



imPULSE

A Periodic Newsletter of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission ISSUE 33 • MARCH 2013

FORMER STEEL EXEC, FEDERAL JUDGE NEWLY ELECTED TO HERO FUND BOARD

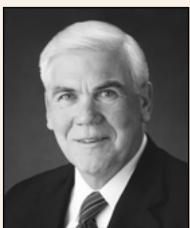
A former vice chairman of U.S. Steel Corp.—which was founded in 1901 with J. P. Morgan’s acquisition of Andrew Carnegie’s steel interests—and a retired federal judge were recently elected to the board of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission.



Mr. Hernandez

Commission president Mark Laskow announced that Robert M. Hernandez, who was also the chief financial officer of the largest integrated steel producer in the United States, and Robert J. Cindrich, who was nominated in 1994 by then President

William J. Clinton as a U.S. District Court judge, would both serve on the Hero Fund’s Executive Committee, which is its awarding body.



Mr. Cindrich

Hernandez, a native of Pittsburgh and now of Champion, Pa., is chairman of the board of RTI International Metals, Inc., of Niles, Ohio. From 1994 to 2001, he was vice chairman and chief financial officer of USX Corp. (now U.S. Steel Corp.), of

which he served on the board of directors since 1991. Prior positions at USX Corp. include executive vice president; senior vice president, finance; treasurer; and president of the corporation’s U.S. Diversified Group. He commenced his tenure at USX Corp. (then U.S. Steel Corp.) in 1968 as a project associate in business research.

Hernandez is a magna cum laude graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, and he received a master’s degree in business administration in 1968 from the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton Graduate School of Finance and Commerce, where he was first in his class of 500. Currently,

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Year in review: Efforts at home, abroad strengthened integrity of Carnegie Medal

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

2012 was a remarkable year for change and outreach. For an organization of 109 years, the Carnegie Hero Fund strives to maintain its original charge while adapting to the current situation in our world. Strengthening the integrity of the award of the Carnegie Medal was accomplished on several fronts during the year by the Executive Committee:

* *At home:* The committee was enhanced by the addition of four new members who were elected to the board last year: Michael A. Thompson, Nathalie Lemieux, Robert B. Cindrich, and Robert M. Hernandez, all of whom are

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Joshua W. Steed, left, was named an awardee of the Carnegie Medal on Dec. 13, and two days later he was graduated magna cum laude from Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas, with a bachelor’s degree in business administration. Steed, one of 81 recipients of the Carnegie Medal in 2012, was cited for rescuing a friend, Jacob B. Allen, right, from assault by a gunman. Also pictured are Stormi James, Steed’s girlfriend, and Jessica Allen, Jacob’s wife. Photo by father Robert Steed and used with permission. See pages 7-11 for details of Steed’s heroic act and the acts of the 17 others who were awarded the medal in December.



AWARDEES' BRAVERY PROMPTS HUMILITY

By Mark Laskow, President
Carnegie Hero Fund Commission



Annual reports covering the activities of the Hero Fund over the past three years have been compiled into a 174-page booklet that is fresh off the press. It is being distributed to each of those years' awardees, plus select public and university libraries and all major newspapers

in the United States and Canada—all in keeping with Andrew Carnegie's directive that "a detailed statement of sums and medals granted and the reasons therefore" be made available to the public.

The Founder was not shy about broadcasting the good works of his trusts and institutions. "There is not much good to be done in the world without publicity," he wrote in a letter of May 31, 1905, to the first president of the Commission. "You must attract the attention of the people. This leads them to think and appreciate the work that you are doing, and finally to stir within themselves the desire to go and do likewise."

To aid you in your doing likewise, you may request a copy of the booklet by contacting the Hero Fund: carnegiehero@carnegiehero.org.

It falls to me, as the Commission's president—its seventh—to write the opening lines of these periodic reports. In the current issue, I am pleased to report that the Hero Fund continues its robust pursuit of the mission set out by Carnegie in 1904: To identify, verify, and recognize acts of individual heroism in the United States and Canada. The task is not trivial. Over the last three years, our staff recorded 2,581 rescue acts, from which the Commission awarded the Carnegie Medal to 249 individuals. The Commission has awarded 9,576 medals since 1904 from among 85,420 rescue acts called to its attention.

Our award standards require that the rescuer face serious risk of death in the course of a rescue. The reality of that risk is reflected in the fact that over the last three years 39 of the awardees died in their rescue acts. We are truly humbled by the bravery of our heroes, most of all those who gave their lives attempting to save others.

A number of changes have taken place on the Commission itself over the last three years. Two
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Year in review

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lending impeccable credentials along with the promise of commitment to the Hero Fund's goals as expressed by Andrew Carnegie. With the previous year's addition of Arthur M. Scully III, Susanne C. Wean, and Joseph C. Walton, the Commission is on solid footing for the foreseeable future.

- * *In the field:* Efforts to maintain the prestige of the award were made by personal presentations of the medal and by the Commission's involvement with the work of the hero funds in Western Europe. Our meeting with representatives of other funds and appearances by Mark Laskow, Commission president, and board member Linda Hills at centennial events of the funds in Switzerland and Belgium not only cemented our relationships with those funds but spoke to the international aspect of the award. **James R. Ussery, Jr.**, of Havelock, N.C., who was honored for his disabling rescue actions in behalf of a drowning boy in 1981, called recently to say that he takes pride in knowing that his medal is associated with those handed out by the Crown Prince of Belgium.
- * *In cyberspace:* A website giving the history of Carnegie's vision of recognizing civilian heroism and serving as portal to the sites of all nine of the hero funds was launched by the Commission during the past year, and our own website was overhauled.
- * *And in the medal case:* With a change of vendor taking effect during the year, the medal itself was restored to its look as originally designed more than a century ago. Production work has been shortened by the new vendor, Simons Bros. of Philadelphia, to allow for a more timely presentation to the awardees.

Eighty-one acts of heroism were awarded the medal and a financial grant of \$5,000 during the year. Of the awardees, 78 were from the U.S. and three were from Canada. By geographical distribution, the U.S. awardees represented 30 of the 50 states (three of Canada's provinces and territories were represented), with California having the highest number of awardees (10), followed by Pennsylvania (seven) and Iowa (six).

The ages of the awardees ranged from 13 to 76, with each extreme being a death case: Schoolboy **Kyle D. Austin** of Mattawana, Pa., died attempting to save his best friend from drowning in the Juniata River, and retired postal worker **Edward J. Power, Jr.**, gave his life attempting to rescue his sister from their home in Everett, Mass., after fire broke out at night. Ages of the year's heroes were spread fairly evenly across the spectrum: 14 were teenagers; 19 were in their 20s; 17 in their 30s; 13 in their 40s; 15 in their 50s; and three were older than 60.

By gender, the year saw an unusually high number of heroines: 13, or 16% of the total, as compared with 8.9% over the life of the Fund. And they effected some remarkable feats: **Alexis Renee Vaughan** at 17 along with her father saved a woman who was being attacked by a 175-pound mule deer...and then, armed with a hammer, she rescued her father when the deer turned on him. **Summer N. White** at 18 would not let the victim of a motor-vehicle accident remain on the pavement of the Kansas Turnpike...but she was struck by the victim's car when an oncoming truck plowed into the wreckage. **Angela M. Pierce**, 29, did not pass by an officer under assault by the man he was attempting to arrest. Caught on the officer's dashboard camera, Pierce pummeled the assailant into submission. **Ione Fletcher Kleven** at 64 would not tolerate injustice on her front lawn, where three men were assaulting a teenage boy at night. She pulled him away.

By type of act, water proved by far to be the biggest threat: 40 of the cases were of rescues or attempted rescues from drowning, including those involving ice. Threat by fire followed, at 22 cases, which included nine involving burning buildings and 13 involving burning vehicles. Ten assault cases were awarded, with the remaining ones being animal attack, moving vehicle, elevations, and electrocution. Other than the referenced mule deer, the attacking animals included a 70-pound pit bull terrier that was fought off by passing construction worker **Sean C. M. Vorel** and a bull

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Year in review

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shark, thought to be nine feet long as adjudged by the bite it took from its victim's thigh. **Connor M. Bystrom** swam into the pool of blood to secure the victim.

Assumption of "extraordinary risk to life" is the defining requirement for being awarded the Carnegie Medal, and over the life of the Fund, 20.7% of the awardees (1,979 of 9,576) took the risk but succumbed to it. In 2012, the mortality rate of 18.5% approximated the historical one, with 15 of the awardees sacrificed in their attempts. Cases of the type remain a moral touchstone for both board and staff in processing the work, as the medal becomes a part of the last chapter of the awardee's life. Among the posthumous awardees in 2012 were six parents who left minor children to mourn their loss.

