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## *News Release*

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FOR RELEASE:  
September 25, 2003

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### **CARNEGIE MEDALS AWARDED TO 17 FOR EXTRAORDINARY HEROISM IN U.S., CANADA**

PITTSBURGH, PA, SEPTEMBER 25, 2003—In its fourth award announcement of 2003, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission today named 17 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. Three of the awardees died in the performance of their heroic acts.

Among those cited was Carolyn M. Kelly of Shreveport, La., who, on Sept. 1, 2002, helped to save a woman from drowning in a pond on the grounds of the retirement community where the women lived. Then 81, Ms. Kelly becomes the oldest woman ever to be awarded the Carnegie Medal.

The heroes announced today bring to 83 the number of persons honored in 2003 to date and to 8,749 the total number of persons who have been recognized 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 99 years since the Fund was established by industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, \$26.7 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance. The awardees are:

Daniel P. Lennon	Cooper City, Fla.
Frank White, Sr.	Summersville, W. Va.
Evangelos Dimotsantos	Las Vegas, Nev.
William J. Stevens, Jr., deceased	Roslyn, Pa.
Robert James Taylor, deceased	Box Elder, Mont.
Jason Paul Gordon	Brunswick, Md.
Barry Schafer	Dalhart, Texas
Marguerite Zachary	Dallas, Ore.
Markham D. Bunnah	Calgary, Alta.
Shane Douglas Burger	Pavilion, N.Y.
Rodney Lee Venice, deceased	Fenton, Mo.
William J. Gibb	Mississauga, Ont.
Carolyn M. Kelly	Shreveport, La.
Gabriel Gherle	Sacramento, Calif.
Joel J. Schuneman	Dearborn, Mich.
Robert Donald Perry	Dearborn, Mich.
George W. Haas	Langenburg, Sask.

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). Fuller information on the CARNEGIE MEDAL and the history of the CARNEGIE HERO FUND COMMISSION can be found at [www.carnegiehero.org](http://www.carnegiehero.org) 03-4

**DANIEL P. LENNON**  
Cooper City, Florida

Daniel P. Lennon saved Shameeza K. Ishahak from drowning, Cooper City, Florida, April 25, 2002. Ms. Ishahak, 34, who could not swim, remained inside her sport utility vehicle after it left the roadway, entered a canal, and began to sink. Lennon, 18, high school student, who was a passenger in a vehicle nearby on the same road, responded to the scene. Removing his outer attire, he entered the canal and swam to Ms. Ishahak's vehicle, which was starting to sink nose first in the 15-foot-deep water. Using a tool he had taken with him, and then his fist, Lennon broke out the window of the front passenger door. He reached through the window and pulled Ms. Ishahak from the vehicle, then swam her to the opposite bank, which was closer. Ms. Ishahak and Lennon sustained minor injury from which they recovered.

76039-8733

**FRANK WHITE, SR.**  
Summersville, West Virginia

Frank White, Sr., saved Jennifer D. Yagel from burning, Summersville, West Virginia, March 2, 2002. At night, Jennifer, 14, was trapped and unconscious in the back-seat area of a car after an accident in which the car left the roadway, struck a tree head on, and caught fire. White, 42, who lived nearby, was alerted to the accident. He responded to the scene and entered the car through the rear door on its passenger side. Although disabled by physical conditions that restricted his activity, he grasped Jennifer and pulled repeatedly to free her, as her legs were pinned. Flames entering the car were impinging on the driver, who was Jennifer's brother, and White attempted to extinguish them. Then successful in freeing Jennifer, White pulled her from the car. His further efforts to extract her brother were thwarted by deteriorating conditions, forcing him to withdraw. Jennifer was hospitalized 17 days for treatment of severe injuries, and her brother died at the scene. White sustained minor burns to his arms, and he recovered.

76579-8734

**EVANGELOS DIMOTSANTOS**  
Las Vegas, Nevada

Evangelos Dimotsantos rescued Julie M. Deperini and Jason M. Jones from burning, Las Vegas, Nevada, July 21, 2002. Ms. Deperini, 22, was in the front passenger seat, and Jones, 24, in the driver's seat, of a car that, in an accident on an interstate highway at night, left the roadway, struck a tree and a fence, and caught fire. Flames spread, entering the vehicle. Driving on the highway, Dimotsantos, 43, limousine driver, saw the fire and stopped at the scene. He approached the passenger side of the burning car, where Ms. Deperini was emerging head first through the door window. Dimotsantos grasped her and pulled her the rest of the way out. After setting her on the ground away from the car, he returned to it and, despite flames on the front seats, reached his arms through the window and grasped Jones. He pulled Jones through the window and set him on the ground, then moved Ms. Deperini and Jones farther away from the car. The vehicle was destroyed by the flames. Ms. Deperini and Jones required hospitalization for treatment of burns, including second-degree, and other injury.

