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News Release

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

PITTSBURGH, PA, DECEMBER 17, 1998—In its fifth and final award announcement of 1998, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission today named 18 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. Five of the awardees died in the performance of their heroic acts.

The heroes announced today bring to 88 the number of persons awarded in 1998, and to 8,239 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 or their survivors will receive also a grant of \$3,000. Throughout the 94 years since the Fund was established by industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, \$23.2 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance.

The awardees are:

Charles E. Britt	Norfolk, Va.
William Norman Moreau	Penetanguishene, Ont.
Kimberly Kai Stamper, deceased	Juniata, Neb.
Jay Van Conner, deceased	Chattanooga, Tenn.
Henry Paul Silberman	Waverly Hall, Ga.
Brian Toshio Sanders, deceased	San Carlos, Calif.
Dennis Joos, deceased	Stewartstown, N.H.
Teresina Batikayo	London, Ont.
John D. Kaiser	Bermuda Dunes, Calif.
Roger Davis	Macon, Ga.
Jerome Michael Holland	Halifax, N.S.
Raymond Wywadis, Jr.	Mount Carmel, Pa.
Eric Steven Martins, deceased	Fall River, Mass.
Charles Woodbridge	Modesto, Calif.
Murray Richard Baltus	Fernie, B.C.
Brian David Birk	Azusa, Calif.
Homer Evans	Coleman, Fla.
Ignacio Donan	Tulare, Calif.

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.

CHARLES E. BRITT
Norfolk, Virginia

Charles E. Britt saved Justin O. Dutton from burning, Norfolk, Virginia, November 3, 1997. Justin, 5, was in a first-floor bedroom of his family's house after fire broke out in the attached garage at night. A neighbor, Britt, 73, retired fire captain, was alerted to the fire by Justin's mother, who told him that Justin remained in the house. Britt ran to the burning house and stepped into the living room, where dense smoke precluded visibility. As Justin's father maintained voice contact with Justin, Britt, crouching, made his way to the bedroom. He found Justin and grasped him, then retraced his path to the front door as flames were breaking into the house from the garage. Three other people in the house died in the fire. Justin was treated at the scene for mild smoke inhalation. 72260-8222

WILLIAM NORMAN MOREAU
Penetanguishene, Ontario

William Norman Moreau rescued Tracy D. Grenier from burning, Waverley, Ontario, September 20, 1997. Ms. Grenier, 19, remained in the car in which she was a passenger after the car left the roadway at night, struck a stone monument, and broke into flame. Moreau, 28, business operator, drove upon the scene shortly and ran to the driver's side of the burning car. Black smoke issued from the car, preventing Moreau from seeing inside. He leaned through the window of the driver's door, then groped and found Ms. Grenier. He grasped her and pulled her, with difficulty, through the window, then patted out flames on her attire and dragged her away from the car. Moreau returned to the car to aid the three others inside, but he was driven back by intense flames which shortly engulfed the car. Ms. Grenier required lengthy hospitalization for severe burns and other injury. Moreau sustained burns, including second-degree, to his hands, requiring hospital treatment. He recovered. 72121-8223

KIMBERLY KAI STAMPER, deceased
Juniata, Nebraska

Kimberly Kai Stamper died attempting to save Robert C. Nimocks from drowning, Juniata, Nebraska, June 11, 1997. Robert, 17, was swimming across Prairie Lake when he began to struggle and yell for help. Ms. Stamper, 31, truck driver, one of the adults in his party on the bank, entered the water and waded and swam about 165 feet to him. They struggled and submerged but resurfaced. Another adult member of the party entered the water and swam to Robert, but Robert struggled against him, also. That man broke away and returned to the bank, but Ms. Stamper and Robert submerged a final time. They drowned. 72169-8224

JAY VAN CONNER, deceased
Chattanooga, Tennessee

Jay Van Conner died attempting to save Isaiah P. Conner from drowning, Chattanooga, Tennessee, October 5, 1997. Isaiah, 3, was fishing with his grandmother and other family members from barges moored along the bank of the Tennessee River when he fell into the water. Fishing nearby, his uncle, Conner, 22, laborer, immediately responded. Conner dived into the river, swam to Isaiah, and started to take him to safety. Conner began to struggle in the water, then yelled for help and pushed Isaiah toward the bank. Both Conner and Isaiah submerged. Boaters responding to the scene located and recovered Conner then attempted resuscitation, but he could not be revived and was pronounced dead of drowning after being taken to a hospital. Isaiah likewise was found by boaters. He too was taken to a hospital, but he also died of drowning, several hours later. 72152-8239