Those minor children plus the other dependents of the posthumous awardees become the special interest of the Hero Fund, much as they were in the earliest days of the organization. In this regard, in 2012 the Fund provided, to 67 families, continuing monthly grants totaling \$292,525. It is not surprising that close relationships develop between the beneficiaries and the Fund. Our newly named awards coordinator, Myrna Braun, who started with the Hero Fund at the time of her 1955 high school graduation, directs inquiries yearly to the families of posthumous awardees who are not receiving aid of the type but who may be eligible for same. "The Commission gives me peace and a warmth in my heart," wrote a widow in reply. Scholarship assistance is also offered to the children and other dependents of posthumous and disabled heroes, as it is to all pre-retirement awardees. Last year, \$182,137 was given to 26 students to help defray the tuition, book, and fee costs of their post-secondary education.



Crown Prince Philippe of Belgium receives one of the Hero Fund's centennial commemorative medals from Commission member Linda Thorell Hills. The exchange took place in October at a ceremony in Brussels marking the centennial of the Carnegie Hero Fund of Belgium. In May, Hills represented the Hero Fund in Bern, Switzerland, at the centennial of Carnegie's Swiss hero fund, the Carnegie Rescuers Foundation.

Committee work on a broader scale included maintaining relationships with our eight sister funds in Western Europe. In May, Hills and Laskow attended the centennial event in Bern of the Carnegie Rescuers Foundation of Switzerland, during which Hills addressed the gathering in German. Five months later, she reprised the role, in French, in Brussels at the centennial event of the Carnegie Hero Fund of Belgium. Crown Prince Philippe took part in the elegant latter affair (see accompanying photo), lending a high profile to the work of that fund and suggesting greater visibility for its future events. At both sites, meetings of the attending funds took

Personal presentations of the medal were made in 2012 by staff, board, and at least one sheriff (see page 12). **Kirk D. Halde- man** and **Michael J. Ledgard** were given their medals at the Commission meeting in December (see page 11), and board member Linda Hills made a presentation to **Daniel Harrison Haley** of Greeley, Colo., near her home. Completing 10 years with the Hero Fund in 2012, Doug Chambers, director of external affairs, made several school assembly presentations, two of which included awardees.

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BOARDNOTES

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long-serving board members, William P. Snyder III and James M. Walton, retired from active association, and two others, Robert W. Off and Arthur M. Scully, Jr., were lost to us through death. Bob Off was my predecessor as president, serving from 1979 to 2001. These four men contributed a combined total of more than 175 years to this work, and we miss both their experience and their companionship. The longest-serving of the four, Bill Snyder, was on the Commission for 60 years, more than half of this organization's 108-year history. Truly amazing!

The good news is that Carnegie's vision has attracted highly qualified business and community leaders to service on the Commission. We have added seven new members over the last three years, which could be a lot of turnover for a group of 21.

Fortunately, these men and women have rapidly absorbed the culture of the Commission and learned the intricacies of our award criteria. We have continued our work, missing old friends but strengthened by new blood in our pursuit of the work Carnegie laid out for us more than a century ago.



STUDENT ASSEMBLY

Sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students at the Kentucky Avenue School, a private school located in the Shadyside neighborhood of Pittsburgh for students in kindergarten through the eighth grade, learned about the Hero Fund and its awardees of the Carnegie Medal at an assembly in mid-December. Douglas R. Chambers, the Commission's director of external affairs, made the presentation.





HERO FUND BOARD

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Hernandez is chairman of the board of trustees of Black Rock Open-End Equity/Bond Funds, lead director of American Casualty Excess Ltd., and director of Eastman Chemical Co.

A native of Avella, Pa., and now of Zelienople, Pa., Cindrich was most recently senior advisor to the president of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) and formerly its senior vice president and chief legal officer. Prior to joining UPMC in 2004, he served as a judge of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania for 10 years. Before his service on the bench, Cindrich was active as an attorney in both government and private practice, having served as chair of the Pennsylvania Legislative Reapportionment Commission, U. S. Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania, and assistant district attorney and assistant public defender for Allegheny County, Pa.

Cindrich currently serves as a director of Mylan Inc., Allscripts Healthcare Solutions, Inc., and UPMC Mercy Hospital, and he chairs the board of the Heinz History Center, Pittsburgh. He is a graduate of Wittenberg University, Springfield, Ohio, and a *magna cum laude* graduate of the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. He served in the U. S. Army Reserves and the U. S. Air Force Reserves.

SON, BROTHER, HERO

A bronze marker cast in the likeness of the Carnegie Medal was affixed to the grave stone of awardee **Randall C. Stevens** by his family last summer. "It was a moving ceremony," held in Quaker Meeting House Cemetery in Orchard Park, N.Y., according to the family. Randall died at age 17 on May 21, 1983, while attempting to save a friend from

drowning in the Saxtons River at Bellows Falls, Vt., near where the boys were attending Vermont Academy—and from which they were scheduled to graduate days later. The youngest of

five boys, Randall was athletic and quick to make friends. He is survived by his parents, Clair W. and Dorothy G. Stevens, center, of Bluffton, S.C., and his brothers, from left: Paul, Mark, Rob, and Tom. Grave markers are made available to the families of deceased awardees of the Carnegie Medal at no charge. See back cover.



Decorated wartime intelligence analyst used skills to benefit Hero Fund's work

By Mary Brignano

Special to the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission

Presidents of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission have brought many talents and proficiencies to their position, but perhaps none was better trained to analyze facts and technicalities in order to arrive at the essence of heroism than the self-effacing Stewart McClintic, who played a secret role in what one historian called "the most significant intelligence enterprise in the history of warfare."

During World War II, he served in London as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Strategic and Tactical Air Forces (USSTAF), working with the British Air Ministry to analyze intelligence reports to support strategic bombing campaigns over Nazi-occupied Europe. Thousands of lives depended on his ability to evaluate an array of information—an experience that fortified this courtly civil engineer's renowned respect for structure and precision. He was one of a select group of officers who analyzed ULTRA, the codename for the most secret information intercepted from German military radio transmissions. "It was thanks to ULTRA that we won the war," Winston Churchill once told King George VI.

5 FIFTH
IN A
SERIES



Mr. McClintic

Stewart McClintic (1904–1982) was born in Pittsburgh to Howard Hale McClintic and Margaret McCulloch McClintic. His father co-founded the McClintic-Marshall Construction Company with fellow Lehigh University engineering classmate Charles D. Marshall in 1900; it would develop into the largest independent steel-fabricating firm in the country, producing structural steel for the Panama Canal locks, the Empire State Building, and the Golden Gate Bridge. Bethlehem Steel acquired McClintic-Marshall in 1931 for \$32 million. Lehigh's McClintic-Marshall dormitory is the second at that school to carry the family name of a Carnegie Hero Fund Commission president.

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Year in review

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place, and steps were taken under Laskow's leadership to formalize the association in a "World Committee of Carnegie Hero Funds."

No report of this committee by its chair would be complete without an expression of thanks to its members, and the work of the committee could not be performed without the effort of the staff. We salute them for their hard work during the year. We anticipate, in Laskow's words, *continuity and renewal* as we enter the Hero Fund's 110th year, appreciative of the honor of service and humbled by the magnanimity of human spirit occasioning our purpose. 



Sybil P. Veeder, Ph.D., has chaired the Executive Committee since 2002. She was elected to the Commission in 1992.



Stewart and Pamela McClintic at their wedding reception in Pittsburgh, Feb. 6, 1946. Photo courtesy of the family.

Intelligence analyst

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McClintic was graduated from The Hill School in Pottstown, Pa., and from the Sheffield Scientific School at Yale University. (He later read case reports with a slide rule in hand, “sending shivers up the spine” of case investigators like the young Walter F. Rutkowski, now the Hero Fund’s executive director.) He went to work for Mellon National Bank and Trust Company and remained with the bank until his retirement at age 65. His work revolved mainly around corporate loans ... a career interrupted only by his war service, which began almost immediately after Pearl Harbor.



Early in 1942, McClintic entered the ground forces of the Army Air Force. By the summer of that year, he was in England, assigned to the U.S. VIII Bomber Command. Re-designated the Eighth Air Force in 1944, it would become the “greatest air armada in history,” planning and executing an American bombing campaign designed to hit precise enemy targets in Europe during daylight hours. After a short sojourn with the OSS (Office of Strategic Services), an antecedent to the CIA, he was assigned to the Intelligence Division of USSTAF.

