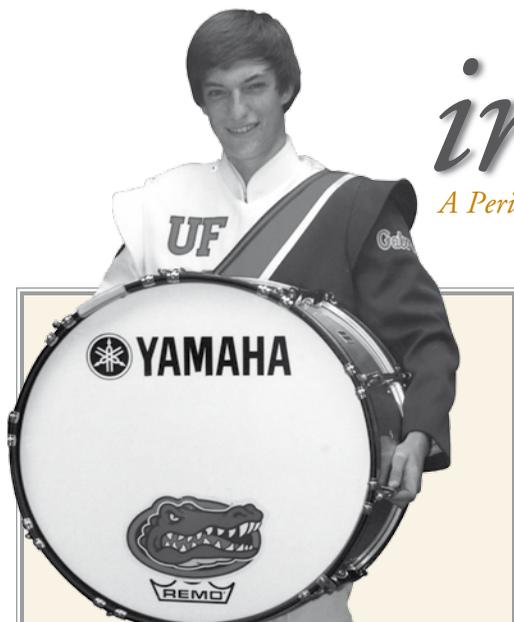




imPULSE

A Periodic Newsletter of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission ISSUE 35 • SEPTEMBER 2013



GATOR BAND DRUMMER DIED HELPING FRIEND

When a close friend and fellow member of his university's Fellowship of Christian Athletes became stranded while exploring a cave, **Michael Wayne Pirie**, 18, donned a harness and descended into a dark, 125-foot-deep pit to rescue him. Trapped, neither man returned to safety.

For his efforts on Feb. 12, 2011, Pirie, 18, a freshman at the University of Florida and a drummer in the university's band, was posthumously awarded the Carnegie Medal in June. (See pages 6-8 for more on his actions and those of the 12 other newly named medal awardees.) Pirie's family recently placed one of the Hero Fund's grave markers on his headstone.

Pirie, of Oviedo, Fla., was a freshman marketing major at the university, where a memorial scholarship was established for students on the band's drumline who exhibit "strength of character, generosity, exuberance, and dedication to the Gator Band." He leaves a legacy that "continues to touch and change lives for the better," said his father, Brent Pirie.



Stitch's "Hometown Heroes" mural in Louisville, Ky.

Double Carnegie Medal awardee honored with 'Hometown Heroes' mural downtown

Darryl L. Stitch, 54, of Louisville, Ky., was only 9 months old when his father, **Rudell Stitch**, who was ranked the No. 2 welterweight boxer in the world, died in 1960 attempting to save a friend from drowning. But Darryl, the youngest of Stitch's six children, has come to know his father through his legacy.

That legacy was strengthened in June when a "Hometown Heroes" mural featuring Stitch was installed in downtown Louisville. Spanning the upper two levels of a Fifth Street parking garage, the mural is one of 22 paying tribute to notable Louisville natives in a project of The Greater Louisville Pride Foundation. The foundation's commission had voted unanimously to honor Stitch with the mural, putting him in company with Muhammad Ali, Col. Harlan Saunders, Judge Louis Brandeis, and television journalist Diane Sawyer.

"I remember, as a kid, going through his scrapbooks," Darryl said. "It was like reading a comic for a superhero. It was the story of a great man, but then, in the end, he dies."

(continued on page 2)



HEARING OF HEROIC ACTS IS ENRICHING, ENNOBLING

By Mark Laskow, President
Carnegie Hero Fund Commission



imPULSE is fortunate to have three thoughtful contributions to this issue from Matthew Eldred, a law student; Lacey Wallace, a sociology professor; and Carl Muller, an awardee of the Carnegie Medal. They discuss ways in which heroism affects our society and how, in turn,

our society influences the willingness to undertake a dangerous rescue. Together they raise the interesting question of how the Hero Fund might affect the willingness to rescue. Does the existence of the Carnegie Medal *promote* heroic acts?

Andrew Carnegie himself seemed of two minds. These words of his have appeared in our annual reports for more than a century:

I do not expect to stimulate or create heroism by this fund, knowing well that heroic action is impulsive. But I do believe that, if the hero is injured in his bold attempt to save or serve his fellows, he and those dependent upon him should not suffer pecuniarily.

On the other hand, Eldred quotes from a letter in which Carnegie recognized that publicizing heroic acts had the potential “to stir within themselves (the public) the desire to go and do likewise.” So, how does the Hero Fund interpret these words of Carnegie?

First, let’s be honest and recognize that the effects of our publicity efforts must be small. The U.S. and Canada are big countries, and we allocate almost all of our resources to locating and investigating cases and to making awards to the heroes and their families. Also, we are cautious and humble about urging people to attempt risky rescues that can, and too often do, end in their own deaths.

In my view, this discussion ultimately involves the “why” of heroism. Why would anyone undertake mortal risk for a stranger? Is it nature or nurture? Something innate and noble in the human spirit, or a value our society cultivates? I think there are clearly elements of both, and that is worth a separate discussion. But do we change the equation by publicizing rescues? I don’t have any more clarity on that than Andrew Carnegie himself did. I am confident, however, that when we publicize true heroic acts we enrich

(continued on page 3)

Double Carnegie Medal awardee

(continued from cover)



Rudell Stitch with wife Rosa Mae and three of their sons, circa 1955. From left, Rudell, Jr.; Rodney, and Donald

He said the mural is his father’s “mortal ascension” and that “his story is there to be told to anyone who passes by. It will be there for people to ask, ‘Who was this man?’ and his story can live on.”

“This forgotten hero is way overdue to be honored,” said Mike Sheehy, the foundation’s president, in a letter to secure funding for the mural. At the dedication, Darryl and his father’s friend, Mickey Clark, performed a song about Stitch’s life that Clark wrote. “I think it’s just a relief that this great person will get some recognition and be remembered,” Clark said.

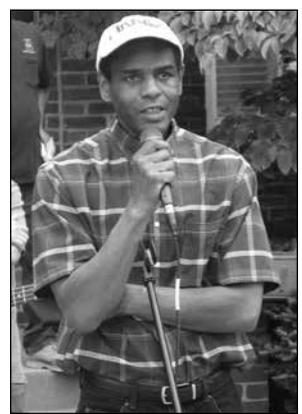
Donald C. Stitch, 62, also of Louisville, is the oldest of Stitch’s five sons. “The mural

means a great deal to us,” he said. “It is a great honor and tribute to the type of person my dad was. Not only as a great boxer, but as a churchman, a person who did charity work for Louisville children, and a hero.”

Stitch was awarded a silver Carnegie Medal posthumously for his heroic actions on June 5, 1960. On that day, he and a friend, Charles L. Oliver, an apprentice boxer, were fishing at a dam on the Ohio River at Louisville. Stitch, then 27, was aiding Oliver, 25, a poor swimmer, walk along the dam’s sill when Oliver lost his footing and was swept into the river. Stitch was pulled in with him, and the two became separated in the 10-foot-deep water. Stitch removed his boots, raincoat, and pants while submerged and surfaced to see Oliver get carried beneath a bridge and disappear. He swam to the area where Oliver submerged and dived for him but came up empty-handed. He dived again. Neither man resurfaced. Several hours later, their bodies were recovered.

