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News Release

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EXTRAORDINARY HEROISM BY 24 IN U.S., CANADA CITED BY CARNEGIE HERO FUND COMMISSION

PITTSBURGH, PA, SEPTEMBER 28, 2000—In its fourth award announcement of 2000, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission today named 24 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. Six of the awardees died in the performance of their heroic acts.

The heroes announced today bring to 85 the number of persons honored by the Commission in 2000 to date and to 8,426 the total number of awards made since the Pittsburgh-based Fund's inception in 1904. Commission President Robert W. Off stated that each of the awardees will receive also a grant of \$3,500. Throughout the 96 years since the Fund was established by industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, \$24.4 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance. The awardees are:

Eric A. Erwin	Moscow Mills, Mo.
Robert W. Smith	Saugus, Calif.
Herbert M. Stains	Valencia, Calif.
Sheila Marie Rose	Berlin, Md.
James Mills	Kannapolis, N.C.
Karl Wahl	Lockport, Ill.
Norman G. Hines	Richfield, Minn.
Philip Paul Rothkugel	Plainville, Conn.
Kip R. Tarrant	Bethel, Conn.
Cecil T. Brinkley	Thomasville, Ga.
Grant Sullivan, deceased	Boone, N.C.
Alan D. Wheeler, deceased	Seneca, S.C.
Thomas Passafiume, deceased	Brantford, Ont.
David Michael Calnan	Fort St. John, B.C.
Douglas Morrison	Calgary, Alta.
Timothy Guckenber	Neenah, Wisc.
Walter Kenneth LeMay	Winnipeg, Man.
Christopher M. Keif	Marshfield, Mass.
Maxim B. Sylliboy, deceased	Eskasoni, N.S.
Anastasia J. Sylliboy, deceased	Eskasoni, N.S.
Tonia E. Sylliboy	Eskasoni, N.S.
Chad Spencer Boone	Plant City, Fla.
James E. Hresko, deceased	Rochester, Pa.
Rick A. Alvarado	Hamilton, Mich.

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 (toll free) 1-800-447-8900.

ERIC A. ERWIN
Moscow Mills, Missouri

Eric A. Erwin saved Lisa L. Owsley from burning, St. Peters, Missouri, May 13, 1999. After a multi-vehicle accident on an interstate highway, Ms. Owsley, 25, was trapped inside her car, which was pinned against a concrete medial barrier by a tractor-trailer. Flames had broken out at a fuel tank on the tractor-trailer and spread quickly to that vehicle and to Ms. Owsley's car. Erwin, 37, limousine service operator, witnessed the accident while traveling on the highway. He stopped and ran to the scene. At Ms. Owsley's car, Erwin mounted the barrier and broke out the window of the car's driver's door. He then extended his upper body into the car, in which flames had spread to the back seat, and, after freeing Ms. Owsley's leg, pulled her through the window and over the barrier. Flames shortly engulfed the car, as well as the tractor, and burning fuel flowed along the highway. As Erwin was moving Ms. Owsley away from the car, two men responded and helped take her to a point of safety. Ms. Owsley required hospitalization for treatment of her injuries. Erwin, whose hair was singed, sustained lacerations to his hands, from which he recovered.

73659-8403

ROBERT W. SMITH
Saugus, California

HERBERT W. STAINS
Valencia, California

Robert W. Smith and Herbert M. Stains saved Vicky F. Eyre from burning, Santa Clarita, California, February 13, 1999. Ms. Eyre, 42, struggled to escape her Jeep after it collided with a bus and caught fire in a highway accident. She shouted for help. Smith, 41, utility supervisor, and a friend, Stains, 42, general contractor, traveling on the same highway, witnessed the accident and stopped at the scene. They ran to the Jeep, where flames were issuing from the engine compartment and spreading, precluding access to the doors. Smith and Stains went to the rear of the vehicle, where they gained access to the inside by tearing a hole in its plastic rear window. Standing on the rear bumper, they reached into the Jeep, grasped Ms. Eyre, and pulled her out of the vehicle and to the pavement. They then picked her up and carried her away from the Jeep, which was shortly engulfed by flames. Ms. Eyre required hospitalization for extensive injury.