The slim, personable American worked at the British Air Ministry, where his job was to evaluate and integrate intelligence from many sources and to communicate it to operational commands. Among these sources was ULTRA, one of the most critical secrets of World War II. ULTRA was the code name for the German radio transmissions intercepted and decoded by cryptologists using a cipher machine called ENIGMA. McClintic’s assignment was to trace the flow of money to industrial war production facilities in Germany. The movement of funds became a leading indicator of production activity—and thus identified targets for precision bombing. He also helped to locate the launching pads for the German “buzz bombs” so that they could be eliminated. In December 1944 he remained in England in charge of Rear Headquarters of the Directorate of Intelligence when the Main Headquarters moved to St. Germain, France. He was awarded the Order

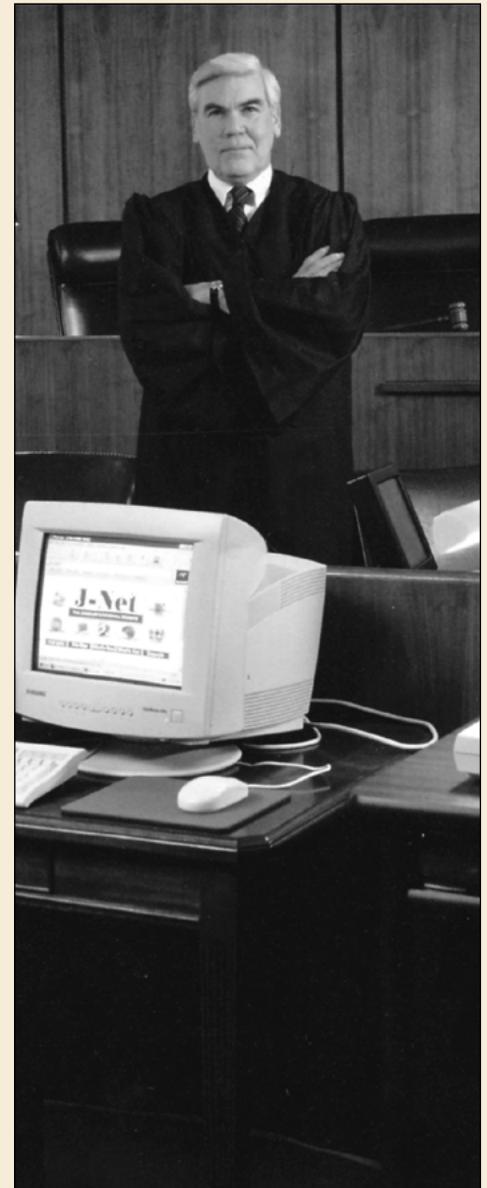
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EVIL COMPOUNDS EVIL, GOOD COMPOUNDS GOOD

*By Robert J. Cindrich
Carnegie Hero Fund Commission*

As I left the conference room following my first meeting as a member of the Commission, I experienced an overall sense of well being, that all seemed right with the world, and wondered why I felt that way. There are probably a number of reasons, the first being the palpable sense of good will that so permeated that room as the members

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The Honorable Robert J. Cindrich, formerly a judge for the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania, was featured on the cover of the Spring 1999 issue of Lawnotes, the magazine of the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. The cover image is courtesy of the School of Law and used with permission. Cindrich was elected to the Commission on Dec. 13. See cover.



EVIL COMPOUNDS EVIL

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deliberated on the latest round of nominees for the Carnegie Medal. The second was the warm reception I was given by so many gracious people. But there was more, and in thinking about it, I was reminded of a speech by a law professor at the University of Michigan Law School I read a number of years ago. Here is what he said:

"We see not simply what the world presents to us but what our minds project to it. Psychology has repeatedly demonstrated that truth empirically. The point is made by a charming story about Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. They went on a camping trip. After a good meal and a bottle of wine, they lay down for the night and went to sleep. Some hours later Holmes woke up, nudged his faithful friend, and said, 'Watson, look up at the sky and tell me what you see.' Watson replied, 'I see millions of stars.' Holmes asked 'What does that tell you?' Watson thought a moment and replied, 'Astronomically, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Astrologically, I observe that Pisces is in Leo. Horologically, I deduce that the time is approximately a quarter past three. Theologically, I can see that God is all powerful and that we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, I suspect that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you?' Holmes was silent for a second and then spoke: 'Watson, you idiot, it tells me that someone has stolen our tent.'

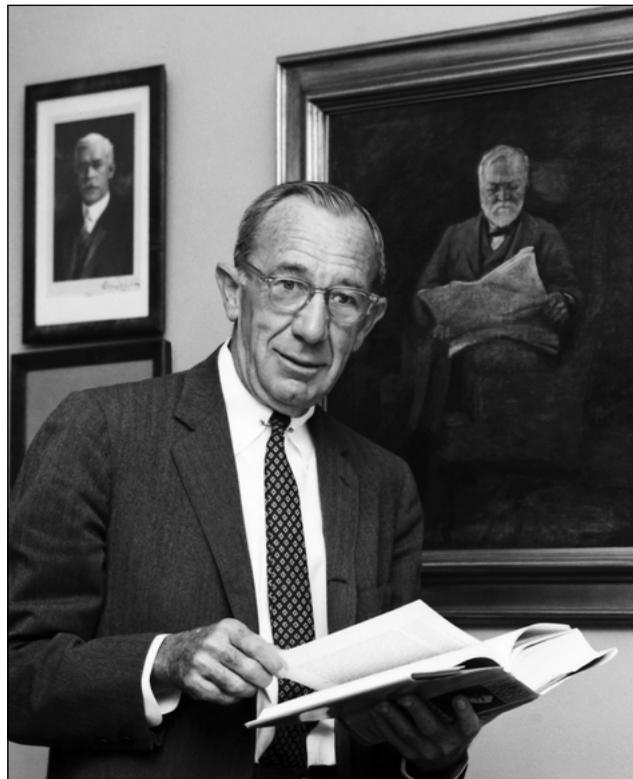
"To use the psychological jargon, 'the world is mediated by cognitive structures and processes that actively shape how we perceive and evaluate the world around us.' Believing is seeing. If we believe bad things, we will see bad things. If we believe the good, we will see the good, not only in ourselves but in others. When I say believing is seeing, I use 'believe' in the sense of believing in something, in the sense of having a vision that something can be brought to pass. The only limits are those of vision. In the Biblical phrase, 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' Powerful ideas like democracy, liberty, the worth of the individual, have changed whole continents." (From a speech by Prof. John W. Reed, University of Michigan Law School before the American College of Trial Lawyers, Oct. 27, 2000.)

The Commission members and all of the people associated with the Carnegie Hero Fund have chosen to believe that despite our many shortcomings, the human race is capable of acting nobly, honorably, and, on rare occasions, extremely courageously. That is what we believe. That is why we see the good in others and strive to enlarge and perpetuate these virtues through the simple act of recognizing them publicly. And it is likely

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Intelligence analyst

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Speaking of the Hero Fund's case investigations, McClintic wrote, "We must be sure that all facts can be established. We should not have to decide what is right—we should know."

speed with which the enemy was routed and eventually forced to surrender."

In his intelligence work, McClintic had to be not only smart and reliable but also diplomatic and social. In London he had his uniforms made on Savile Row, lived in the glamorous Claridge's hotel, and shared a flat in Belgravia with two USSTAF colleagues: Lewis F. Powell, Jr., who would serve as an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, and McClintic's old friend Lowell P. Weicker, a Yale man whose father had built E. R. Squibb & Sons into a pharmaceutical giant. McClintic had been an usher at Weicker's wedding and would be godfather to his son Lowell, Jr., a U.S. Senator and governor of Connecticut. The flat was owned by the Queen of Yugoslavia. "These unusual accommodations," writes Powell's biographer, "had been justified by Powell's need for a suitable place for entertaining British dignitaries (part of his duties was to establish good relations with personnel of the British Air Ministry)."

It was in London that McClintic met his future wife, Pamela Gresson, an elegant British war widow who drove an ambulance for the Red Cross. They were married in 1946 and had two children, Miranda and Howard—who both remember how seriously their father took his responsibilities at the Hero Fund. "He would read the case reports out loud to us," recalls Miranda. "He cared very much about each one. That was part of his philosophy of life: recognition for every individual. He treated everyone the same."

McClintic served for a number of years as president of the board of the Eye and Ear Hospital, Pittsburgh. He became a member of the Commission in 1947, succeeding his father, a member from 1912 until his death in 1938. As treasurer, he oversaw its finances for almost 30 years. "His frequent memoranda are classics in revealing the dedication of this man to the efficient operation of the Fund," according to Commission minutes. He believed in the Carnegie Medal as the highest symbol of civilian

of the British Empire and the French Croix de Guerre.