Stitch’s wife, Rosa, wrote to the Hero Fund: “It is with deep gratitude that my family and I acknowledge the receipt of the medal ... I am sure this will help me keep alive the memory of Rudell in our children.”

It wasn’t Stitch’s first Carnegie Medal. Two years earlier, on Sept. 16, 1958, he rescued a dam worker from drowning in the same river at the same location. Joseph C. Schifcar, 37, was standing on the dam’s sill, plugging leaks, when he lost his footing and was swept from the dam. He struggled to keep his head above water as he was carried downstream. Stitch, fishing from rocks below the dam, waded into the water and grasped Schifcar, but he also lost his footing. The two men drifted until they reached shallower water, where another fisherman helped Stitch tow Schifcar to safety.



Son Darryl Stitch, at mural dedication. Photo by Rick Howlett, Louisville Public Media.

Stitch is one of four people in the Hero Fund’s 109-year history to receive the Carnegie Medal twice. The others: **Daniel Elwood Stockwell** of Keene, N.H. (for rescues in 1963 and 1991); **John J. O’Neill, Sr.**, of Yonkers, N.Y. (1954 and 1956); and **Henry Naumann** of Hammond, Ind. (1924 and 1927).

—Jewels Phraner, Case Investigator

TO THE HERO FUND



Evacuation of the stranded scow was made by hoisting the victims and Hanke in a breeches buoy extended from the boom of a land-based construction crane, left.

Legacy left by 95-year-old Carnegie hero includes dramatic rescue of five in 1961

The death of 95-year-old Carnegie Medal awardee **Kenneth L. Hanke** on April 20 called to mind one of the more dramatic rescues ever recorded by the Hero Fund. For his heroic act 52 years ago, Hanke, late of Michigan City, Ind., received one of only 620 silver medals given by the Hero Fund from its inception in 1904 to 1980, when the medal grade was set to bronze only.

It was on May 26, 1961, when Hanke, then 43, an ironworker superintendent for a construction company in Michigan City, and another man, **Theodore E. Smith**, 36, teamed up to rescue five crewmen from their stranded scow. The steel scow, a barge-like vessel that was transporting a construction crane, had broken from its line while being towed and ran aground in Lake Michigan at Michigan City Harbor. Partially submerged, it listed precariously at a point about 150 feet from shore. It was night, with air temperatures in the 30s and winds at gale force, about 50 m.p.h. Waves up to 15 feet high pounded the scow as well as the shore line, thwarting rescue efforts by the Coast Guard, the fire department, and other responding agencies. The crewmen took refuge in the scow's engine house.

Broadcast news of the situation reached Hanke, who was at a restaurant in town. Hanke responded to the scene, where he learned that the rescue effort had been turned over to local construction companies, one of which employed Smith, an ironworker foreman who was an acquaintance of Hanke. The plan was to reach the stranded scow from shore by extending the boom of a construction crane to it, and on his arrival Hanke found that the land-based crane's boom was being assembled and that a ramp was being bulldozed to enable the crane to approach the water line as close as possible.

Hanke went home and went to bed, but sleep didn't come; mulling over the rescue plan, he recognized flaws in the details. Dressing in heavy work clothing, he returned to the scene. By then it was midnight and the severe weather conditions



Four hours after he started his rescue, Hanke was lifted ashore.

(continued on page 4)

SCHOLARSHIP AID APPRECIATED

I am writing to let you know that I completed my course requirements, passed all exams, and obtained my principal's license. Thank you for your financial assistance in this matter. Due to your generosity, I was able to focus on my studies without working a second job.

Blessings to all of you as you continue to make certain that all of the Carnegie heroes' families are able to pursue their dreams.

Victoria Thanos, Valparaiso, Ind.

The writer is the widow of **Mark John Thanos**, who died Sept. 14, 2008, attempting to save a boy from a flooded culvert. He was awarded the Carnegie Medal posthumously a year later.

FAMILY HISTORY FOCAL POINT

We received the refinished medal today and both it as well as the new box are absolutely beautiful. Thank you and your organization for renewing such a wonderful tribute to my grandfather. My only regret is that he passed away before I was born. I know he was a selfless man who would do anything for anyone in need. This medal, in that beautiful box, will remain a focal point of our family history for many generations to come. Please extend our heartfelt thanks to all involved.

Wayne Thomas Glenn, Charlotte, N.C.

Glenn's grandfather, **Albert B. Taylor**, was awarded the medal for saving a 9-year-old girl from being struck by a train in Carnegie, Pa., on Oct. 16, 1930. Taylor, then 47, a clergyman, snatched the girl from the track and rolled clear of the rail with her when the locomotive was just two feet from him. The Hero Fund refinishes medals at no charge to the holder. Contact Myrna Braun (myrna@carnegiehero.org) for details.

Glenn's sentiments reflect Carnegie's thinking. In the Hero Fund's founding Deed of Trust, which Carnegie wrote in 1904, he says, "A medal shall be given to the hero, or widow, or next of kin, which shall recite the heroic deed it commemorates, that descendants may know and be proud of their descent."

BOARD NOTES

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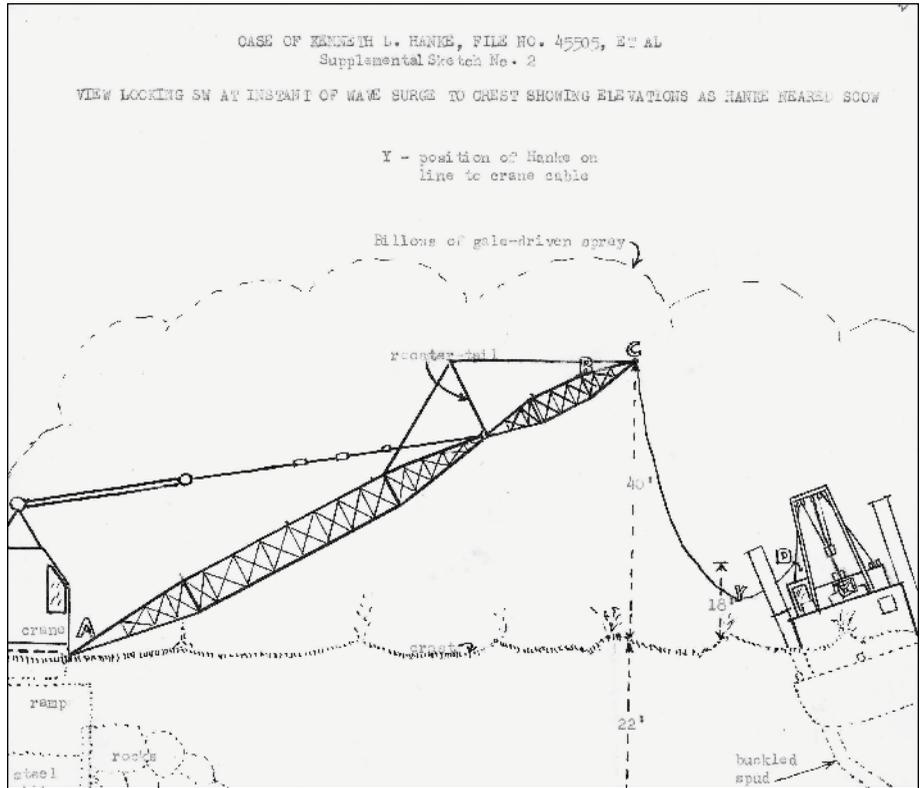
our culture and strengthen the best of its values. We are all ennobled by awareness of the potential for heroism within us.

