

# imPULSE

*A Periodic Newsletter of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission*    ISSUE 10 • JUNE 2007

## CARNEGIE GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER NEWEST MEMBER OF COMMISSION



*The Hero Fund's newest board member is Linda T. Hills of Littleton, Colo., shown at the dedication of the site of a new headquarters for Andrew Carnegie's United Kingdom-based trusts in Dunfermline, Scotland.*

The newest member of the Hero Fund's board, elected at its annual meeting in March, will add a distinct perspective to the work of the Commission. Linda Thorell Hills of Littleton, Colo., is a great-granddaughter of Hero Fund founder Andrew Carnegie and his wife Louise Whitfield Carnegie and becomes their first descendant to serve on the board.

"We are delighted to establish this historic link to Mr. Carnegie, who is always present in our hearts," Commission President Mark Laskow said. "It will be of special significance to have Linda present during our deliberations."

Hills's cousin Margaret Thomson of Scotland also weighed in favorably on the announcement. "Apart from our delight in feeling that a family member has become involved with A.C.'s ain bairn (own born), I cannot think of anyone who is more dedicated to whatever she  
*(continued on page 4)*

## *Twice a hero, school principal prepared in fight for his own life*

*By Anika Clark • Sunday Sentinel (Keene, N.H.)*

One of the first things Daniel E. Stockwell remembers about splashing into the water off Maine's Fox Island decades ago was how cold it was. Just earlier, the huge waves had pulled two fellow Bates College students into the undertow, one of whom had been swept away trying to save the other. Standing in a crowd of spectators, Stockwell, then in his junior year, jumped in after them—managing to bring one safely to shore.

As principal of Monadnock High School, East Swanzey, N.H., he also walked into a classroom where, in 1991, a teenager held roughly 15 children hostage with a rifle. And, in 2005, when a recurrence of cancer handed him a death's sentence, he did exactly what he had done before. He dove into battle.

Stockwell, 64, of Roxbury, speaks of his heroic deeds simply, in a voice that can be hard to hear. But according to family members, it is this quality of calm and focus—rather than  
*(continued on page 2)*



*Daniel E. Stockwell, the only living awardee of two Carnegie Medals*



## DOUBLE AWARDEES OF CARNEGIE MEDAL

Only four times in its 103-year history has the Carnegie Medal had repeat awardees. The most recent double awardee—and the only surviving one—is Daniel Elwood Stockwell of Roxbury, N.H. (see accompanying article).

Stockwell's first medal was awarded for his role in a May 12, 1963, Atlantic Ocean rescue in Phippsburg, Maine, that left a co-rescuer dead. Then a 20-year-old student at Bates College, Lewiston, Maine, Stockwell tied a rope around his waist and entered the cold, rough surf to get to a man, 20, who had lost consciousness in the water. Aided by persons pulling on the rope, Stockwell towed the man to shore, where he

was revived. Another Bates student, Dale Arnold Hatch, 18, died attempting to save the man before Stockwell became involved. Hatch was awarded the medal posthumously.

That award was followed 30 years



### 2 *Mr. Stitch, with family*

later when in 1991 Stockwell freed 15 seventh-grade students who were being held at gunpoint in a classroom of the school where Stockwell was principal.

The other double awardees:

- **Rudell Stitch**, a professional boxer from Prospect, Ky., who helped to save a man from drowning in the Ohio River at Louisville, Ky., on Sept. 16, 1958. Less than two years later, on June 5, 1960, Stitch, 27, died attempting to save another man from drowning at the same spot. Stitch left a widow and six small children, and they became beneficiaries of Hero Fund assistance for a time.
- **John J. O'Neill, Sr.**, of Yonkers, N.Y., a highway maintenance employee, who twice rescued women who had fallen into the Hudson River from the Yonkers City Pier. The rescues occurred on May 5, 1954, and Dec. 29, 1956.
- **Henry Naumann**, a railroad crossing watchman from Hammond, Ind., who was struck by a train each time he acted to rescue women attempting to cross the tracks in Hammond. The first heroic act, on June 16, 1924, was successful, but Naumann lost his right leg in the second incident, on March 30, 1927, in which the victim died of her injuries.

## *Twice a hero*

*(continued from cover)*

any superhuman prowess—that makes him capable of great deeds. “I think he has an inordinate ability to focus and draw from his inner strength,” said his wife, Merry, 63, who was at his side for the Maine rescue. Son Michael R. Stockwell, 27, described him in similar terms, “He’s able to keep his head under pressure.”

This was certainly evident that morning in 1991 after a former student fired shots in the Monadnock High School cafeteria, and Stockwell—the school principal—made a series of quick decisions that prevented probable disaster. He had the foresight to advise a coworker against pulling the fire alarm because it might put children in the gunman’s path. And after voluntarily entering the classroom, he managed to calmly convince the teenage gunman to release the children while he remained hostage.

“I didn’t know how the hell I was going to get out of there,” said Stockwell, who remembers having to force the belief that he was about to die from his mind. Still, when the gunman told him his “demands”—a stereo and his friend—Stockwell was clear-headed enough to relay the message through an open window instead of over the public address system. By moving to the window, he realized, the boy would have to turn his back to the police officer Stockwell had spotted outside the classroom. Moments later, the crisis was averted.

But fighting cancer was different, as a course of action wasn’t as clear as jumping in the ocean or opening a door. And, as Merry said, with cancer, her husband had more time to think about the danger. “He’s always felt some measure of control when things have happened to him in the past,” Michael said. “He could always see what had to be done ... and with cancer, there really wasn’t any clear path.”

In 2005, after Stockwell had undergone surgery and chemotherapy for lung cancer, doctors discovered cancer in the spine. Not shying away from grim reality, Stockwell pressed a doctor to tell him “how it was going to happen.” His answer was that the disease would likely spread through his body, “like grass seeds” in wind.

But what the lack of medical cure told them, Stockwell said, was that they had to explore alternatives. Again, Stockwell looked inward—only this time in a more formalized process, through meditation. “For me to tell you what I’ve done and that meditation is a cure, I can’t say that,” Stockwell said. But he does know how certain he felt one day last year when he was struck by an overwhelming sense that his cancer was gone.

In May 2006, he asked for another scan, and it showed no detectable sign of the disease. Another test revealed the same result last October—about a month after Stockwell started feeling the pains that would lead to yet another daunting diagnosis: coronary disease. But today, after receiving a stent, a small tube that helps to keep an artery open, and graduating from a rehabilitation program at a wellness center, Stockwell is doing great, Merry said.

Since last summer, the couple has shared its story to New Hampshire Unitarian congregations—although, Merry said, they would be happy to speak to anyone who would invite them, in an effort to give hope to others. “We don’t do this to say, ‘we found the answer to cancer,’” Merry said. “We just try to share how we, as one couple, chose to meet the challenge.”

And although Stockwell is the first to admit that he has no idea exactly what caused the apparent change in his health, he does believe that people have an internal force—and when he tapped into that force, he said, good things started to happen.