Because each American indoctrinated in ULTRA had been ordered not to divulge the fact that ENIGMA ciphers had been read or that ULTRA existed, only in the 1980s did its influence on Allied strategy, tactics, and victory begin to be widely appreciated. But in July 1945, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower wrote about ULTRA to the head of the British Secret Service: "The intelligence ... has been of priceless value to me. It has saved thousands of British and American lives and, in no small way, contributed to the

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LATEST AWARDEES
OF THE CARNEGIE MEDAL

SINCE THE LAST ISSUE OF *imPULSE*, THE FOLLOWING 18 INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN AWARDED THE CARNEGIE MEDAL, BRINGING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS TO 9,576 SINCE THE HERO FUND'S INCEPTION IN 1904. THE LATEST AWARDS, WHICH WERE ANNOUNCED ON DEC. 19, ARE DETAILED ON THE COMMISSION'S WEBSITE AT WWW.CARNEGIEHERO.ORG. THE NEXT ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARDEES WILL BE MADE ON APRIL 18.

Christopher M. Johnson, 20, of Bolingbrook, Ill., helped to save Quintin Sconyers, 15, from drowning in a retention pond in Bolingbrook on Dec. 11, 2011. Quintin broke through thin ice on the pond at a point about 25 feet from the bank and was unable to climb from the open water. Johnson, a lifeguard at a nearby aquatic complex, responded to the pond and crawled onto the ice with a rescue tube. As he approached, Quintin submerged. Johnson entered the frigid water, grasped him, and returned him to the surface. After a brief struggle, Quintin held to the rescue tube as Johnson attempted to break a path through the ice to the bank. Arriving firefighters entered the water and took both Johnson and Quintin to safety. They required hospital treatment, and they recovered. (See photo.)

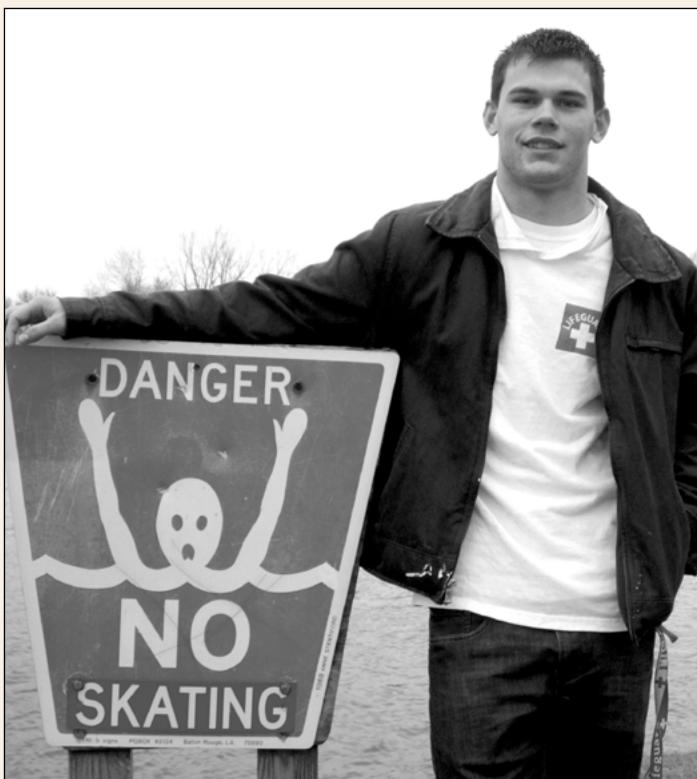
Carl Casey Loando, 54, a land survey technician from Honolulu, Hawaii, saved Helen Choy from her burning house in Honolulu on April 27, 2011. Choy, 85, was inside the one-story house after fire broke out in an enclosed porch and spread. Working nearby, Loando responded to the scene after seeing



Lloyd Jones and Deborah G. Jones placed a wreath on the bank of the Cedar River at Mount Vernon, Iowa, in memory of their son, Jonathan Paul Jones. Jonathan Jones drowned in the river while helping to save two young boys who were being carried away by a strong current. Photo, republished with permission, is © 2011 Iowa SourceMedia Group, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

smoke there. Learning that Choy remained inside, Loando entered the house through a door in the carport and, crawling, penetrated dense smoke, which did not allow visibility. He heard Choy faintly call for help and crawled in her direction, reaching her in a hallway about 20 feet from the door. Loando grasped Choy and dragged her to the carport. Nearly overcome by smoke, he exited for air as Choy was taken to safety. Choy and Loando both required hospital treatment for smoke inhalation.

Christopher M. Johnson can attest to the danger of the pond behind him: Last winter, he crawled across its frozen surface to save a 15-year-old boy who had broken through the ice and submerged at a point about 25 feet from the bank. Johnson entered the frigid water for him and returned him to the surface. Arriving firefighters took both back to the bank. Photo, by Don Grigas, is courtesy of the Wheaton Leader, Wheaton, Ill.



New Brunswick, N.J. Police Officer **Gary Yurkovic, Jr.**, 27, of Carteret, N.J., helped to save a woman from falling from a railroad trestle in New Brunswick on Dec. 14, 2010. At night, a woman, 53, was found suspended from the trestle about 25 feet above a paved street in what was reported to be a suicide attempt. Yurkovic and other officers responded. From the trestle's deck, they reached through a hole in the chain-link fence along the edge of the trestle and grasped the woman, but they experienced difficulty holding to her in the 20-degree air temperature. Yurkovic climbed over the fence and lowered himself to a narrow ledge along its base. Holding to the fence with one hand, he reached down and grasped the woman's jacket with the other. She was uncooperative as Yurkovic held her against the trestle for several minutes. Responding firefighters lowered both to the ground.

Ione Fletcher Kleven, 64, a portrait artist from Castro Valley, Calif., rescued a 14-year-old boy from an assault in Castro Valley on May 14, 2010. The boy was attacked by three men at night in a residential neighborhood. They took him to the ground, where they punched and kicked him, and one of the assailants stabbed him three times. The boy screamed for help, attracting the attention of Kleven, who lived nearby. Kleven saw the assault and, screaming, ran to where the boy lay on the ground, two of the assailants atop him and the third standing close by. She shouted at the assailants to get off the boy and then grasped him by the arm and pulled him to his feet away from the assailants. The assailants fled. The boy was hospitalized for treatment of his stab wounds.

College student **Joshua W. Steed**, 20, of Abilene, Texas, rescued a friend, Jacob B. Allen, 21, from an

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LATEST AWARDEES

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assault by a gunman in Abilene on Sept. 7, 2011. Allen was working in the office of an apartment complex when a man entered, approached him, and without provocation, pointed a .38-caliber revolver at him. He sought refuge, but the assailant pursued him and shot at him repeatedly, striking him in the head. Steed also was working in the office. He picked up a chair and, although access to the office door was open to him, approached the assailant and threw the chair at him, stunning him. As the assailant turned toward Steed, Steed rushed him, grabbing him by the arms and ramming him into a wall. He then threw the assailant to the floor, disabling and disarming him, and secured his weapon. Steed recovered from his wound. (See cover.)

Sedgwick County, Kan., Sheriff's Deputies **Thomas Joseph Delgado**, 43, and **Joseph C. Page**, 36, saved David D. Ong, 65, from his burning pickup truck after an accident in Wichita, Kan., on Aug. 31, 2011. Ong remained in the driver's seat after the vehicle left the highway and caught fire. Flames spread along the passenger side and underside of the vehicle and reached its engine area and fuel tank, and dense smoke filled the cab. Delgado, of Valley Center, Kan., responded and attempted to pull Ong from the vehicle, but deteriorating conditions forced him back. Page, of Wichita, arrived about then and gave a knife to Delgado, who used it to cut Ong's safety belt. As the two men attempted to pull Ong through the window of the driver's door, a sudden rush of flames forced them back. Returning to the vehicle, flames by then having compromised its fuel tank to allow burning gasoline to flow from it, they pulled Ong with difficulty through the window. They dragged him across the highway to safety seconds before flames engulfed the truck, destroying it. Both rescuers required hospital treatment for smoke inhalation. (See photo.)