Every person who hears these accounts, myself included, asks the same question, "Would I have done it?" That's a good conversation to have with yourself.



MEDAL AWARDEE AS MEDAL PRESENTER

Summer visitors to the Hero Fund include Carnegie Medal awardee **Chris A. Cole** and his wife, Nicole, of Lewis Run, Pa. Cole was awarded the medal in 2003 for saving the driver of a tank truck that tipped onto its side and began to spew its cargo of 7,000 gallons of gasoline as the rig's engine continued to run. Cole, who was 29 at the time, witnessed the March 12, 2002, accident and then ran through the gasoline to extract the truck's seriously injured driver before the gasoline could ignite. He sustained abrasions and chemical burns to his feet, but he recovered, as did the driver. Since the award, Cole has maintained a close association with the Hero Fund by offering to present the medal to newly awarded recipients living nearby. "I am prior military," Cole wrote in 2010, "and when we received a medal, it was always presented to us by someone. It gave the award some importance and acknowledgement. I believe that the Carnegie Medal is one of the most respectable awards and I feel that it should be delivered in this manner." Cole has gone on to make a few presentations, and the Hero Fund, through Douglas R. Chambers, the Commission's director of external affairs, has lined up other awardees for local presentations. Chambers can be reached by email—doug@carnegiehero.org—should other awardees wish to make presentations near their homes. As a token of appreciation to Cole for his courtesies, he was given one of the Hero Fund's 2004 centennial commemorative medals.



The scene of Hanke's rescue act as seen in a cross-section rendering by the Hero Fund's investigator, Herbert W. Eyma.

Legacy includes dramatic rescue

(continued from page 3)

had not abated. The ramp had been completed and the crane's 110-foot-long boom nearly assembled, but when extended toward the scow, the boom fell short of it by 40 feet. Hanke's plan: Climb to the end of the boom, cast a weighted line to the scow, and pray that it engage on a projection of the scow. The line would then be the physical link, however tenuous, between the shore and the scow, between the men's doom and their salvation. Hanke was the man for the job. He had been an ironworker for most of his adult life and had worked on radio and television towers as high as 250 feet. Three years earlier he ascended a 185-foot-high smoke stack at a mental institution to talk a resident out of a suicide attempt.

With lifelines tied to them, Hanke and Smith climbed over the turbulent water to the end of the extended boom. For the next hour, Hanke made repeated casts of the weighted line until it caught securely to the scow. Crossing his ankles over the line—a length of rope a half-inch in diameter—Hanke then moved hand-over-numbered-hand along it until he reached the scow. Resting briefly, he removed his lifeline and searched the vessel for the stranded crewmen, having to get to the engine room at the opposite end of the scow by climbing the length of the lowered boom of the crane being transported. Reaching the engine room, Hanke contacted the crewmen and then aided them along the boom to the point at which he boarded the vessel. He rigged the crewmen separately into a breeches buoy so that each could be swung ashore by the operator of the land-based crane. Four hours after starting the rescue, Hanke himself was lifted to safety—tired, numbed from cold, and chilled from his exposure to the raw elements.



Mr. Hanke

In 1963, Hanke was awarded the silver Carnegie Medal and a grant of \$1,000, and Smith was awarded a bronze medal and \$500. A few months before he died, Hanke donated his medal to the Michigan City Historical Society, which is displaying it in its Old Lighthouse Museum, located at the harbor. A very humble man, according to his son, Paul, of Tucson, Ariz., Hanke had kept the medal in his sock drawer and rarely spoke of the rescue. ☒

Traditional mission secured, enhanced by Hero Fund's 7th and current president

By Mary Brignano

Special to the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission

Shortly after he was elected Commission president in 2001, Mark Laskow was interviewed by a young reporter who asked, "What changes do you expect to be making at the Carnegie Hero Fund?" Surprising his questioner, Mark answered, "None." He went on to explain that, in 1904, Carnegie made a clear statement of what he considered to be of enduring value in human character and that no alterations were necessary to the Hero Fund's mission. "Modern society still needs heroes, and the Hero Fund still finds them and still honors their acts and spirit."

In that context, "no change" was the appropriate sentiment. But as the events of the ensuing years have shown, an institution can rely on and honor its history as it simultaneously grows

stronger, more inclusive, and more relevant to its own time. If this is a delicately balanced path to tread, Mark Laskow is the balanced, articulate leader to walk it — and his many contributions continue to be a walk in progress.

Mark is the most recent in a line of extraordinary leaders of the Carnegie Hero Fund. His inauguration as president was baptized by fire, coming three months after 9-11 as the Commission formulated its response to the unprecedented degree of selfless heroism exhibited at the terror sites in Manhattan, Shanksville, and Washington, D.C. Additional circumstances that demanded Mark's attention in his early years as president included preparation for the Commission's centennial, the instituting of the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy with its call for involvement by all of Carnegie's benefactions, and the coming of age of the Internet with its seemingly limitless opportunities for communication. Mark took advantage of all these developments to raise the profile of the Hero Fund and its work while at the same time honoring and acting on its cherished principles.

A native of Philadelphia, Mark is a graduate of The Hill School (as was Stewart McClintic, Mark's predecessor as president), the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. Formerly an associate at Reed Smith, he was vice president and director of The Hillman Company and the chief executive officer of Greycourt & Co., an independent investment advisor. He and his wife, Lisa, are the parents of two sons, Paul and Thomas.

In addition to his work with the Hero Fund, Mark is active in health care. As a board member, director, chairman, and trustee of hospitals and health care foundations, he has made the case for elimination of hospital-borne infections and medication errors, and improved efficiency, safety, and retention by challenging the status quo and building consensus among hospitals and health plan administrators, physicians, business leaders, and health care advocates. "Mark has consistently impressed me with his knowledge, integrity, and high moral code in directing and supporting paths for improving the quality of care for patients," said Sheila Fine, chair of LEAD Pittsburgh (Leading Education and Awareness for Depression), in 2011. A trustee of UPMC Shadyside (formerly Shadyside Hospital) since 1983, Mark is vice chair of

SEVENTH & 7 FINAL IN A SERIES



Mr. Laskow

(continued on page 12)

OVERHEARD

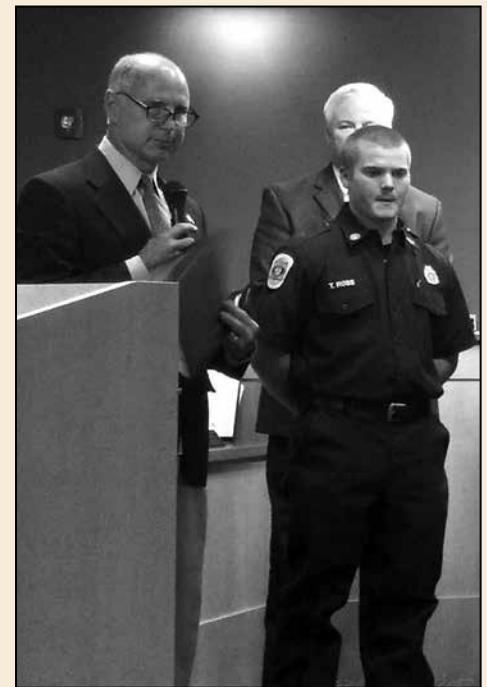
He is a hero by anyone's standards.—An eyewitness to the actions of **Michael Blake**, Carnegie Medal award-ee #9599, who rescued a man being stabbed.