But still, neither Stockwell nor his wife is counting their chickens. “No one has said that he is cancer-free... It just has not done what they said it was going to do,” said Merry, who nevertheless plans to keep her husband around for another 30 years. “I don’t call myself a survivor. I say I’m surviving,” Stockwell said. And, in the meantime, he remains the only living man to have won the Carnegie Medal of Heroism twice. ☒

*(Reprinted with permission.)*



## IN OTHER WORKS

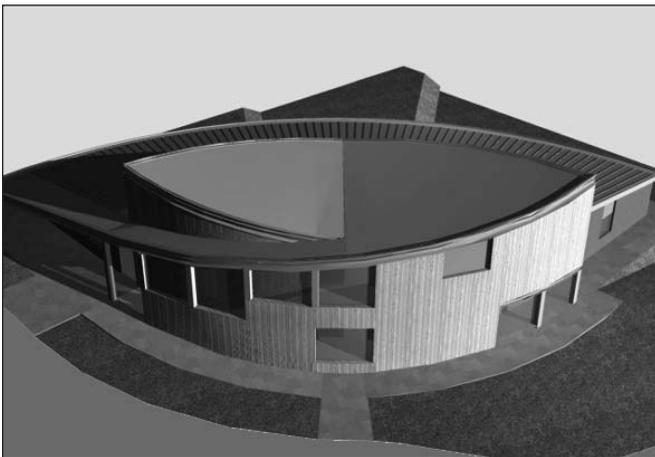
## Carnegie's U.K.-based trusts getting new home in Scotland



*William Thomson and his wife Tina "cut the first sod" in the groundbreaking of a new building in Scotland to house Andrew Carnegie's four U.K.-based trusts. Thomson is Carnegie's great-grandson.*

relocation, hoped for in November of this year. The four trusts are now housed in three separate locations in Dunfermline.

In a nod to historical significance, Thomson used the spade that Carnegie used in 1904 to plant trees in the park. The spade was last used, also to plant a tree, in 1934 by Barbara Miller, one of Carnegie's four grandchildren and the mother of Linda T. Hills, of the Hero Fund board. Hills and her family and Thomson's



*Designed by architects Page/Park of Glasgow, the Andrew Carnegie House will be an environmentally friendly building nestled in a park setting in Dunfermline, Carnegie's hometown.*

Construction is underway on a new headquarters facility that will house Andrew Carnegie's four United Kingdom-based trusts under one roof in Dunfermline, Scotland. The construction site is in Pittenceiff Park—itsself a gift from Carnegie to the city—and is not far from the weaver's cottage in which Carnegie, in his time the richest man in the world, was born to humble circumstance in 1835.

"Cutting the first sod"—groundbreaking—for the project was held in December, with Carnegie's great-grandson, William Thomson, and his wife Tina, taking part. Thomson is the honorary president of Carnegie's United Kingdom and Ireland Trust, one of the building's future occupants, and is overseeing the trusts'

children represented the Carnegie Family at the building's site dedication in October 2005.

To cost \$4 million, the new structure will be pavilion-like in design, owing to its park location, according to the Glasgow-based architects. It will feature curved timber and glass elevations (continued on page 4)

## BOARD NOTES

### PITTSBURGH TO HOST BIENNIAL CARNEGIE 'FAMILY REUNION'

*By Mark Laskow, President  
Carnegie Hero Fund Commission*

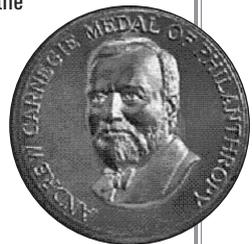


This fall, representatives of the Hero Fund and the other 23 institutions established by Andrew Carnegie, plus several of his descendants and leaders of international business, governments, media, and philanthropy, will convene in Pittsburgh for the fourth presentation of the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy.

This international award, given biennially, was conceived by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. It was created jointly by the 24 organizations in 2001 on the centennial of Carnegie's planned philanthropic giving—"the business of benevolence," in his words. The previous presentations were held in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Edinburgh, Scotland.

The award, inspired by Carnegie's dedication of his personal wealth to the common good, has been considered as the "Nobel Prize for Philanthropy." It has gone to major world philanthropists whose gifts have contributed immeasurably to the advancement of mankind and the preservation of the environment. Some of the awardees include the Gates Family, the Rockefeller Family, George Soros, Ted Turner, the Hewlitt and Packard families, the Cadbury Family, and His Highness the Aga Kahn.

Pittsburgh is a logical and historically appealing choice to host the presentation. The city is heir to Carnegie's business legacy, beneficiary of many of his philanthropic interests, and home to four Carnegie institutions. These four institutions—Carnegie Mellon University, the Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, and the Hero Fund—are organizing the event, which is scheduled for Oct. 16-17. The event will draw world attention to Pittsburgh and its history on the eve of the city's 250th anniversary festivities in 2008.



Over the past few years the award has proven to be of benefit on different levels. It showcases the generosity of the awardees, thereby inspiring others to consider funding of worthy projects with their wealth. It draws attention to Carnegie's efforts, spanning more than a century, in elevating the human condition through the advancement of science, culture, and education. In addition, the event itself brings into focus the work of the hosting institutions.

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## CARNEGIE GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER NEWEST MEMBER OF COMMISSION

*(continued from cover)*

undertakes in life," Thomson said. "She will become a very valuable addition to your board.

"I have known Linda since she was 5 and my memory of her is that she was already pretty good at organizing! Over the years we have all been aware of Linda's loving concern for our rather large extended family both in the U.S. and here in G.B."

Hills, 59, says she is eager to serve on the Hero Fund board. "It is truly an honor to be able to read about individuals who living their daily life are really the unsung heroes of our society," she said. "Through their character and moral fortitude, they sacrifice or show they are willing to sacrifice all for another human being. I can see it will be a really rewarding and profoundly meaningful experience to be part of what my great-grandfather so long ago understood was worthy of recognition. It is very exciting to share in this."

One of the 15 Carnegie great-grandchildren (13 of whom survive), Hills joins a few of her cousins who are also board members of some of the 24 trusts and institutions established by *Grandpa Naigie* a century ago. She first met Hero Fund representatives during the dedication of a Carnegie site in Dunfermline, Scotland, two years ago (see related story, page 3), and she displayed great interest in learning more of the Commission's work on a subsequent visit to Pittsburgh.

Born in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., raised in Summit, N.J., and formerly of Granby, Colo., Hills is a graduate of The Orme School, Mayer, Ariz., where she was valedictorian of the 1965 class. She is also a graduate of Pomona College, Claremont, Calif., where she received a bachelor's degree in botany. A horticulturalist for more than 35 years, Hills worked in the floral industry and is a "passionate gardener." Inspired at an early age by her father, Lennart G. Thorell, a native of Sweden who was a captain for Pan American Airways, she is a world traveler, most recently having returned from her second trip to Southeast Asia.

Hills and her husband of 35 years, Harold, are the parents of three: Scott Roswell, 26; Louise Margaret, 24; and James Whitfield, 19. The children's names reflect their heritage: "Roswell" was the name of Carnegie's son-in-law; "Louise" and "Margaret" were the names of his wife and daughter, respectively; and "Whitfield" was his wife's maiden name.

The link to Carnegie for Hills is through her mother, Barbara Miller Lawson, who was one of four children of Carnegie's daughter, an only child. In 1961, Lawson and her husband Bill settled on a working cattle ranch in Granby that remains in the family.

## New home in Scotland

*(continued from page 3)*

in a spiral-and-circle design that will have a natural bond with its setting to form an "organic" installation. The building will also employ the latest in environmentally friendly green technology, with the use of sustainable timber throughout, a geothermal heat pump to reduce energy costs, and a physical orientation to capture maximum solar gain. Local craftsmen and labor will be used.

Incorporated with the design is a Tiffany window that was commissioned by Carnegie in 1913 as a memorial to his parents, William and Margaret Morrison Carnegie, who are buried in Pittsburgh. The four trusts, of the 24 established by Carnegie in Europe and the U.S., that are to settle into the new "Andrew Carnegie House" are:

- **The Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland**, established in 1901. The trust supports the improvement and expansion of the 13 universities in Scotland as well as the education of Scottish students attending them.
- **The Carnegie Dunfermline Trust**, established in 1903 to benefit the inhabitants of the city through the support of education, sports, arts, heritage, culture, welfare, and recreation. The trust also oversees the Carnegie Birthplace Museum, located in the family cottage.
- **The Hero Fund Trust for the U.K., Ireland, and the Channel Islands**, established in 1908 to recognize those ill-affected by the performance of heroic lifesaving acts.
- **The Carnegie U.K. Trust**, established in 1913 to address the changing needs of the people of Great Britain and Ireland through the support of educational, arts, and social development programs. 