Jonathan Paul Jones, 41, a student from Lisbon Iowa, died helping to save two boys from drowning in the Cedar River at Mount Vernon, Iowa, on June 19, 2011. **Kujtime Ajro** and **Nathan James Marling** of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and **Makeda S. Barkley** of Lisbon helped in the rescue. The boys, brothers ages 9 and 6, were wading close to the bank when they lost their footing and were pulled farther out and downstream by a strong current. In another party at the scene, Jones was fishing from the same bank. He entered the water, swam out to the boys, and established a hold on them, but the boys struggled against him. A friend of the boys' family, Ajro, 29, a homemaker, also swam out to the boys. She took the older boy from Jones and attempted to return him to the bank, but the boy struggled against her as they were pulled downstream. Marling, 18, a lifeguard, who also had been fishing at the scene, entered the water and swam to Jones, who by then had submerged. He took the younger boy from Jones, but the boy



Thomas Joseph Delgado, left, and Joseph C. Page, both deputies with the Sedgwick County, Kan., Sheriff's Department, pulled a man from his burning pickup truck in Wichita, Kan. The rescue was recorded on video (inset) by a dashboard camera in Delgado's vehicle. Although both rescuers were on duty at the time of the rescue, they were not "trained, equipped, nor expected to rush into the flames," said Sheriff Robert Hinshaw. The victim survived. The larger photo was taken at the scene by Brian Corn and, used with permission, is courtesy of The Wichita Eagle.

struggled against him and submerged him repeatedly. Resurfacing, Marling calmed the boy and swam him to the bank. Meanwhile, Makeda, 16, a high school student, had responded to the bank. Seeing that Ajro was having difficulty with the older boy, she entered the river and swam to them. Makeda took the older boy from Ajro and swam him to the bank, and then, with a makeshift flotation device, she returned to Ajro and took her to safety. Ajro, who had swallowed water and was nearly exhausted, required hospital treatment, and she recovered. Jones drowned. (See photo.)

Ricky D. Clinton, 49, of Mountain Pine, Ark., died attempting to save Tyler J. French from a burning house in Mountain Pine on Sept. 24, 2011. Tyler, 13, was spending the night at a friend's house when the house caught fire. Clinton, who was the friend's father, discovered the fire and alerted the house's occupants. They made their way to the back door to exit, but Tyler turned back into the house to retrieve an item. He was then heard screaming for help. Clinton re-entered the house. Flames grew, destroying the structure. Firefighters located the bodies of Clinton and Tyler inside; both had died of smoke inhalation.

Cynthia L. Riediger, 53, a geologist from Calgary, Alta., died helping to save a friend, James F. Barker, 64, from drowning in Lake Erie at Pelee Island, Ont., on Aug. 23, 2010. While swimming, Barker experienced difficulty against a strong undertow on attempting to return to the beach. His plight was witnessed on shore by Riediger, who directed that help be called. Riediger and Barker's wife then entered the water with an inflatable float and made their way

out to Barker, who was about 165 feet from shore. With Barker's wife holding him to the float, she and Riediger started to return to the beach, but at some point Riediger became separated from the float. Barker and his wife reached the beach safely. Barker was nearly exhausted, but he recovered. Riediger's body was recovered from the lake two days later; she had drowned.

Pastor **John M. Byrd**, 49, of Round O, S.C., and **Mark Samuel Dawson**, 37, a mechanic from Summerville, S.C., rescued Ronald B. Thompkins, 35, from an overturned and burning car after an accident in Round O on Sept. 17, 2011. Semiconscious, Thompkins remained inside the car, which lay on its driver's side, aflame at the front end. Byrd responded to the scene after being alerted to the accident and reached through the broken-out window of the passenger door. Able to make contact with Thompkins but not to remove him that way, he retreated and, finding a small ball bat, struck the vehicle's sunroof repeatedly, breaking it. Flames by then had entered the passenger compartment of the vehicle. Byrd reached inside the car, grasped Thompkins, and pulled him from the flames and partially through the sunroof. He called out for help. Dawson, a passing motorist who had stopped at the scene, approached, grasped Thompkins, who was aflame, and with Byrd pulled him the rest of the way from the vehicle. Byrd was treated at the scene for burns to his hands, from which he recovered.

Kenneth J. Stephens, Sr., 55, a blast team supervisor from Dunnellon, Fla., died after saving Priscilla M. DeLira, 8, and attempting to save Pauline R. Yambao,

(continued on page 10)

Family historian uncovers Carnegie Hero in tracing clues from old correspondence

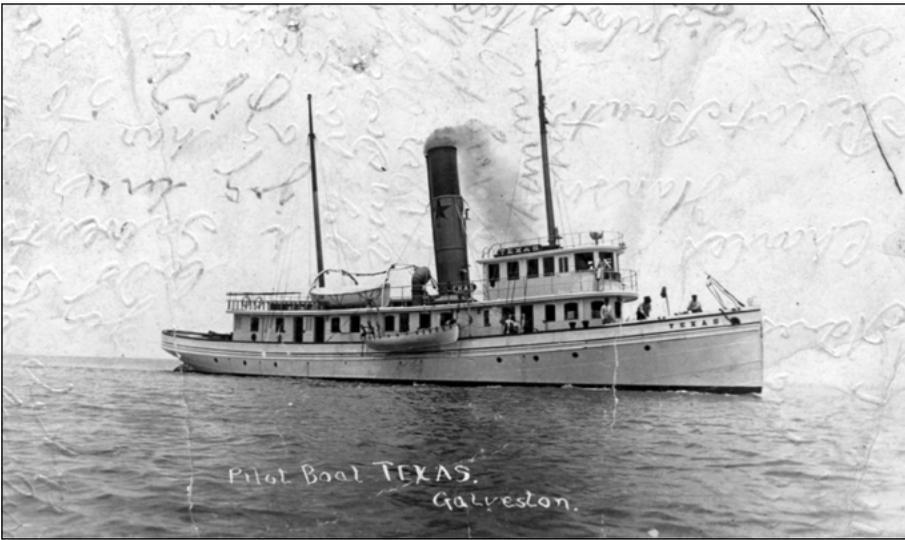
By Charles E. Lund, Otsego, Mich.
Great-nephew of awardee

Dear Family,

I'm not a person who lives in the past and I don't live in the Galapagos either, but I've visited both. I've found that researching our family's past has been very much like a visit to a far-away land, and one of my favorite voyages has been the discovery of the adventure of Uncle Charles.

Charles Albert William Hansen often signed his letters "Albert," but I choose to refer fondly to him as "Uncle Charles." I hadn't even heard of him until 1996, when Cousin Bill Lund said that our great-uncle had been on a boat in Galveston, Texas, that helped some people during a hurricane.

(continued on page 10)



The pilot boat Texas

Intelligence analyst

(continued from page 6)

heroism, and he refused to award it lightly or without a thorough examination of the facts. "We must pursue the truth," he insisted over and over.

"Perhaps we will never have an opportunity to be dramatically heroic," this dignified, thoughtful, courteous man once wrote. "Yet, every day we can be responding to the needs of others; in specific ways we can be mentally preparing ourselves to be truly useful in case of the chance emergency. This predisposition of the mind and nerve to help others will speed the reactions necessary when the crisis happens. We may be a hero, in the eyes of some. But for those who know, it will be the natural, spontaneous act of one who has prepared himself to love his fellow men wherever the need." 

(Profiles of the presidents of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission were compiled by prominent Pittsburgh historian Mary Brignano in 2011 in honor of the 10th anniversary of the election of Mark Laskow, the Hero Fund's seventh and current president. The first four presidents were featured in imPULSE last year, and the June 2013 issue will continue the series with the profile of the sixth president, Robert W. Off [1979-2001]. A booklet containing all seven profiles is available by contacting the Hero Fund: carnegiehero@carnegiehero.org).

OVERHEARD

I'm not afraid of many things, but I would have been afraid of me that night.—**Ione Fletcher Kleven**, Carnegie Medal awardee #9562, on her response to a victim under assault.

We were floating out to sea while I talked about anything but sharks.—**Ian R. Tordella-Williams**, Carnegie Medal nominee #85007, who helped to save four teenagers from drowning.

My actions on July 7, 1990, and the vision of the Hero Fund have shaped my life forever. I am truly blessed.—**Jacob A. Greving**, Carnegie Medal awardee #7526 and Hero Fund scholarship recipient.

We fought the undertow the whole way. That's why it took so long to get in, with only one arm pulling two people.—**Robert Eli Meyer**, Carnegie Medal awardee #9757, who saved a boy from drowning in the Atlantic Ocean.

EVIL COMPOUNDS EVIL

(continued from page 6)

why I had such a positive reaction to my first meeting, even though I was not able to put words and reasons behind these feelings until reflecting upon them later.