One thing I can tell you is this—saving a life is a feeling like none other.—**Christopher A. Pratt**, Carnegie Medal awardee #9600.

True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic. It is not the urge to surpass all others at whatever cost, but the urge to serve others at whatever cost.—**Arthur Ashe**, world-class professional tennis player and awardee of the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Honestly, it felt as if one thing just led to another, and I figured I was capable, so why not?—Carnegie Medal nominee #85464 **Nathaniel Bacon**, who saved a woman from drowning.

I do not recommend swimming with pants and boots. Imagine Frankenstein swimming and you get the picture.—**Clarence M. Brooks, Jr.**, Carnegie Medal nominee 84787, who helped to save a man from drowning.



FIRE HERO

Hall County, Ga., Fire Services recruit **Tray Hughes Ross**, right, of Gainesville, Ga., received his Carnegie Medal at a meeting of the Hall County Commissioners on July 11. Doing the honors is Commissioner Billy Powell, left. Ross, who was featured in the June 2013 issue of *imPULSE*, was cited for rescuing an elderly man from a burning house in 2011, and the rescue prompted him to revive his dream of becoming a firefighter. He is now in training.



LATEST AWARDEES
OF THE CARNEGIE MEDAL

SINCE THE LAST ISSUE OF *imPULSE*, THE FOLLOWING 13 INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN AWARDED THE CARNEGIE MEDAL, BRINGING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS TO 9,611 SINCE THE HERO FUND'S INCEPTION IN 1904. THE LATEST AWARDS, WHICH WERE ANNOUNCED ON JUNE 25, ARE DETAILED ON THE COMMISSION'S WEBSITE AT WWW.CARNEGIEHERO.ORG. THE NEXT ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARDEES WILL BE MADE ON OCT. 2.

Michael Blake, 48, a technology advisor from Sterling, Va., rescued a man from an attack in Sterling on Oct. 6, 2011. In a domestic dispute, a 35-year-old man was being stabbed in the front yard of a house in a suburban neighborhood by a man armed with a butcher knife. Blake was at his home nearby and heard shouting. He ran to the scene and found that the victim's lower body was covered with blood. Blake grasped the assailant from behind and forced him to the ground despite the assailant's struggling against him in attempts to stab him. Blake disarmed the assailant of his knife and threw it aside and then held the assailant to the ground until police arrived shortly and apprehended him. The victim was hospitalized for treatment of significant stab wounds.

Christopher A. Pratt rescued Jace A. Westbrook, 4, from a burning car after an accident in Centralia, Ill., on Dec. 21, 2011. Jace remained in a car seat



Kirk Montgomery Rohle, left, sustained extensive third-degree burns in the attempted rescue of his friend and teammate Benjamin T. Rogers, right, from a fire in their college campus house in early 2012, but that didn't stop him from graduating a few months later. The men were students at Hampden-Sydney College, Hampden Sydney, Va. Photo, by Eva Russo, is provided by the Richmond Times-Dispatch and is used with permission.

secured to the rear seat of a sport utility vehicle after the pre-dawn accident, in which the vehicle left the roadway, overturned onto its driver's side, and caught fire at its front end. Pratt, 30, a metal fabrication supervisor from Odin, Ill., drove upon the scene. He ran to the vehicle and, hearing Jace crying, broke out the window of its hatch door. Although flames

were entering the front of the vehicle, Pratt crawled inside and made his way toward Jace. Pratt used his knife to cut Jace free and then, holding him to his chest, backed out of the vehicle to safety. Flames spread to engulf the vehicle shortly. Jace and Pratt both required hospital treatment for burns, Pratt sustaining first- and second-degree burns to his hands and forehead.

A police constable from Lindsay, Ont., **David Paul Murtha, 33**, saved Bruce G. Henderson from a burning house in Lindsay on May 3, 2010. Henderson, 64, was in the basement unit of his house after fire broke out on the structure's front porch at night and spread into the ground-floor level. Murtha responded to the scene and learned that he was unaccounted for. Despite flames along one side of the house issuing above the roof, Murtha entered through a door on the other side, stepping into a room that was aflame. He descended the stairs to the smoke-filled basement, located Henderson, and attempted to lead him back to the stairs, but Henderson instead took Murtha to another stairway, which was nearer the overhead flames. The stairwell was aflame at the top, but the men climbed to an outside door, the frame of which was burning. They emerged to safety.

Michael Wayne Pirie of Oviedo, Fla., died February 12, 2011, while attempting to save Grant S. Lockenbach from exposure while on a caving expedition in LaFayette, Ga. Lockenbach, 20, and Pirie, 18, were among a group of college students exploring Ellison's Cave. When a backpack was lost to the bottom of a 125-foot-deep pit that was 1,000 feet inside the cave, Lockenbach lowered himself by rope to retrieve it. Encountering difficulty, he shouted for help. Pirie donned a harness and descended



Lewiston, Idaho, Police Officer Dustin E. Hibbard, second from left, and Reserve Officer Jason Ewing, second from right, each received the Carnegie Medal for saving a woman from her smoke-filled apartment. For the same rescue, they received also Idaho's Medal of Honor, the state's highest award for extraordinary bravery by law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency medical service providers. Idaho Attorney General and Medal of Honor Commission Chairman Lawrence G. Wasden, right, said the officers went "above and beyond the call of duty in their commitment to the service of others." At left is (former) Idaho State Senator Denton Darrington.

(continued on page 7)

LATEST AWARDEES

(continued from page 6)

into the pit to him on another line. For several minutes he and Lockenbach remained in communication with those students at the top of the pit, despite the noise of a nearby waterfall. Eventually their voices were silenced, Lockenbach's first. Rescue personnel arrived and found both men suspended by one of the lines in the spray of the waterfall. They had died of harness-hang syndrome and hypothermia. (See cover.)



Jason Ewing, 36, a business owner volunteering as a reserve police officer for the Lewiston, Idaho, Police Department, and **Dustin E. Hibbard**, 32, an officer with the department, saved Charity D. Vaughn, 35, from her burning apartment building in Lewiston on Nov. 28, 2010. Vaughn's apartment filled with dense smoke after its neighboring unit caught fire at night. Ewing, Hibbard, and other officers responded to the scene and, hearing Vaughn screaming, set out to locate her. After Hibbard kicked in the door to her apartment, Ewing crawled through the kitchen despite heavy smoke that severely restricted visibility. Hibbard followed at his heels, also crawling. Then seeing Vaughn in her bedroom, Ewing told her to go to the floor. He grabbed her by the wrist and began to pull on her. Standing, Hibbard grasped Vaughn and pulled on her as Ewing pushed, and in that fashion they took her across the floor to the back door and to safety. Both officers suffered smoke inhalation, for which they required hospital treatment, Ewing being detained overnight. (See photo.)