HENRY PAUL SILBERMAN
Waverly Hall, Georgia

Henry Paul Silberman saved Evelyn M. Clegg and Geraldine M. Culpepper from burning, Waverly Hall, Georgia, September 20, 1997. Ms. Clegg, 63, and her sister, Ms. Culpepper, 60, were inside Ms. Clegg's one-story home when, in early morning, propane gas that had leaked into the house exploded and set fire to the structure. Ms. Clegg attempted to flee the house, but debris blocked the front door; Ms. Culpepper, who was visiting, was disoriented, and she screamed from a bedroom near the front door. A neighbor, Silberman, 42, manufacturing technician, witnessed the explosion and immediately ran to the scene. He dislodged the debris from the front door then pulled Ms. Clegg to safety. Despite flames quickly consuming the house, Silberman entered through the front door, located Ms. Culpepper in the bedroom, which was aflame, and pulled her to the front door. They exited the house to safety minutes before the house was engulfed by fire. Ms. Clegg and two others who also had escaped the house received hospital treatment for burns. 72167-8225

BRIAN TOSHIO SANDERS, deceased
San Carlos, California

Brian Toshio Sanders died attempting to save Brian T. Pearce from drowning, Overton, Nevada, May 17, 1997. After Pearce, 22, jumped from a ledge of the cliffs forming Cathedral Cove on the Overton Arm of Lake Mead, he entered the water and surfaced briefly but then submerged and did not re-appear. Others in his party, including Sanders, 19, college student, dived in the 30-foot-deep water in search of him. Sanders made repeated dives over the course of several minutes before he submerged a final time. Responding divers located Pearce and Sanders on the floor of the cove within a few feet of each other. Both had drowned. 72006-8226

DENNIS JOOS, deceased
Stewartstown, New Hampshire

Dennis Joos died attempting to rescue Vickie M. Bunnell from assault, Colebrook, New Hampshire, August 19, 1997. Ms. Bunnell, 45, and others fled the building which housed Ms. Bunnell's law office as well as the operations of a newspaper after a man armed with an assault rifle arrived at the premises in a stolen police cruiser. The man, whom Ms. Bunnell recognized, had just killed two state police troopers not far away. As Ms. Bunnell ran across the parking lot at the rear of the building, the man, standing at a point near the building's back door, shot her. At work in the building, Joos, 51, editor, ran through the back door, then approached and grasped the assailant, who outweighed Joos. During the ensuing struggle for control of the rifle, the assailant shot Joos, felling him. The assailant then left the scene but was later killed in a shootout with police. Ms. Bunnell and Joos died of their gunshot wounds. 72005-8227

TERESINA BATIKAYO
London, Ontario

Teresina Batikayo helped to rescue Lyndon G. MacBain from assault, London, Ontario, August 20, 1997. MacBain, 63, was crossing a downtown street when a man armed with a knife approached him from behind and, without provocation, stabbed him. MacBain struggled against the assailant, who then inflicted additional stab wounds. MacBain fell to the pavement and called for help as the assailant stood over him, appearing to prepare to lunge at him. Ms. Batikayo, 39, housekeeper, who was nearby, saw the attack. She approached the assailant from behind, then grasped his hands and pulled them behind him. The assailant dropped the knife. Others intervened. The assailant was taken to the pavement, where he was secured until police arrived and apprehended him. MacBain was hospitalized two days for treatment of his stab wounds, from which he recovered. 72059-8228

JOHN D. KAISER
Bermuda Dunes, California

John D. Kaiser saved Christina A. Huerta, Graciela Vega, and Valerie H. Huerta from burning, Indian Wells, California, August 14, 1997. Dazed, Christina, 15; Graciela, 17, and Valerie, 14, remained in the car in which they were passengers after a highway accident in which the car caught fire on its passenger side. Kaiser, 26, an off-duty deputy sheriff, drove upon the scene immediately after the accident. He approached the driver's side of the car as Christina was emerging through its rear, side window. Kaiser grasped Christina and pulled her from the vehicle, then turned back to the car, partially entered it through the same window, and grasped Graciela, who also was in the back seat. He pulled Graciela from the car. Despite quickly growing flames that by then had covered the passenger side of the car and were beginning to enter its interior, Kaiser extended his upper body through the driver's window and grasped Valerie, who, still wearing her safety belt, was in the front passenger seat. With difficulty, he released the belt and pulled Valerie partially through the window. Another man arrived and assisted in freeing her from the car. Kaiser obtained a fire extinguisher from an arriving officer and returned to the car for the driver, who had been thrown to the passenger side. A burst of flames issued from beneath the car, burning Kaiser on the legs. He was forced away from the vehicle, which was then engulfed by flame. The driver was killed in the accident, but the three rescued girls, who required hospital treatment for injury, survived. Kaiser was taken to the hospital for treatment of second-degree burns to both legs, which caused him to miss two months' work. 72047-8229

