



CARNEGIE HERO FUND COMMISSION
Recognizing civilian heroism in the United States and Canada

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News Release

FOR RELEASE:
September 29, 2009

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**20 CITED FOR EXTRAORDINARY HEROISM
 BY CARNEGIE HERO FUND COMMISSION**

PITTSBURGH, PA, September 29, 2009—In its third award announcement of 2009, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission today named 20 individuals from throughout the United States and Canada as recipients of the CARNEGIE MEDAL. The medal is given to those who risk their lives to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others.

Four of the awardees lost their lives in the performance of their rescues acts, including Mark John Thanos and his father John Mikel Thanos, both of Chesterton, Ind. The men were swept by floodwaters into a culvert while attempting to save a neighbor boy from drowning on Sept. 14, 2008.

The heroes announced today bring to 9,304 the total number of awards since the Pittsburgh-based Fund's inception in 1904. Commission President Mark Laskow stated that each of the awardees or their next of kin will also receive a financial grant. Throughout the 105 years since the Fund was established by industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, \$31.8 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance. The awardees are:

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|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Mark John Thanos, <i>deceased</i> | Chesterton, Ind. |
| John Mikel Thanos, <i>deceased</i> | Chesterton, Ind. |
| Jorge L. Orozco-Sanchez | Firestone, Colo. |
| Allen Drew Nelson | Brooklyn, N.Y. |
| Mark Barnard | Regina, Sask. |
| Michael David Landry | Regina, Sask. |
| Andrew Douglas Hilderman | Regina, Sask. |
| Timothy Tonkin | Smithtown, N.Y. |
| Robert Stanford Rand | San Clemente, Calif. |
| Robert Villarreal, Jr. | San Antonio, Texas |
| John Augustus Baker II | Brunswick, Ga. |
| Joel Edmond Moody | St. Simons Island, Ga. |
| Robert P. Bercel | Richmond, Mich. |
| Adam W. Lucas | Manchester, N.H. |
| Scott O. Clarke | Nashua, N.H. |
| Bruce A. Baxter | Petaluma, Calif. |
| Rosetta M. Albright, <i>deceased</i> | Sapulpa, Okla. |
| Tanya M. O'Donnell | West Harrison, N.Y. |
| Joseph F. Kelly, Sr., <i>deceased</i> | Levittown, Pa. |
| Jacob T. Carr | Jacksonville, Ore. |

Resumes of the acts follow. To nominate someone for the CARNEGIE MEDAL, write the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, 436 Seventh Avenue, Suite 1101, 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

MARK JOHN THANOS, *deceased*
JOHN MIKEL THANOS, *deceased*
Chesterton, Indiana

Mark John Thanos and John Mikel Thanos died attempting to save Douglas P. Zehner from drowning, Chesterton, Indiana, September 14, 2008. Douglas, 11, became caught in the extremely swift current of water that was flooding a drainage ditch in his neighborhood after heavy rains. He shouted for help. The water flowed through a culvert under a roadway at the scene, and Douglas was swept into the culvert. Mark, 48, high school teacher, and his wife and father, John, 74, retired custodian, responded to the ditch from their nearby home. As his wife went to the downstream end of the culvert, Mark and his father went to its upstream end and entered the ditch. They too were swept into the culvert. Douglas emerged from the culvert and was aided to safety by Mark's wife. Responding rescue personnel located Mark and John in the culvert. They had drowned. Douglas took in water and was treated at the hospital. He recovered. 81588-9285 / 81589-9286

JORGE L. OROZCO-SANCHEZ
Firestone, Colorado

Jorge L. Orozco-Sanchez saved Peyton and Morgen Nicklas from burning, Lucerne, Colorado, October 28, 2008. Peyton, 4, and Morgen, 1, remained strapped in their car seats in the back seat of their mother's sport utility vehicle after the vehicle's head-on collision with a tractor-trailer. Flames broke out at the front ends of both vehicles, which remained in contact. Orozco-Sanchez, 30, was the driver of the tractor-trailer. He exited his rig, went to the sport utility vehicle, and tried unsuccessfully to open the back door on its passenger side. Using a fire extinguisher, he broke out that door's window. Orozco-Sanchez then extended his upper body inside the burning vehicle, released Peyton from her car seat, and removed her through the window. After taking Peyton a safe distance away, Orozco-Sanchez returned to the vehicle, approaching it on its driver's side, which was aflame. Using a fire extinguisher, he put out the flames on the vehicle's back door and with difficulty opened it. Orozco-Sanchez extended his upper body inside, freed Morgen from her car seat, and removed her from the vehicle. After carrying her to safety, Orozco-Sanchez went back toward the vehicle for the girls' mother, but he was unable to get close to it because of intolerable heat and flames. The girls' mother died at the scene. Peyton and Morgen were hospitalized for treatment of their injuries, but they were not burned. Orozco-Sanchez, who singed his hair, was taken to the hospital for treatment of minor injury, from which he recovered. 81706-9287