A welder from Wawaka, Ind., **Charles A. Miller**, 39, saved Tiffany J. Miller (no relation) from a burning car after an accident in Ligonier, Ind., on Feb. 22 last year. Tiffany, 26, was the front-seat passenger in a sport utility vehicle that, at night, left the roadway and struck a tree. Unconscious, she remained in the seat, secured by her safety belt, as flames broke out on the car's undercarriage. Miller, a motorist, stopped at the scene. He crawled through the broken-out window of the driver's door and struggled to free Tiffany from her safety belt, the task made difficult by extensive damage done to the vehicle in the accident. Flames by then started to enter the car at its dashboard. Miller maneuvered Tiffany through a side window and exited the vehicle himself shortly before it was engulfed by flames. Tiffany was injured in the accident but not burned.

Kevin Roberts, 43, a maintenance supervisor from Mount Lookout, W. Va., died June 4 last year attempting to save four youths from drowning, and



Witnessing a sport utility vehicle overturn and catch fire in a causeway accident (small photo), Pamela Jones-Morton opened the vehicle's rear door and entered to rescue the driver. She then discovered a 3-year-old girl strapped inside. After removing the girl, Jones-Morton re-entered and freed the driver. For her efforts, she received the first-ever Medal of Valor awarded by the Bonita Springs, Fla., Fire District. Presenting the medal is Fire Commissioner Steve Lohan. Photo, by Scott McIntyre, is courtesy of the Naples Daily News. For more on the event, go to <http://www.naplesnews.com/photos/galleries/2012/jan/09/pamela-jones-morton-receives-medal-valor/>

Ian Tordella-Williams, 27, a sales clerk and water sports instructor from Carrboro, N.C., helped to save them. The four youths, ages 12 to 17, struggled against a strong current in the Atlantic Ocean off Bald Head Island, N.C. Roberts, a member of their party on the beach, swam about 750 feet out to them. He attempted to calm them and instructed them on how to escape the current, but he was overtaken himself and carried farther out. From another party at the beach, Tordella-Williams swam out with a small inflatable boat and reached one of the youths, a girl, 14, who was apart from the others. As she held to the boat, Tordella-Williams paddled it farther out to the other youths. All held to the boat as they attempted to return to the beach, but they made no progress against the current. A rescue boat took them to safety. Roberts was then found to be missing, and rescuers recovered him from the water at a point about a half-mile from shore. He had drowned. Tordella-Williams was nearly exhausted, but he recovered. (See photo.)

Pamela Jones-Morton saved Audrey L. Hart and Colleen M. Page from a burning car in Bonita Springs, Fla., on Dec. 10, 2011. Audrey, 3, was the back-seat passenger in the sport utility vehicle driven by her grandmother, Page, 49, that overturned onto its passenger side in an accident. Page was suspended, restrained by her safety belt, and Audrey was secured in a child safety seat as flames erupted on the undercarriage of their vehicle. Jones-Morton, 64, a retired educator from Estero, Fla., witnessed the accident and attempted to open the car's only accessible door, but it was locked. At her urging,

Page unlocked the doors. Jones-Morton opened the rear door, entered the car, and maneuvered toward the front, discovering Audrey as she did so. After releasing Audrey from her seat, Jones-Morton carried her to the back of the vehicle and stepped outside. She then re-entered the car, went to the front, and released Page's safety belt. The two women exited the car to safety as flames spread quickly, engulfing it, before firefighters arrived. (See photo.)

Richard P. Baumgartner, 49, of Lubbock, Texas, rescued a woman from an assault by a man armed with a knife in Lubbock on May 9, 2011. The man entered the office building of a school and confronted four staff members. Baumgartner, the school's director, responded from another part of the campus, but the man locked the door on his arrival. Three of the staff members fled through another door, but the assailant held the fourth, a woman, 40, at knife point in a locked inner office. Hearing her scream, Baumgartner entered the building and broke down the door to that office. Distracted, the assailant turned to Baumgartner, who had fallen to the floor, and wounded him in the back with the knife. The woman fled to safety. Baumgartner regained his footing and used an office chair to fend off the assailant until an officer arrived shortly and arrested him.

Fred D. Leslie III, 35, of Ducktown, Tenn., helped to rescue Tennessee Highway Patrol Officer Larry L. Russell, 36, from his burning patrol car after an interstate highway accident in Knoxville, Tenn., on March 13, 2012. Unconscious, Russell remained in the driver's seat of the car after it was struck from behind by

(continued on page 8)



Ian Tordella-Williams—an experienced surfer and kiteboarder—used a child’s blow-up raft to help save four youths from drowning in the Atlantic Ocean off Bald Head Island, N.C., last summer. Another rescuer died in the same effort.

LATEST AWARDEES

(continued from page 7)

a tractor-trailer. Flames spread from the rear of the car to its interior. Those responding to the wreckage included Leslie, a paramedic for a private ambulance company. Despite flames encroaching on the front passenger compartment, Leslie leaned through the driver’s door, grasped Russell, and pulled on him but found him to be stuck. He then grasped Russell by his legs and pulled, freeing him. Leslie pulled Russell partially from the vehicle and then was aided by others in removing him and taking him across the highway to safety.

Kirk Montgomery Rohle of Mechanicsville, Va., attempted to rescue Benjamin T. Rogers from a burning house in Hampden Sydney, Va., on Jan. 25, 2012. Rogers, 21, and Rohle, 22, students at the same college and residents of the same two-story house, were asleep on the second floor after fire erupted on a porch. Alarmed, all of the residents except Rogers fled the house and then realized that Rogers remained inside. Wearing only shorts, Rohle returned to the second floor. He checked the bedrooms there, finding that part of the flooring by then had collapsed into the living room. Disoriented by the blinding smoke and blistering heat, Rohle felt his way back downstairs. With flames blocking him, Rohle made his way into a first-floor bedroom, where he threw himself through a window to the ground. Rogers at some point had made his way to safety. Rohle sustained burns of up to third-degree to about 50 percent of his body and inhalation injury. He required extensive hospitalization for treatment, including skin grafting. (See photo.)

Medals awarded to three for heroism during shooting spree in Pennsylvania

Three southwestern Pennsylvanians were recognized by the Hero Fund for extraordinary heroism during an assault by a gunman in the small community of Calumet, near Greensburg, three years ago. At its April meeting, the Hero Fund announced awards to **Mark A. Garsteck** and **John E. Swartz** of Mount Pleasant and posthumously to **Stacey Lynn Feiling**, also of Mount Pleasant, who was killed in her heroic act. The medals were given personally by Commission representatives at a ceremony on June 27.

