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News Release

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CARNEGIE MEDALS AWARDED TO 22 FOR EXTRAORDINARY HEROISM IN U.S., CANADA

PITTSBURGH, PA, MARCH 7, 2002—In its first award announcement of 2002, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission today named 22 individuals from throughout the United States and Canada as recipients of the CARNEGIE MEDAL. The bronze medal is given to persons who risk their lives to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others. Two of the awardees died in the performance of their heroic acts.

The heroes announced today bring to 8,580 the number of persons honored by the Commission since the Pittsburgh-based Fund's inception in 1904. Commission President Mark Laskow stated that each of the awardees or their survivors will receive also a grant of \$3,500. Throughout the 98 years since the Fund was established by industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, \$25.4 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance.

The awardees are:

Nanci J. Rutledge	Newnan, Ga.
Christopher J. Chapman, deceased	Edina, Minn.
Michael W. Green	Chepachet, R.I.
David Shaw	Cambridge, Ont.
David H. Neighbors	Olney, Ill.
Thomas J. Kopke	Grand Rapids, Mich.
Michael Connolly	Eau Claire, Wisc.
David A. Wagner	Cary, Ill.
Benjamin David Wagner	Cary, Ill.
Dara Veng	Providence, R.I.
Jean Melo	Providence, R.I.
Camen Ross Milano	Clarkston, Mich.
Christopher Bernecker	Grand Blanc, Mich.
Timothy Lee Rowe	Salisbury, N.C.
Harmon Perryman III	Mesquite, Texas
Kara Elizabeth Scott, deceased	Mitchellville, Md.
William A. Brown	Mitchellville, Md.
Kevin W. Brown	Laurel, Md.
Johnathan Hunter	Cottondale, Ala.
Salvador A. López	Glade Park, Colo.
Herbert Thompson III	Marysville, Wash.
Oliver J. Wood	Geneva, Ohio

Resumes of the acts follow. To nominate someone for the CARNEGIE MEDAL, write the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, 425 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1640, Pittsburgh, PA 15219, or call 1-800-447-8900 (toll free).

NANCI J. RUTLEDGE
Newnan, Georgia

CHRISTOPHER J. CHAPMAN, deceased
Edina, Minnesota

Nanci J. Rutledge helped to save, and Christopher J. Chapman died attempting to help save, a boy from drowning, Pensacola Beach, Florida, April 3, 2001. A 10-year-old boy was swimming with a boogie board in the Gulf of Mexico when he became caught by a strong current that took him farther from shore and kept him from returning. From the beach, Ms. Rutledge, 37, program specialist, and the boy's mother waded and swam to him. They grasped hold of the board and struggled to swim free of the current. Chapman, 44, food and beverage manager, was walking on the beach in the vicinity when he saw the situation. He immediately entered the water and also waded and swam to the boy. After the group was submerged in the breaking waves, Ms. Rutledge helped the boy and his mother regain their hold of the board, and she continued struggling to free them from the current. To help them reach safety, Ms. Rutledge pushed the boy and his mother toward shore, then, tiring, floated on her back until she was able to stand. She left the water aided by others, as did the boy and his mother. They were nearly exhausted but did not require medical treatment, and they recovered. Chapman was removed from the water by arriving rescue personnel, but he could not be revived. He had drowned. 75525-8559 / 75208-8560

MICHAEL W. GREEN
Chepachet, Rhode Island

Michael W. Green saved Christopher J. Robidoux from burning, Providence, Rhode Island, December 14, 2000. At night, Christopher, 6 months, remained in the front room on the first floor of a two-story duplex after fire broke out in an adjacent room and began to spread quickly. At his home in the neighborhood, Green, 35, carpet and flooring installer, heard yelling about the fire, then went outside and saw flames at the scene. He responded to the duplex, where he was told that Christopher and another infant were inside. Learning that Christopher was in the front room, Green broke the window of the door that opened to that room and climbed inside, where he landed between the door and a bed that had been placed against the door. Despite flames on the walls and ceiling of that room, blistering heat, and dense smoke, Green crawled in the direction of Christopher's faint cries. He found the infant and placed him under his jacket, then crawled back to the door and climbed through the window to safety. Christopher was hospitalized two days for treatment of smoke inhalation, and he recovered; the other infant died in the fire. Green sustained blisters on his forehead and palms from which he recovered. 74982-8561