ALLEN DREW NELSON
Brooklyn, New York

Allen Drew Nelson saved Josephine Harrison from drowning, Dotsero, Colorado, July 14, 2008. Harrison, 36, was separated from her inner tube while floating down the Colorado River, and she lost consciousness in the cold, swift water. Nelson, 29, laborer, had been fishing on a bank of the river and saw her approach. He entered the water for her and, directing his course at an angle to intercept her downstream, bounced off the river's bed until he was in water over his depth. He then swam to the point at which he intercepted Harrison. Securing a hold of her, Nelson swam to the opposite bank, which was closer, the current taking him and Harrison 200 feet farther downstream. They were aided from the river by others. Harrison required hospital treatment, and she recovered. Nelson was tired and cold after the rescue, and he too recovered. 81494-9288

MARK BARNARD
MICHAEL DAVID LANDRY
ANDREW DOUGLAS HILDERMAN
Regina, Saskatchewan

Mark Barnard, Michael David Landry, and Andrew Douglas Hilderman rescued Julie E. Wharram from burning, Armstrong, British Columbia, July 23, 2007. Wharram, 25, was the driver of an automobile that, at night, left the highway, went down an embankment, and overturned onto its roof. Flames erupted in the front of the car and issued from its exposed underside. Wharram was trapped inside the car, suspended upside down by her safety belt. Motorists, including Barnard, carpenter, and two friends, Landry, electrician, and Hilderman, landscape manager, each 21, drove upon the scene and stopped. Barnard crawled partway into the car through the window of the driver's door to attempt to free Wharram but could not, and he withdrew. The men then fought the flames with available aids but reduced them only momentarily, and the fire spread to the interior of the car. Landry then obtained a knife from another motorist, crawled partway through the driver's window, and cut Wharram's safety belt. As he maneuvered her toward the window, Barnard and Hilderman reached inside and grasped her, and the three men pulled her from the vehicle. They carried her away, flames spreading to engulf the car shortly. Wharram required lengthy hospitalization for extensive and serious burns and other injuries. Barnard suffered mild smoke inhalation, and Landry was treated at the scene for cuts to his feet and legs. They recovered. 81141-9289 / 81139-9290 / 81140-9291

TIMOTHY TONKIN
Smithtown, New York

Timothy Tonkin helped to save James A. Leone, Jr., from drowning, Cold Spring Harbor, New York, October 12, 2008. Leone, 39, was inside a sport utility vehicle that was submerging in Cold Spring Harbor at a point about 60 feet opposite a boat ramp. It was dark. The man who discovered the vehicle alerted authorities and, paddling a dinghy out, attempted to gain access to it. Tonkin, 44, police officer, was dispatched to the scene. He swam to the vehicle, which by then was submerged in the deep water but for a few inches at its rear roofline. Using his metal baton, Tonkin broke the rear passenger-side window after striking it repeatedly. Tonkin reached into the vehicle through the broken-out window, grasped Leone, and pulled him out, but Leone's weight sent Tonkin deeper into the water. He surfaced but struck his face against the vehicle. The man in the dinghy had grasped Leone and with Tonkin held him to that vessel as they maneuvered it to the bank. Leone and Tonkin were taken to the hospital, where Tonkin, who had broken a tooth, was treated for lacerations. He recovered. 81664-9292

ROBERT STANFORD RAND
San Clemente, California

Robert Stanford Rand helped to save a woman from falling, Laguna Hills, California, August 10, 2008. A 22-year-old woman stood outside a chain-link fence atop a parapet of an overpass and threatened to jump the 50 feet to the highway below. Rand, 43, highway patrol officer, responded to the scene, as did other officers, including sheriff's deputies. As some of the officers attempted to secure the woman by holds through the fence, Rand stepped onto the inches-wide edge of the parapet outside the fence and moved about 65 feet along it to her, one of the deputies following him. They grasped the woman by the arms, but she struggled against them as she dangled from their grip over the highway. A second deputy went to the outside of the fence and helped Rand and the first deputy pull the woman back up to the parapet. They held her to the fence until a fire truck equipped with a bucket apparatus responded to the scene and lowered the woman, and then the officers, to ground level. Rand sustained scrapes to his arms and wrists, and he suffered back pain. He recovered. 81499-9293

