

imPULSE

A Periodic Newsletter of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission ISSUE 13 • MARCH 2008

2007 IN REVIEW

98 medals given in U.S., Canada, grants since 1904 reach \$30 million

By Sybil P. Veeder • Chair, Executive Committee • Carnegie Hero Fund Commission

The Commission received much attention in 2007 from a significant audience, those who attended the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy presentation ceremony, which was hosted by the Hero Fund and Carnegie's three other Pittsburgh institutions. We can take pride in knowing that the event was considered a success and that our work of ensuring the continuance of this part of Andrew Carnegie's legacy was viewed favorably. The "viewers" included representatives of four of the 10 European hero funds and the other Carnegie foundations.

Hero Fund efforts to "continue the legacy" included the addition of Linda Thorell Hills, one of the 15 Carnegie great-grandchildren, to the Commission. Hills joins her cousin William Thomson of Scotland as the only other family member currently serving on a Carnegie institution board. Peter F. Mathieson, a member since 2001,

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Brothers Mark, left, and Bruce R. Sperling, shown at Bruce's 2004 wedding

'THEY ENDED THEIR LIVES IN A WAY THEY LIVED THEM'

Those were the words used to eulogize brothers **Mark and Bruce R. Sperling**, who died together on May 27, 2006, while attempting to save a stranger from drowning in Yorkville, Ill. The men were named posthumous awardees of the Carnegie Medal in December 2007. (See page 6 for a description of their heroic act.)

By all accounts, the brothers were selfless and caring not only in their last actions but throughout their lives, and that spirit will be kept alive by the Sperling Brothers Foundation of Palos Heights, Ill. According to the men's family, the foundation was set up by them to emulate the choices the men made in putting the needs of others first. The foundation funds gifts to charities, ministries, and individuals needing emergency financial aid.

Gifts to date have included \$20,000 to the Disabled Patriot Fund, a grant to a home for teen-age orphans in Chicago, and \$10,000 to the Lombard, Ill., Bible Church, where Bruce was youth pastor. Early this year, the foundation participated in assembling AIDS caregiver gifts, 300 of which were shipped to Africa.

Funding for the foundation's grants is provided in part by an annual golf outing, the first of which, held last August, raised \$83,000. The second outing is scheduled for July 14. The family has earmarked the Hero Fund's grants to the foundation "to keep these beloved men within our hearts."



Patrick McGeough, Jr. (wearing ball cap), is one of the 2007 awardees of the Carnegie Medal. He was cited for his actions of May 14, 2006, by which he and another young man attempted to remove the driver of a van that was partially submerged in a flooded drainage ditch in Hewitt, Texas, where McGeough then lived. McGeough was pinned to a submerged culvert when the van shifted during the rescue, and he had to be freed by firefighters. Photo by Jerry Larson of the Waco, Texas, Tribune Herald and used with permission. (See related photo, page 3.)



OF GOOD SAMARITANS AND CARNEGIE HEROES

By Mark Laskow, President
Carnegie Hero Fund Commission



What does it take to be awarded a Carnegie Medal?

Anyone familiar with the Hero Fund knows that the award is not given to recognize those who save lives, as honorable as that is. Rather, we reserve the award for civilians

who risk their own lives—and to an extraordinary degree—while engaged in acts of life saving.

The distinction might sound subtle, but it is significant. And it is necessary, as recognized in 1904 by the first Commission, whose members were appointed by Andrew Carnegie. He may have funded the organization and laid down its guiding principals, but the details of administering it were left up to the board. Six months after the board members were first called together, the “committee on permanent organization” produced a list of awarding requirements that, with minor modification, has served us ever since.

That early board realized, as we do today, that we are fortunate to live in a culture whose members readily look out for each other. Our societies, U.S. and Canadian, have an abundance of both organized means of protection—whether by fire departments, lifeguards, hospitals and emergency rooms, search-and-rescue teams, police, armed forces—as well as those individuals who respond solely out of the goodness of their hearts when faced with someone in need of immediate help. Were we to have given medals out for life saving by individuals of either of these groups, we would have depleted our resources probably within months.

Rather, the Commission adopted the self-risk factor as its major awarding requirement, as it represents the ultimate offering any human can make to another. That means the award is exclusionist, but how it is earned has given it its integrity. Over the last 104 years, the medal has gone to only 11% of those who have been nominated for it.

These pages and our website, news releases, and annual reports all relate accounts of those who qualified for recognition. But what of those who didn't? Why not?

Some statistics. In 2005, the most recent year of nearly all “closed cases” (many nominations made in 2006 and 2007 are still “open”), 800 individuals were nominated for the medal. Of these, 74 received

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Year in Review

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Peter F. Mathieson

indicated his intent to resign. The son of a medal awardee, Mathieson has been reliable and insightful, and he will leave a notable void.

Ninety-eight awards were approved during the year. The U.S. was represented by 90 awardees from 32 states (highest number was from Virginia, nine, with seven each from New York, Michigan, and California). Canada's seven awardees (7% of the total, in line with the historical ratio of 8%), represented three of the 13 provinces and territories, Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador. The 98th hero was Russian

Vitaly Tsikoza (see related story, page 7). Tsikoza's was one of the 12 posthumous awards made during the year (the 12% mortality rate compares with 21% over the life of the fund). Other posthumous awards recognized the actions of two brothers, Mark and Bruce R. Sperling, both of whom drowned while attempting to save a kayaker from the boil of water at the base of a low dam in Yorkville, Ill. (related story, page 1).

By age, the heroes ranged from 16 to 74: Seven were in their teens; 22 in their 20s; 30 in their 30s; 17 in their 40s; 15 in their 50s; four in their 60s; and three were over 70. The youngest heroes were two 16-year-old boys, Derrick Kyle of Hewitt, Texas, and Michael E. G. Oakley of Savannah, Tenn. Oakley helped to save a man from his wrecked and burning pickup (photo, page 7), while Kyle took the ride of his life through a 70-foot-long flooded culvert while trying to help a woman from her vehicle in a runoff-swollen ditch. The oldest hero was Thurston Duke, 74, of Muncie, Ind., who pulled a man from a burning truck at night. By gender, six of the awardees, or 6%, were female, compared to the historical 9%.