The event was held at the Arnold Palmer Pavilion, a cancer treatment facility in Greensburg that is a joint endeavor of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) and Excelsa Health. Feiling was a UPMC office assistant at the facility, and the ceremony was attended by her husband, parents, and many friends and coworkers as well as by family members and friends of Garsteck and Swartz. Hosted by the Hero Fund and Excelsa Health, the event included the dedication of a conference room at the medical center in Feiling’s memory. Matthews International of Pittsburgh donated a bronze plaque dedicating the room, the plaque featuring the obverse of the Carnegie Medal along with the New Testament verse that appears on every medal: “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13).

Presenting the medals were Commission member Joseph C. Walton and the Hero Fund’s director of external affairs, Douglas R. Chambers, and executive director, Walter F. Rutkowski. “We pause to call to mind the events of a terrifying evening in a small community not far from here,” Rutkowski told the gathering of about 50. “That day will remain a dark one in the hearts of many who are gathered here, but for all of us, the extraordinary heroism exhibited can well be seen as a triumph of the human spirit in its striving to fight evil and to render aid, all in the face of great danger.”

Rutkowski then introduced Garsteck and Swartz’s wife, JoAnn, and son, John, Jr., as Swartz was unable to be present. “Garsteck and Swartz are neighbors in Calumet,” Rutkowski said, “neighbors also to the scene of great horror that unfolded on the evening of June 1, 2010. Rather than remain in the security of their own homes, they made the high moral choice of placing themselves in the line of fire, literally

(continued on page 9)



A bronze plaque commemorating the posthumous awarding of the Carnegie Medal to Stacey Lynn Feiling serves to dedicate a conference room in her memory at her place of employment, the Arnold Palmer Pavilion in Greensburg, Pa. The plaque was donated by Matthews International of Pittsburgh, manufacturer of the bronze grave markers that the Hero Fund makes available to deceased medal awardees (see back page).



Mark A. Garstek, left, was one of three to be recognized with the Carnegie Medal for heroic action during a gunman's assault in his neighborhood. The two other awardees were represented at the medal's presentation ceremony by family members: John Swartz, Jr., second from left, and JoAnn Brown, right, son and spouse of John E. Swartz; and Ronald F. Feiling, second from right, husband of the late Stacey Lynn Feiling. Photos, by Lindsay Reddington, are courtesy of Excelsa Health.

Medals awarded

(continued from page 8)

in the line of fire, to attempt to thwart an unstable gunman, to provide help as needed, and to keep others from the immediate scene."

He said the Hero Fund was "honored and humbled to act in behalf of civilized society" in acknowledging the men's bravery and selflessness. "The medal that we bestow is a mark to represent that you gave freely of yourselves, in the face of extraordinary risk, for only the safety of others. You are worthy of our respect and admiration."

The Commission learned that before Swartz was able to block traffic with his truck, at points both south and north of the immediate scene, two vehicles drove by at about the same time and stopped there. In the northbound car was an elderly woman returning to her nearby home. Feiling was in the southbound car, returning to her home from her job. "It is rightly concluded that both women were unaware of the developing situation," Rutkowski said, "but it has also been concluded without a doubt that Stacey elected to remain to render aid once she saw that help was needed. 'That's Stacey,' was the reaction we heard when we investigated the case."

Feiling's husband, Ronald F. Feiling, and parents, Earl and Donna Rice, attended the event. Rutkowski told them, "A medal cannot restore the loss of an only child, a beloved spouse, a dear friend, nor do we pretend that it will ease your grief. What it does do is serve as a sign and seal of our pledge that Stacey will not be forgotten. In her last deed, she spoke not only to the caliber of her upbringing and her character, but to the desire of decent people to look out for each other. By her so doing, she spared a life from what would have been a tragic end, even though that was the cost to her. We honor her sacrifice with the highest acclaim."

Providing the event's invocation was Anthony M. Novak, a Fraternal Order of Police chaplain from Somerset, Pa., who, as a friend of the Rice and Feiling families, called the case to the Hero Fund's attention. Westmoreland County, Pa., Coroner Kenneth Bacha was also present, as he too nominated Feiling for the award. 

EVIL CAN BE STOPPED, BUT IT'S UP TO US TO DO IT

By Mark A. Garstek, Mount Pleasant, Pa.
Carnegie Medal Awardee #9596

Madman kills six people in apartment complex before being killed. As I listen to the nightly news, the report of another violent incident reminds me of the evening of June 1, 2010, and all of the people's lives that have been affected by the insanity that transpired.

I have spent the last three years attempting to forget what happened that evening, since recalling those terrible events is very difficult. But to see a whole neighborhood and a Good Samaritan, **Stacey Lynn Feiling**, try to stop the madness was an incredible inspiration: It spoke volumes to the spirit of human nature. As a result of a madman's actions, I will never be the same again. Because of this life-changing experience, I no longer simply realize, but actually feel with great intensity, that life is too short and that we should live each day as though it were our last.



Ms. Feiling

I've always felt strongly about helping others. Many years ago while practicing a self-defense form of martial arts, I never could have foreseen that the physical training I was receiving would have such an impact on my belief system. I hope that I never, ever have to go through something like this again, but if I do,

I know I will be more prepared than ever before and will do whatever I can to help and protect those in need.

As more and more of these atrocities occur, I would hope that my effort might be an example to anyone who is ever a witness to crime to come forward if it is felt that a difference could be made. When you see evil happening, be brave and attempt to stop it to the best of your ability. Evil can be stopped, but it's up to us as people to do it.

I'm very pleased to receive the Carnegie Medal, never thinking I would receive such an honor. I am very humbled and in awe to be in the company of Ms. Feiling and all other recipients. I want to thank the Hero Fund for honoring me with this award and allowing me to share my thoughts.

Garstek responded to the backyard of his neighbor after he had shot and wounded his wife and teenage daughter and was pursuing them as they fled. He attempted to stop the gunman but was fired at by him. Garstek then ushered two young boys from the property and sought to secure the neighborhood with the gunman at large.



GOOSE BUMPS ON MY ARMS, TEARS IN MY EYES

By Jo Braun, Administrative Assistant
Carnegie Hero Fund Commission

When searching for a new job, sometimes it's not only what you know but whom you know.

This has been the case for me in four of the five companies I have worked for, including my current employer, the Carnegie Hero Fund. My mother-in-law, Myrna J. Braun, has worked for the Commission for more than 58 years—starting at the time of her high school graduation—and when I began searching for a new job, I never imagined I would end up working with her. During my job search, one of the administrative assistant positions at the Commission was vacated, and I was asked to interview. I started to work here on June 1.



Jo Braun, seated, with mother-in-law, Myrna Braun, who is the Hero Fund's awards coordinator.

In my short time at the Hero Fund, I have learned several things, including: 1) the city of Pittsburgh is a very small town in that my fellow administrative assistant and I share several acquaintances; 2) the word *penultimate* means "next to the last," as in, "The Commission pays on the *penultimate* work day of the month;" 3) a cronut is a cross between a croissant and a donut; and, most importantly, 4) there is an abundance of American and Canadian citizens who are willing to put their own lives in danger to help others.