DAVID SHAW
Cambridge, Ontario

David Shaw helped to save Raymond C. Haag, Jr., from burning, Cambridge, Ontario, August 27, 2000. At night, Raymond, 5, remained in his bedroom, on the upper floor of his family's house, after fire erupted on the first floor, in the enclosed back porch. Flames spread into the kitchen. Police officers, including Shaw, 45, responded to the scene. After learning that Raymond was still inside the house, Shaw and another officer entered the living room and ascended the stairs partway as smoke grew denser. Telling the other officer to remain on the stairway, Shaw crawled the remaining distance to the upper floor, where a floor-level break in the smoke permitted him to see Raymond, about 10 feet away, in the bedroom. Shaw crawled into that room, pulled Raymond off the bed, then stood and walked toward where he thought the stairway to be. Unable to see in the smoke, Shaw walked into a wall at least twice before locating the stairway. Carrying Raymond, he descended the stairway to the other officer, who then grasped him by the belt and pulled him down the stairs. They left the house safely with Raymond. Shaw and Raymond were treated at the hospital for smoke inhalation, and they recovered. 74759-8562

DAVID H. NEIGHBORS
Olney, Illinois

David H. Neighbors saved Makayla I. Klingler from burning, Olney, Illinois, January 22, 2001. Makayla, 2, was in a bed in the master bedroom of a mobile home after fire broke out in the living room. Flames spread quickly and filled the mobile home with dense smoke, preventing a woman who had fled the structure to return for Makayla. Driving nearby, Neighbors, 32, maintenance man, saw the burning mobile home and stopped at the scene, where the woman told him that Makayla was in the bedroom. Neighbors climbed through a window in the bedroom, dropped to his hands and knees, and in the dense smoke crawled along the perimeter of the room until he found Makayla, who was gasping for breath. Neighbors picked Makayla up, then stood and took her to the window, where he handed her out to the woman. Neighbors then exited the mobile home himself by climbing through the window. Makayla, who had stopped breathing, was revived at the scene, then was taken to the hospital, where she was detained two weeks for treatment of severe smoke inhalation. She recovered. Neighbors also received hospital treatment, for mild smoke inhalation and a laceration to his right hand that required sutures, and he too recovered. 75068-8563

THOMAS J. KOPKE
Grand Rapids, Michigan

MICHAEL CONNOLLY
Eau Claire, Wisconsin

DAVID A. WAGNER
BENJAMIN DAVID WAGNER
Cary, Illinois

Thomas J. Kopke, Michael Connolly, David A. Wagner, and Benjamin David Wagner saved Jacob I. MacLean from drowning, Grand Marais, Michigan, August 7, 2000. Swimming in Lake Superior, Jacob, 9, and his father encountered a strong current and high waves that prevented them from returning to shore. From a bluff overlooking the lake, Kopke, 44, salesman, saw them and alerted Connolly, 48, teacher, who was nearby. Kopke and Connolly responded to the beach with a canoe, but their attempts to launch the craft against the breakers were not successful. Having donned life jackets, Connolly taking an additional one with him, they then dived into the lake, despite its 54-degree temperature, and swam to Jacob, who was by then at least 300 feet out. Kopke reached Jacob first and supported him until Connolly arrived and put the life jacket on him. They then attempted to return to shore but became separated by the rough water. Meanwhile, David A. Wagner, 46, technical instructor, and his son, Benjamin, 17, high school student, at a campsite nearby, were alerted to the situation. They ran to the beach and, donning life jackets and taking the canoe with them for use as a flotation device, entered the water. They swam to Jacob, then, holding onto the canoe with him, returned toward shore, fighting the current and overtaking waves. They discarded the canoe near shore, and Benjamin swam Jacob to wadable water, where they were assisted from the lake, as was Wagner. Kopke and Connolly swam with difficulty toward shore and likewise were aided from the water, by others using rope. Jacob and his four rescuers were cold and tired but otherwise uninjured. His father drowned. 74822-8564 / 74821-8565 / 75081-8566 / 75082-8567

DARA VENG
JEAN MELO
Providence, Rhode Island

Dara Veng and Jean Melo rescued Michael A. and Nelson Andino from burning, Providence, Rhode Island, December 8, 2000. At night, brothers Michael, 8, and Nelson, 7, remained in the kitchen of their family's first-floor apartment after fire broke out in the living room and spread quickly. Friends Veng and Melo, both 19, were driving through the neighborhood and discovered the fire. They stopped at the scene and ran to the rear of the three-story building, where they learned that the boys were inside. Despite blistering heat, thick smoke that impeded visibility, and advancing flames, Veng entered the apartment through its back door and saw the boys in the kitchen. He advanced to them, then dragged them toward the kitchen door, but material dripping from the ceiling burned him and forced him to flee the structure. After discarding his jacket, Veng re-entered the apartment, grabbed Michael, and removed him from the building, and Nelson was likewise removed by Melo, who also had entered the apartment. Both boys were hospitalized for treatment of smoke inhalation and extensive burns. Veng and Melo required hospital treatment for smoke inhalation, and Veng sustained first- and second-degree burns, to his hands and face, that also required treatment. They recovered. Five members of a family living in the building's third-floor apartment died in the fire. 74937-8568 / 74938-8569