*Abbey Park House, Dunfermline, is current home to Carnegie's Dunfermline and Hero Fund trusts.*



*Mr. Saks*



### BURNING ENERGY TO CONSERVE IT

Benjamin Saks, Carnegie Medal awardee and an architecture major at Carnegie Mellon University (founded by Andrew Carnegie as Carnegie Technical Schools in 1900), Pittsburgh, is playing a key role in the university's participation in a national competition to design, build, and operate the most attractive and energy-efficient solar-powered home. His team is one of 20 selected by the U.S. Department of Energy to compete in the 2007 Solar Decathlon.

The project takes a lot of Saks's own energy and, along with his regular course work, keeps him so busy that the Hero Fund had a tough time scheduling him for the presentation of his medal, the awarding of which was announced in September. Late in the afternoon of Feb. 20, of course after classes, Saks was joined by his proud family, a few of his professors, and several classmates for the presentation. The Commission was represented by Douglas R. Chambers, director of external affairs, and Susan L. Marcy, who investigated the case.

Saks, originally from the Cleveland, Ohio, area, was recognized for going to the aid of a Pittsburgh police officer a year earlier, on Feb. 25, 2006. Attempting to apprehend a suspect, the officer pursued and tackled him to the pavement outside Saks's residence. Saks, then 21, witnessed a fair amount of this action, and as the officer struggled with the suspect, Saks asked if he needed help. He then approached and lay across the suspect's legs to hold him down. The man grasped the officer's gun and fired it, the bullet striking Saks in the left hand. Realizing he had been shot, Saks stood and backed away as other officers arrived to subdue the suspect. Saks's wound required 20 stitches, but he is now fully recovered.

The house that Saks's team is building will be showcased and judged along with the others on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., in October. The house will then be moved to a nature reserve near Pittsburgh to become a permanent installation. *(Lower photo courtesy of ThePittsburghChannel.com)*

## Palm Beach museum lecture honors three medal awardees

Dr. L. Rodger Currie, a winter resident of Palm Beach, Fla., was presented his Carnegie Medal this spring for a summertime act of heroism, by which he helped to save six persons from a burning yacht in Nantucket Sound. The award was announced last fall (see the December 2006 issue of *imPULSE*).

At age 81, Currie, a retired dentist, teamed up with a friend, Richard J. Gallagher, then 54, the fire commissioner of Hyannis Port, Mass., to effect the July 2005 rescue. Gallagher was also awarded the medal.

The presentation ceremony was held at Whitehall, the mansion of Henry M. Flagler, who was the “Gilded Age” developer of the Florida East Coast Railway. Two blocks from Currie’s home, Whitehall now houses the Flagler Museum, a new program of which is an annual lecture by a representative of the Hero Fund. Museum executive director John M. Blades conceived the program, recognizing that Hero Fund founder Andrew Carnegie and Flagler were contemporaries in the era between the Civil War and the Great Depression.

This year’s lecture was by Douglas R. Chambers, the Commission’s director of external affairs, who gave the history of the Hero Fund, citing specific cases. Alluding to the rescue act of Floridian Kerry D. Reardon, who jumped from a bridge to rescue a boy from a submerged vehicle in Tampa Bay in 2005, Chambers surprised the crowd by introducing the hero. The 2006 medal awardee and his family were attending the lecture from their home, in St. Petersburg, as was awardee Joseph Anthony Alaimo of West Palm Beach.

Alaimo had been cited for his role in saving a girl from drowning in the Atlantic Ocean at Palm Beach, and his medal was also presented at Whitehall, in 2005. That gave Blades the idea for an annual event.

Others who represented the Commission at this year’s lecture were its vice president, Priscilla J. McCrady, and retired board member S. Richard Brand, of Key Largo, Fla. Last year’s inaugural presentation was given by Commission president Mark Laskow and executive director Walter F. Rutkowski. 



*Whitehall, home of the Flagler Museum*



*Three Carnegie Medal awardees were honored in March by the Hero Fund at an annual event at the Flagler Museum of Palm Beach, Fla. Pictured from left: S. Richard Brand, representing the Commission; awardees Dr. L. Rodger Currie, Kerry D. Reardon, and Joseph Anthony Alaimo; and Commission vice president Priscilla J. McCrady.*

### TO THE HERO FUND

#### COMMUNITY ENCOURAGEMENT

Your recognition of heroes is admirable, and I would like to share your stories with my community.

We have had a lot of crime in our neighborhood. The police do all they can to help, but their territory is large and they are rarely in the neighborhood except to take reports after crimes occur.

I believed we could do better, so I started looking into what is working elsewhere to implement it here. As I was learning about new crimes, I realized many of them could have been prevented if only my neighbors knew exactly what was occurring. I started a community email distribution, but my news, while intending to help prevent future crimes, is not uplifting. I’ve seen neighbors being held up with a gun, beaten, robbed, pistol-whipped, and tied up.

To balance my news to the community, I would like to end each report with an inspiring story of ordinary people who did extraordinary things for others. Since you are reporting and recognizing people that have courage and put the good of others above their own safety, I would like to share these stories—it will allow me to report the dangers in my neighborhood but always end on a positive note.

*Alan Sakowitz, Esq. • Bay Harbor Islands, Fla.*

#### HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

I am writing to let you know how much I appreciate the work that you do. The Hero Fund is not widely known but is undoubtedly treasured by every recipient. I don’t know that I would have known about the award were it not for my great-grandfather, who was a recipient. The award resulted in my grandmother attending college, meeting my grandfather...you can figure out the rest!

As I read about the many acts of courage among our “ordinary people” [in the Commission’s annual report], I am always overwhelmed with a sense of pride and hope for our future. Once read, I leave the report in a public area where it can be reviewed by others.

I know that my small token of appreciation is minuscule given the totality of the fund; however, I feel it is necessary to at least cover the cost of my copy of the annual report. Please know that your efforts are appreciated!

*Karen Albert • Vienna, Va.*

*(Note: The writer’s great-grandfather, Earl R. Albert, was awarded the medal for attempting to save a woman from drowning in the Delaware River at Camden, N.J., in 1927. The woman was saved by others, but Albert, 28, drowned.)*

#### THE RIGHT THING

My father passed away on May 2, 2006. I have his medal now and have always thought it illustrated the kind of man he was. He did not have a lot to say. He always let his life and the *(continued on page 7)*



AWARDEE'S OWN FOUNDATION  
BUILDS CHARACTER IN YOUTH



Mr. Lessard

When Paul Lessard helped to save a 62-year-old grandmother from drowning in a swollen creek in High Point, N.C., in 1993, he would have had no idea that his actions would have a favorable impact on the character development of thousands of young people throughout the High Point area.

For his heroic act, Lessard, then a 35-year-old sales manager, was awarded the Carnegie Medal, as was his co-rescuer, John P. Kavanagh III of New Canaan, Conn. A year after the rescue, Lessard used the award's monetary grant to help establish a non-profit foundation,

The Lighthouse Project. Goal of the endeavor was to expose well-known role models as speakers to students of both public and private schools. An annual scholarship was added to honor students who display extraordinary character and servant leadership.

Advance 13 years to 2007 and find the project still going strong.

"This year we passed the 700,000 mark of kids who have heard our speakers," Lessard said. Figuring in this year's program was former NFL star Joe Ehrmann of the Baltimore Colts. Ehrmann is now a pastor, novelist, and guest speaker who runs The Door, an inner-city ministry reaching out to those in economic, spiritual, and emotional need. His story is told by Pulitzer Prize winner Jeffrey Marx in the 2003 book, "Season of Life," a New York Times bestseller.

