

**OUR HERO:
MARK MOSS**

Trio rescue woman from submerged car

3 converged as driver went into pond

BY GABRIEL MARGASAK
THE STUART NEWS

PALM CITY • "I don't know how to swim too much, but I knew she just had to get out of that car."

That thought ran through Port St. Lucie resident Mark Moss' mind Wednesday as a car sank deeper into a Palm City pond. The water already had reached the neck of the trapped senior citizen behind the wheel.

With two other rescuers, Jupiter resident Geoff Collins and Martin County sheriff's Deputy Jim Warren, Moss jumped in the chilly water, and they saved a life.

"It was just a good experience," said Moss, 24. "It just felt good to do it."

"I just wish if my wife or anyone else in my family ended up in a canal, someone else would do that," Collins, 32, said.

The driver, Palm City resident Marjory Stoner White, 67, escaped serious injury.

Sheriff's spokeswoman Sgt. Jenell Atlas said it was unclear why White drove into the pond at High Meadow Avenue and Martin Downs Boulevard.

White's husband, meanwhile, said he was grateful.

"I think that's damn good," Ray White said. "She would have drowned sure as hell."

The two good Samaritans recalled the harrowing ordeal:

Moss was on the way home

to Port St. Lucie from his job as a security guard in Riviera Beach. Collins was heading from home in Jupiter to work as a building contractor in Palm City.

They found themselves on High Meadow Avenue about 7:45 a.m., when a white, 1989 sedan slowly cut them off from an access road, and went straight into the pond. They said the driver looked like she was passed out.

"The door wouldn't open, and the water had submerged all the way to her neck," Moss said. "We were trying to keep the car up and put weight on the back of the car so it didn't sink further."

Collins went back to his truck to find something to break a window while talking to a Martin County 911 dispatcher. "It's going under water. We can't get to it now," Collins said on the 911 recording.

Indeed, the tool he grabbed wouldn't break the window.

The driver wasn't moving.

"She was kind of sleeping the whole time. She woke up while she was in the water, and she was still kind of disoriented," Moss said. "The water was freezing cold."

"She was just saying, 'Get me out of here,'" Collins said.

That's when Deputy Warren, 41, arrived.

Warren was able to free White from her seat belt and pull her to shore.

None of the rescuers considered himself a hero.

"It was just something I knew had to be done, and I just did it," Moss said.