ROGER DAVIS
Macon, Georgia

Roger Davis saved an indeterminate number of persons from being struck by a runaway wheel, Macon, Georgia, July 19, 1997. More than 40 persons, including about 15 young children, were attending a party on the lawn of a private residence. One of the guests, Davis, 21, college student, was standing near a group of the children, who were seated on a blanket. A truck pulling a 40-foot flatbed trailer was driving past the scene when one of the trailer's wheels became disconnected and started to bounce and roll down the sloping yard in which the party was taking place. Davis saw the wheel and, realizing that it was headed toward the children, stepped into its path and crouched in blocking stance. The wheel struck him, forcing him backward and to the ground, then veered aside and overturned. Davis stood and jumped on the wheel to stop it. Davis required hospital treatment for abrasions to his neck and hand, and he recovered. 71882-8230

JEROME MICHAEL HOLLAND
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Jerome Michael Holland helped to rescue Richard A. Bennett from burning, Halifax, Nova Scotia, December 4, 1997. Bennett, 54, lay unconscious on the floor of the living room in his basement apartment after fire broke out in that room and filled the apartment with dense smoke. Holland, 39, computer technician, who lived on the floors above, responded. He broke into Bennett's apartment through its door, which opened into the kitchen, then proceeded inside. The smoke forced him back out. Positioning himself on his hands and knees, Holland looked beneath the smoke and saw Bennett. He then entered the apartment again, crawled across the kitchen into the living room, and grasped Bennett by the wrist. Holland stood and moved Bennett toward the door but again had to exit for air. Despite flames spreading overhead into the kitchen and out through the door, Holland re-entered the apartment again. He grasped Bennett and dragged him to the door, where another man assisted in getting Bennett to safety. Bennett sustained smoke inhalation and serious burns and died seven weeks later. Holland recovered from smoke inhalation and lacerations to a foot. 72317-8231

RAYMOND WYWADIS, JR.
Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania

Raymond Wywadis, Jr., saved Victor J. Girardi from drowning, Hummels Wharf, Pennsylvania, February 10, 1998. While fishing in the Susquehanna River, Girardi, 48, was thrown from his boat into the frigid water. He attempted to return to the boat but could not, then, weighed down by his clothing, he tired in his attempts to swim to the bank. He called for help. Wywadis, 37, was fishing from the bank in that vicinity when he was alerted to Girardi's plight. Removing his outer attire, Wywadis entered the 45-degree water and waded and swam to Girardi, who by then had submerged at a point about 250 feet from the bank. Wywadis grasped Girardi and swam back toward the bank, towing him. When they had reached wadable water, two other men entered the river and assisted in removing Girardi to the bank. Girardi and Wywadis both required hospital treatment for hypothermia, and they recovered. 72488-8232

ERIC STEVEN MARTINS, deceased
Fall River Massachusetts

Eric Steven Martins died after attempting to save Kyle M. DeMello from suffocation, Fall River, Massachusetts, October 31, 1997. Kyle, 11, and Eric, 12, student, were playing atop a pile of gravel at a cement plant when Kyle became caught in the gravel as it dropped into the hopper below. He called for help. Eric immediately responded and pulled at Kyle's leg but could not free him. Both boys were pulled into the hopper, buried by gravel. A boy who had been with them ran for help, and police officers, firefighters, and others who responded worked to free Kyle and Eric. Rescuers first attempted to dig them out from the top of the pile then were successful in removing them through the base of the hopper amidst falling gravel. Both boys were hospitalized; Kyle was treated for multiple injuries, but Eric died two days later of his injuries. 72227-8233