"I am always aware that without the Carnegie Hero Commission none of this would have been possible," says Lessard, whose "day job" is now executive director of the High Point Community Foundation.



BOARD NOTES (continued from page 3)

But there is another benefit that has evolved. Carnegie's institutions are largely independent of each other, and their representatives now get the chance to meet on a regular basis. The ceremonies in Edinburgh two years ago included a gathering of hero funds from several countries, which we will repeat this year in Pittsburgh. At Edinburgh, the Hero Fund developed friendship with Carnegie's great-granddaughter, Linda T. Hills, who is now on our board.

This year's Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy awardees will be announced over the summer, and *impULSE* will carry details of the presentation in future issues. We are anticipating our family reunion!

The quandary of naming heroes

By Thomas L. Wentling, Jr., Board Member • Carnegie Hero Fund Commission

Who am I to decide who is a hero and who is not?

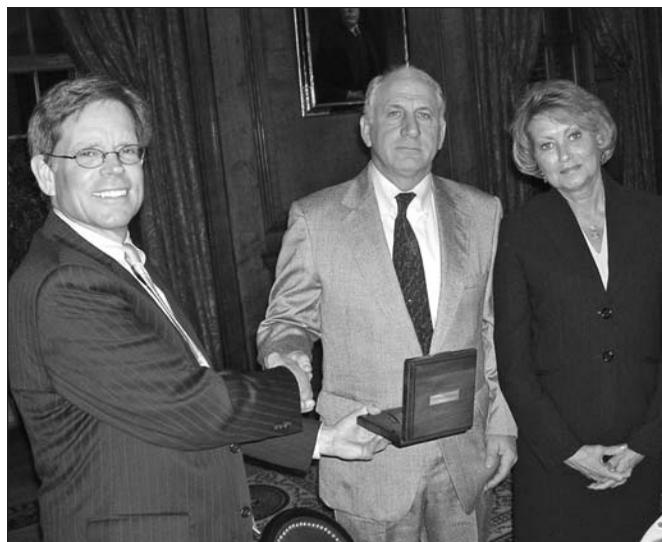
After 16 years on the Commission, I think about that at least once during each of the five annual Executive Committee meetings, at which we review the 20-or-so cases the staff has presented for consideration. By the time a case gets to the committee, generally one or two years have passed since "the event"—enough time for our investigators to interview participants, witnesses, law enforcement, and anyone else who can substantiate, corroborate, or lend perspective to the heroic act. That the case has survived to this point is not taken lightly by the trustees, as we have great respect for the skills and judgment of our investigators.

But neither does the case get a rubber stamp. The trustees bring a wide variety of perspectives and life experiences to bear upon the fact set. We have read the abstracts of the cases prior to the meeting, and our role is to probe and discuss them before making a decision. We have the raw case data at hand to answer any question that arises, at least insofar as any event shrouded in chaos and fear allows for accurate reconstruction.

There are 21 committee members, 14 male and seven female, of whom 12 on average attend any given meeting and vet the cases. While certainly larger-than-life heroes to our spouses, children, and household pets, Carnegie heroes we are not, and therein lies my quandary. Who am I to vote against someone whose actions I don't think measure up? *Insufficient life risk...but he didn't go back in...she couldn't have known the dangers...anyone in a similar situation would have done the same thing...* and so on.

How could we know what it must have been like? Obviously we can't, but the twin crucibles—one investigative, relentless, and at ground level (the factual report), the other a step removed and with a different perspective, adding insight, experience, and impression (the analysis)—form a rigorous and, we hope, nearly foolproof gauntlet, so that when you read that someone has received a Carnegie Medal, you know that person did something very, very special: He or she acted when others hesitated, someone is alive today because of them, or, even if the victim died, the hero did everything in his power to save them, perhaps to the point of his own death.

We are all about heroes—finding them, verifying their acts, recognizing them in their



Thomas L. Wentling, Jr., left, presented the Carnegie Medal to John H. Flanigan at the Hero Fund board's 103rd annual meeting in March. A bricklayer by trade, Flanigan responded to the scene of a fire on Aug. 15, 2005, in Pittsburgh, on learning that a 6-year-old girl was trapped in the burning basement of a house. Then 57, Flanigan crawled through a basement window, found the girl in the dense smoke, and handed her outside to others. Citing his difficulty in the rescue, Flanigan, shown here with his wife Roxann, told the board, "I thought, maybe this is how it will end." Wentling told Flanigan it was an honor for the board to meet him.

communities, and adding them to the pantheon of Carnegie medalists, who number 9,092 since 1904. We are humbled by them and catch in them a glimpse of Christ's observation: "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Rarely does a Carnegie hero believe he or (continued on page 7)

**EQUIPPED TO ACT**

Robert Rex Miller, left, of Lakeside, Calif., is a plumber, and so it stands that while on the way to a job he would have his tools with him. He got to use two of those tools to rescue a man from a burning car following a crash on a southern California highway on April 29, 2005. Miller's vehicle was also involved in the accident, but, unhurt, he grabbed a hammer and a utility knife from the bed of his truck and responded to the burning car, in which the driver was trapped. Miller, then 45, used the hammer to break a window and then, extending his upper body into the car, used the knife to cut the strap of the driver's safety belt. After releasing the buckle, Miller pulled the driver partially through the window. Another man assisted in freeing the man from the car.

A unit from the San Diego Fire Rescue Department arrived soon, including its captain, Robert Glass, shown here with Miller. Capt. Glass and the department, including public information officer Maurice Luques, aided the Hero Fund in its investigation of the case, then made arrangements for a medal-presentation ceremony, which took place in February outside the station. Representing the Commission was Douglas R. Chambers, director of external affairs.



**TO THE HERO FUND** (continued from page 5)

way he lived it speak for itself. He kept his medal in his dresser drawer, not out of false humility but because what he did was what he expected of himself (and me and my brothers as well): Do the right thing because it is the right thing, not for any reward that might come from it. I am proud to be his son.

Gary E. Davis • Springville, Ala.  
 (Note: Horace A. Davis, crane operator, was 33 in 1961 when he helped to save a workman who was pinned at the bottom of a 60-foot-deep well in Chalkville, Ala.)

**CHARGE A FEE**

I must say that there are publications "out there" that are certainly not as noteworthy OR as newsworthy as *imPULSE* is and that charge a bundle for a subscription. The latest issue was simply excellent, encouraging, and inescapably thought provoking.

I realize that the Commission is non-profit...and perhaps is so well funded that it doesn't NEED this, but I would suggest a campaign of sorts to promote the newsletter for a small subscription fee with exceptions to the immediate surviving heirs of Carnegie Medal recipients. (Regardless, I would be thrilled to pay a modest sum to help fund something like I have suggested.) Every elementary school in America should be provided with copies of this newsletter and a Carnegie-sponsored program such as Mrs. Miller initiated in her school [see March 2007 issue]. We have become a nation faced with few heroes rising from the public forum. It is the quiet men and women who are the true heroes.

The school character program is an outstanding idea, particularly since the times have brought our nation to a virtual standstill for the lack of character except in the case of 'everyman.' It is the day-to-day struggling people simply seeking to live and let live where we find true heroes.

Stella Taylor • Cypress, Texas  
 (Note: Ms. Taylor's grandfather, Forest W. McNeir, was awarded the medal for helping to save a firefighter who was stranded on a ladder outside a burning building in Houston in 1910. The rescue was described in the September 2006 issue of *imPULSE*.)

**ACADEMIC REVENGE**

I'm a professor at Moorpark College, a community college in California, where I teach a social psychology class. We have a unit on prosocial behavior, looking at the steps people go through before they decide to help others.

Last year, after asking the class about their heroes, I was frustrated to hear that they all named sports and entertainment figures who hadn't done anything that could be considered heroic. In plotting "academic revenge," I decided to go to your Website for assistance. I found it!