By type of act, rescues from burning vehicles were the most predominant at 31 in number, followed by drowning, 17; burning building, 14; assault, eight; submerging vehicle and boat, six each. The sole case in the “falling object” category was that in which retired coach Duane Damron, 71, of Bakersfield, Calif., pulled a man from the path of a mobile home that was toppling over. The men were working on a mission project in Katrina-ravaged Gulfport, Miss.

Monetary grants reached a significant milestone in late 2007, with a total of \$30.1 million having been paid or pledged since 1904—all from Carnegie's initial endowment of \$5 million. In monthly grants to 77 beneficiaries (most of them the widows of awardees), \$285,220 was given during the year. Four of the beneficiaries were removed from the roll through death, with two of them having received Hero Fund aid since the early 1950s. Eight of the beneficiaries, living in California, Alabama, and Georgia, were visited—a first for a few of them—by staff. Scholarship giving at \$94,808 went to 24 recipients in 2007.

Hero Fund giving also includes partial reimbursement of funeral expenses for those awardees who die as the result of acting. Three grants totaling \$13,600 were made in 2007, including a grant to the parents of a young Nova Scotian who drowned saving two children. The hero had no life insurance, and the award of the medal and grant “will forever be appreciated” by the parents, we were told. The parents received also a bronze grave marker in the likeness of the medal. The marker was introduced in 2007, and to date, about 40 of them have been distributed to families of deceased awardees. Reception has been favorable: “Words cannot convey how I felt looking at it...I am hoping this helps others to remember what he did,” the daughter of a hero wrote.

Outreach efforts centered largely on medal presentations, and during the year 14 heroes were personally handed their Carnegie Medals. Mark Laskow, the president of the Commission, delivered a medal in Key West, Fla., to Patrick McGeough, Jr., who was the co-rescuer in the referenced Kyle case (see photos, pages 1 and 3), and Priscilla

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In drier times, Patrick McGeough, Jr., now of Key West, Fla., is shown receiving his Carnegie Medal from Commission President Mark Laskow, left, at an informal ceremony last November at the Key West office of the Monroe County Sheriff's Department. At right is Maj. Tommy Taylor of the sheriff's department.

Year in Review

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J. McCrady, the vice president, was on hand in Palm Beach, Fla., for a presentation to L. Rodger Currie, an awardee of that city. Douglas R. Chambers, the director of external affairs, organized the Palm Beach event, which was held at the Flagler Museum and is now considered to be held annually.

Other medal presentations were by board members Dan D. Sandman, who gave medals to the four members of a towboat crew who rescued two men from their sunken craft at the base of a dam near Pittsburgh, and Thomas L. Wentling, Jr., who gave a medal at the Commission's annual meeting to John H. Flanigan of Pittsburgh. Chambers made presentations during the year in Brookville, Pa.; Los Angeles; San Diego; Calgary, Alta.; and Chesterfield and Hampton, Va., and on the campus of Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. Susan L. Marcy, one of the case investigators, attended four of the events, as she had investigated those cases.

Other outreach efforts by Chambers included a revamping of the Hero Fund's website to give it an updated look, and he is working with the National Museum of Patriotism, Atlanta, on a "Hall of Patriots" display that will prominently feature awardees of the Carnegie Medal along with those of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Medal of Honor, and the Congressional Gold Medal.

Highlight of the year was the Commission's participation in the October presentation of the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy. It was a win-win situation for the city of Pittsburgh, which was showcased beautifully by venue selection (and ideal weather); for the host institutions, whose leaders and work were prominent throughout the two-day affair, and for the medal recipients and attendees themselves, who were graciously and abundantly accommodated. Carnegie Mellon University's event planners deserve much credit for orchestrating the gathering, in which the Hero Fund played a significant role: Laskow and Sandman secured the major funding from U.S. Steel Corporation and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

As visitors included representatives from Carnegie's hero funds in the U.K., Germany, Sweden, and Switzerland, the Commission hosted a dinner gathering for these "cousins," giving all the opportunity to make or renew acquaintances. The following day's itinerary included a visit to the site of the Harwick mine explosion in 1904, which is the root of the funds' common history. 

BOARD NOTES

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it. Consideration was refused in 284 of the cases on the grounds of "risk," the Hero Fund concluding that, although the rescuer may have engaged in life-saving activity, he or she did so at minimal or no risk to life.

Inadequate "factual establishment" was the major factor in 387 of the cases. We simply could not get the necessary support for the act, or the rescuer refused to be considered, or the testimony provided by case principals was contradictory. In 34 of the cases, we thought the rescuer had an obligation to respond—the act was somehow job-related or otherwise felt to be within the rescuer's responsibility. We found that three of the cases were performed by members of the military, who are ineligible for this civilian award.

Seven of the cases were refused because the acts occurred more than two years before the date of nomination, our time limit. In three cases, it was felt that the victim's life was not at threat—and therefore not in need of being saved. In five of the cases, we applied the acronym, NAH: "not an act of heroism" by our definition, although perhaps a good deed or even a great one. The last three cases, if you're counting, await a conclusion.

Are our decisions subjective? Often. But do we strive to be consistent and fair? Always. We are committed to the dignity of each individual represented in the cases, just as are the Good Samaritans who step from their routines to tend to those who need their help.

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OFF-DUTY OFFICER HONORED

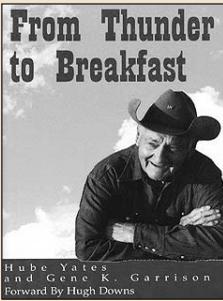
Ontario Provincial Police Officer Daniel William Bailey, center, is congratulated on being awarded the Carnegie Medal by Julian Fantino, left, OPP Commissioner, and Douglas R. Chambers, the Hero Fund's director of external affairs, at a ceremony at OPP headquarters in Orillia, Ont., in January. Bailey, of Fort Frances, Ont., was off duty on Aug. 1, 2006, and about a thousand miles from home when he helped to rescue two women from a sport utility vehicle that overturned and caught fire in Central Elgin, Ont. Reaching into the vehicle, Bailey, then 43, cut the women free and helped remove them. One of the women suffered severe burns, and the other died shortly after the accident of extensive injuries. Bailey recovered from minor burns to his forearms.