ROBERT VILLARREAL, JR.
San Antonio, Texas

Robert Villarreal, Jr., rescued a boy from assault, San Antonio, Texas, January 23, 2007. A 12-year-old boy was stabbed by a mentally ill woman in the kitchen of his home. The boy's brother, also stabbed, fled the house and attracted the attention of Villarreal, 45, customs and border protection officer, who was driving by. Villarreal stopped at the scene and followed the brother back to the house. As Villarreal approached it, he heard screaming through an open door to the kitchen. He entered the bloodied room and, unarmed, approached the woman, who was restraining the boy with one arm while pointing a kitchen knife and carving fork at his neck. Villarreal tried to convince the woman to release the boy, but she said repeatedly that she was going to kill him. Villarreal lunged at the woman, wrested her away from the boy, and forced her to the floor, where she released her hold on the weapons. He then dragged her outside and restrained her until police arrived. Both boys were hospitalized three days for treatment of stab wounds and lacerations. 80042-9294

JOHN AUGUSTUS BAKER II
Brunswick, Georgia

JOEL EDMOND MOODY
St. Simons Island, Georgia

John Augustus Baker II and Joel Edmond Moody saved Sarah M. and Emily A. Wagner and Laura King from drowning, St. Simons Island, Georgia, July 23, 2008. Sarah, 19; her sister Emily, 15; and their friend Laura, 15, were on a sandbar in the Atlantic Ocean about 300 feet off the beach when the incoming tide stranded them there. Others on the beach called 911, and responders included firefighters who were neither trained nor fully equipped for water rescue. Fearing there was insufficient time for a Coast Guard unit to arrive, one of the firefighters, Baker, 25, entered the water with a rescue tube, as did Moody, 45, teacher, who had been walking on the beach. Having to swim across a strong lateral current and against the incoming tide, the men made their way to the sandbar, Moody encountering difficulty en route from a cramp. Baker positioned Emily and Laura on the rescue tube and started to return to shore, pulling them, as Moody, also using a rescue tube, returned to shore with Sarah. He was nearly exhausted, but he recovered. As he swam, Baker struggled against the current and the weight of the girls, but he too made it to the beach safely with them. 81470-9295 / 81471-9296

ROBERT P. BERCEL
Richmond, Michigan

Robert P. Bercel helped to save William J. Shepherd from burning, New Haven, Michigan, September 28, 2007. Shepherd, 78, was trapped inside a burning van that came to rest on its driver's side after a collision with a tractor-trailer. The vehicles were only a few feet apart, with flames issuing from the front of the tractor and the exposed underside of the van. Bercel, 46, laborer, drove upon the scene and stopped. He approached the front of the van, removed its windshield, and, crouching, stepped inside. Finding Shepherd's legs pinned by the steering wheel, Bercel pulled up on it, freeing him. With flames growing on the outside of the van, Shepherd grasped Bercel around his neck, and Bercel backed from the vehicle, pulling him. Two other men had approached and helped remove Shepherd fully from the van. Bercel and the other men then carried Shepherd away from the van, which was shortly engulfed by flames. Shepherd was hospitalized a day for treatment of lacerations to his arm, and Bercel sustained minor lacerations. Both men recovered. 81391-9297

ADAM W. LUCAS
Manchester, New Hampshire

SCOTT O. CLARKE
Nashua, New Hampshire

Adam W. Lucas and Scott O. Clarke saved Lisa D. Ladd from burning, Sugar Hill, New Hampshire, September 6, 2008. Ladd, 54, was the driver and sole occupant of an automobile that left an interstate highway, struck an embankment, and rolled onto its passenger side. Fire erupted on the engine. Other motorists, including Lucas, 22, technical support specialist, stopped at the scene. Lucas approached the burning vehicle and reached through the open window of the driver's door but was unsuccessful in freeing Ladd from her safety belt. Another motorist, Clarke, 43, public works employee, stopped at the scene and joined him at the burning car. With a special tool, Clarke cut Ladd's shoulder belt while Lucas supported her to keep her from dropping to the bottom of the vehicle. Clarke then mounted the car, reached inside, and cut Ladd's lap belt. The men maneuvered her from the vehicle moments before flames increased to engulf it. Ladd required hospitalization for treatment of her injuries, but she was not burned. 81549-9298 / 81548-9299