I knew where my mother-in-law worked, but I

(continued on page 12)

Carnegie heroes violate social norms (but in a most positive way imaginable)

By Lacey N. Wallace
Pennsylvania State University

In everyday life there are many times when we find ourselves confused, irritated, or outraged by something someone else is doing. Whether it's a diner who does not leave a tip, a driver who runs a red light, or a neighbor who throws a loud late-night party, we get frustrated because something



Ms. Wallace: "Positive deviants and amazing individuals"

about these behaviors seems wrong. Why? These are all behaviors that violate social norms, the unwritten rules of how people are supposed to behave in certain situations. When people deviate from social norms, we are quick to notice, judge, and sometimes punish their actions.

Like many other secondary institutions, the Pennsylvania State University offers a sociology course focusing on the topic of deviance. Our goal is to help students understand why certain people break social norms, how society reacts to these people, and where our social norms and ideas of deviance come from. When I was first asked to teach the course, I added a typical list of topics to the syllabus: crime, body modification, belief in alien abduction, and a few others. After making this list, however, I realized that one important topic was missing: positive deviance.

Although we usually describe deviance as actions or beliefs that others view as wrong or troubling, deviance is really defined as *any* action or belief that goes beyond the norm. In other words, someone can be deviant by going beyond social norms in a positive way. A person can be deviant, for instance, because of unusual beauty, special talents, or above-average intelligence.

Although many instructors of deviance courses omit the topic from the course, I feel it is important to show students that deviance can be both positive and negative.



When I was writing my positive deviance lesson for the class, I knew I wanted an example of positive deviance that would be powerful and memorable, an example that students could relate to on a personal level. I immediately thought of the Carnegie Medal heroes. These individuals risk and sometimes sacrifice their lives to save the lives of others in situations where most of us would stand aside, call 911, or panic. Their acts of selflessness go well beyond our expectations of what any typical person would do. What makes their stories all the more moving is that Carnegie heroes are people just like us. In the hours before their heroic actions they were going to work, taking care of children and families, spending time with friends, or even watching TV. They had no responsibility or obligation to take action. It is their extraordinary self-sacrifice and bravery that makes these individuals true heroes and positive deviants.

(continued on page 14)

Aiding fellow man whenever, however: Harvard alum learns lesson from Carnegie

By Carl F. Muller, Greenville, S.C.
Carnegie Medal Awardee #5307

Our farm in the center of South Carolina was on a high ridge, where distant sounds could be heard. One summer afternoon in 1966 I heard something new, a mechanical growl coming up the road. I raced there just in time to see a curious little humpback car with a Pennsylvania license tag slow almost to a stop, and then turn into my yard. It was a Volkswagen; I had only seen them in pictures.

A nicely dressed gentleman emerged, introduced himself as Samuel LeDonne from the Carnegie Hero Fund in Pittsburgh, and said that he was looking for Carl Muller. "I suppose that's your brother," he added. "No, that's me," I replied. His mistake was understandable. I was 5'4" tall and weighed 92 pounds. He smiled and said, "Well then, let's talk."



Muller at Harvard: "Beneath that bow tie and soft-spoken Southern charm lie an incisive legal and literary mind and a terrific sense of humor—complemented by an affinity for a great barbecue."—Ellen Gordon Reeves, Muller's predecessor as president of the Harvard Alumni Association. Photo by Jim Harrison, Cambridge, Mass.

a cross-chest carry. Instantly, he seized me and pinned my arms. I took him underwater and he let go. I came to the surface and told him to relax and I would take him to shore. We made it there and I stumbled back into the surf, exhausted. I was joined by two other men, and together we brought the second man to the beach. I attempted to revive him with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, even while we were far out in the water, but was not successful. When the rescue squad arrived, I quietly left.

I walked back to our rented house wondering if it was all a dream. When I had arrived ashore the second time, the first man was gone. There was not a mark on me as evidence of what had happened, and nobody that I knew had seen a thing.

Then, out of nowhere, Mr. LeDonne came. Because there were no road signs, he found me by asking at the town's general store. In those days, the Volkswagen from the North was enough to cause talk, but what riveted everyone's attention was the name Carnegie. It was—and is—synonymous with the finest elements of the American spirit: self-reliance, determination, success, and philanthropy.

Recognition of my actions by the Carnegie Hero Fund, especially with such a beautiful and individualized medal, instantly vaulted me into another sphere. The award also uplifted my family, my scout troop, and even my small town. With the self-confidence that resulted from this recognition, I made up my mind to go to Harvard, and did, initially as an undergraduate and then as a graduate student in

(continued on page 14)



Mr. Dorken

ON VACATION, NOT OFF DUTY

A firefighter from Ontario, **Nicholas Ray Dorken** gave in to his instincts and training while on vacation in Florida with his wife, Kim, and young daughter. In the wee hours of Feb. 23 last year, the family was returning to their condo in Fort Myers Beach after visiting Disney World when they came upon a fire in a parking lot in Fort Myers. First seeing the blaze in his car's rearview mirror, Dorken, then 28, commented to his wife that a dumpster must have caught fire.

Whatever the cause, Kim later told a reporter, she knew that her husband wanted in the worst way to investigate. Despite the hour—1:30 a.m.—she told him to turn around. Arriving at the scene "in emergency mode," they found a burning car, flames at least 10 feet high issuing from its rear and both rear sides. Inside the car, they saw a man slumped against the steering wheel, flames rolling overhead and in the backseat area of the car's interior.

Dorken acted immediately, not pausing to think about what he was going to do. He ran to the vehicle and, stepping through the driver's doorway, extended almost his entire body inside. He grasped the man under his arms and pulled him from the car to a safe spot in the parking lot. Dorken then returned to the car to look for other occupants, but by then the vehicle was fully engulfed by flame. Dorken was not injured, but the man required hospitalization for treatment of multiple injuries.

(continued on page 12)



GOOSE BUMPS

(continued from page 10)

never knew a lot of the details about the Commission, such as how it was started, how many people have been recognized, and what is entailed in determining “hero” status. I am now proud to say that I am a part of the process. I was surprised to learn that once a hero is recognized, the Commission’s relationship with that person and his or her family is not over. I never realized that funeral assistance could be provided, scholarships are available, and other assistance can be offered to not only the hero but the hero’s family as well, in some cases.

Having been in clerical positions for more than 28 years, working in areas such as government, the private sector, and the hospital industry, I am finding that this is the first position I have held that gives me a do-good feeling. I am part of a team that recognizes others for their selfless acts of kindness – many of them losing their own lives in the process. I have had goose bumps on my arms and tears in my eyes when reading some of the cases or talking with people on the telephone. I have been shocked by the dangerous situations people knowingly enter to go to the aid of others, mostly strangers. And I have been touched by family members who call the office to ask for more information about their loved one’s act of heroism after recently finding out about the award—it’s not unusual to talk to an awardee’s great- or even great-great-grandchild.

Proud to be a part of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, I hope to be here for a long, long time ... although 58 years might be a little unrealistic at my age!

ON VACATION

(continued from page 11)

He recovered, later telling his church newsletter that “God put a trained professional there for me.”