I printed off the names and stories of each of the heroes, then divided the class into small groups and gave each group a hero or set of heroes. The group had to summarize the heroic action and relate it to the concepts in the chapter about the decision process.

(continued on page 11)



**A HERO REMEMBERED**

Joyce Hapke of Burbank, Calif., holds the Carnegie Medal awarded to her late husband, Jürgen Hapke, at a private ceremony earlier this year in Los Angeles. Hapke, 65, died Dec. 14, 2005, while rescuing his friend and coworker Helmut Mende, then 71, from a knife attack as the men, commercial painters, worked at a job in Beverly Hills (the March issue of *imPULSE* carries further details). Present at the ceremony were other members of the Hapke family; several friends; the chief of the Beverly Hills Police Department, David L. Snowden, left; and two of the department's detectives, John Czarnocki and Tad Nelson, shown to the right of Mrs. Hapke. The Commission was represented by Douglas R. Chambers, second from left, who made the presentation. For more on Mrs. Hapke, see the Hero Fund's Website, [www.carnegiehero.org](http://www.carnegiehero.org).

*The quandary of naming heroes* (continued from page 6)

she acted heroically, but rather "I did only what anyone would have done." Hardly. It is our great honor to play a part in recognizing what Andrew Carnegie wanted to recognize in establishing the award. ☒

[Note: Wentling, who is Senior Vice President, Investments, of UBS Financial Services Inc., joined the Commission in 1991 and currently serves as vice chair of its Executive Committee and chair of the Finance and Audit committees. During his 14 years' oversight of the Commission's finances, its portfolio increased 106% (net of distributions and expenses), allowing for substantial increases in the Hero Fund's giving.

[The contribution of Wentling's time and talent is at no cost to the organization. Further, he provides similar guidance to the Pittsburgh-based Staunton Farm Foundation, which is devoted to mental health care, treatment, and support. What motivates his altruism? Simply, "to be of service to the community." The organizations' missions "are extremely important, especially the Hero Fund's. It resonates with me."]



LATEST AWARDEES  
OF THE CARNEGIE MEDAL

SINCE THE LAST ISSUE OF *imPULSE*, THE FOLLOWING 39 INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN AWARDED THE CARNEGIE MEDAL, BRINGING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS TO 9,092 SINCE THE HERO FUND'S INCEPTION IN 1904. THE LATEST AWARDS, WHICH WERE ANNOUNCED ON MARCH 15 AND MAY 3, ARE DETAILED ON THE COMMISSION'S WEBSITE AT [WWW.CARNEGIEHERO.ORG](http://WWW.CARNEGIEHERO.ORG).

**Francisco Santiago**, 30, a wire technician, rescued his neighbor **Teresa A. Sciortino**, 52, from an attacking dog in Waterbury, Conn., on March 6 of last year. A 100-pound male pit bull attacked Sciortino in her backyard, biting her severely about the legs. Santiago witnessed the attack and, armed with only a three-foot piece of wood, began to strike the dog. The dog turned on Santiago, darting at his legs and snapping. When the dog finally fled the yard, Santiago aided Sciortino into her house, where they awaited an ambulance and police.

Retiree **Thurston Duke**, 74, rescued **Clint A. Folgate** from a burning pickup truck after a nighttime highway accident outside Duke's house in Muncie, Ind., on Nov. 30, 2005. Severely injured and semiconscious, Folgate, 49, remained in the cab after the accident. Despite high flames issuing from the rear of the pickup and along its driver's side, Duke leaned through the window of the passenger door, grasped Folgate, who was aflame, and dragged him to safety. Duke suffered minor burns to his hands.

**Alarie Ronald Davis** died a day after saving his wife **Victoria** from an armed assailant in Detroit, Mich., on Feb. 26 last year. Ms. Davis, 53, was sitting in the couple's car, waiting for her husband, when a man armed with a shotgun opened the driver's door and got inside. He told her he was taking the car. Davis, 54, disabled maintenance worker, responded from across the street and struggled with the assailant. The assailant, who had just killed a woman in a church during services, shot Davis, mortally wounding him, then left the scene.

**Jay P. Johansen** of Cranston, R.I., saved **Sandra A. Stephenson** from a burning apartment house in Cranston on Jan. 4, 2006. Stephenson, 57, was trying to escape from the third floor of the building but was nearly overcome on the second floor by dense smoke. Driving by, Johansen, 35, correctional officer, discovered the fire and learned that Stephenson was unaccounted for. He entered the building, crawled up to the stairs, and found her. With Stephenson clinging to his neck, Johansen returned downstairs and outside to safety.

Towboat captain **Charles Lee Montgomery** and his crew of **Donald LeRoy Brown**, **Robert F. M. Cornman**, and **Thomas W. Siegler** saved two men from drowning in the Ohio River at Industry, Pa., on Jan. 9, 2005. **George A. Zappone**, 44, and **John A. Thomas, Sr.**, 35, were crewmembers of a towboat that was swept by the extremely swift current through an

open gate of a dam at night. The boat came to rest upright in very turbulent water below the dam, at a point about 30 feet from the structure, and the men held to a ladder affixed to its pilothouse for more than an hour as they shouted for help. **Montgomery**, 41, of East Liverpool, Ohio, was the pilot of a towboat that was moored downstream. Learning of the accident, he took his boat to the scene, accompanied by **Brown**, 24, lead deckhand, of Aliquippa, Pa.; **Cornman**, 36, deckhand, of East Liverpool; and **Siegler**, 47, lead deckhand, of Washington, Pa. **Montgomery** positioned his vessel in the turbulent water in close proximity to the submerged one and worked to hold it from being drawn to the dam by a strong back flow. From the swamped lower deck, the other crewmen threw life rings to **Zappone** and **Thomas** and pulled them aboard. **Montgomery** then rode his boat with the downstream current and took it to the safety of a nearby power plant. Four other men aboard the stricken vessel died in the accident.

Neighbors **Henry H. Garvey III** and **Gregory Deighan** helped to save a workman from suffocating in a below-ground cistern in Newburyport, Mass., on Aug. 20, 2005. **Ezekiel T. Wentworth**, 24, was working with a sealant in the eight-foot-deep concrete cistern, which was located under the utility room of a house. Sealant vapors ignited, causing an explosion that rendered him unconscious and severely burned him. **Garvey**, 42, manager, and **Deighan**, 43, data sales manager, responded. **Garvey** entered the cistern three times before he was able to drag **Wentworth** to a ladder at the cistern hatch. **Deighan** then entered the cistern, and he and **Garvey** hoisted **Wentworth** up to others. Both rescuers required hospital treatment for smoke inhalation.

**Patrick Shane Pace** of Lago Vista, Texas, saved **Barbara C. Vidlund**, 52, from her burning house in Leander, Texas, on April 15 last year. **Pace**, 31, a police officer, was dispatched to the fire, which was outside his jurisdiction. Despite 20-foot flames issuing from the rear of the doublewide mobile home, he entered three times before finding **Vidlund** semiconscious and sitting on the living room floor. Grasping her by her clothing, **Pace** dragged her to the door, then removed her from the house with help from another man.

Retired coach **Duane Damron**, 71, of Bakersfield, Calif., saved a man from being struck by a shifting mobile home while on a mission trip in Gulfport, Miss., on Dec. 12, 2005. **Damron** and **Curtis A. Nemetz**, 26, were installing a mobile home for victims of Hurricane Katrina when the structure shifted toward **Nemetz**. **Damron** lunged at him from a kneeling position and pulled him away. That end of the unit dropped to the ground, pinning **Damron** by the hand. He required two months' hospitalization for treatment of severe injury to that hand.