It is good to be virtuous, honorable, and courageous and to demonstrate these attributes through our actions; to be a true hero. Not many of us will personally achieve that distinction. But I believe it is also good for the rest of us to recognize those attributes in others and to applaud them. Evil compounds evil and good compounds good. That is why ceremonies and awards honoring those who have well served their nation and humankind are so important. In thoughtfully and gratefully recognizing and honoring those who have earned it, we ennoble not only them but the rest of us as well, and, as importantly, we help to promote and carry forward the highest aspirations of humankind.

Witnessing contemporary society, there are times when many of us are tempted to agree with Thomas Merton, who wrote that "[w]e live in a time of the glorification of the material, of perverse and disordered libertarianism" (Thomas Merton, *Life and Holiness*). So, it is appropriate that we pause occasionally to review our personal and public "gratitude journal," to spend a little time each day to reflect on some positive aspect of our being—our health, friends, family, freedom, education, natural surroundings, and of course our heroes. Through this recognition, we honor those who deserve to be honored and we too experience a heightened sense of our own well being. It is for these reasons that I am honored and gratified to serve the good purposes of this Commission.



LATEST AWARDEES

(continued from page 8)



Eagle Scout Connor Farland Stotts of Oceanside, Calif., added not only the Boy Scouts Honor Medal with Crossed Palms to his chest but a Carnegie Medal, both in recognition of saving his friends from drowning in the Pacific Ocean at Oceanside. Connor, then 17, put his lifeguard certification from the Boy Scouts of America to good use in combating a rip current during the rescue.

10

44, from drowning in Lake Weir at Ocklawaha, Fla., on June 13, 2011. Priscilla and Yambao were swimming not far off a boat that was anchored about 1,500 feet from the closer bank. Aboard the boat were Priscilla's parents as well as Stephens, who was the boat's operator. Yambao experienced difficulty while swimming and began to struggle with Priscilla. Stephens, who was Priscilla's uncle and Yambao's brother-in-law, jumped into the water, swam to Priscilla, and returned her to the boat, where her parents took her aboard to safety. He then swam back toward Yambao but submerged suddenly and did not resurface. Yambao also submerged. Their bodies were recovered from the lake the following day.

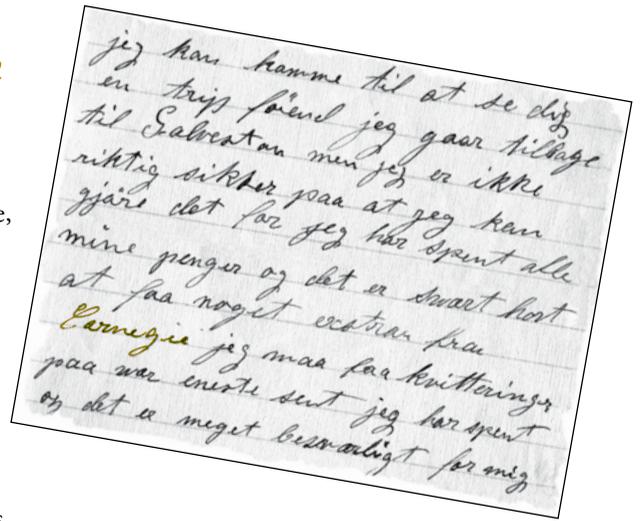
Robert Eli Meyer, 28, an assistant nursing home administrator from Kingston, Mass., saved Johaun B. Bennett, 10, from drowning in the Atlantic Ocean at Scituate, Mass., on May 14, 2011. Playing in knee-deep water off the beach, Johaun, 10, was taken farther out by a strong undertow, and he was unable to return. Meyer was working at a property near the scene when he was alerted to the situation. He ran to a point on the beach opposite Johaun and removed his outer attire. Meyer then entered the 50-degree water and waded and swam through rough surf about 300 feet to Johaun. He established a hold on Johaun with one arm and with the other began to swim to shore. Their progress was difficult,

(continued on page 11)

Family historian

(continued from page 9)

I began to research his story last July, when, out of the blue, relatives we hadn't known in Norway contacted us. They had been researching the family and discovered that their great-uncle, Hans Lund, had emigrated from Oslo to Michigan with his wife, Amelia Hansen, around 1900. Hans and Amelia were our grandparents, and Charles was Amelia's brother. When Bill first told me about Uncle Charles, he also gave me all of the old family photos and letters. Now it was time to sort through them and get them translated by our newly found Norwegian relatives.



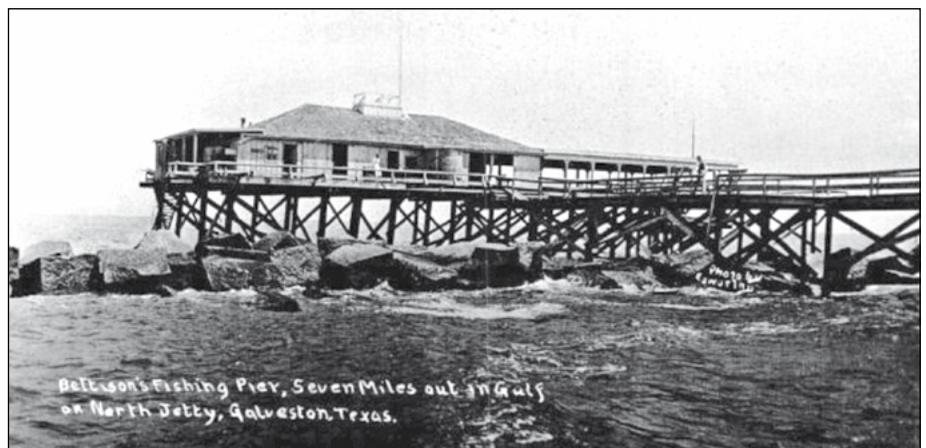
Hansen's 1915 reference to "Carnegie"....in Norwegian

Uncle Charles's story began to come to light in one of his letters, written on June 27, 1915, in New York City to Amelia that contained the remarks, "Before I return to Galveston I will try to take a trip to visit you. I am not sure I can because I have spent all of my money, and it is very difficult to get extra money from Carnegie. I must get a receipt on every cent I use, and that is very difficult for me." The reference to Carnegie was simply a mystery!

Among the cards and letters that Bill had given me was a postcard from Uncle Charles of a photograph of the *Texas*, a 120-foot-long pilot boat equipped with a 450-horsepower engine—"one of the best boats in Galveston." Uncle Charles had written on both sides in Norwegian, and unfortunately it could not be translated. Not knowing what his status on the boat had been, I started to research the Galveston hurricane of 1900, which killed 6,000 people. There was no link to this boat, but there were mentions of the *Texas* associated with a later hurricane, in 1909. According to the *Galveston Daily*: "East of Galveston, Bettison Pier and the newly completed Tarpon Fishing Pier, both sited on the north jetty, were destroyed. The pilot boat *Texas* rescued 38 people from the Bettison pier..."

This startling revelation was followed by another record, from the book "Lost Galveston," by Brian Davis: "Thirty-eight fishermen were removed from Bettison's Fishing Pier by the crew of the pilot boat *Texas* before it was destroyed in the hurricane that struck the region on July 21, 1909. The pier was located seven miles northeast of the city, at the end of the North Jetty, and brought visitors in from the harbor by

(continued on page 11)



Bettison's Fishing Pier prior to its 1909 destruction. Photo courtesy of Galveston County, Texas, Historical Museum.



Lund family reunion held Oct. 27 in Mesa, AZ. The author is standing in the back row, fifth from the left, wearing a white cap.

Family historian

(continued from page 10)

boat. In a city directory advertisement, it boasted “The coolest spot in Texas. No mosquitos.”

Continuing my research, I discovered a description of Uncle Charles’s rescue actions on the Carnegie Hero Fund’s website and learned that Hansen, then 29, was one of the two rescuers from the *Texas*. The summary tells how he and another crewmen took a small boat, a 16-foot yawl, from the *Texas* through 20-foot waves and 36 m.p.h. winds to reach the pier, “which was threatened with destruction by a storm.” Requiring eight or nine trips, each lasting 15 to 40 minutes, the two men transferred all of the victims from the pier to the *Texas*, the yawl being “tossed about like a piece of cork.” Hansen was so tired that he could hardly walk, according to the Hero Fund’s records. From *The Galveston Daily News* of July 22, 1909:

Nerve and seamanship of the highest order were displayed by these gallant men in the rescue of thirty-eight persons from the Bettison fishing pier. A guest at the . . . pier cannot say too much about the bravery of the crew of the pilot boat Texas. “Our rescue came in the nick of time. The work accomplished by those sailors can never be surpassed. Every one of us owe our lives to their skill and nerve, and while we can never recompense them fully, we will hold them in grateful remembrance.”