CAMEN ROSS MILANO
Clarkston, Michigan

CHRISTOPHER BERNECKER
Grand Blanc, Michigan

Camen Ross Milano and Christopher Bernecker rescued Emery G. Welch from burning, Clarkston, Michigan, September 27, 2000. Welch, 76, lay at one end of the hall of his one-story house after fire erupted in the living room, which was just off that end of the hall. Driving by, Milano, 34, off-duty police officer, saw smoke and flames issuing from the house, then stopped at the scene and learned that Welch was still inside. Milano entered the house through a door in the far end of the hall and, despite increasing heat and smoke inside the house, proceeded through the hall to Welch. He dragged Welch through the hall back toward the door but was repulsed by the dense smoke and intense heat and had to return outside for fresh air. Bernecker, 22, construction worker, and a coworker arrived at the scene and entered the house in a rescue attempt, but they too were repulsed by conditions. Milano and Bernecker re-entered the house and crawled through the hall to Welch. Each of them grasped Welch by an ankle and, dragging him, returned to the door. From there, the other construction worker helped to carry Welch to safety. Welch was hospitalized for treatment of smoke inhalation and internal burns. Milano received hospital treatment for smoke inhalation, and Bernecker exhibited signs of same. They recovered.

74816-8570 / 74845-8571

TIMOTHY LEE ROWE
Salisbury, North Carolina

Timothy Lee Rowe saved Marguerite H. Campbell from burning, Salisbury, North Carolina, October 13, 2000. Ms. Campbell, 53, who could not walk unaided, lay on the floor in the living room of her one-story house after fire broke out in a bedroom and filled the house with dense smoke. Working at a house across the street, Rowe, 35, live-in specialist, saw smoke and flames issuing from Ms. Campbell's house. He reported the fire, then responded to the scene, where he learned Ms. Campbell was still inside. Entering the house through the front door, he heard Ms. Campbell's cries, but he was quickly repulsed by the smoke and retreated to the front porch for fresh air. Rowe then re-entered the living room, crawling, and went in the direction of Ms. Campbell's voice and found her. He dragged her to the door and onto the porch, where arriving firefighters assisted them. Ms. Campbell was treated at the hospital for smoke inhalation, and Rowe also received hospital treatment for effects of having inhaled smoke. They recovered. 75123-8572

HARMON PERRYMAN III
Mesquite, Texas

Harmon Perryman III helped to rescue Trudy L. Walunas from burning, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, June 9, 2001. Ms. Walunas, 42, was pinned inside a burning van after an interstate highway accident in which the van and a tractor-trailer that was transporting several cars collided. Fuel tanks on both the van and the tractor-trailer were ruptured, and flames broke out at the vehicles, which remained in contact. Perryman, 36, truck driver, who was the passenger in the tractor-trailer, exited the vehicle and, shoeless, approached the passenger side of the van. Seeing Ms. Walunas inside the van, the interior of which was burning, Perryman returned to his vehicle for a fire extinguisher. Another man approached the van, opened the passenger door, and attempted to remove Ms. Walunas, but, unsuccessful, he withdrew amid deteriorating conditions. Perryman responded with the fire extinguisher and used it against the flames but to no effect. He and the other man then extended their upper bodies into the van, despite the intense heat and close flames. They grasped Ms. Walunas and pulled her from the vehicle just moments before it was engulfed by flames. Ms. Walunas was taken to the hospital, where she was detained for treatment of third-degree burns and other injuries. Perryman was also treated at the hospital, for lacerations to his left hand and a chest wall contusion. He recovered.

75389-8573

KARA ELIZABETH SCOTT, deceased
Mitchellville, Maryland

Kara Elizabeth Scott died helping attempt to save Krystyne A. Scott from suffocation, Mitchellville, Maryland, June 1, 2000. Krystyne, 9, was inside her bedroom on the second floor of her family's two-story house after fire broke out in an adjacent bedroom and filled the floor with dense smoke. From the first floor, her sister, Kara, 13, student, and the girls' father saw smoke coming down the stairway. Unaware of Krystyne's location, Kara and her father climbed to the second floor, where dense smoke precluded visibility. Kara entered Krystyne's bedroom, then called out to their father, who joined them there. Kara and the girls' father attempted to remove Krystyne from the bedroom, but Kara was overcome by smoke and collapsed, and the father collapsed at the head of the stairs. Two men from the neighborhood entered the house and removed the father but were unable to reach Kara or Krystyne. They were removed from the house by firefighters and were taken to the hospital, where Kara was pronounced dead of smoke inhalation. Krystyne died the next day.