HERO, STORYTELLER

Hubert A. Yates lived the life of an adventurer, a life that is captured in the book, *From Thunder to Breakfast*, by Gene K. Garrison. In addition to being a firefighter, horseman, and hunting guide, Yates was an awardee of the Carnegie



Medal, which was given to him in recognition of his actions of Feb. 13, 1931. Then 28, Yates saved a man from drowning in the Salt River in Tempe, Ariz. The 69-year-old man was on an island in the river when water from heavy rains threatened to overflow it. Yates, a city fireman at the time, swam to the island with one end of a rope in his mouth and secured the farmer, who was then pulled to the bank by others.

Heroics were far from being the only adventure Yates experienced before he died at the age of 77. *From Thunder to Breakfast* begins when the 11-year-old Yates moved with his parents and six siblings from Guthrie, Okla., to Phoenix in a covered wagon. Along the way they met Indians and horse thieves. At 17, he entered a 144-mile bicycle race and won after cycling from Tucson to Phoenix. A master storyteller, Yates became a preacher while working as a firefighter, played Santa Claus in his community, took campers out on pack trips, met the legendary Will Rogers, and played more than his share of practical jokes. The book is published by Xlibris Corporation and includes a forward by television personality Hugh Downs. — Susan L. Marcy, Case Investigator

'FIRST' GERMAN HERO

Philipp Scharpf, left, a 17-year-old high school student from Weil der Stadt, Germany, became the first awardee of a medal from Carnegie's re-instituted German hero fund, the *Carnegie Stiftung fuer Lebensretter*. The medal was presented in December by Andreas Huber, right, president of the fund, which resumed operating in 2006, or decades after the



original fund ceased to exist in post-war Germany. Scharpf received "silver medal No. 001" to recognize his actions of Aug. 1, 2007, by which he saved an 8-year-old girl from drowning in the Wuerm River in Weil der Stadt, which is in south-

west Germany near the Black Forest. Both Scharpf and the girl were visiting a nature preserve when the girl fell into the river and submerged. Scharpf entered the water for her, positioned her on his shoulders, and returned her to the bank. "We are very proud of our first contemporary hero," Huber said.

Descendants of first gold-medal awardee pay tribute at graveside, install marker

Descendants of the first recipient of a gold Carnegie Medal gathered in December in a Daytona Beach, Fla., cemetery to remember their patriarch, Capt. Mark Casto. Among the moss-draped cedars, they placed a commemorative marker in the likeness of the medal on his gravestone.

"The influence of the heroic effort of Capt. Casto in 1906 and the subsequent recognition by the Hero Fund are ongoing in our families," said one of the awardee's grandchildren, also named Mark Casto, of Ormond Beach, Fla.

Capt. Casto was a 36-year-old commercial fisherman from Pleasantville, N.J., who ran a 58-foot, 10-ton fishing schooner, the *Alberta*, out of Atlantic City. On Jan. 14, 1906, a 2,256-ton freighter with 54 persons aboard went aground on the Brigantine shoals in the Atlantic Ocean and was taking on water. Casto and a six-man volunteer crew took the *Alberta* through 25-foot seas to the rescue.

After the schooner went to within 200 feet of the freighter, its crew launched two dories, but one was smashed on the deck by a large wave, and the other, with Casto aboard, was broken apart when it hit the side of the freighter. Having conferred with the captain of the freighter, Casto returned to his boat in one of the freighter's lifeboats, taking with him one end of a secured line. By means of that line, the *Alberta* was pulled closer to the freighter.

Another lifeboat from the freighter was secured by lines affixed to the vessels, and, in 12 trips, it shuttled the 54 crew and passengers from the freighter to the schooner. The *Alberta* returned to shore under sail, as its engine was then disabled.

For his efforts, Casto was awarded the gold medal later that year, and accompanying financial grants were used to pay the mortgage on the *Alberta* and assume schooling costs for his son, Mark Jacob Casto. The younger Casto was trained as an engineer at Carnegie Institute of Technology, which is now Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh. In 2004, the Casto family donated the medal to the university's archival collection.

Capt. Casto continued fishing out of Atlantic City until the 1920s, when he and his family moved to Stuart, Fla., where he then ferried yachts. He retired from boating in 1939 and became a caretaker for a Coast Guard auxiliary facility. "He was never more than 100 yards from the sea," his grandson said. Casto died in

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The four grandchildren and other descendants of Carnegie Medal awardee Capt. Mark Casto gather at his gravesite. The grandchildren are Vernon Casto, seated at center; Harry Edward Casto, to Vernon's right; Mark Casto, behind Vernon; and Christina Anne Carr, to Vernon's left. Vernon himself has carried on his grandfather's reputation as lifesaver by having rescued six swimmers single-handedly from the surf at Daytona Beach, where he was a lifeguard.

LATEST AWARDEES
OF THE CARNEGIE MEDAL

SINCE THE LAST ISSUE OF *imPULSE*, THE FOLLOWING 21 INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN AWARDED THE CARNEGIE MEDAL, BRINGING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS TO 9,151 SINCE THE HERO FUND'S INCEPTION IN 1904. THE LATEST AWARDS, WHICH WERE ANNOUNCED ON DEC. 20, ARE DETAILED ON THE COMMISSION'S WEBSITE AT WWW.CARNEGIEHERO.ORG. THE NEXT ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARDEES WILL BE MADE ON APRIL 10.

DeWayne D. Rodgers, a 48-year-old marble and granite craftsman from Cumming, Ga., saved his neighbors, Pedro Zuniga, 32, and his four young children, from their burning house on Aug. 26, 2006. Fire broke out at night in the one-story house where the Zuniga family was sleeping. Rodgers discovered the fire and gained entry to the house, where, barefoot and shirtless, he searched for family members, having to pass impinging flames. He found one of the children in a bedroom, then aided family members through a window to safety. Rodgers required hospital treatment for burns.