76262-8735

**WILLIAM J. STEVENS, JR., deceased**  
Roslyn, Pennsylvania

William J. Stevens, Jr., died helping to save Paul E. Weidman from drowning, Long Pond, Pennsylvania, July 7, 2002. Paul, 15, and his uncle, Stevens, 32, letter carrier, were in separate kayaks on East Emerald Lake when Paul fell from his craft and into the water. He struggled to stay afloat. From nearby, Stevens left his kayak and swam to Paul, then grasped him. They struggled as a woman with an inflated raft swam toward them. After pushing Paul toward safety, Stevens submerged. The woman helped Paul atop the raft, and he made his way to the bank, but she could not locate Stevens. Divers recovered him within the hour; he had drowned.

76250-8748

**ROBERT JAMES TAYLOR**, deceased  
Box Elder, Montana

Robert James Taylor died attempting to save Ira V. Moreno from drowning, Box Elder, Montana, May 27, 2002. Moreno, 28, and another man were fishing from a rowboat on the Bonneau Reservoir, about 225 feet from shore, when the boat capsized, sending both into the cold, 18-foot-deep water. Although the other man swam to shore, Moreno clung to the overturned boat and called for help. Police were alerted, and Taylor, 43, was one of the officers who responded. He entered the water and began to swim toward the boat, but, just short of it, he submerged. Others reached Moreno and took him to shore. He required hospital treatment for hypothermia, and he recovered. Taylor's body was found two days later, in the vicinity of the reservoir at which he was last seen; he had drowned. 76172-8738

**JASON PAUL GORDON**  
Brunswick, Maryland

Jason Paul Gordon saved Nancy A. Hay from burning, Knoxville, Maryland, January 19, 2002. Ms. Hay, 46, was trapped in her car after an accident on a snowy highway in which the car struck and mounted a guide rail, rupturing its fuel tank, then caught fire. Traveling behind her, Gordon, 27, salesman, witnessed the accident. He stopped at the scene. As flames blocked access to the car's driver's door, Gordon struck its windshield repeatedly with his fists, then with a shovel provided by another motorist. He created a hole in the windshield, then enlarged it, reached into the car, and grasped Ms. Hay. He pulled her through the hole and from the car. Flames filled the car's interior. Ms. Hay required hospital treatment for minor injury, and Gordon sustained cuts to his hands, from which he recovered. 75835-8736

**BARRY SCHAFER**  
Dalhart, Texas

Barry Schafer helped to rescue Gerald D. McElroy from burning, Dalhart, Texas, June 26, 2002. McElroy, 63, remained inside the cab of the tractor-trailer he had been driving, after a head-on collision with another vehicle. He lay on the floor, unable to move, as flames entered the cab through the floor. Schafer, 19, lawn care service provider, who lived nearby, heard the accident and responded to the scene, where he learned from two other men who had arrived that McElroy remained in the burning cab. Despite dense smoke inside the cab, Schafer entered it through the passenger door and pulled McElroy from the floor to the passenger seat. While Schafer pushed McElroy from the cab, one of the other men aided from outside it, then Schafer and the other men took McElroy away from the truck. Flames shortly engulfed the cab. McElroy was hospitalized for third-degree burns to his right leg. 76496-8737

**MARGUERITE ZACHARY**  
Dallas, Oregon

Marguerite Zachary helped to rescue Charlotte J. Woods from assault, Dallas, Oregon, September 24, 2002. Ms. Woods, 59, was in the courtyard of the apartment complex she managed when a male resident of the complex shot her repeatedly. Another resident, Ms. Zachary, 74, retired licensed practical nurse, was in her apartment about 60 feet away when she heard the gunfire. She saw Ms. Woods lying bloodied in the courtyard and responded to her to provide medical attention. As she neared Ms. Woods, she saw the assailant on the balcony of his second-floor unit, about 30 feet away. The assailant fired again at Ms. Woods, striking her, as Ms. Zachary knelt to tend her. Ms. Zachary then lay next to Ms. Woods and over the course of several minutes, or until police arrived, provided comfort. Told by police to seek cover, Ms. Zachary crawled to the nearest apartment. An officer then removed Ms. Woods from the scene. The assailant was arrested after a five-hour standoff with police. Ms. Woods required hospitalization for treatment of numerous gunshot wounds. 76401-8739

