



NEWS RELEASE

Carnegie Hero Fund COMMISSION

A CENTURY of HEROES 1904-2004

FOR RELEASE:
July 7, 2005

Contact: Douglas R. Chambers
Toll free: 1-800-447-8900

CARNEGIE HERO FUND COMMISSION CITES 20 FOR EXTRAORDINARY HEROISM IN U.S., CANADA

PITTSBURGH, PA, JULY 7, 2005—In its third award announcement of 2005, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission today named 20 individuals as recipients of the CARNEGIE MEDAL. The medal is given throughout the United States and Canada to those 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.

The heroes announced today bring to 53 the number of persons who have been recognized by the Commission in 2005 and to 8,922 the total number since the Pittsburgh-based Fund's inception in 1904. Commission President Mark Laskow stated that each of the awardees or their survivors will also receive a grant of \$3,500. Throughout the 101 years since the Fund was established by industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, \$27.9 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance.

The awardees are:

Kathleen Imel	Hillsboro, Ore.
George W. Miller	Copiague, N.Y.
Christian A. Hubert	Oceanside, N.Y.
Dennis Bellemore	Manchester, Conn.
Bryan T. Verdeur	West Chester, Pa.
Patrick Kevin Verdeur	West Chester, Pa.
Michael J. Kane	West Chester, Pa.
Serge Landry, deceased	Amqui, Que.
Justin D. Dunham	Nantucket, Mass.
Dennis D. Gillespie, deceased	Robstown, Texas
Mathias D. Maciejewski	Los Angeles, Calif.
Jason Michael Quirino	Granada Hills, Calif.
Spencer C. Madrie	Gadsden, Ala.
John P. Sawchuk	Clifton Park, N.Y.
Michael Bennett	Castleton, N.Y.
Richard Conrad, deceased	Toms River, N.J.
Alexander Tezsla	Wrightstown, N.J.
Robert C. Meyer	Union Beach, N.J.
Charles R. Stewart III	Johnstown, Pa.
John Lane	Brunswick, Ga.

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

KATHLEEN IMEL
Hillsboro, Oregon

Kathleen Imel helped to rescue Joshua Pia Perez from attacking dogs, Aloha, Oregon, July 27, 2004. Joshua, 7, was outside playing when two pit bulls approached, then began to chase him. The larger dog, a male weighing about 70 pounds, caught up to him and began to maul him in the street. Imel, 51, caregiver, was approaching in her vehicle at the time. She parked and, responding to Joshua, screamed at the dogs and kicked them. They retreated but then returned, the male dog inflicting a severe bite wound to Joshua's ear and taking him to the pavement. Imel positioned herself between Joshua and the dogs, shielding him with her body. The male dog bit Imel on the arms and face, inflicting a severe wound in the area of an eyebrow. Others responded to remove Joshua from the scene and keep the dogs at bay. Police arrived and captured the dogs, which were quarantined and later euthanized. Joshua and Imel were taken to the hospital for treatment, including surgery, of their wounds. 77795-8903

GEORGE W. MILLER
Copiague, New York

CHRISTIAN A. HUBERT
Oceanside, New York

George W. Miller saved Patrick J. and with Christian A. Hubert helped to rescue Elizabeth A. Canning from burning, Lindenhurst, New York, January 29, 2004. In early morning, Canning, 41, and his sister, 42, were on the upper level of a two-story, split-entry house after fire broke out in a bedroom on that level and filled it with dense smoke. Miller, 48, boiler mechanic, was nearby, driving to work, when he came upon the burning house and learned that occupants were inside. He entered the house through the front door and began to ascend the stairs to the upper level but was repulsed by smoke and retreated to the outside. Re-entering, he made his way toward the top of the stairs, where he found Canning. Miller grasped Canning by the arm and led him outside to safety, then he re-entered the house, accompanied by Hubert, 33, police officer, who had responded. They crawled to the upper level, but deteriorating conditions forced them outside for air. Again entering to the upper level, they searched for Ms. Canning, Hubert finding her in a dining area opposite the top of the stairs. Miller joined him there, and they took Ms. Canning to a back door, which they then found they could not open. After Hubert broke through the door with his flashlight, he and Miller removed Ms. Canning to a deck, from which she was taken to safety. Ms. Canning required hospitalization for treatment of smoke inhalation and minor burns. Miller and Hubert also required hospital treatment for smoke inhalation. All recovered.