73489-8404 / 73490-8405

SHEILA MARIE ROSE
Berlin, Maryland

Sheila Marie Rose saved Anthony J. Matreselva from drowning, Ocean City, Maryland, June 26, 1999. Matreselva, 18, and five friends waded into the Atlantic Ocean and were quickly pulled into deeper water by a rip current. They struggled to return to shore. Ms. Rose, 39, pool attendant at a nearby condominium, had seen the boys approach the water and, knowing of the existence of rip currents in that area, started to the beach to warn them. When she arrived, the boys were yelling for help. She immediately ran into the water and directed them to swim parallel to shore to get out of the current. Seeing that Matreselva was the farthest out, she swam to him, finding him just below the surface of the water, his energy sapped. When Ms. Rose seized him and took his head above the water, a brief struggle ensued. Shouting encouragement and directive, Ms. Rose grasped Matreselva by the arm and, although he outweighed her, began to tow him parallel to shore, with Matreselva kicking. After they had swum beyond the range of the rip current, Ms. Rose towed Matreselva directly to shore, where he collapsed. He was treated both at the scene and at a hospital, and he recovered. Ms. Rose was nearly exhausted, and she too recovered. The other boys all left the water safely.

73784-8406

JAMES MILLS
Kannapolis, North Carolina

James Mills saved Virgie M. Peoples from being struck by a train, Concord, North Carolina, October 11, 1999. Ms. Peoples, 71, was in the driver's seat of a car that, at a railroad crossing, became stuck on the track on which a passenger train was approaching at 65 m.p.h. From his vehicle nearby, Mills, 48, truck driver, saw Ms. Peoples attempting to exit the car. As the train bore down on the crossing, at only slightly diminished speed, Mills ran to the car, opened wide the driver's door, and pulled Ms. Peoples out. He moved her off the track then cleared it himself just seconds before the train struck the car, demolishing it, and pushed it 1,000 feet down the track. Ms. Peoples sustained a bruise to her arm, from which she recovered.

73996-8407

KARL WAHL
Lockport, Illinois

Karl Wahl saved David L. McCulley from burning, Lockport, Illinois, July 3, 1999. McCulley was the driver of a car that, before dawn, left the roadway, struck a culvert, and came to a rest upright in a yard. Fire erupted in the engine area. Another motorist, Wahl, 39, production manager, stopped at the scene and approached the car, which was filled with smoke. With difficulty, Wahl forced open the right rear passenger door, then leaned inside the car and pulled the back of the front passenger seat out of the way so that he could reach McCulley, who remained in the driver's seat. Having crawled completely inside the car as flames were spreading to the dashboard, Wahl grasped McCulley, then exited the car, pulling McCulley with him. Wahl dragged McCulley away from the burning vehicle minutes before flames engulfed its interior. McCulley required extensive medical treatment for injuries received in the accident.

73841-8408

NORMAN G. HINES
Richfield, Minnesota

Norman G. Hines saved Victoria Pankratz from being struck by a train, Verndale, Minnesota, December 7, 1999. Ms. Pankratz, 39, was attempting to cross a railroad crossing in her motorized cart when the cart stalled. She became stranded on the track on which a freight train was then seen approaching at about 60 m.p.h. A motorist, Hines, 77, retired salesman, arrived at the scene and stopped at the crossing, the gates of which were down. After seeing Ms. Pankratz's predicament, he immediately left his car and ran to her, approaching the cart from behind. Hines attempted unsuccessfully to push the cart off the track as the train bore down at undiminished speed. He then went to the front of the cart and, just as the train reached the crossing, pulled the cart from the track; in his so doing, the cart impacted him, injuring a knee. A projection of the passing train struck the rear of the cart. Regaining his footing, Hines secured the cart until the train cleared the crossing. The train stopped, its lead locomotive then more than a mile from the scene. Ms. Pankratz sustained minor injury, from which she recovered. Hines required surgery for his injured knee.

74106-8409

PHILIP PAUL ROTHKUGEL
Plainville, Connecticut

Philip Paul Rothkugel saved Luis A. Gonzalez from drowning, Farmington, Connecticut, May 30, 1999. Swimming in the Farmington River, Gonzalez, 22, struggled to stay afloat at a point about midway across, in an area of rapids. He called for help. Although he was asthmatic, Philip, 16, high school student, who was fishing from the bank at the scene, ran into the water fully clothed and swam about 125 feet to Gonzalez. When he reached Gonzalez, a struggle ensued, during which Philip was submerged and swallowed water. The current carried them downstream as Philip struggled to establish a hold on Gonzalez. When Gonzalez ceased struggling, Philip swam back to the bank with him. A man there helped Philip remove Gonzalez to the bank, where he was given medical treatment, then was taken to the hospital. He was detained overnight. Philip developed bronchitis, but he recovered. 73762-8410