Police detective **Robert G. Falconer II**, 44, rescued his neighbor Fred K. Johnson, 61, from a burning house in Akron, Ohio, on Oct. 29, 2006. Johnson was overcome in his ranch-style house after fire broke out there and, fueled by stored oxygen, intensified and spread quickly. Falconer responded to the open door of the integral garage and approached the door to the kitchen. He crawled into the smoke-filled kitchen, grasped Johnson by a foot, and then crawled back to the garage, pulling Johnson with him. Johnson died of severe burns four months later.

Paul D. Meeks, 63, a retired service technician, rescued Daniel Richman from a crashed and burning airplane in Port Orange, Fla., on Nov. 1, 2006. Richman, 37, was the student pilot of a twin-engine airplane that crashed in a field and caught fire. Meeks, 63, heard the crash from his nearby residence and ran to the scene. Despite advancing flames, he reached into the plane, cut Meeks's safety belt, and pulled him out to safety. Richman died a few hours later. Meeks recovered from minor burns to his hands.

Theodore L. Christoff saved a woman from a burning house in Jackson, Mich., on Nov. 3, 2006. Phyllis E. Landes, 74, was in her living room after fire broke out on the back porch and spread to the house's interior. Christoff, 36, a business operator, responded from his nearby home. He broke through a locked door and crawled about 10 feet through dense smoke to where he saw Landes sitting on the floor. With flames filling the adjacent kitchen, Christoff dragged Landes to the front door and took her outside. Christoff inhaled smoke and sustained a deep cut to one foot.

A 21-year-old restaurant employee, **Seth Clayton Hooks**, of Cadiz, Ky., rescued Hunter B. Wiseman, 4, from a burning car after an accident in Cadiz on Dec.



Michael F. Hahn, left, of Wausau, Wis., and Stephen P. Hanson of Black Creek, Wis., teamed up to rescue a man from his overturned and burning pickup truck after a highway accident. They men had to break through the windshield of the wreckage, shown at right, to get to the unconscious victim. They are shown here with awards given them by the Shawano County Sheriff's Department. Photos, by Cory Dellenbach, courtesy of the Shawano Leader.



12, 2006. The car overturned and caught fire in the accident, and spreading flames reached the seat where Hunter was restrained by his safety belt. Hooks stopped at the scene and, seeing Hunter inside the car, entered through the window of its driver's door. He pulled Hunter free and rolled him on the ground to extinguish the flames on him. Hunter later died of his injuries, and Hooks needed hospital treatment for second-degree burns to both hands.

Ronald D. Rowlett of Vacaville, Calif., and **Glenn K. Manning** of Wichita, Kans., died while attempting to save Manning's wife from drowning in the Pacific Ocean at Kilauea, Hawaii, on Feb. 5, 2006. Vicki Manning, 57, was in wadable water atop a coral reef that extended out from shore when the swift current of a deep channel nearby carried her seaward. When Rowlett, 59, correctional facility officer, witnessed her struggling to return to shore, he waded and swam toward her but was then swept into rough surf at the edge of the reef. From the beach, her husband, 57, supervisor, also waded and swam toward her, but he too was swept by the current into the rough surf. Arriving rescue personnel took

Ms. Manning to safety. Rowlett and Manning were also returned to shore, where resuscitation was attempted. Both men drowned.

Ronald M. Crafton of Kalamazoo, Mich., helped to rescue Joseph G. and Shirley A. Mitchell from assault on Nov. 19, 2006. Mitchell and his wife, both 67, were walking on a sidewalk in Kalamazoo when a man approached them and without provocation knocked Ms. Mitchell to the pavement. Armed with a reinforced four-foot metal pipe, he struck the couple repeatedly, landing forceful blows. After witnessing the attack, Crafton, 57, psychologist, tackled the assailant to the pavement and struggled to overpower him. Police arrived and arrested him. Mrs. Mitchell required lengthy hospitalization for treatment of significant injuries.

Brian James Ivory rescued Winston J. DeCoteau from his burning car after a nighttime accident in Hauppauge, N.Y., on Dec. 17, 2006. DeCoteau, 24, was semiconscious in the driver's seat after his car struck a pole and burst into flame. Ivory, 25, a

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LATEST AWARDEES

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bartender from Oakdale, N.Y., witnessed the accident. He opened the driver's door and with difficulty released DeCoteau's safety belt. By then flames had spread to the car's interior and to DeCoteau's clothing. Ivory grasped DeCoteau and pulled him from the vehicle and to safety. Flames engulfed the car. DeCoteau was hospitalized for his injuries, which included burns.

Jason Michael Schappert, 18, a college student from Ocala, Fla., saved Robert S. Hughes from drowning in Lakeville, Mass., on Feb. 11 of last year, after Hughes entered open water while riding an all-terrain vehicle across the ice on Long Pond. Hughes, 51, tried without success to climb back onto the ice. From nearby, Schappert walked toward the open water and then lay on the ice to distribute his weight. He threw the strap of a camera case to Hughes and, requiring repeated attempts, pulled him atop the ice. He provided the victim articles of dry clothes and then aided him to the bank, about a quarter-mile away.

Salesperson **Steve Linder**, 52, of Macon, Ga., rescued a 16-year-old girl from her burning car after an accident in Macon in which the car caught fire in its engine area. Leslie B. Deal remained in the driver's seat, semiconscious, as flames spread to the interior. Linder witnessed the accident. He reached through the window of the driver's door, released Leslie's safety belt, and pulled her from the car, having first to free her from the steering wheel. Within moments, flames engulfed the interior of the vehicle.

Motorists **Stephen P. Hanson**, 46, a laser operator from Black Creek, Wis., and **Michael F. Hahn**, 38, a delivery truck driver from Wausau, Wis., saved Roger J. Steinbring, Jr., 32, from his burning pickup truck after a nighttime accident in Shawano, Wis., on Dec. 8, 2006. Steinbring lay unconscious in the pickup's overturned cab after the accident. Hanson arrived first and punched a hole in the windshield. Hahn joined him, and after the men dislodged the window, Hahn leaned inside and pulled Steinbring partway out. As Steinbring was caught, Hanson leaned inside and freed him. The rescuers then pulled Steinbring the remaining distance out and dragged him away before flames engulfed the cab. (See photos, page 5.)