77534-8904 / 77535-8905

DENNIS BELLEMORE
Manchester, Connecticut

Dennis Bellemore attempted to rescue Irene MacMullen from assault, Manchester, Connecticut, July 22, 2003. Wearing her safety belt, MacMullen, 70, was in the driver's seat of her van, which was parked in the lot of a supermarket. A man approached, opened the driver's door, and attempted to remove her from the vehicle. She shouted for help and sounded the van's horn. Walking nearby, Bellemore, 39, furniture repairman, heard MacMullen's screams and ran to the van to investigate. The assailant climbed over MacMullen into the passenger seat of the vehicle and pushed her through the driver's door to the pavement. When Bellemore stepped up to her to remove her safety belt, the assailant started to drive the van away, entangling both MacMullen and Bellemore in the straps of the belt. The assailant sped through the parking lot, dragging MacMullen and Bellemore for more than 500 feet before they were released. He then fled the scene in the van. MacMullen and Bellemore were taken to the hospital, where they were treated for extensive abrasions. The assailant was arrested the following day. 78072-8906

BRYAN T. VERDEUR
PATRICK KEVIN VERDEUR
MICHAEL J. KANE
West Chester, Pennsylvania

Bryan T. Verdeur saved Kyle J. Lawver from drowning, and Patrick Kevin Verdeur and Michael J. Kane saved James P. Lawver, Avon, North Carolina, August 8, 2004. Kyle, 14, was swimming in shallow water of the Atlantic Ocean with his father, Lawver, 43, when they were caught by a current and swept far out, into deeper water. They shouted for help as they struggled to remain afloat. Bryan, 20, auto body technician, was on the beach in the vicinity with his brother, Patrick, 21, automotive technician, and Kane, 48, letter carrier. Despite rough surf conditions, including high breakers, that were the result of a hurricane passing days earlier, Bryan entered the water and swam to Kyle and his father, who were then about 300 feet from shore. Kyle, supported by his father, who was submerged, grasped Bryan about the neck and submerged him. Patrick also had entered the water, as did Kane, and arrived about then. Patrick secured a hold on Lawver as Bryan grasped Kyle around the chest and started to swim back to shore with him, the current forcing them on a diagonal course. Patrick too started back toward shore, with Lawver, en route being joined by Kane. With each grasping Lawver, Patrick and Kane also swam on a diagonal to shore, Lawver's being inert bogging them beneath the surface of the water. Bryan removed Kyle to safety as did Patrick and Kane with Lawver. Kyle and Lawver were taken to the hospital, where they were treated for effects of their ordeal; they recovered. Bryan and Patrick were winded, and Kane nearly exhausted, but they too recovered. 77919-8907 / 77920-8908 / 77921-8909

SERGE LANDRY, deceased
Amqui, Quebec

Serge Landry died attempting to save Denis Gagné from drowning, Amqui, Quebec, June 14, 2003. Friends Gagné, 42, and Landry, 41, garage operator, were kayaking the Matapédia River with members of their families and other friends. At an abandoned hydroelectric dam, Gagné took his kayak over the three-foot waterfall without incident, but then the kayak became caught in the backwash below the dam and was drawn back to it. The kayak rolled, spilling Gagné from it, and he became trapped in the turbulent water at the base of the dam. Landry, who had exited the river, reboarded his kayak and, from the bank just downstream of the dam, paddled to Gagné. He left the kayak and grasped hold of Gagné's life jacket. Landry too was then caught in the turbulent water at the base of the dam. Minutes later, he and Gagné were ejected from the backwash, and they floated downstream. Responding emergency personnel removed them from the water and resuscitation was attempted, but they had drowned. 77808-8910

JUSTIN D. DUNHAM
Nantucket, Massachusetts

Justin D. Dunham saved Robert K. Massie from drowning, Nantucket, Massachusetts, September 3, 2004. While in wadable water of the Atlantic Ocean, Massie, 48, stepped from a drop-off into water over his depth and was carried from shore by a strong current. Unable to return against the current, Massie signaled to persons on the beach for help; those who attempted a rescue were thwarted by rough water conditions, including high breakers, and others who were asked to help refused, citing same. Dunham, 18, college student, was on the beach, having earlier concluded that the ocean was too rough for surfing. When alerted to Massie's situation, he immediately ran into the water with his 62-inch surfboard and, penetrating the breakers, paddled out to Massie, then about 300 feet from shore. He positioned Massie on his board and, joining him there, began kicking and paddling a return. En route to shore, they were knocked from the surfboard and submerged a few times by waves, and the board once hit Dunham in the head, inflicting a welt. They safely reached the beach, where Massie was examined by rescue personnel. He was uninjured. 77902-8911