In 1912, Uncle Charles and the other rescuer, **Klaus L. Larsen**, each received the Carnegie Medal and a financial grant of \$1,000 for their heroism. Now I understood why Uncle Charles depended on “Carnegie” for money. The grant came with the stipulation that “it be soberly and properly used,” and Uncle Charles satisfied the requirement by attending a well-regarded institution founded by Capt. Howard Patterson, a famed teacher and author on nautical astronomy.

After completing his training at navigation school, Uncle Charles returned to Galveston and became captain of the *Texas*. He married Cordelia Maddux around 1917. After that, no records of him have been found, although there is, in a 1930 census of merchant seamen, a “Charles Hansen” listed as born in 1879 in Denmark (?) and living in Port Arthur, Texas, and as working on the ship *Gulfstar*. Likewise, there are no known photos of Uncle Charles.

This journey and exploration of mine continues! The holy grail for me is to locate the medal—stay tuned!

Love to all,

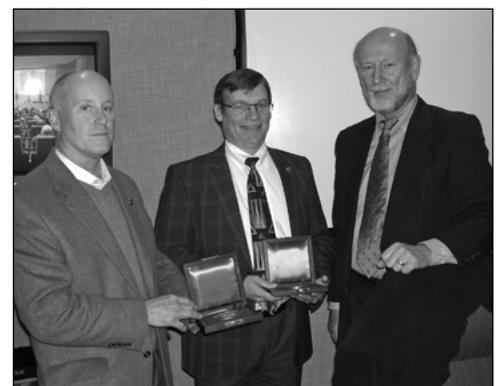
Cousin Chuck 

LATEST AWARDEES

(continued from page 10)

Meyer struggling to maintain his hold of Johaun and to keep Johaun’s head above the surface. From wadable water, Meyer carried Johaun toward shore, others assisting.

High school student **Connor Farland Stotts**, 17, of Oceanside, Calif., saved Christian E. Osuna, 18, and Karen T. Ainuu, 16, from drowning in the Pacific Ocean at Oceanside on July 31, 2011. While swimming, Osuna, Karen, and others in their party were carried farther from the beach by a rip current. They struggled to return but made little progress. Connor had also been carried out by the current, but he was able to swim against it to wadable water. Seeing that the others remained stranded about 200 feet out, Connor returned to them, finding that Osuna was having difficulty staying afloat. With Osuna holding to him, Connor swam toward shore, tiring and swallowing water en route. Osuna waded to safety. Connor again turned and swam out to the others. Karen, by then semiconscious, was trying to stay afloat. Connor attempted to swim her to shore but made no progress against the current. He then helped Karen secure a hold of his neck and in that fashion returned to the beach, towing her, the remaining victims following. (See photo.)



MEDALS AWARDED BY HERO FUND PRESIDENT

Michael J. Ledgard, left, of Greensburg, Pa., and **Kirk D. Haldeman**, center, of Ligonier, Pa., were named awardees of the Carnegie Medal in June but received the medals in December from Mark Laskow, right, Hero Fund president, at a meeting of the Commission. Long-time friends, Ledgard and Haldeman were having a meal in the barroom of a pub and grill in Ligonier on July 11, 2011, when a man armed with a semi-automatic rifle entered and opened fire, killing one of the other patrons. Although they were seated just feet away from a door to the outside, Ledgard and Haldeman charged across the room and felled the assailant, disarming him. In addition to the medal, members of the Commission gave the men a round of applause for their response.

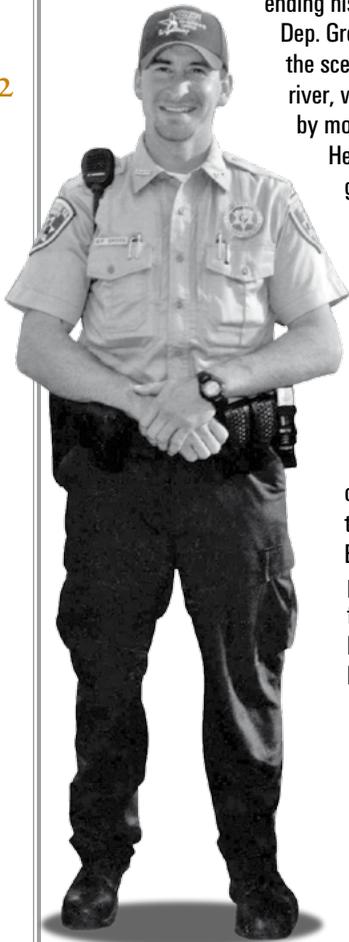


DEPUTY'S SACRIFICE HONORED

Amy Gross of Douglas, Wyo., received her late husband's Carnegie Medal from Converse County, Wyo., Sheriff Clinton B. Becker in December. Gross's husband, **Bryan Phillip Gross** (left), was a deputy in Becker's department when he died attempting to help save a 14-year-old girl from drowning in the North Platte River at Douglas on July 28, 2011. Minutes away from

ending his shift that day, Dep. Gross responded to the scene and entered the river, which was swollen by mountain snowmelt. He intercepted the girl and pushed her toward the bank, but they were carried farther downstream. The girl was rescued by others, but Gross drowned.

"His perception of that scene dictated his response," Becker said. "He put the thought of failure and death behind him, and he took it upon himself to try to prevent the death of a total stranger." Above photo by Amanda Smith of *The Glenrock Bird* of Glenrock, Wyo., and used with permission.



FRIENDS REMEMBERED



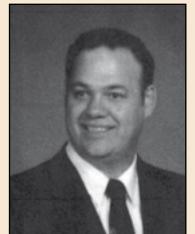
Alvan C. Hirshberg, 86, right, of Cary, N.C., died Jan. 16. He was awarded the medal in 1962 for saving the four-man crew of an American Airlines jet that overturned and caught fire during a crash landing at LaGuardia Airport, New York, on Sept. 14, 1960. Then 34, Hirshberg, who had been a U.S. Navy navigator during World War II, and all other passengers escaped the wreckage, but the four crewmen were trapped in the cockpit. Hirshberg returned to the plane and struggled to open one of the cockpit windows from outside while flames burned on the fuselage 15 feet away. Producing a quarter from his pocket, he finally pried the window open and pulled the first officer to safety. The two men then freed the remaining crewmen, and all fled to safety. Hirshberg is shown here with **Paul D. Meeks**, who was awarded the medal for his 2006 rescue of the pilot of a twin-engine airplane that crashed and burned near his Port Orange, Fla., home. The photo was taken in Palm Beach, Fla., in 2008 when Hirshberg and Meeks attended a gathering of Carnegie Medal awardees.



James L. Brown, 93, of Hebron, Ky., died Jan. 8. Brown received the Carnegie Medal in 1963 for helping to save a partially paralyzed man, 76, from his burning home at night on Jan. 3, 1963, in Constance, Ky. Then 43 and a steel mill utility operator, Brown was one of two rescuers who required repeated trips into the smoke-filled residence to find and remove the man, who died six weeks later. Brown was also a recipient of the Bronze Star for his U.S. Army service during World War II.

Mr. Brown

Ronald F. McMahon, 70, of Elm, N.J., died Dec. 26. McMahon and his wife, **Mary M.K. McMahon**, were each awarded the medal in 1989 for their roles in subduing a gunman after he shot a woman and her 6-year-old daughter, both of whom were sitting in a parked car. Stopped in their vehicle nearby, the McMahons witnessed the March 29, 1988, shooting, which occurred in Philadelphia, Pa., and responded to the scene, where they helped to disarm the assailant. Police arrived and arrested him. The girl survived, but her mother died of her injuries.



Mr. McMahon

Herbert E. Saindon, 75, of St. Augustine, Fla., died Jan. 5. Saindon received the medal in 1964 for saving a man from drowning in a lake near Vassalboro, Maine, on July 28, 1962. The man was a nonswimmer who had jumped from a moving boat, which then, out of control, circled him. Saindon swam more than 200 feet to reach him and, with the boat still circling, secured him to the side of a float until others arrived and lifted him onto it.



Mr. Shelby

Jon M. Shelby, 56, of Elgin, Ill., died July 22. Shelby was awarded the medal in 2004 to recognize his actions of July 13, 2002, by which he saved a man from a burning mobile home in Dunsuir, Calif. Shelby required three attempts in penetrating the smoke before locating and removing the man, who required hospital treatment for smoke inhalation. His wife informs that Shelby "was so proud to be a Carnegie Hero awardee."

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Personal enmity set aside when rescuer risks life for victim

Most who have been awarded the Carnegie Medal acted in behalf of strangers, friends, or relatives, but not **Rufus K. Combs** of Midway, Ky., who received the medal in 1906. He risked his life for a man who was not only a political opponent but a “bitter rival” when he entered a below-ground vault in his neighborhood to rescue Richard Godson on a spring evening that year.