Off-duty firefighter **Brian D. Rothell**, 42, of Richmond, Va., helped to keep a man from falling 50 feet from a bridge into the shallow James River in Richmond on March 25, 2006. **Rothell** and others held the suicidal man against the bridge railing but could not lift him to the deck. **Rothell** then climbed over the railing and secured himself to the bridge by hooking one leg



*Brian D. Rothell recreates the positioning he assumed on the outside of a bridge while helping to keep a suicidal man from falling. Rothell acted 50 feet above the James River.*

through the railing. He reached toward the man and, although the man outweighed him by 85 pounds, helped lift him up to the top of the railing, where the others pulled him to safety. (See photo.)

**Keith R. Miller** of Ocean, N.J., helped to save **Carlos Hernandez**, 21, from drowning in the Atlantic Ocean at Avon by the Sea, N.J., on Feb. 11 of last year. Fully attired, **Hernandez**, 21, was yelling and struggling at a point about 300 feet from shore. **Miller**, 64, marketing consultant, saw him while jogging nearby. He stripped down to his running tights, entered the 40-degree water, and swam to **Hernandez**, who outweighed him. **Miller** towed him toward shore, en route being met by a police officer. All made it to safety.

Racecar driver **Stephen David Sliwa**, 33, of Daytona Beach, Fla., saved a 92-year-old woman from her crashed and burning automobile in Daytona Beach on May 10, 2006. **Merry C. Banks** was trapped in the car after it struck an electrical ground station and caught fire at its front end. **Sliwa** responded by bicycle. He got **Banks** to unlock the front passenger door, then he knelt on the seat, released her safety belt, and pulled her from the car. He ran with her to safety, an explosive rush of flame shortly filling the car's interior.

**James P. Daigle, Jr.**, sustained second-degree burns saving his grandmother, **Ruby H. LeCompte**, 89, from her burning house in Houma, La., on Feb. 12 last year. **Daigle**, 37, a police detective, was alerted to the nighttime fire next door and responded immediately. As he ushered **LeCompte** from her bedroom and through a hall, they fell amidst flaming debris, and **Daigle's** shirt caught fire. Regaining his footing, **Daigle** took **LeCompte** outside to safety before the house was engulfed by flames. **Daigle** was hospitalized overnight for treatment of burns to his back.

**John C. Springer**, 62, a legal administrator from Alexandria, Va., rescued Jeanne Hobbs, 37, from a man who was attacking her with a knife in her office at a retirement home in Alexandria. Springer was visiting at the facility when he heard Hobbs scream. He approached the office, grabbed the assailant by an arm, and struggled with him, Hobbs fleeing to safety. The man cut Springer about the head extensively before going to another wing on that floor. He similarly attacked four elderly patients before he was subdued by **Amadu Jalloh**, 39, of Alexandria, and **Jane Margaret Dow**, 59, of Arlington, Va., both of whom also were visiting. Dow, an editor, produced a canister of pepper spray, which she and Jalloh, a home health aide, used against the assailant. The assailant struck Dow, sending her to the floor, before he was disarmed by Jalloh. Police arrived shortly and arrested him. Springer required 48 sutures to close his wounds.

**Justin Frederick Zurilla** of Baltimore, Md., saved a 2-year-old boy from an overturned and burning sport utility vehicle after an accident in Rossville, Md., on May 19, 2005. Jayden M. Shird remained strapped in his car seat as flames began to enter the passenger compartment. Zurilla, 34, a mortgage broker, entered the vehicle on his back through its broken-out rear window. He positioned himself underneath Jayden and worked to free him from his seat. He then handed the boy through the window and left the vehicle for safety.

Atty. **W. John Funk**, 59, of Gilmanton, N.H., saved Jason M. Young, 16, and Samantha L. Redman, 15, from a burning pickup truck on June 30, 2005, after a nighttime accident not far from Funk's home. After the pickup struck a tree and caught fire, Funk ran to the scene, entered the bed of the vehicle, and pulled Jason through the rear window of the cab. He then partially entered the truck through the window of the driver's door, grasped Samatha, who was unconscious, and pulled her out. The teens were injured in the accident but not burned.

**Michael Sanchez**, 33, a mechanic from Homestead, Fla., died attempting to save four children from drowning in a man-made lake at a condominium complex in

Homestead on March 26 of last year. The children, two aged 15 and the others 11 and 10, were adrift in a small boat that began to take on water and sink at a point about 500 feet from the bank. Visiting at the complex, Sanchez entered the water for them but experienced difficulty while swimming out and submerged. Using boats, others removed the children to safety, but Sanchez drowned.

Warehouse supervisor **Michael F. Drozdo**, 31, rescued his neighbor Diana L. Bowman, 48, from her burning house in Holly, Mich., on April 3, 2006. Drozdo discovered the fire and reported it, then entered the house through the front door. Oxygen tanks were stored in the entry hall, and flames issued along its ceiling. He found Bowman on the hall floor and dragged her outside, flames shortly engulfing the interior of the structure and causing some of the tanks to fail, intensifying the blaze.

Working on a pole in Catoosa, Okla., on Feb. 27 last year, electrician **Michael D. Evans, Jr.**, saw a car enter a 10-foot-deep retention pond nearby. Evans, of Kellyville, Okla., descended to the ground, ran to the pond, and entered the 40-degree water. Still wearing his work boots, he swam 75 feet to the driver's side of the car, which was sinking nose first. He opened the vehicle's rear door and pulled the driver, Jack E. Bailey, 72, out by the hair. They returned to the bank. Bailey was uninjured, but Evans became ill and missed several days' work.

U.S. National Park Service coworkers **Roger W. Myers**, 57, a carpenter from Interior, S.D., and **Kenneth Lee Thompson**, 35, a maintenance worker from Wall, S.D., saved an elderly couple from their burning automobile after a highway accident in Martin, S.D., on March 10, 2005. During a dust storm with high winds, William A. and Ann B. Byrne, both 87, were trapped inside their car after it left the roadway, entered a ditch, and caught fire. Myers and Thompson drove upon the scene and stopped. Thompson removed the window of the passenger door, assisted Ms. Byrne from the car, and carried her to safety. He and Myers then partially entered the vehicle and pulled Byrne out to safety just before flames engulfed the car's interior. Both rescuers required hospital treatment for minor burns.

**Michael E. G. Oakley**, 16, a student from Savannah, Tenn., helped to rescue Eric G. Alexander from a burning pickup truck in Savannah on April 13, 2005. Following a nighttime highway accident, Alexander, 29, remained in the driver's seat of his truck, trapped by wreckage, as flames broke out and spread into the passenger compartment. Michael stopped at the scene and pulled on Alexander about the arms. After having to retreat at least twice because of intense heat, he pulled Alexander out, receiving help from another man.

**Matthew J. Emmerling**, 21, a student at Pennsylvania State University, and **Kevin J. Mahoney**, 22, a university lifeguard, saved Seth L. Mattleman, 20, and other students from their burning house in State College on April 2, 2006. Fire broke out before dawn on the back porch of the house and, spreading rapidly, entered the structure, including into Mattleman's bedroom. Emmerling, of State College, and Mahoney, now of Columbus, Ohio, entered the house through the front door, shouting to



*After witnessing a highway accident in New Ipswich, N.H., in which a 10-wheel truck overturned onto a pickup (foreground), Richard Stauffenker of New Ipswich removed the truck's windshield, freed the driver, and pulled him out to safety—as the wreckage burned.*

alert its occupants, some of whom fled. They then went to Mattleman's room. Emmerling grasped Mattleman about the arms and pulled him out the front door, then he and Mahoney re-entered the house and went upstairs. Finding a disoriented man in a bathroom, Mahoney pulled him to the stairs, and they stumbled part way down before exiting the structure along with Emmerling. Flames destroyed the building. (See photo.)