DENNIS D. GILLESPIE, deceased
Robstown, Texas

Dennis D. Gillespie died after saving Casey V. Burriola from drowning, Concan, Texas, June 30, 2004. Burriola, 48, and his friend Gillespie, 33, senior millwright, were kayaking the Frio River with another friend. The river, in flood stage as the result of recent rains, poured over a low-water crossing in a four-foot-high waterfall that dropped to a pool about five feet deep. The three kayaked over the crossing, Gillespie and the other friend continuing downstream without incident. Burriola's kayak, however, became caught in the backwash at the base of the waterfall. It rolled, spilling him into the water. Unable to overcome the downward pull of the backwash, Burriola signaled for help. Gillespie returned to the crossing in his kayak and at the waterfall freed Burriola. Burriola swam to safety. Gillespie's kayak then rolled, spilling him into the backwash and trapping him there. Others using a line and an inflated inner tube pulled him to the bank. Attempts to revive Gillespie failed, as he had drowned. 77760-8912

MATHIAS D. MACIEJEWSKI
Los Angeles, California

JASON MICHAEL QUIRINO
Granada Hills, California

Mathias D. Maciejewski and Jason Michael Quirino rescued Shannon Parker from an attacking mountain lion, Kernville, California, June 26, 2004. Parker, 27, was hiking in the Sequoia National Forest when she was attacked by a mountain lion. The undernourished, 58-pound male lion dragged her from the trail and about 25 feet down a steep embankment, where it mauled her about the face. Three friends with whom she had been hiking, including Maciejewski, 28, law student, were a distance behind her and heard her screams for help. They immediately responded, Maciejewski arriving first. He descended to Parker and grasped her about the waist as he attempted to push the lion away with his foot. The other friends arrived, and one of them, Quirino, 30, law student, handed Maciejewski a pocketknife. Maciejewski stabbed the lion twice, but it maintained its grasp of Parker. While the other friend ran to alert help, Quirino threw rocks at the lion, and it released Parker. As Maciejewski and Quirino were attempting to get Parker up the embankment, the lion bit into her right leg and again maintained its grasp. Quirino struck the lion repeatedly about the head with rocks until it released her. Maciejewski and Quirino walked Parker to safety. She was airlifted to one hospital, then transferred to another, where she was treated for extensive injury, including the loss of an eye. Maciejewski recovered from a laceration to an ankle, and Quirino from a minor sprain to an ankle and scratches to his arms and legs. 77949-8913 / 77950-8914

SPENCER C. MADRIE
Gadsden, Alabama

Spencer C. Madrie saved Hollea D. Battles from burning, Gadsden, Alabama, July 26, 2004. Battles, 24, was trapped in her car after an accident in which the car left the highway, entered the premises of a gasoline station, and struck and knocked over a fuel pump. Spilled gasoline caught fire in the vicinity of the car's fuel tank, and flames spread quickly to envelope the driver's side of the car. Battles released her safety belt but found that the car's doors were inoperable. She screamed for help. Madrie, 18, high school student, witnessed the accident, then, failing to see Battles emerge from her car, left his vehicle and ran to the scene. Despite the growing flames, Madrie approached the passenger side of the car and attempted without success to open the door. He then kicked the window to break it out but was again unsuccessful. Forcing his fingers into the seam around the door, Madrie pried the door open, then with difficulty forced it open wide enough to provide access. He reached into the smoke-filled car, grabbed Battles by the arm, and helped her out. They ran to safety as flames grew high above the car and entered it along the driver's side. Battles required hospital treatment for her injuries, but she was not burned. She recovered. 77865-8915

JOHN P. SAWCHUK
Clifton Park, New York

MICHAEL BENNETT
Castleton, New York

John P. Sawchuk rescued an indeterminate number of persons from assault, and Michael Bennett attempted to help, East Greenbush, New York, February 9, 2004. A 16-year-old boy entered a restroom of the high school he attended, then emerged brandishing a loaded 12-gauge shotgun. He fired two shots at students in the hall but missed, and the students fled to safety. In a classroom in that wing of the building, Sawchuk, 41, assistant principal, heard the gunshots and, followed by Bennett, 36, teacher, proceeded through the hall to investigate. Turning a corner, they saw the armed assailant about 20 feet away. Sawchuk immediately ran to him, grasped him, and started to struggle against him for control of the gun. The assailant fired again, striking Bennett in the leg as he approached. Sawchuk convinced the assailant to release the gun, which Sawchuk then handed over to another teacher. He took the assailant into a nearby office and detained him there until police arrived shortly and arrested him. Bennett required hospital treatment for his wound. 77487-8916 / 77522-8917