**MARKHAM D. BUNNAH**  
Calgary, Alberta

Markham D. Bunnah saved a man from drowning, Calgary, Alberta, May 20, 2001. While walking his bicycle across a railroad bridge, a man fell into the cold, swift water of the Bow River at a point about 120 feet from the closer bank. Bunnah, 38, project manager, had been walking along that bank and witnessed the accident. As the man was being carried downstream, toward the turbulent water of a weir about 1,200 feet from the bridge, Bunnah ran to a point on the bank beyond him, then, shedding his shoes and jacket, entered the river and swam to him. He grasped the man and swam toward the bank, Bunnah tiring en route as the current pulled them downstream. Nearing the bank, Bunnah stood, cradled the man in his arms, and waded the rest of the way in. Others helped to remove the man from the river, Bunnah following. The man was taken to the hospital for treatment of minor injury. 76510-8740

**SHANE DOUGLAS BURGER**  
Pavilion, New York

Shane Douglas Burger rescued Christine E. Flint from burning, Stafford, New York, July 17, 2002. Ms. Flint, 18, was unconscious in the driver's seat of her car after a highway accident in which the car struck the side rear of a tractor-trailer and, its front end wedged under the trailer, caught fire. Traveling behind the tractor-trailer, Burger, 27, restaurant manager, witnessed the accident. He stopped at the scene, approached the vehicles, and, seeing Ms. Flint in the car, attempted to open the driver's door. Despite flames on the rear of the trailer and the front end and roof of the car, he then leaned through the window of the driver's door and attempted to move Ms. Flint, who still was wearing her safety belt. He withdrew from the car because of the heat and smoke, then re-entered after Ms. Flint roused and released her safety belt. Although flames by then had spread to the front passenger seat, Burger leaned into the car again, grasped Ms. Flint, and pulled her through the window to safety. Flames shortly engulfed the car. Ms. Flint was treated at the hospital for minor burns to her legs and other injury. Burger sustained lacerations to his arms and minor smoke inhalation; he recovered. 76301-8741

**RODNEY LEE VENICE, deceased**  
Fenton, Missouri

Rodney Lee Venice died rescuing Suzanne R. Gibson from assault, Sunset Hills, Missouri, November 19, 2000. Ms. Gibson, 30, was conversing with a man outside his vehicle, which was parked in a commuter lot. During an ensuing argument, the man produced a metal object and struck her repeatedly with it. She fell to the pavement and yelled for help. Venice, 43, was the driver of a taxicab that was parked nearby in the lot. He drove toward the scene, then exited his vehicle and ran to the assailant and Ms. Gibson, yelling for the assailant to leave Ms. Gibson alone. Venice then pulled the assailant away from Ms. Gibson, allowing her to regain her footing, then flee in her vehicle, which was parked nearby. As Ms. Gibson drove from the scene, the assailant fired a handgun at her, then at Venice, striking him three times. The assailant fled in his vehicle but was captured weeks later. Ms. Gibson required hospitalization for treatment of her injuries. Venice died at the scene. 74970-8742

**WILLIAM J. GIBB**  
Mississauga, Ontario

William J. Gibb saved Ludmila Vavryshchuk from assault, Toronto, Ontario, November 20, 2000. Ms. Vavryshchuk, 36, was an attendant in the doughnut shop owned and managed by Gibb, 59, when, late at night, two teen-age boys entered the shop to rob it. The boys produced knives, and one of them jumped over the counter and ordered Ms. Vavryshchuk to open the cash register. She struggled to do so. In the adjoining kitchen, Gibb heard shouting coming from the shop and, looking through the kitchen door, saw one of the assailants holding Ms. Vavryshchuk at knifepoint. After calling police, Gibb ran into the shop, pulled the assailant away from her, then struggled against the assailant to disarm him. The assailant stabbed Gibb once, in the back, then, taking the cash register, he and his accomplice fled. Gibb required hospitalization for treatment, including surgery, of his injuries. The boys were apprehended later.

