

Luck's With Teen-ager in Fall 150 Feet Down Silver-Mine Shaft

CASA GRANDE — Luck of the Indian gods stayed with a California teen-ager yesterday when he tumbled 150 feet to the floor of a derelict silver mine on the Papago Reservation near here — and limped out with bruises.

Leonard Corvelli, 13, Palm Springs, was hauled back to daylight with a grazed face and hands, bruised legs, shock and fright from spending five hours in the jet-black underground.

"Thanks a lot, you guys," he told rope rescuers, then asked for a drink of water.

Last night, Corvelli was in



Corvelli

Alfred Lilienthal ASU Guest Speaker

Alfred M. Lilienthal will be guest speaker at the meeting of the International Relations Club at the Arizona State University

St. Joseph's Hospital, Phoenix, where his condition was described as "very good . . . which must be something of a miracle."

THE BOY was on a field trip to the Silver Reef Mine, 11 miles south of here on White Horse Mountain, with 10 companions from Villa Santa Cruz School, Toltec City.

Tour supervisor Bill Maitland, recreation director at the school, told the boys not to venture near shafts at the 87-year-old mine.

But according to Sgt. Minor Stephens of Pinal County sheriff's office, Corvelli decided to explore on his own and descended a 100-foot ladder to the mine's first level.

THEN, SAID Stephens, Corvelli walked 20 feet into a dark tunnel and fell into a shaft leading to the second level. The boy tobogganed down a 20-foot incline and then dropped 150 feet straight down.

Hearing rocks dislodged by the tumble, Maitland counted heads, discovered Corvelli missing, and went for rescuers

Twenty-five persons, including Papago police, Pinal County sheriff's deputies, the Pinal County Search and Rescue Squad and civilian volunteers, all under Deputy Amos Hawkins, rigged a leather saddle cinch and lowered it to Corvelli.

The boy, still conscious, was able to sit in the makeshift Jacob's ladder for the long pull to safety.



TAPESTRY PORT
Starting Tues. Feb. 27th
NO APPOINTMENT
PHOTOGRAPHER

1968 Leonard Corvelli rescued from AZ mine shaft fall



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Martinez Gets Reward For Mine Rescue Here

SELLS Papago Policeman Daniel Martinez was awarded a monetary reward and certificate here yesterday for his part in the Feb. 28, 1968 rescue of a youth who had plunged 150 feet into an abandoned mine tunnel.

It was Martinez, State Prison Sgt. Alex Cordova, and miner Waldo Gomez who spent more than four hours perched on a plank placed 100 feet above the bottom of the vertical shaft in an effort to rescue 13-year-old Leonard Corvelli. The youth had fallen into the deserted shaft while on a field trip with classmates from the Villa Santa Cruz School at Toltec.

The three took turns lifting the boy, 10 feet at a time, from the shaft.

Martinez, a Papago, was presented the Special Act Award by Joseph M. Lucero, superintendent of the Papago Agency. The award is part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Incentive Award program to recognize BIA employees efforts in their jobs.

When informed of the boy's plight, Martinez gathered rescue equipment and notified the Pinal Sheriff's office and Sells Police office of the emergency.

He then went to the Silver Reef Mine, located about three miles south of Chuichu, where the boy had fallen. It was not possible to go down all the way into the shaft to the boy, so, with the help of Cordova planks were set cross-wise on the open pit about 100 feet

down.

Rescuers then rigged a saddle cinch for a swing, other rescuers kept talking to the boy, and gave him instructions in an effort to keep him calm.

After the youth was pulled up as far as the planks, he was tied securely into a stretcher and those on top pulled him to the top, being guided by the two rescuers from below. The boy suffered only slight bruises and shock during the five hours in the mine shaft. He was taken by ambulance to a hospital and was released soon after.

"The rescue had taken about four hours of preparation, getting all equipment and getting it into place, plus about an hour to pull the boy to safety, according to June E. Frank.

1968 Leonard Corvelli rescued Daniel Martinez gets award



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