74511-8574

WILLIAM A. BROWN
Mitchellville, Maryland

KEVIN W. BROWN
Laurel, Maryland

William A. Brown and Kevin W. Brown saved Kevin H. Scott from suffocation, Mitchellville, Maryland, June 1, 2000. Scott, 42, lay on the second floor of his two-story house, at the head of the stairs, after helping one of his daughters attempt to rescue his other daughter from her bedroom; fire had broken out in an adjacent room and filled the floor with dense smoke. William A. Brown, 57, letter carrier, and his son Kevin, 28, customer service supervisor, who lived across the street, saw smoke issuing from the house and immediately responded to the scene. They entered the house through the front door and, after searching the first floor for any occupants, climbed the stairs to the second floor, but they were repulsed by smoke and left the house for air. They entered the house a second time, climbed the stairs, and found Scott. William and Kevin grasped Scott and pulled him down the stairs to the first floor, then outside to safety. After Scott told the men that his daughters remained on the second floor, William and Kevin entered the house a third time and climbed partway up the stairs before being repulsed by deteriorating conditions. As he returned down the stairs, Kevin fell, landing on his shoulder and dislocating it. Firefighters arrived and removed the girls, but they did not survive. William and Kevin Brown showed effects of smoke inhalation, and Kevin required hospital treatment for the injury to his arm. They recovered.

75179-8575 / 74592-8576

JOHNATHAN HUNTER
Cottondale, Alabama

Johnathan Hunter rescued Steven W. Rutland from burning, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, March 26, 2001. Rutland, 47, was trapped inside a room of a building that housed an engine repair shop after fire broke out in the shop and, fueled by gasoline, grew quickly. Adjacent to the shop and opening into it, the room had a door to the outside, but the door was secured by a deadbolt. Driving by, Hunter, 29, heavy equipment operator, saw smoke and flames issuing from the building and stopped at the scene, where he learned that Rutland was still inside. Requiring two attempts, Hunter broke down the door to the room, then entered; dense smoke extending to the floor almost precluded visibility, and heat was blistering. Hunter shouted for Rutland and could hear him coughing. He proceeded to Rutland, then, after being momentarily disoriented, walked him to the door and took him outside to safety. Rutland was hospitalized for treatment, including surgery, of smoke inhalation and burns to his lungs. Hunter was treated at the hospital for first- and second-degree burns to his hands and a bruised shoulder, and he recovered.

75204-8577

SALVADOR A. LÓPEZ
Glade Park, Colorado

Salvador A. López rescued Nicholas B. Reyes from a runaway vehicle, Grand Junction, Colorado, March 5, 2001. Sitting in the driver's seat, Nicholas, 7, was the sole occupant of a car that, its engine running, was approaching the intersection of a busy, five-lane road. López, 49, a letter carrier on his rounds, was nearby, on the sidewalk, as the car approached him. After jumping out of its way, López ran to the car, which sideswiped another car and continued. Running alongside the car, he reached through the open window of the driver's door, grasped the steering wheel, and tried to reach the keys in the ignition. Failing also to open the driver's door, López entered the car headfirst through the window and pulled the car's emergency brake. The car traveled a few feet more before it impacted the rear of a van at the intersection and stopped. Nicholas had minor bruises from which he recovered. López sustained minor injury to his ribs that required medical attention and partially disabled him for about three weeks. He recovered.

75185-8578

HERBERT THOMPSON III
Marysville, Washington

Herbert Thompson III rescued Jamie R. Seltz from assault, Everett, Washington, November 1, 2000. Ms. Seltz, 48, was at work behind the counter of a convenience store when a man armed with a gun aimed the weapon at her and demanded money, then shot at her. Ms. Seltz went to the floor. A customer in the store, Thompson, 28, restaurant supervisor, witnessed the assault. Thinking that Ms. Seltz had been shot, he ran to the assailant and grasped him from behind. The assailant dropped the gun. Thompson forced the assailant out of the store and into the parking lot, where he took him to the pavement and held him for police. Ms. Seltz was not injured. Thompson sustained lacerations to a hand from which he recovered.

75499-8579

OLIVER J. WOOD
Geneva, Ohio

Oliver J. Wood rescued Jeffery E. Finehout from a runaway truck, Madison, Ohio, March 3, 2001. When Finehout, 39, emerged from the one-ton, flatbed truck that he had been driving, the truck, its engine still running, began to roll backward down a slight grade. Grasping the door handle with one hand and the steering wheel with the other, Finehout was dragged by the truck, his legs underneath it. Oliver, 17, high school student, was at work in front of a store located on the same street about 250 feet away. He saw the runaway truck approach, then ran into the street as it arrived, its speed having reached about 20 m.p.h. Oliver jumped over Finehout into the truck's cab. He pressed the brake pedal with his hand, taking the truck to a stop over the course of 118 feet. Finehout had skin abrasions and was taken to the hospital. Oliver sustained an abrasion and swelling to his knee, which he had struck against the truck while entering. He recovered.

75212-8580

CARNEGIE MEDAL



ANDREW CARNEGIE