**Johnathan P. Burbea** of Brookline, Mass., moved Lawrence Spiegel from the path of a trolley in Brookline on June 15 of last year. Crossing the track on which a trolley was approaching at 10 m.p.h. in a commuter station, Spiegel, 62, fell and landed between the rails. From nearby, Burbea, 33, a financial professional, immediately ran to him as the trolley closed in on them. Burbea moved Spiegel to the platform, the trolley striking Burbea in the leg and grazing Spiegel as it passed. Both men received hospital treatment for their injuries.

**Obed M. Petties, Jr.**, an 18-year-old construction worker from Detroit, Mich., died attempting to help save Petter Mattic, 64, from drowning in a retention pond in Sterling Heights, Mich., on July 20, 2006. Mattic was in his car as it began to submerge about 125 feet from the bank. Other men attempting a rescue shouted to Petties, who was on the bank, to get a hammer. Obtaining the tool, Petties entered the pond and began to swim to the car, but before reaching it, he submerged. Mattic was rescued by the others, but Petties drowned.

**Oscar A. Leiva**, now of Reno, Nev., saved two neighbors from a burning house in Tracy, Calif., on Nov. 29, 2005. Lynn Bloom and Mary M. Rocha, 92, were inside a one-story house after fire broke out in a front room. Working outside, Leiva, 34, a forklift operator, responded to the house and kicked in the front door. He found Bloom in dense smoke in the living room and walked her outside. Re-entering, he found Rocha in a rear bedroom. He picked her up and carried her out the back door to safety. Leiva was treated for smoke inhalation.

*(continued on page 10)*



*During a nighttime fire that destroyed this house in State College, Pa., last year, Matthew J. Emmerling of State College and Kevin J. Mahoney of Columbus, Ohio, entered the structure and evacuated its residents.*



## LATEST AWARDEES (continued from page 9)



*James J. Blount III of Chesapeake, Va., may be a volunteer and a professional firefighter, but he was off duty on July 19, 2006, when he witnessed a major highway accident on a bridge in Suffolk, Va. He saved the lives of both drivers involved. Photo courtesy of Suffolk Department of Fire & Rescue.*

**Richard Stauffeneker**, a mason from New Ipswich, N.H., pulled a man from a burning truck after a highway accident in New Ipswich on May 4 of last year. Joseph P. Gruda, 26, was the driver of the truck, which carried at least 130 gallons of fuel. It overturned onto a pickup, and the wreckage caught fire. Stauffeneker, 36, witnessed the accident. He pulled the truck's windshield away, partially entered the cab, and freed Gruda's legs, which were pinned. He worked to dislodge Gruda while the flames grew, then guided him to safety. (See photo.)

Sales representative **David R. Sauter**, 50, of Canandaigua, N.Y. helped to save a woman from drowning after her car entered the Erie Canal in Pittsford, N.Y., last May 25. Ethel Hannah, 60, tried to escape the car, but it submerged 52 feet from the bank in water about 12 feet deep. Sauter witnessed the accident. He swam to the car, reached down, and, grasping Hannah by the collar, pulled her to the surface. En route to the bank with her, he had difficulty in the cold water. Two other men entered the canal and took Hannah to safety, Sauter following.

**Christopher Alan Duggan**, 31, of Prospect, N.S., saved Darian S. H. Mansfield, 8, from drowning in the Atlantic Ocean on Sept. 2, 2005, at Lawrencetown, N.S., and he died attempting to save her brother Adam R., 12. The children were carried away from shore by a very strong current. Duggan, a family friend, swam to them and towed Darian to safety on a nearby point of land, then he turned back for Adam. A man who was kiteboarding took Adam to safety, but Duggan submerged and drowned.

An off-duty firefighter and medic, **James J. Blount III**, 32, of Chesapeake, Va., rescued the drivers of two trucks that collided and caught fire on an interstate highway bridge over the James River at Suffolk, Va., on July 19, 2006. Sigmund Molis, Jr., 52, was driving a tractor-

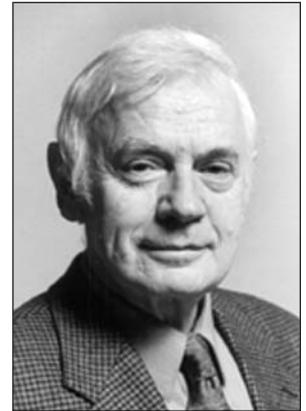
*(continued on page 11)*

## What makes a hero? Turns out, nobody knows

By Nick Werner • The Star Press, Muncie, Ind.

News stories about heroes often end with the hero declaring with modesty that he just did what most people would do. But is the cliché true?

No, according to those who study altruism, a form of behavior in which individuals act to benefit someone else at a cost to themselves. "It's not usual for people to intervene in other people's tragedies," said Samuel P. Oliner, an emeritus professor of sociology at Humboldt State University in California.



Dr. Oliner

Oliner has interviewed 216 recipients of the Carnegie Medal for civilian heroism and studied heroes from Sept. 11, 2001, and people who rescued Jews in Nazi Europe. Through his studies of Jew rescuers, Oliner said he found most people are bystanders, willing to ignore human suffering with the hope that somebody else will intervene.

Academia, he said, has yet to explain why some humans rush into burning buildings or jump into icy waters to save strangers from death.

Lee Dugatkin, an evolutionary biologist with the University of Louisville, agreed. "If we could understand why that behavior evolved, we would make huge leaps forward," Dugatkin said.

Less dangerous acts of altruism within a group of organisms or a single society are easier for science to explain, Dugatkin said. The professor pointed out that some group animals survive in part because they share food or have sentries to watch for predators. "It's what's behind sports psychology," Dugatkin said. "You give up something so your group can outperform other groups."

That group mentality is why people are more likely to act heroically for their family members. But it can be expanded in humans through socialization and training, resulting in people who are more predisposed toward heroism than others, according to David Sloan Wilson, an evolutionary biologist with Binghamton University in New York. Sloan pointed to Marine training, in which young men are socialized to take extreme risks for the benefit of their group or unit in combat.

"We are instinctively set to fight to the death for our group," Sloan said. It is possible that some people with military training expand their "group" to include all humans in civilian life, Sloan said.

In his studies, Oliner said he has found that many heroes have role models who have taught them empathy and social responsibility. He also said many heroes are religious. "It's the right thing to do to help others," he said. "It says in the New Testament, 'No greater love has a man than to give his life for another.'" ❏ (Reprinted with permission.)

### COLLEGE OR ELSE

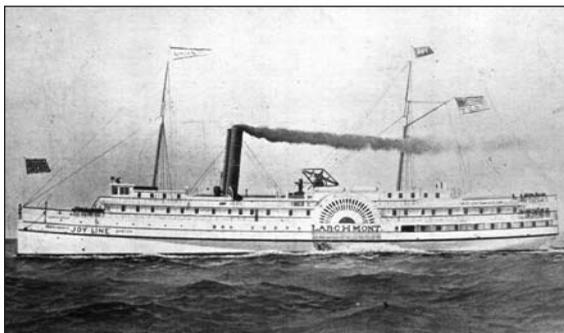
Carnegie Medal awardee Miranda A. Elkins, 25, of Gainesville, Texas, is getting a bachelor's degree from Texas Women's University this spring, but she had little choice in the matter. According to her mother, "It was either 'go to college' or 'go to college,'" Elkins says. Read more on the Commission's Website at [www.carnegiehero.org](http://www.carnegiehero.org). Elkins was awarded the medal for saving a man from drowning in the Gulf of Mexico in 2005.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

ANGELS WALK AMONG US

Feb. 11-12 marked the 100th anniversary of Rhode Island’s worst maritime disaster—the sinking of the steamer *Larchmont*, a 1,600-ton ship en route from Providence to New York City. The vessel sank in the Atlantic Ocean about eight miles off Block Island, and the residents there have not forgotten the tragedy or the acts of bravery in behalf of its surviving victims.