BRUCE A. BAXTER
Petaluma, California

Bruce A. Baxter rescued Mary E. Newman from burning, Petaluma, California, December 22, 2008. Newman, 87, was in the living room of her doublewide mobile home after an accidental fire broke out in that room. Her next-door neighbor, Baxter, 58, accountant, was alerted to the fire by the structure's smoke alarm. He responded to the scene, gained entry through the front door, and saw Newman, whose attire was aflame, sitting on a couch in the far end of the living room. He crossed the smoky room to her, lifted her from the couch, and patted out the flames on her attire. Grasping her, Baxter ushered her to the front door and outside to safety as flames spread quickly to engulf that end of the mobile home, destroying it. Newman was hospitalized for treatment of severe burns and died of her injuries two months later. 81813-9300

ROSETTA M. ALBRIGHT, *deceased*
Sapulpa, Oklahoma

Rosetta M. Albright died saving Havana Jastrzemski from burning, Sapulpa, Oklahoma, November 17, 2008. Havana, 3, was in the bedroom in one end of her family's mobile home after fire broke out in the hall outside that room at night. Her mother and others, including Albright, 47, escaped the structure but realized that Havana and her grandfather were still inside. Albright re-entered the mobile home through the front door and made her way through the burning hall to the far bedroom. Havana's mother responded to a point outside the window of a bathroom adjoining the bedroom and received Havana as she was passed safely through it. Flames spread throughout the structure. Firefighters found the bodies of Albright and Havana's grandfather in the bathroom below the window. They had died of smoke inhalation and burns. 81747-9301

TANYA M. O'DONNELL
West Harrison, New York

Tanya M. O'Donnell helped to save Kinley S. McDonald from drowning, Chatham, Massachusetts, August 31, 2008. Kinley, 10, and her father were swept from a sandbar near the entrance to Chatham Harbor into deeper water of the Atlantic Ocean. They struggled against a strong current that took them farther from shore. Tanya, 17, an off-duty lifeguard from another municipality, was among the beachgoers who observed their plight. She waded and swam to them and supported Kinley but could make no progress against the current in returning to shore. A harbor patrol boat reached them at a point about 300 feet from the beach and, leaving Tanya with a life jacket, returned Kinley's father to shore for emergency medical care. Tanya donned the life jacket and continued to support Kinley as they were carried farther out. Another harbor patrol boat reached them at a point about 750 feet from the beach, and they were returned to shore. Kinley and her father were taken to the hospital, where Kinley was treated for hypothermia. Her father drowned. Tanya was exhausted and cold, but she recovered. 81541-9302

JOSEPH F. KELLY, SR., *deceased*
Levittown, Pennsylvania

Joseph F. Kelly, Sr., died attempting to save Jeffrey Williams from being struck by a vehicle, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 18, 2008. At night, Williams, 43, entered an interstate highway in a wheelchair by going the wrong way on a ramp. Kelly, 55, driver, was approaching on the highway in his vehicle at that time. He parked in a safety zone just past the ramp, donned a reflective vest, and crossed the highway to Williams, calling out to him. Kelly was attempting to move Williams from his position at the far shoulder as a pickup truck approached on the highway, moved onto the shoulder without slowing, and struck them. Both men died at the scene. 81026-9303

JACOB T. CARR
Jacksonville, Oregon

Jacob T. Carr rescued James J. Frings, Sr., from burning, Jacksonville, Oregon, November 15, 2008. Frings, 70, lay in the living room of his one-story house after fire broke out in the structure. His next-door neighbor, Carr, 33, vascular technologist, responded to the front door of the burning house and opened it to intense heat, dense smoke, and ammunition that was detonating in the spreading flames. Carr called out repeatedly to Frings and then saw his hand at a point about 10 feet from the door. He crawled to Frings, grasped him about the forearm, and, retracing his steps, dragged Frings to the front door and outside to safety. Frings required hospitalization for burns, up to second-degree, and he recovered. 81782-9304

CARNEGIE MEDAL



ANDREW CARNEGIE