Brothers **Mark and Bruce R. Sperling** both died in an attempt to save a man from drowning in the Fox River at Yorkville, Ill., on May 27, 2006. Craig R. Fliege, 38, went over a low dam in a kayak and, thrown from the craft, was caught in the boil at the base of the dam, at a point about 120 feet from the closer bank. About to go canoeing, Mark, 27, a construction business operator from Yorkville, and his brother, Bruce, 31, a youth pastor from Lombard, Ill., were on the bank in the vicinity. They entered the river and walked out toward Fliege, but they too became caught in the boil and could not escape it. Rescue personnel removed all three men from the river. Each was pronounced dead of drowning.

Helicopter pilot **James P. Hood**, 48, of Alpine, Wyo., rescued three mountain climbers from exposure after a storm on Mount Logan, Yukon Territory, on May 27-28, 2005. The experienced climbers were stranded for two days at an altitude of about 18,000 feet. Suffering frostbite and altitude sickness and with little provision, they radioed for help as they sought refuge in a snow cave, their tent having blown away. Agreeing to a rescue mission, Hood, who was based about 400 miles away in Alaska, flew a specialized high-altitude helicopter to the scene. He ascended to the climbers, his craft carrying minimal fuel due to weight restrictions. The diminishing light of late evening compromised his visibility and depth perception in terrain with which he was unfamiliar, and he was not acclimated to the thin atmosphere, which caused him to use supplemental oxygen. Unable to land at the site, Hood hovered above it and in repeated trips removed the three climbers one at a time in a rescue basket to a staging area nearby. They were hospitalized for hypothermia and frostbite, two of them requiring digit amputation.

Walter E. S. Hohl, 38, a ship inspector from Astoria, Ore., helped to rescue Bob L. Scott, 76, from his overturned and burning motor home after an accident in Cascade Locks, Ore., on Oct. 22, 2006. Hohl stopped at the scene and with another man broke out the motor home's windshield. He then leaned inside and attempted repeatedly to free Scott, who was trapped, but intense heat forced him back. When Scott started to emerge through the windshield, Hohl helped him the rest of the way out and took him to safety. Flames grew to destroy the vehicle. Severely burned, Scott died at the scene.

Police officer **Benjamin S. Henrich**, 28, of River Falls, Wis., attempted to save Lisa N. Villigan, 39, from an impending explosion in Prescott, Wis., on Feb. 17 of last year. Villigan remained in her pickup truck after it crashed into a house at night, severing a natural gas line. Henrich responded and approached the vehicle, which was about six feet into the structure. He was attempting to rouse Villigan when the gas exploded, setting fire to the house and truck and throwing Henrich at least 15 feet. Flames engulfed the house and truck, destroying both. Villigan died in the fire. Henrich sustained burns to his face and cuts and bruises.

Bryan Thomas Jared, a police officer from Lexington, Ky., helped to save the co-pilot of a commercial regional jet that caught fire after it crashed while taking off, on Aug. 27, 2006. James M. Polehinke, 44, remained restrained in his seat in the cockpit after the accident. Jared, 29, responded to the scene and crawled into the cockpit through a hole in the wreckage. He and another man freed Polehinke, but with difficulty, flames just feet away. They pulled him from the cockpit to safety.

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FRIENDS REMEMBERED

Scott Walter Asson, 39, of Boise, Idaho, died Sept. 22, 2007. Asson was an awardee of the Carnegie Medal for his actions of Oct. 14, 1988, by which he saved Nancy Lippert from drowning after her car was swept into a wash in Scottsdale, Ariz. The two had remained in touch over the years, and Lippert made the trip to Boise to attend Asson's funeral. According to the family, Asson "was an active child, with sun-blessed cheeks and through the years grew and matured to become a handsome, caring, hard-working and hard-playing adult."

George E. Lennerton, 82, of Nokomis, Fla., died Nov. 28, 2007. Lennerton received the medal for saving four children from drowning on Dec. 21, 1943, after they fell through the ice on a pond in Jamaica Plain, Mass. Then 18, Lennerton jumped into the open water and lifted the children to safety. Lennerton spent much of his career working with explosives, including those used to create the Lincoln Tunnel joining New York and New Jersey in the 1950s. He retired to Florida in 1985.

Gary Lee Thompson, 54, of Newport, Ky., died Nov. 3, 2007. In 1968, when he was 15, he saved two children from drowning after they broke through the ice on a lake in Covington, Ky. Fully clothed, Thompson broke a path through the ice as he swam to the children, who were about 45 feet from the bank. He returned them to safety, earning him the Carnegie Medal. According to his brother-in-law, Thompson was proud of the medal and always carried it with him.

LATEST AWARDEES *(continued)*

The 49 other passengers and crewmembers of the jet died in the accident.

Long Beach, Calif., college student **Michael Joseph Towle, Jr.**, 22, helped to save a man from drowning in the Pacific Ocean at Santa Cruz, Calif., on Nov. 14, 2006. A 23-year-old man fell into turbulent water while climbing on rocks along the coast. Breaking waves battered him against the rocks, and the 52-degree water sapped his strength. Towle, who was nearby, began to climb down to the water but fell, hitting the rocks hard before landing in the rough surf. He secured a hold on the man and took him to an exposed rock. When others threw out a life ring, Towle gave it to the man and then swam alongside him as he was pulled in. Towle fractured a wrist during the rescue and required surgery.

Charles T. Carbonell, Sr., saved a police officer from assault in Tampa, Fla., on Feb. 12 of last year. Steven D. Metzler, 57, was attempting to detain a man after stopping him in traffic, but the man struggled against him and seized his handgun. While passing by, Carbonell, 50, a furniture restorer from Tampa, witnessed the men fighting for control of the weapon. He parked, ran to the assailant, and peeled his fingers from the gun, enabling Metzler to reholster it. The assailant struggled violently as Carbonell and Metzler took him to the ground and handcuffed him.