The *Larchmont* sank off the coast of Rhode Island, taking the lives of most of its 200 passengers



This month the Block Island Historical Society opens an exhibit, “Wrecks and Rescues: Block Island Heroes,” that will run until Labor Day. Ben Hruska, historical society administrator, said the exhibit documents the *Larchmont* disaster as well as about eight other shipwrecks. Spoon molds and a door lock from the *Larchmont*, retrieved by a diver from the remains of the steamer, will be part of the display.

The *Larchmont* began its final journey in Providence on Feb. 11, 1907. Shortly before midnight, a coal-carrying schooner struck and tore through it, and the *Larchmont* began to sink in the frigid waters. With the temperature at two below zero, winds raging at 50 m.p.h., and seas at 15 feet, many of the passengers went down with the ship, and most of those who did not died of exposure. Of the 200 or so passengers on the *Larchmont*, only 18 survived. A Navy tug attempted a rescue but had to turn back.

(continued on back cover)

TO THE HERO FUND (continued from page 7)

At the end of the class, I had all the students stand in a circle that I called a “Court of Honor.” Each student read off the names of their assigned heroes. And we stood silently for a minute, saluting these heroes and their truly heroic acts.

At the end of the semester, several of the students commented that this was the most meaningful moment of the entire class. I now do this exercise every semester. In fact, I’ll do it tomorrow.

I thought you’d like to know that we may have touched the lives of some of our young people—at least, shown them that there are genuine heroes today who continue to provide selfless aid to others in urgent need. Thanks for a great Website!

Deena Case-Pall, Ph.D. • Moorpark, Calif., College

OFF THE ISLAND

Receiving the award changed our mother’s life completely. Had she not been a part of this event, she would probably have attended teacher’s college and taught elementary school on Manitoulin Island or close by.

This scholarship broadened her horizons enabling her to leave Manitoulin Island to complete her high school years and attend the University of Toronto. There she met a young bright man headed for medicine and statistics whom she later married. After university, she taught high school phys-ed and English.

Mary Mitchell • Port Carling, Ont.

(Note: Mitchell’s mother was Phyllis A. Tilston, who was awarded the medal at age 13 for her actions of August 13, 1920, by which she saved a woman from drowning at Sandfield Bay off Lake Huron. The award included \$2,800 in scholarship funds over the following 10 years.)

II

FRIENDS REMEMBERED

**Dorothy M. Courier**, 90, of Oviedo, Fla., died Oct. 23. She was the widow of Carnegie Medal awardee **John E. Courier, Jr.**, who was partially disabled by a gunshot wound sustained while attempting to protect a neighbor from an armed intruder in 1954. In 1965, Courier died in an automobile accident. Accompanying Courier’s medal was a monthly disability payment that continued to his widow until the time of her death. Courier and his wife were the grandparents of tennis pro Jim Courier, 36, who was ranked No. 1 in the world in 1992.

**Betty C. Taylor Raimo**, of Scotia, N.Y., died June 25, 2004, a week after her 100th birthday. In 1925, she saved a 24-year-old man from drowning in Lake Erie at West Irving, N.Y., after he had stepped from a sandbar into deep water at a point about 120 feet from shore. Taylor towed him to wadable water despite his locking his legs around her and submerging her. For her actions, she was awarded the Carnegie Medal. After graduating from Pratt Institute, she taught high school art for many years in between raising her children and working in the family business. She is survived by four daughters, six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

[Note: Raimo’s obituary appears on the page of the Hero Fund’s Website that features her heroic act (www.carnegiehero.org). Those having access to obituaries of deceased awardees are urged to submit them for posting. Address to doug@carnegiehero.org, or mail to the office address.]

**Suzanne Gottwald**, 84, of Midlothian, Ill., died March 8. She was the widow of **Zoltan E. Gottwald**, who was awarded the Carnegie Medal posthumously for his actions of Dec. 1, 1972, by which he drowned at age 49 while helping to save a 3-year-old girl who had broken through the ice on a pond. The girl was saved by others. Ms. Gottwald and her husband, both born in Czechoslovakia, came to the U.S. after World War II. She was the recipient of monthly grant from the Hero Fund, to help with routine living expenses, that commenced at the time of her husband’s death.

LATEST AWARDEES (continued from page 10)

trailer that struck a utility truck driven by James Tatem, 54. After Blount witnessed the accident, he helped Molis, who was severely injured, from the cab of the tractor. He then broke out a window of Tatem’s truck with his helmet, maneuvered partially into the cab, and, grasping Tatem, pulled him to safety. (See photo.)

Three men teamed up to pull Timothy C. Baptiste from the wreckage of his automobile after it was struck from behind by a truck and burst into flames, in Butler, Pa., on June 21 of last year. **Frank Oesterling**, 50, a sales engineer, and **Richard M. Gigliotti**, 20, a university student, both from Butler, witnessed the accident. They ran to the car and had started to pull Baptiste through the window of the driver’s door when one of his relatives, **Dennis Mark Baptiste**, 45, a construction worker from Fenelon, Pa., happened upon the scene. Dennis freed Timothy’s legs, and the three rescuers removed him to safety. The car was destroyed in the accident and fire.



## FROM THE ARCHIVES

## ANGELS WALK AMONG US (continued from page 11)

*Elsie returns to Old Harbor with eight survivors*

As is often the case when tragedies occur, the stage is set for heroic acts. By 8 a.m. on the 12th, word of the *Larchmont's* sinking was received by the eight crewmembers of a Block Island fishing schooner, the *Elsie*. The men boarded their 60-foot, two-masted vessel—equipped also with an 18-horsepower engine “for auxiliary power”—and, despite the adverse conditions, set out to search for survivors. Around 10 a.m. they

spotted a 20-square-foot raft of the wreckage

of the steamer’s hurricane deck, finding that it carried eight survivors and several bodies. According to the Hero Fund’s report, the “the bodies formed a bulwark around the almost lifeless” survivors.

The *Elsie* crew launched two 12-foot dories in a rescue attempt. After one female and three male survivors were taken aboard each dory, both smaller vessels drifted back to the schooner, and all hands assisted in transferring the survivors. The *Elsie* returned to harbor by noon. One of the eight persons rescued died of exposure.

Each of the *Elsie* crewmembers was awarded a gold Carnegie Medal in May of that year. John W. Smith was the captain of the crew, which included his brothers, G. Elwood and Albert W. Smith, and three nephews, Harry L., Earl A., and Louis E. Smith. John’s brother-in-law, Jeremiah M. Littlefield, and Littlefield’s brother Edgar completed the crew. Accompanying financial grants helped some of the men’s children attend college.

The residents of Block Island continue to mark the anniversary of the tragedy, and on its centennial in February the New Shoreham Town Council of Block Island decreed a resolution to honor the heroes, some of whose descendants still live on the 10-square-mile island. The resolution concludes, “Lest we forget angels do walk among us, ordinary folk found out only when they are called to duty.” ☒

*By Susan L. Marcy, Case Investigator. With thanks to Block Island contacts Robert M. Downie (who provided the photos), Helen Farrell Allen, Ben Hruska, Edith Littlefield Blane (awardee descendant), Peter Voskamp, and Martha Ball.*

*Larchmont survivors being transported on Block Island*

*imPULSE* is a periodic newsletter of the CARNEGIE HERO FUND COMMISSION, a private operating foundation established in 1904 by Andrew Carnegie. • The Hero Fund awards the CARNEGIE MEDAL to those throughout the United States and Canada who risk their lives to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others. • The Commission also provides financial assistance, which may include scholarship aid and continuing grants, to the heroes and to the dependents of those awardees who are disabled or die as the result of their heroic acts.

Further information is available on-line or by contacting the Commission.

**Any ideas?** *imPULSE* welcomes your submissions for publication, and your ideas for consideration. Be in touch!

**Address change?** Please keep us posted!

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