75027-8743

**CAROLYN M. KELLY**  
Shreveport, Louisiana

Carolyn M. Kelly helped to save Nina M. Hutchinson from drowning, Shreveport, Louisiana, September 1, 2002. The car in which Ms. Hutchinson, 83, was a passenger entered a small pond and began to sink in water about 11 feet deep. She exited the car and struggled to stay afloat in the center of the pond, about 50 feet from the bank. Ms. Kelly, 81, retired medical technologist, heard the accident from her nearby home and, after notifying authorities, responded to the scene. Recognizing Ms. Hutchinson and seeing her difficulty, Ms. Kelly removed her outer attire, entered the pond, and swam to her. She grasped Ms. Hutchinson and moved to the submerging car, where she supported Ms. Hutchinson as she held to the car. Firefighters began to arrive within minutes, and one of them entered the pond and swam to the women. He took Ms. Hutchinson to the bank, Ms. Kelly following. Ms. Hutchinson was admitted to the hospital, where she died the following day.

76330-8744

**GABRIEL GHERLE**  
Sacramento, California

Gabriel Gherle rescued Ricardo B. Monteiro from burning, Sacramento, California, January 18, 2002. Ricardo, 3, was unconscious in a bedroom of his family's one-story house after fire broke out in the living room. Working in the neighborhood, Gherle, 25, construction worker, saw smoke and responded to the scene, where he learned that Ricardo was still in the burning house. He broke out a window at the front of the house and entered but did not find Ricardo in that smoke-filled room. Exiting through the window, Gherle went to the back of the house, where a neighbor had just removed Ricardo's sister through a window of the back bedroom. Wetting himself down with a garden hose, Gherle went through the window, finding that bedroom also filled with smoke. He searched the room on his hands and knees and found Ricardo unconscious on the floor. Gherle wet Ricardo down with the hose, then returned to the window with him and climbed out. He handed Ricardo over to arriving rescue personnel. Ricardo was hospitalized eight days for treatment of smoke inhalation, and he recovered. Gherle also inhaled smoke but recovered later that day.

75844-8745

**JOEL J. SCHUNEMAN**  
**ROBERT DONALT PERRY**  
Dearborn, Michigan

Joel J. Schuneman and Robert Donalt Perry rescued Robert C. and Deanna M. Boer from burning, Dearborn, Michigan, July 16, 2002. Boer and his wife, both 34, were in their two-story house when an explosion of leaking natural gas occurred in the basement and severely burned them. A neighbor, Schuneman, 40, communications engineer, was arriving home after work about then and was alerted to the explosion, as was another neighbor, Perry, 38, automotive plant supervisor. Both men immediately ran to the house, which had been structurally compromised and from which basement flames were issuing through the windows. Escaping gas was continuing to burn as they entered the house, Schuneman through the front door after kicking it in and Perry through a window in the living room. While Perry approached Boer, who was on a couch in the living room, and dragged him to the front door, Schuneman proceeded into the kitchen, where he saw Ms. Boer emerge from the basement stairway. Schuneman guided Ms. Boer toward the living room before turning to search the house for other occupants. Returning to the living room, he helped Perry take Boer to the front lawn, Ms. Boer likewise removed to the safety of that point. Boer and his wife required hospitalization for treatment of extensive burns. Schuneman and Perry inhaled smoke, and they recovered. 76396-8746 / 76395-8747

**GEORGE W. HAAS**  
Langenburg, Saskatchewan

George W. Haas saved Glen A. Pattison and David G. Robertson from drowning, Kamsack, Saskatchewan, November 8, 2001. Pattison, 43, and Robertson, 58, were passengers in the cab of a pickup truck that was being driven by another man on a narrow, snow-covered road in a provincial park. The men had offered a ride to Haas, 59, farmer and retired miner, whose vehicle was a mile distant, and Haas was in the bed of the truck. The pickup slid from the roadway, then went down a steep bank, overturning, and broke through the ice of a frozen beaver pond at the base of the bank. It landed upside down in the pond, its passenger side about five feet from the bank, trapping Haas under the bed and the three other men in the partially submerged cab. Haas attempted unsuccessfully to open the pickup's tailgate, then he submerged and went head first under the edge of the bed to clear the truck. When he tried to surface in the pond, he found that he was under solid ice. Striking the ice repeatedly until it broke, he surfaced to realize that the other men were still in the cab. Although he had taken in water and was in pain and nearly exhausted, Haas made his way to the passenger side of the truck and, with difficulty, opened the door. He pulled Pattison from the cab and helped Robertson out. The three men then extracted the driver, who was unconscious, and took him to the bank, where they tended him. Haas left the scene to alert help, then was taken to the hospital, where he was detained overnight for treatment of having nearly drowned. Pattison sustained bruises but did not require treatment, and Robertson required medical attention for his injuries. The driver did not survive. 76391-8749

CARNEGIE MEDAL



ANDREW CARNEGIE