Capt. Casto

Descendants (continued from page 4)

1946 after a brief illness.

The family's visit to the gravesite provided the opportunity for some of the younger members to learn about their ancestor and for the older ones to pass on stories and remembrances, according to grandson Mark. In attendance were Casto's four grandchildren and representatives of the next three generations, as well as spouses and friends. ❧

— Jeffrey A. Dooley, Investigations Manager

(The Hero Fund makes available to families of deceased Carnegie Medal awardees a bronze likeness of the medal for mounting on a gravestone or urn.)

HERO FUND ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS 2007 AWARDEES

Actions of 98 individuals who were awarded the Carnegie Medal last year are detailed in the Hero Fund's 2007 annual report, which has just been published.

Copies of the booklet are available by calling the Commission toll free at 1-800-447-8900 or by emailing at carnegiehero@carnegiehero.org.

In the report's "President's Message," Mark Laskow writes, "We salute heroes unabashedly, they who disregard themselves for the moment to focus only on others. Their stories are memorable, and the Hero Fund is both proud and humbled to have a role in seeing that they are not forgotten."

The youngest of the awardees were two boys who were 16 at the time of their heroic acts. One of them, Michael E.G. Oakley of Savannah, Tenn., was cited for his actions of April 13, 2005, when he pulled Eric G. Alexander, then 29, from his crashed and burning pickup truck after a nighttime accident. Alexander was trapped in the wreckage as flames entered the vehicle's passenger compartment, severely burning him. Requiring repeated attempts, Oakley reached through the driver's window, grasped Alexander, and started to pull him out. He was joined by another rescuer in removing Alexander from the truck and taking him to safety.

The awardees also include 12 men who died as the result of their lifesaving efforts. One of them, Vitaly Tsikoza, 41, a software project manager from Novosibirsk, Russia, was visiting friends in Utah during the summer of 2006 when he descended a steep canyon wall to rescue his friends' 4-year-old daughter, who had fallen from a trail. Tsikoza reached the girl but then fell to his death. His medal was sent to his daughter Anastasia, 14 (shown at right), of St. Petersburg, Russia. Over the life of the fund, the medal has been posthumously awarded to 1,905 of the total of 9,151 heroes.



Michael E. G. Oakley, one of the youngest Carnegie Medal awardees of 2007, receives his medal from Hardin County, Tenn., Fire Chief Melvin Martin. Eric G. Alexander, left, is the man who was rescued from a burning truck by Oakley.



Anastasia Tzikosa of St. Petersburg, Russia, received the medal granted posthumously to her father, Vitaly Tsikoza.

TO THE HERO FUND

KEEPING THE GENEROSITY GOING

Once again, I thank the Commission for the generous grant, and I am still to this day humbled that I could even be considered for such an honor. If there is ever anything that I can do to help the Commission, please don't hesitate to contact me. The Rutland family and I still exchange letters and Christmas cards. I vow to repay the Commission the grant, so that in my small part I can help Mr. Carnegie's generosity to continue to bless others in the future. God bless each of you, for I feel that the Commission are heroes themselves, striving to continue Mr. Carnegie's wishes, and helping people when they desperately need it the most. Keeping you in my prayers and very gratefully yours,

Johnathan Hunter • Cottondale, Ala.

(Note: Hunter was awarded the medal for his actions of March 26, 2001, by which he saved Steven W. Rutland from a gasoline-fueled fire in an engine repair shop. Hunter sustained first- and second-degree burns to his hands in the rescue.)

CARNEGIE'S GIFT

Whatever success I may have had in this life, for myself and others, has arisen from a foundation that includes within its brick and mortar the recognition and resources generously provided to me by the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission when I was just a boy. What a gift Andrew Carnegie had, to know that the candle he lit a century ago would light others still today.

Carl F. Muller • Greenville, S.C.

(Note: Muller was recognized with the Carnegie Medal for saving a man from drowning in the Atlantic Ocean at Murrells Inlet, S.C., in 1966. He was 14 at the time of the rescue, which he effected despite suffering a blood clot in his leg the result of a sports injury. Now an attorney, Muller received scholarship aid from the Commission during his schooling at Harvard University, of which he is a magna cum laude graduate.)

20 YEARS LATER

Almost 20 years! This award has meant a lot to a very immature 20-year-old. It helped in providing a boost to a great life in family, business, and giving back to others. Mr. Carnegie's legacy lives on. Thank you.

Stephen W. McInerney • Lowell, Mass.

(Note: McInerney received a Carnegie Medal for helping to save a 70-year-old woman from the back seat of a burning car after a fiery accident in Burlington, Mass., on July 29, 1988.)

THE TORCH OF MORALITY

When I first heard about receiving the Carnegie Medal, I was too stunned to speak. I had read the stories of previous heroes on the Fund's webpage and didn't feel worthy to be listed among them. However, now I am honored to be represented among those that have showed their merit. Not only had you elevated me in the eyes of others, you have given me hope and helped

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TO THE HERO FUND

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me preserve my dreams. I appreciate wholeheartedly the scholarship that will help me continue my studies at the University of Colorado.

Finally, a medal representing the deed that had occurred was presented to me yesterday. It's an heirloom that will stay with me and help my children take up the torch of morality and "just doing the right thing." My gratitude for all you've done for me—know that you've touched my life. As my father stated in some of his e-mails, if there is anything I can do for you, let me know and consider it done.

Kyle DeLapp • Roswell, Ga.

It has been a great honor to receive this incredible award that is nationally recognized and respected. It is hard to believe that what we did for those kids has actually turned out to give us so much in return. Being a recipient of this medal and grant has been a tremendous experience in so many ways. I really appreciate all that the Hero Fund has given to me. The most recent grant toward my education at Georgia Southern is so helpful and amazing.

Steven M. Gartner • Alpharetta, Ga.

(Note: DeLapp, Gartner, and a friend, all high school students, saved four children from drowning in the Gulf of Mexico at Miramar Beach, Fla., on April 1, 2006, while they were on a spring break. Each was awarded the Carnegie Medal last September and subsequent scholarship aid to help with their continuing education. DeLapp attends the University of Colorado at Boulder, and Gartner is attending Georgia Southern University at Statesboro.)

