fall with bag-valve-mask ventilation

and from their training they know that this is the critical need in the short

term.

With the first set of vital signs there is no pulse and no respirations. As CPR

continues and team members are calculating the correct dose of epinephrine,

the first drug of choice for treatment of PEA, one of the team picks up a

rhythm change on the monitor. Normally, someone would check for a pulse

next. But, incredibly someone shouts, “Look! You can actually see a carotid

pulse in his neck!” YES! They count; it’s at 100 beats per minute. And, for the

first time there’s a blood pressure of 64/50. “Okay, he is still in shock, but we

never thought that we would get this far.” Dispatch is notified there has been

a return of spontaneous circulation. June Dickson can’t believe it. When she

can, she steps outside to cry. Medic 44 departs for the rendezvous. It’s a 93

second ride. Maybe they leave a little rubber on the road.

The Air Evac Lifeteam crew with pilot Robert Whitaker, Flight Nurse Zac

Curtis and Flight Paramedic Dana McDonald has been notified of the return of

spontaneous circulation and that they will be taking this patient to Monroe

Carroll, Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt Medical Center. The Sheriff’s

Department has secured the pre-existing landing zone. Air Evac is waiting as

the ambulance pulls up. Curtis and McDonald board the ambulance and

receive an update, complete their assessment and assume Brantley’s care.

He’s unconscious, unresponsive, and his right pupil is fixed and dilated.

Glascow Coma Score is 3. Uh-oh! This is bad news for possible brain injury.

Blood pressure is now 107/65, pulse 95 and capillary refill is more than 2

seconds. It’s a 25 minute flight to Vandy. Due to the child’s inability to protect

his airway the decision is made to intubate before boarding the aircraft. After

a time out the rapid sequence intubation drugs are given. It’s still

a difficult airway, but on the second attempt Dana is successful. With a four

person lift Brantley is transferred from the EMS stretcher to the Air Evac

stretcher and hot-loaded onto the aircraft and secured. Whitaker lifts off and

banks left towards Vanderbilt Medical Center.

Fifteen minutes into the flight McDonald picks up that Brantley’s heart rate is

falling. Now it’s 58. The endotracheal tube position is verified. Skin is pale

and cool. Capillary refill is 5 seconds, but brachial and femoral pulses are

strong. Dana administers epinephrine and the heart rate comes up. Five

minutes later the aircraft safely lands, but Brantley’s pulse is falling again.

Now it’s 53. A second dose of epinephrine is given and the heart rate

responds again. Brantley is cold off-loaded and rushed to the Children’s ED

and the waiting resuscitation team assumes his care.

Brantley is admitted to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit in Monroe Carroll

and placed on life support. The doctors tell his family that it will be 48-72

hours before the extent of his brain damage can be determined. Four days

later he is taken off life support. After an additional three days he is

discharged home and walks out of the hospital!

In her nomination, Renee Jacobs, program director for Air Evac Lifeteam 09 in

Lewisburg writes: “This call is a testament to how a system can work

perfectly to save a life. Bystander and First Responder CPR performed here

demonstrate the importance of CPR education in the community and the value

of our volunteer fire departments and first responders. From the initial call to

the helicopter skid landing at Vandy Peds, the system functioned like a well-

oiled machine. This team came together using their training and skills to save

a life. That is why 2 year old Brantley Daws is here today.”

Because this accident occurred two days before Halloween, Brantley, his

brother and cousins had not been able to Trick or Treat. Three weeks after

the near-drowning the Lewisburg community came together for the Daws

family with a Trunk or Treat, Silent Auction and Celebration. The invitation in

the local newspaper read: “By the Grace of God, he was taken off life support

four days later and after seven days in the hospital he was released to go

home. The doctors told his parents that Brantley was a miracle. He definitely

had angels with him. Brantley should not be here today, but he is!!! We would

like to invite you to come celebrate with us!!!”

And tonight we invite you to celebrate with us as we honor Marshall County

911, Marshall County EMS, Belfast Farmington Volunteer Fire Department,

and Air Evac Lifeteam 009 as the 2017 Star of Life Award winners for

Region 6.

Director Tidwell will now present to Brantley and his family his “Certificate of

Life” that reads: “It is hereby certified and solemnly attested that Brantley

Daws survived a life-threatening event on October 29th, 2016. This certificate

commemorates the first day of the rest of your life.”