RICHARD CONRAD, deceased
Toms River, New Jersey

Richard Conrad died helping to save Michael D. Ford from drowning, Seaside Park, New Jersey, September 13, 2004. Ford, 44, was wading in the Atlantic Ocean when he lost his footing and was pulled by a current away from shore. Unable to stand, he attempted to swim back to shore but made no progress. He yelled for help. Conrad, 72, retired engineering technician, was lounging on the beach in that vicinity. He and two other men ran into the water and swam to Ford, who was struggling to keep his head above water. They got Ford atop a plastic surfboard and began to swim back to shore. Conrad, however, stopped swimming and was observed apart from the others, floating face down in the water. Lifeguards from a neighboring municipality arrived and swam to Conrad. They returned him to shore, where they and responding paramedics attempted to revive him. Conrad was taken to the hospital, where he was pronounced dead. Ford and the two other men reached shore safely. 77999-8918

ALEXANDER TEZSLA
Wrightstown, New Jersey

ROBERT C. MEYER
Union Beach, New Jersey

Alexander Tezsla and Robert C. Meyer rescued Robert E. Erickson, Jr., from burning, East Brunswick, New Jersey, July 8, 2004. Erickson, 32, remained in the driver's seat of a tractor-trailer after an interstate highway accident in which the vehicle collided with a dump truck and caught fire in its engine area. Tezsla, 34, a state trooper patrolling the area, came upon the scene within moments. He tried to gain access to the tractor cab but found that both of its doors were jammed shut. Tezsla then mounted the fuel tank on the driver's side of the tractor and broke out the window of the driver's door. Smoke had filled the cab, and flames were entering it at Erickson's feet. Meyer, 45, delivery driver, also stopped at the scene, and he and Tezsla pried the door open enough for Meyer to use his fire extinguisher to calm the flames somewhat in the cab. Tezsla and Meyer, who also mounted the wreckage, grasped Erickson and lowered him to the pavement, then they dragged him to safety on the highway shoulder. Flames grew and spread quickly to envelope the rig, which was destroyed. Erickson was taken to the hospital for treatment of burns to his legs and smoke inhalation. Tezsla and Meyer also were taken to the hospital, where they were treated for smoke inhalation and Tezsla for a cut to his right hand. They recovered. 77798-8919 / 77799-8920

CHARLES R. STEWART III
Johnstown, Pennsylvania

Charles R. Stewart III helped to save Edwin L. Keller III from drowning, Johnstown, Pennsylvania, September 18, 2004. While retrieving a football, Edwin, 12, fell into the rain-swollen Stoneycreek River, which at the scene flowed through a flood-control channel having sloped, concrete banks. He was swept downstream by the very swift current. Stewart, 32, disabled dockworker, was crossing a nearby bridge when he saw Edwin in the water. He immediately ran to a point on the nearer bank opposite Edwin and, removing his shoes, slid down the channel wall and into the river. Stewart swam to Edwin, who climbed on his back, then attempted to return to the wall. The current washed them farther out into the river and about 900 feet downstream, or to the point at which Stewart grasped the branches of a small tree growing from the riverbed. They remained at the tree until arriving firefighters threw a line to them, pulled them back to the bank, and aided them up the wall. Both Edwin and Stewart were taken to the hospital, where they were treated for hypothermia, and Stewart for a cut to his foot. They recovered. 77953-8921

JOHN LANE
Brunswick, Georgia

John Lane saved Gary L. and Sally W. Puckett from burning, Darien, Georgia, March 17, 2004. Puckett, 61, and his wife, 51, were the driver and front-seat passenger, respectively, of a sedan that was struck by an out-of-control tractor-trailer on an interstate highway bridge. The trailer became separated from the rig and continued moving while the tractor came to rest adjacent to the Pucketts' car. Both of those vehicles caught fire, as did fuel from at least one ruptured tank that flowed onto the bridge deck. Dazed and severely injured, Puckett and his wife remained inside their car as a wall of flames spread across the bridge deck, and flames began to enter the car through its driver's window. Another motorist, Lane, 50, logging contractor, witnessed the accident and pulled onto the median. Approaching the scene on foot, he saw Mrs. Puckett struggling in the burning car. He hurried to the front passenger door, opened it, and worked to detach her safety belt. Puckett, meanwhile, lay atop his wife. Lane pulled him from the car and dragged him away, then returned to the car and worked to free Mrs. Puckett. An explosion outside the car increased the flames that were issuing through the driver's window. Lane pulled Mrs. Puckett out of the car and away from the burning vehicles. Neither she nor her husband was burned, but each required extensive hospitalization for treatment of significant injuries. 77800-8922

CARNEGIE MEDAL



ANDREW CARNEGIE