PHILANTHROPIST HEROES

Thank you for the grant. It will go toward my church, where I'm just finishing being treasurer. Part will also go to the lighthouse where my grandfather was light keeper and where I hope to spend weekends being a tour guide this year. And to the youth sports in town here, where I help coach 4-6-year-olds in T-league and also help with Little League. The money will be greatly appreciated by all!

Steve Hanson • Black Creek, Wis.

Thank you for your generous time and effort to recognize people and their actions, including myself. I cannot express the amount of joy, dignity, respect and humility you have brought to me and my family. I have really enjoyed learning more about the fund and its recipients through your mailings of the DVD and the book.

Mr. Carnegie's desire to recognize good deeds and give back to humanity has inspired my wife and me to donate the \$5,000 award to our local community foundation and set up an endowment fund that can continue for years. We are now in the beginning stages to raise an additional \$5,000 to start the fund at \$10,000. We hope that we can give as much joy to others as you have given to us.

Ted Christoff • Jackson, Mich.

(Note: Hanson and Christoff are among the most recent awardees of the medal, having been named in

(continued on page 9)

Convinced of altruistic tradition, ex-Marine donates Hero Fund books

It all started with a quote from the Wall Street Journal:

Local heroes may never have been as important as they are today, an era when there are so few national heroes. Today the national hunger for heroes may be best satisfied on a small scale, where a single man, woman, or child may exemplify the selfless bravery America has long honored.

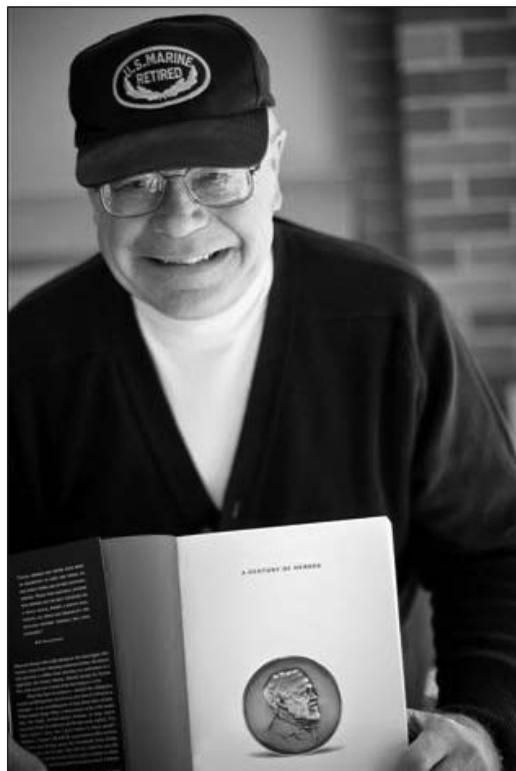
Graham Crutchfield, 69, an ex-Marine from Hayden, Idaho, came across the quote on the jacket of "A Century of Heroes," a book published by the Hero Fund in 2004 in conjunction with the 100th anniversary of its founding. He then read the book. Inspired, he took it upon himself to call the Hero Fund to nominate a local hero, learning that about 1,000 such nominations are made annually.

He discovered also that a lot of people aren't aware of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, and he set out to do something about that. Depleting his local bookstore, Hastings of Coeur d'Alene, of their stock of three of the volumes, Crutchfield contacted the Hero Fund office and secured three more. He gave them to libraries in Hayden, Post Falls, and Coeur d'Alene, and to two schools, Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy and Holy Family Catholic School. The sixth copy will go to the Coeur d'Alene Press.

Why is it important to him that these books get out? Crutchfield said the book shows that altruism is still an American tradition, and he wants to make sure people realize that. "We need to see copies of these books getting into schools because it shows that (ordinary) people are capable of extraordinary heroism," he said. "Anyone who reads this book and still believes that true heroism isn't present in America does not have blood in their veins. If my pockets were deep enough, I'd get these books for every school."

Crutchfield's donation of the books was publicly lauded in an editorial appearing last December in the Coeur d'Alene Press. The gift is "one of his finest efforts to give back to the community he loves," the piece read. "On behalf of your community, Mr. Crutchfield, we thank you. May more heroes emerge among us every day."

His distribution efforts may continue, Crutchfield said, although he found that



Graham Crutchfield

the book in his area "is hard to come by. It was sold out." He has since been made aware that the book is available through the Hero Fund's website, www.carnegiehero.org.

Providing books about one of Carnegie's endeavors to libraries is something of a twist. Crutchfield remembers as a child checking out books from a Carnegie Library, thus learning of Carnegie's library funding. "It would be nice if children knew some of the great things Carnegie did," Crutchfield said.

Crutchfield lives in Hayden with his wife of 43 years, Betsy. His book donations aren't his first philanthropic endeavor, as he has garnered funds for a community health center and several veterans organizations. ☒

— Melissa A. Spangler, Case Investigator

ANNUAL HERO FUND LECTURE MARCH 9 IN PALM BEACH

Representatives of the Hero Fund will be at the Flagler Museum in Palm Beach, Fla., for the annual "heroes lecture" on Sunday, March 9. It's an event that showcases the history and work of the Commission, according to Douglas R. Chambers, director of external affairs. More importantly, he said, it highlights a few of the heroic acts performed by Carnegie Medal awardees over the years and occasionally serves to present the medal personally to recent awardees.

This year's event will add a feature, a noon luncheon to which past awardees from Florida will be invited, as well as their family members and other friends of the Hero Fund. The lecture will follow



Flagler Museum

at 3 p.m., and anyone wishing to attend either or both is asked to call the Hero Fund at 1-800-447-8900 (toll free) to make a reservation.

Chambers said that tentative plans are being made for similar get-togethers in other areas of the United States and in Canada. Possible sites are Atlanta, Ga.; on the West Coast; and in Toronto, Ont. Details will appear in future issues of *imPULSE* and invitations will be sent to awardees living in those areas.