KIP R. TARRANT
Bethel, Connecticut

Kip R. Tarrant rescued Elmer J. Hapken from a runaway vehicle, Georgetown, Connecticut, September 8, 1999. Hapken, 70, lost consciousness while driving an automobile on a highway under construction. The car entered the construction zone and headed toward a piece of heavy equipment parked at the site. Directing traffic at the scene, Tarrant, 42, police officer, saw the car's errant course, then saw Hapken inside the car, his head slumped over. Tarrant ran to the driver's side of Hapken's car, then ran alongside it and tried to open the driver's door. The door was locked. Tarrant dived headfirst through the open driver's window. His legs extended outside the still-moving car, Tarrant reached toward the floor and felt for the brake pedal. He applied the pedal by hand, taking the car to a stop at a point just short of the heavy equipment. Hapken and Tarrant were both taken by ambulance to the hospital, where Hapken was detained for treatment. Tarrant suffered a sprained right knee, from which he recovered. 73958-8411

CECIL T. BRINKLEY
Thomasville, Georgia

Cecil T. Brinkley saved an indeterminate number of persons from possible assault, Conyers, Georgia, May 20, 1999. A 15-year-old boy opened fire with a rifle inside the high school he attended, wounding six other students. He then fled the school and abandoned the rifle but, remaining just outside the building, produced a loaded revolver and fired it. Following the assailant, Brinkley, 60, assistant principal, exited the building and saw that the assailant was closer to another of the building's doors. Brinkley re-entered the building, approached that door, then opened it and walked toward the assailant, urging him repeatedly to hand over the gun. The assailant did so when Brinkley reached him. Brinkley unloaded then secured the weapon as other school personnel detained the assailant for police, who arrived shortly. All of the wounded students survived. 73654-8412

GRANT SULLIVAN, deceased
Boone, North Carolina

Grant Sullivan died helping to save Feather M. Osborn from drowning, Saugatuck, Michigan, August 6, 1999. Feather, 8, was swimming in Lake Michigan when she began to struggle in rough water. Two great-uncles who were swimming nearby observed her difficulty and swam to her, but, nearly exhausted, they were taken farther from shore, as was Feather. From the beach, Feather's uncle, Sullivan, 31, baker, entered the water, swam to her, and established a hold on her. Feather's great-aunt also entered the water and swam out to her; by then, Feather was closer to shore and Sullivan had submerged. The great-aunt took Feather to wadable water, from which she returned safely to shore. The great-aunt and great-uncles also reached shore safely. Sullivan was recovered from the lake by a lifeguard, but he could not be revived. He had drowned.

73873-8413

ALAN D. WHEELER, deceased
Seneca, South Carolina

Alan D. Wheeler died attempting to save Haley B. Hendrix from electrocution, Seneca, South Carolina, August 14, 1999. Haley, 9, swam to her family's boat dock in Lake Keowee and received an electrical shock when she touched the dock. She lost consciousness in the water. Due to an electrical malfunction, the metal portion of the floating dock had been charged. Two teenage girls in her party swam toward her, and one of them also received a shock. Those girls then screamed for help, attracting the attention of Wheeler, 73, retired military officer and university professor, who was at his neighboring dock. Wheeler responded to the scene by boat, then entered the water and approached the dock, although he was alerted to the presence of the electrical charge by the girls. Wheeler made contact with the dock and also received an electric shock. Another man who then responded to the scene removed Haley from the water and worked to revive her. She required hospitalization for treatment of her injuries, and she survived. Wheeler was recovered shortly from the water, but he could not be revived. He had been electrocuted.

73874-8414

THOMAS PASSAFIUME, deceased
Brantford, Ontario

Thomas Passafiume died helping to save a 13-year-old girl and a 36-year-old woman from drowning, Port Maitland, Ontario, July 7, 1999. Swimming in Lake Erie, the girl was drawn farther from shore into water beyond her depth, and a strong undertow prevented her from returning. The woman responded to her from the beach, but she too was caught by the undertow, and she and the girl were separated by waves. A member of their party, Passafiume, 58, retired benefits coordinator, was alerted from nearby. Removing his shirt and shoes, he immediately entered the water and swam out to the girl. He grasped her and twice pushed her toward shore, then went to the woman and started to push her in. Two other persons responded to the girl with a raft and took her to the beach, and the woman swam there on her own. Passafiume was next seen floating near shore. He was removed from the lake by others but could not be revived, as he had drowned.