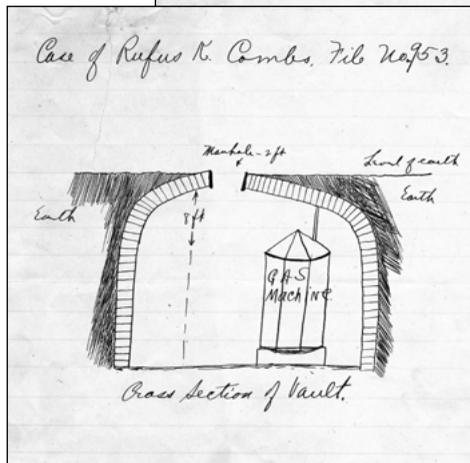
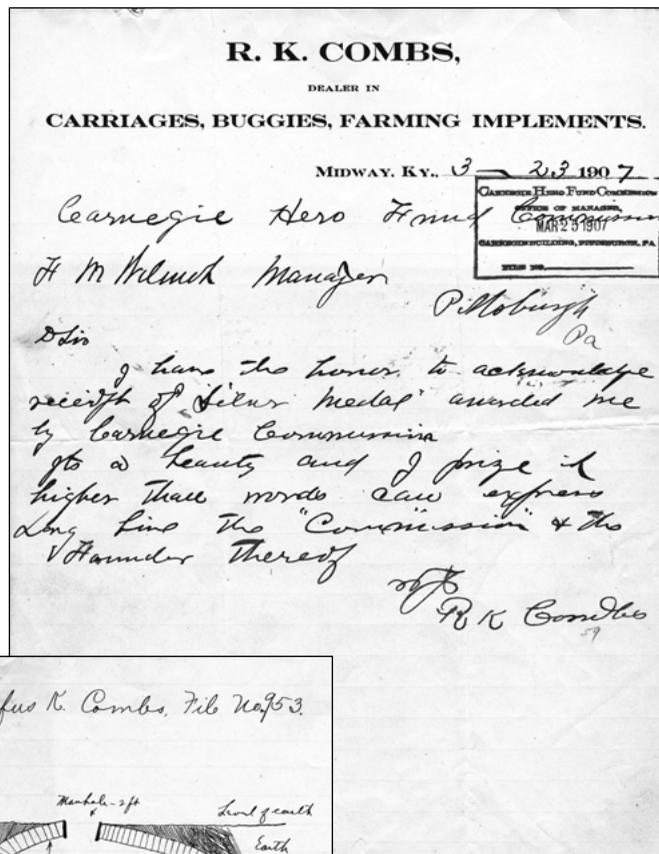
Combs’s opponent was Richard Godson, then 42, an attorney who lived and worked in Midway, where he was active in local politics. Combs, 48, a blacksmith who lived on the same street, was also active in local politics, serving as a member of Midway City Council.

Although only two blocks separated the men’s residences, a huge gulf separated their politics, and their verbal sparring at political rallies—which at times threatened to become physical—was well known.

In those days, before electrical service reached Midway, “gas machines” provided light for homes and businesses. The machine was a tank, containing gasoline, that was enclosed in a below-ground vault at distance from the building. The machine sent gasoline vapors to burners inside the building, providing illumination superior to that from candles or oil lamps.

The house in which Godson and his mother lived had a 150-gallon tank inside a vault in their backyard. On April 2, 1906, as twilight approached, Godson went into the vault to work on the tank. Access to the tank was through a two-foot-wide manhole, and Godson simply lowered himself through the hole and then dropped eight feet to the mud floor of the vault. It was not long before he felt himself grow weak. Recognizing the effect of inhaling gasoline fumes, he was able to climb atop the tank and reach the open manhole. After breathing fresh air, he returned inside the vault to continue his work. A second time he felt himself grow weak, but that time he was unable to reach the manhole.

His mother, meanwhile, searched for him, finding him unconscious inside the vault. Her screams drew neighbors, including Combs,



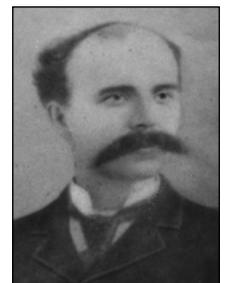
to the scene. Combs later told a Hero Fund investigator that when he looked into the vault and saw Godson, he realized he couldn’t see “a good fighter choked to death,” and for that reason decided to save him. “A man’s a man,” he later told a reporter, “even if he is your enemy.”

Combs lowered himself through the manhole and into the vault and almost immediately began to feel the effect of inhaling the fumes. He lifted Godson, raising him toward the manhole. Two men at ground level grasped Godson but did not establish a firm hold, and Godson fell back to the floor of the vault. A second time Combs lifted Godson toward the manhole, and bystanders then pulled him to safety. Combs was then pulled out of the vault, but, staggering, lost consciousness. He revived but was ill for hours afterward. Godson remained prostrate for days but did recover.

When asked by a newspaper reporter if he realized the life risk he undertook in Godson’s behalf, Combs answered: “You bet I did! When my nose began to sting and the humming sound in my ears began to get louder, I thought of Miss Ella (his wife) and the children. I had \$230 in my pants pocket and ... I was wondering if the doctor or the undertaker would go through me first when I was being measured for a shroud.” Combs was able to avoid the undertaker for four more years, when he died at age 52 of typhoid fever.

For his part, Godson heaped praise on his opponent-turned-rescuer, describing him to a reporter as “impulsive, warm-hearted, and generous.” Apparently attempting to minimize the perceived hostility between the two men, Godson explained: “I really never considered him as an enemy, we just didn’t like each other, that’s all.”

Six months after the rescue, the Hero Fund awarded Combs a silver medal and a grant of \$1,500. Two of Combs’s great-grandchildren, Karen Boxwell of Spearman, Texas, and her cousin Gloria Miller of Nappanee, Ind., when contacted by the Commission, were well aware of their ancestor’s courageous act. Combs’s medal has passed down through the generations as has a photograph of Andrew Carnegie, which Combs purchased after he was awarded.



Mr. Combs

—Marlin Ross, Case Investigator

**Carnegie Hero Fund Commission**

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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!

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Carnegie Hero Fund Commission

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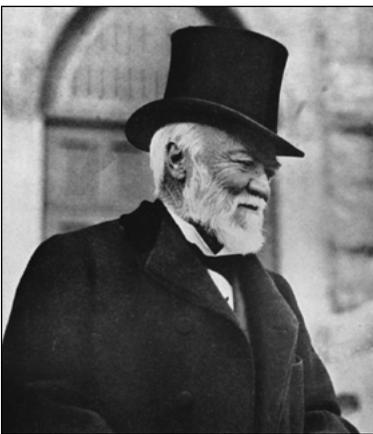
Thomas L. Wentling, Jr.

*Chair, Finance Committee***HONORARY MEMBERS**

William P. Snyder III

James M. Walton

✦ THE QUOTABLE A.C. ✦



Do not lose a day in tracing the family of that father who gave his life for his children. I cannot rest until I feel that they are provided for, if they are in want and provision needed. I shall be glad to put them on my private pension list....

—Private correspondence to Hero Fund, Jan. 16, 1909

✦ CONTINUUM ✦

GRAVE MARKERS Bronze grave markers (below), cast in the likeness of the Carnegie Medal, are available at no cost to the families of deceased awardees. They are designed for mounting on stone or bronze memorials. Contact Susan Rizza (susan@carnegiehero.org) or write her at the address given below.

MEDAL REFINISHING The Hero Fund will refinish Carnegie Medals at no cost to the owner. The medals are to be sent to the Hero Fund's office by insured, registered mail. Allow a month for the process. The contact is Myrna Braun (myrna@carnegiehero.org).

OBITUARIES Written accounts of the awardee's life, such as contained in an obituary, are sought for addition to the awardee's page on the Commission's website. Contact Doug Chambers (doug@carnegiehero.org).

ANNUAL REPORTS Copies of the Hero Fund's most recent annual reports (2010-2012) are available by contacting Gloria Barber (gloria@carnegiehero.org).

A CENTURY OF HEROES The centennial book describing the first 100 years of the Hero Fund is available through the Commission's website (www.carnegiehero.org).

COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL A silver medal struck in the likeness of the Carnegie Medal to commemorate the 2004 centennial of the Hero Fund is available for purchase through the Commission's website.

imPULSE ON LINE? Should you wish to receive *imPULSE* in PDF rather than in your mailbox, let us know: impulse@carnegiehero.org

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