CHARLES WOODBRIDGE
Modesto, California

MURRAY RICHARD BALTUS
Fernie, British Columbia

Charles Woodbridge helped attempt to rescue Michael H. Garrett, and Murray Richard Baltus helped to rescue Charles Woodbridge, from suffocation, Atlin, British Columbia, July 24, 1996. Garrett, 33, descended about 100 feet into the vertical shaft of an abandoned, underground gold mine, then called for help as he was being overcome by carbon monoxide in the shaft. His companions entered the mine and attached a rope and safety belt to him, but Garrett snagged on the mine structure when they then attempted to pull him to the surface. Despite knowing of the presence of the gas, Woodbridge, 47, miner, who had been on the premises visiting Garrett and his party, descended a series of ladders in the dark and wet shaft to Garrett. Woodbridge freed Garrett, enabling the men at the surface to pull him toward the top of the shaft. Woodbridge then climbed the ladders toward the surface of the mine but was himself overcome by the gas and lost consciousness at a point about 65 feet below the top. His teen-aged son and two of Garrett's companions maneuvered Woodbridge closer to the surface before having to leave for air. Baltus, 27, police constable, who had been called to the scene, entered the shaft with Woodbridge's son. They descended the ladders to Woodbridge, then lifted him up to the next level. Working in the confines of the shaft, Baltus laboriously lifted and pushed Woodbridge up two more levels toward the surface, from which others removed Woodbridge from the mine. Woodbridge was revived with oxygen at the scene, then was flown to a hospital, where he was detained a day for treatment of carbon monoxide poisoning and a fractured rib. Baltus also required medical treatment for carbon monoxide poisoning, and he recovered. Garrett died; he had fallen to the bottom of the shaft while his companions were attempting to remove him. 72920-8234 / 72921-8235

BRIAN DAVID BIRK
Azusa, California

Brian David Birk rescued Marcus J. Ware from burning, Azusa, California, January 11, 1998. Marcus, 4, remained in his family's two-story townhouse condominium after fire broke out on the first floor, in the living room. Birk, 26, manager, who lived across the street, saw the flames and immediately ran to the scene, where he learned that Marcus was still inside the unit. Birk opened the front door of the condominium and, barefoot, stepped inside the living room to blistering heat and smoke that limited visibility. He called out, then heard Marcus to the side. Crouched, Birk approached the stairs to the second floor, having to pass a burning couch, then ascended to a landing, where he found Marcus. He picked Marcus up and placed him over his shoulder, then turned, retraced his path to the front door, and exited the house to safety. Marcus required lengthy hospitalization for treatment of severe burns. Birk also required hospital treatment for burns, to a hand and foot, and he sustained lacerations to his feet. He recovered. 72390-8236

HOMER EVANS
Coleman, Florida

Homer Evans rescued Epifanio Ramirez from burning, Coleman, Florida, October 12, 1997. Ramirez, 22, was the driver of a pickup truck that, at night, left the highway and crashed into a truck tractor parked in the yard of a residence. An explosion occurred, and both vehicles caught fire. Awakened by the crash, Evans, 46, truck driver, who lived in the residence, went outside and learned that Ramirez, injured and unconscious, remained inside the burning pickup, which was separated by 12 feet from the burning tractor. Evans approached the pickup and tried to open the driver's door, but it was damaged. He then responded to the pickup's passenger side, which faced the burning tractor. The pickup's dashboard and floor were aflame, as was Ramirez's clothing. With difficulty, Evans pulled open the passenger door, then leaned inside the pickup and smothered the flames on Ramirez. He grasped Ramirez and tried to pull him out of the vehicle, but one of Ramirez's feet was caught among the pedals. Evans freed the foot then pulled Ramirez out of the pickup. Ramirez required hospital treatment for his injuries. 72244-8237

IGNACIO DONAN
Tulare, California

Ignacio Donan helped to rescue Mary J. Bruner-Brusseau from burning, Tulare, California, December 28, 1997. Ms. Bruner-Brusseau, 83, lay unconscious on the floor of the dining room in her house after fire broke out in a first-floor bedroom at night and filled the house with dense smoke. Donan, 25, baker, who lived across the street, saw flames issuing from the front of the house and ran to the scene. He went to the back of the house, as did arriving police officers, and learned that Ms. Bruner-Brusseau was still inside. The officers made repeated entries through the back door to search for Ms. Bruner-Brusseau but were driven back by the smoke. Donan and one of the officers then entered the house, crawled across an enclosed porch, and entered the dining room, where they found Ms. Bruner-Brusseau. Donan and the officer grasped her and removed her from the house. Ms. Bruner-Brusseau was hospitalized for treatment of smoke inhalation and serious burns and died of her injuries 13 days later. Donan experienced tightness in his chest and a sore throat, from which he recovered. 72402-8238

CARNEGIE MEDAL



ANDREW CARNEGIE