73791-8415

DAVID MICHAEL CALNAN
Fort St. John, British Columbia

David Michael Calnan rescued Carrie-Lynne Fair from an attacking bear, Dawson City, Yukon, July 9, 1999. Standing outside their tents in a campground, Ms. Fair, 19, and a friend were approached by a black bear, which then charged Ms. Fair and began to maul her. The friend fled, alerting help at another campground several hundred feet away. Calnan, 45, landscaper, who was working there, responded to the scene. Approaching to within 20 feet of where the bear was continuing to maul Ms. Fair, Calnan threw blocks of wood at the bear to scare it away. Thus incited, the bear charged him twice, each time approaching to within a few feet before returning to Ms. Fair and dragging her farther away. Calnan picked up a four-foot log and approached the bear, which was straddling Ms. Fair. He struck the bear with the log repeatedly, forcing the bear to retreat about 100 feet, from which distance it circled Calnan and Ms. Fair a few times. The bear remained in the vicinity until a police officer, arriving with other emergency personnel, provided a rifle with which Calnan fired at the bear. Evacuated from the scene, Ms. Fair required extensive hospitalization for treatment of severe injuries. 74025-8416

DOUGLAS MORRISON
Calgary, Alberta

Douglas Morrison saved Robert L. Moyer from burning, Kincaid, Saskatchewan, November 8, 1999. Moyer, 62, lay unconscious on the front seat of his car after a highway accident in which the car left the highway, rolled down an embankment, and came to rest upright at the edge of a plowed field. Flames broke out in the car's exposed engine area. Driving on the same highway, Morrison, 50, security manager, and his wife came upon the scene and saw the burning car. They stopped, and Morrison immediately responded to the car. Unable to open the front passenger door, he went to the driver's door, which he could open. He entered the car and, straddling Moyer, freed his head and arm from underneath the dashboard. Morrison exited the car, then, despite flames entering its interior, leaned back inside. He grasped Moyer by his attire and pulled him from the car, the interior of which then became aflame. Another man arrived and helped Morrison to move Moyer farther away from the car, which was shortly engulfed by fire. Flames reached also the dry grass on the embankment next to the car and spread in both directions along the highway. Moyer required hospitalization for treatment of extensive injury, from which he recovered. 74108-8417

TIMOTHY GUCKENBERG
Neenah, Wisconsin

Timothy Guckenbergsaved a man from drowning, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, May 20, 1999. A 39-year-old man waded into the Chippewa River, then called for help after stepping into deeper water and submerging briefly. Guckenbergs, 21, college student, was crossing the river on a footbridge in the vicinity and saw the man, then about 130 feet from the closer bank. Guckenbergs immediately ran from the bridge to that bank and waded into the river, which was swift and swollen from recent rains. Guckenbergs swam out to the man, who was semiconscious by then, and grasped him. He swam back to the bank with him, the current carrying them downstream about 150 feet, then helped him from the water. Guckenbergs and the man were taken to the hospital, where Guckenbergs was treated for mild hypothermia. He recovered. 74325-8418

WALTER KENNETH LEMAY
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Walter Kenneth LeMay saved a woman from drowning, Winnipeg, Manitoba, October 2, 1999. In a suicide attempt, a 54-year-old woman leapt from a bridge into the Red River and was quickly carried downstream by the swift current. LeMay, 36, pilot, was visiting at a house along the river when he was alerted to the situation. LeMay ran to the river, doffing his boots as he did so, and immediately waded into the 50-degree water and swam about 200 feet to the woman, who was in midstream. As he neared her, LeMay spoke to the woman, but she replied that she did not want his assistance, and she attempted to swim away. LeMay approached the woman from behind and grasped the back of her jacket. He began to swim with her back to the bank as both were pulled downstream by the current, the woman continuing a weak attempt to break away from LeMay during part of their course. As they neared the bank, other men waded into the water and assisted them from the river. The woman was taken from the scene by boat, then was taken to a hospital, where she was detained two days for treatment of hypothermia and bruises. She recovered. LeMay was cold and tired, but he also recovered. 74006-8419

CHRISTOPHER M. KEIF
Marshfield, Massachusetts

Christopher M. Keif saved Robert Garmony from drowning, Plymouth, Massachusetts, November 23, 1999. Garmony, 51, was found in the 50-degree water of Plymouth Harbor, off the Atlantic Ocean, at high tide by a woman walking on shore. The woman left for help and alerted Keif, 30, general contractor, who was in his vehicle parked nearby. Keif ran to the harbor and saw Garmony bobbing up and down in the water about 45 feet out. Fully dressed, Keif immediately entered the water and swam to Garmony, who by then had submerged. He grasped Garmony, pulled him to the surface, and swam him to shore. Garmony was taken to the hospital for treatment. Keif was cold after the rescue but uninjured. 74112-8420

MAXIM B. SYLLIBOY, deceased
ANASTASIA J. SYLLIBOY, deceased
TONIA E. SYLLIBOY
Eskasoni, Nova Scotia