HARWICK MINERS REMEMBERED

The 104th anniversary of the deaths of the 179 miners who perished in a coal-mine explosion in Harwick, Pa., on Jan. 25, 1904, was observed with the laying of a wreath at a memorial service in January. The ceremony, attended by about 100, was organized by Local 4426 of the United Mine Workers of America and was held at the Springdale Township, Pa., Volunteer Fire Department, where a stone marker stands not far from the site of the mine portal. Shown placing the wreath are retired Harwick miners Emilio Saldari, left, and Clarence Schreckengost. The Hero Fund traces its origin to the disaster, as rescue attempts that left two more men dead prompted Andrew Carnegie to establish a commission to honor civilian heroes. The Carnegie Hero Fund Commission was formed by April 15 of that year. It was represented at the ceremony by staff members Douglas R. Chambers, Walter F. Rutkowski, and Jeffrey A. Dooley, who took the top photo. Below, a 1904 photo, courtesy of the Alle-Kiski Valley Historical Society of Tarentum, Pa., shows efforts at identifying the miners' remains.



TO THE HERO FUND

(continued from page 8)

December. See pages 5 and 6 for details of their heroic acts and a photo of Hanson.)

KEEPING THE MEMORY ALIVE

I came across your website when I was searching the name of Joseph J. Granahan, whom I remembered as saving my paternal grandmother, Helen Giles, in 1960 when I was one month shy of eight years old. I was very happy to see his name on your site with a good written description of his extraordinary heroism, including certain details that I was not aware of or had forgotten, but what I found particularly moving was the excellent audio presentation on him. I really appreciate that you have created these audio segments, and that you included one on Granahan. They have emotional impact that goes beyond that of the written word.

I remember that night in 1960 when my grandmother called my father to report that her house collapsed, and I remember reading all about it in the newspapers. I also remember that my father called Granahan to thank him for saving his mother. That one call was the only interaction between them, and I feel bad that there was no further contact. My grandmother meant a great deal to me, and I am grateful to Granahan for what he did, and to your organization for recognizing him for his extraordinary heroism.

Although my father (who died three years ago at 91) did not keep in touch with Granahan, I wish I had reached out to him to express my gratitude to him. Finding your website makes me appreciate the role of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission. True heroes, like Joseph J. Granahan, deserve recognition. We need to keep their memory alive and to learn from them and be inspired by them.

Jeffrey Giles • Forest Hills, N.Y.

(Note: To celebrate its centennial year in 2004, the Hero Fund produced a series of 90-second broadcasts, each recounting a remarkable act of everyday courage drawn from the fund's archives. Spanning a century of heroism and representing a broad range of individuals, these real-life accounts of selfless acts of courage are uplifting evocations of exceptional human behavior. The audio archive, underwritten in part by MSA, is found on the "resources" page of the Hero Fund website, www.carnegiehero.org.)

JUST NATURAL AND NECESSARY

It has taken me some time to fully comprehend the magnitude of this honor. Having had the opportunity to review the history of the fund and read the stories of some of the recipients of the award, I find myself humbled and honored to be included in the company of such brave and selfless people. I'm sure they, like me, just did what at the time seemed natural and necessary.

One of the other blessings of June 25, 2006, has been keeping in touch with Betty Kindley. She is such an upbeat person, grateful for life, and happy to be alive and here for her family.

McKenzie Anne Perry • Mount Pleasant, S.C.

(Note: Perry and another young woman were each given the medal for rescuing Kindley from drowning in the Atlantic Ocean off Sullivan's Island, S.C.)



FROM THE ARCHIVES

HARBOR HORROR

Few motorists crossing the Francis Scott Key Bridge south of Baltimore may know that the stretch of the Patapsco River below them was once the scene of one of the worst explosions in the city's history.



In late morning of March 7, 1913, the steamship *Alum Chine* was at anchor off Hawkins Point, having sailed from Cardiff, Wales, to load coal and 300 tons of dynamite for transport to Colón, Panama, for construction of the Panama Canal. A tugboat, *Atlantic*, had towed a barge with the dynamite to the *Alum Chine*. Stevedores were transferring the boxes from barge to steamship when fire erupted in the hold of the steamship.

Men on the *Alum Chine* began to cry "Fire!" and, in a panic, ran onto the *Atlantic* and a motorboat moored to the side of the *Alum Chine*. The motorboat left the scene in safety. For

its part, the *Atlantic* traveled 450 feet toward the inner harbor before some of those on board noticed two men remaining on the *Alum Chine*. By then dense black smoke was issuing from the *Alum Chine*, and no one aboard the *Atlantic* could doubt the danger posed by a burning ship laden with dynamite.

The captain of the *Atlantic*, William E. Van Dyke, conferred with his engineer, William W. Marshall, who recommended returning to the *Alum Chine* to rescue the two men. Van Dyke turned the *Atlantic*, which then approached the *Alum Chine* at full speed, despite the protesting shouts of many of the tugboat's refugees. The two men remaining on the steamship had climbed down the anchor chain attached to the bow as fire was spreading on the *Alum Chine*, reaching 15 feet above the deck.

The bow of the *Atlantic* passed underneath the anchor chain, at which point the two men jumped onto the tugboat. The *Atlantic* then moved away in reverse, at full speed, but when it was 75 feet from the steamship, the dynamite on the *Alum Chine* exploded. Flames and smoke reached 300 feet into the air. The concussive force of the blast caused earthquake-like tremors and broken windows across the bay and into Delaware, and rumbling was heard in Philadelphia and Atlantic City.

The *Alum Chine* was destroyed, and debris was flung as far as two miles from the scene. Pieces struck and killed Van Dyke, one of his crewmen, six stevedores, and one of the two men rescued from the steamship. An unknown number of people on shore were also struck and killed. Marshall was badly injured but survived.

Van Dyke and Marshall were each awarded a silver medal by the Commission, and Van Dyke's wife and mother were given a monthly grant. Two crewmen of the *Atlantic* were also given medals, including the one who was killed. 

— Marlin Ross,
Case Investigator



The tugboat "Atlantic"

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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