Maxim B. Sylliboy and Anastasia J. Sylliboy died helping to save, and Tonia E. Sylliboy helped to save, Dexter C. M. Johnson and John D. Doucette, Jr., from drowning, Eskasoni, Nova Scotia, July 15, 1999. Dexter, 11, and John, 7, were swimming in East Bay of Bras d'Or Lake when they were caught by a strong current, which took them farther into the lake. Struggling against the current, they shouted for help. Nearby on the beach, Maxim, 53, carpenter and bricklayer, and his daughter Tonia, 30, college student, saw the situation. Fully clothed but for his shoes, Maxim entered the lake and swam to the boys, then grasped them and attempted to keep them at the surface of the water. Maxim's cousin's daughter, Anastasia, 19, high school student, who had been on the beach nearby, entered the lake and swam to Maxim and the boys, who had by then submerged. She dived and surfaced with Dexter, and Maxim retrieved John. As Maxim and Anastasia attempted to keep the boys at the surface of the water, all four were carried farther into the lake. Tonia, who was pregnant, then entered the water with a child's foam toy and swam out to the four. Having the boys secure a hold on the toy, Tonia swam, with difficulty, to shore, towing them. They left the water safely, but by then, Maxim and Anastasia had submerged. Arriving emergency personnel located first Anastasia, then Maxim, and removed them from the lake. Anastasia was taken to the hospital, but she could not be revived. Maxim also had drowned. Tonia was hospitalized overnight for treatment of complications to her pregnancy, but she recovered.

73825-8421 / 73826-8422 / 74284-8423

CHAD SPENCER BOONE
Plant City, Florida

Chad Spencer Boone saved Patricia A. Sisson from burning, Covington, Virginia, November 25, 1999. Ms. Sisson, 52, remained inside her car after it left the roadway and lay overturned on its passenger side at the bottom of a ravine. A passenger in another car, Boone, 28, operations manager, witnessed the accident. He ran to the edge of the ravine, where he saw small flames issuing from the underside of Ms. Sisson's car. After Ms. Sisson called out, Boone climbed to the bottom of the ravine. He stood beside the car's roof, peered over into the rear window on its driver's side, and saw Ms. Sisson in the back-seat area. Boone reached up to open the rear door on that side of the car, but it was jammed shut. He then climbed atop the car and, despite a sudden increase in flames, reached through the rear window, which was missing, grasped Ms. Sisson about the arms, and pulled her out. Boone then helped Ms. Sisson off the car and up the embankment to the top of the ravine. The car was engulfed by flames within minutes. Ms. Sisson was taken to the hospital for treatment, and Boone sustained a cut to his left leg, from which he recovered.

74088-8424

JAMES E. HRESKO, deceased
Rochester, Pennsylvania

James E. Hresko died after attempting to rescue Edward G. Bender from burning, Rochester, Pennsylvania, December 4, 1999. Bender, 81, was alone in his two-story house after fire broke out in its kitchen, on the first floor. At work in an establishment adjoining the scene, Hresko, 54, bartender, was alerted to the fire by a passerby. He immediately responded to Bender's front porch, where he attempted to kick in the front door. Unsuccessful, he kicked out a window in the door, then reached inside and unlocked the door. Crouching, Hresko made his way a few feet into the house before being forced back out by thick, black smoke in the living room. Hresko left the porch to find a hose but returned momentarily without one. He entered the house again, disappearing into the smoke. Arriving firefighters found him unconscious on the floor of the living room and removed him from the house. Firefighters also found Bender, in the kitchen, but he had died of smoke inhalation. Hresko was taken to the hospital, where he died the following day, also of smoke inhalation.

74076-8425

RICK A. ALVARADO
Hamilton, Michigan

Rick A. Alvarado rescued Laura E. Hamm from burning, Holland, Michigan, August 11, 1999. Laura, 14, and three young male cousins were in a ground-level apartment after fire broke out in the unit's living room. Alvarado, 42, maintenance supervisor for the apartment complex, responded to the apartment after seeing smoke issuing from it. Hearing the boys crying inside one of the bedrooms, he broke out the bedroom window, reached inside, and removed the boys to safety. Learning from the boys that Laura was still inside the apartment and assuming that she might be in the other bedroom, Alvarado went to the window of that room and broke it out. He shouted Laura's name and heard her crying, then climbed into the smoke-filled room and, crouching, searched for her, having to return to the window repeatedly for air. Alvarado found Laura on the floor near the bedroom door, then, backing, dragged her to the window and removed her through it to safety. Laura required hospitalization for treatment of extensive burns. Alvarado was treated at a hospital later that day for minor smoke inhalation, from which he recovered.

73861-8426

CARNEGIE MEDAL



ANDREW CARNEGIE