Word of the rescue traveled quickly, all the way to the Dorkens’ small hometown of Innerkip, near Kitchener, Ont. When they returned, an illuminated sign welcomed the town’s hero home. “I’m definitely not a hero,” Dorken told a newspaper reporter. “I would have expected any firefighter to do the same thing.” But he also admits to being equipped with protective clothing and tools on the job. “Here, I had nothing.”

Dorken was awarded the Carnegie Medal in April, and on June 11 it was presented to him by Douglas R. Chambers, the Hero Fund’s director of external affairs, at a ceremony in the Innerkip firehouse.

Traditional mission secured

(continued from page 5)

UPMC. He has chaired the Shadyside Hospital Foundation since 2001 and also serves as chair of the UPMC Health Plan. He has been a board member and treasurer of LEAD Pittsburgh since 2004.

In 2011, the Allegheny County, Pa., Medical Society presented him with the Benjamin Rush Individual Public Health Award, which honors a lay individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the betterment, health, and welfare of citizens in the county. Mark was recognized for his work as a member of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation Board and as a founding member and chair of the Pittsburgh Regional Healthcare Initiative. This collaborative effort of local health care agencies, foundations, regional hospitals, and federal health agencies has applied quality and improvement controls to successfully reduce hospital-borne infections and has become a national standard.

Mark’s civic engagement extends to The Dietrich Foundation, a Pittsburgh-based, \$550 million fund that supports higher education and charitable organizations primarily in Western Pennsylvania. He was named board chair in 2012.

Mark became a member of the Commission in 1993, serving on the finance and executive committees and chairing the latter. The commemoration of the Hero Fund’s centennial in 2004 provided an opportunity for its new administration to recognize the value of history both as a course-steadier and a map for the future. Mark was convinced that the occasion merited memorable events of lasting value: a speech by David McCullough in the Carnegie Music Hall, a dinner, a book and video, and the presentation of a commemorative medal, all centered on the heroes and not on the organization alone. The 250 people who attended the elegant dinner in the grand Hall of Architecture of the Carnegie Museum of Art brought together Commission members, community leaders, and a number of medal awardees, some of them traveling from the west coasts of both the United States and Canada. Their presence brought members of the Commission together with the flesh and bones of its work. That evening, too, the Commission presented its first limited-edition commemorative medal to George D. Hemphill of Union Mills, N.C., an awardee who sustained disabling burns in his heroic act 50 years earlier.

The memorable evening capped two years’ preparation, including the production of a book, *A Century of Heroes*, and a video, *Heroes Among Us*, which feature many of the acts of heroism recognized since 1904. Both items remain a part of the award package for newly named medal recipients in Mark’s belief that they will enhance each hero’s appreciation for the award, which itself represents the magnanimity of every hero’s act. All centennial events were designed to keep the Hero Fund and its fundamental ethic in the public’s consciousness.

For Mark, the Carnegie evening also spawned ideas on how the Hero Fund could be more effective, more inclusive, and more open. These ideas revolved around greater outreach, both to integrate the awardees into a cohesive unit — a “family” — and to elevate their status as merited by their selflessness. The Commission began to publish a quarterly newsletter, *impULSE*. Presentations of the medal by Commission members, staff, and local awardees became regular events. The Hero Fund enhanced its website to accommodate obituaries for deceased heroes and introduced a bronze grave marker to be provided to the families of deceased awardees.

The Commission then broadened this outreach by revitalizing the Hero Fund’s relationships with the more than 20 other Carnegie institutions.



In 2006, Laskow, left, cited Commission member Frank Brooks Robinson for 40 years’ service to the Hero Fund. Robinson has now reached the 47-year mark.

Traditional mission secured

(continued from page 12)

The opportunities came largely through the Carnegie Medal of philanthropy initiative begun in 2001 by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The biennial meeting of the organizations includes not only the larger ones, such as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Carnegie Institution for Science, but also the smaller European hero funds. Attending these meetings as the Commission's representative, Mark finds many shared qualities among all of the "Carnegie family." As he wrote recently, "We have much in common with our larger Carnegie brethren. Fundamentally, we all deal with values of lasting importance to our civilization." During the past decade, he has represented the Commission in Stockholm, Edinburgh (twice), Bern, and New York and has overseen participation by other Commission representatives at events in Germany, Sri Lanka, and Dunfermline. "Join the Commission, see the world," he once remarked with a grin.



On January 25, 2004—the 100th anniversary of the Harwick, Pa., mine disaster—Laskow, right, placed a wreath at the mass grave of many of the disaster's victims. With him are siblings Bruce Gunia and Grace Gunia Abbs, grandchildren of the mine's only survivor, Adolph Gunia. Heroic acts in the wake of the mine explosion prompted Andrew Carnegie to establish the Hero Fund.

with a frugality that would make our Founder proud," he wrote in the midst of the economic downturn of 2008–2009. Quick to commend the leadership of the Hero Fund's finance committee, Mark concluded that investment management changes made early in the decade resulted not only in record-high portfolio levels but in major defenses against the collapse of equities and against inflation while retaining the opportunity to participate in recovery.

Unlike those of previous presidents, Mark Laskow's legacy at the Carnegie Hero Fund is still in the making. But, like every one of them, he is committed to perpetuating a unique philanthropic endeavor that seeks to balance altruism with practicality, idealism with pragmatism ... an endeavor that recognizes the unchanging nature of humanity's hunger for heroes. As he wrote in an *imPULSE* column, "The Carnegie Medal represents a considered judgment in which the heroic act was weighed against an exacting standard and found worthy. History steadies our course. When Commission members deliberate, they are well aware of the Hero Fund's history and of their own responsibility in adding to that history. Year by year we are building our next great century, confident that there will be no shortage of heroes, no shortage of those willing to act in the face of danger to aid others." ❏

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. Previous issues of *imPULSE* carried the first six profiles, all of which are available in booklet form by contacting the Hero Fund: carnegiehero@carnegiehero.org.

LAW STUDENT POSTS HEROIC ACTS TO COMBAT INTERNET 'CYNICISM'

There is not much good to be done in the world without publicity. You must attract the attention of the people. This leads them to think and to appreciate the work that you are doing, and finally to stir within themselves the desire to go and do likewise.—Andrew Carnegie, in a letter of May 31, 1905, to Charles L. Taylor, the Hero Fund's first president.

By Matthew A. Eldred
North Chili, N.Y.

The Internet is the future of publicity if not the present. Social media are exceptional tools for getting the word out about anything. The price is right, and they are becoming the main forms of communication for many people.

A change in life recently caused me to return to using social media. It quickly became obvious that not only does negative news spread quickly through the ether, but negative stereotypes and overall feelings of cynicism also run rampant—in my estimation, snarkiness and sincerity are mixed 40:1 by my generation online! Many people do not see their fellow citizens so much as potential heroes but as villains, and the Internet seems to be the place to voice this opinion. In an effort to offer a positive voice online, I began choosing and posting one story a day from the archives of the

(continued on page 14)



A constant voice with a positive message: Matthew A. Eldred, in photo by Nita L. Eldred.



LAW STUDENT

(continued from page 13)

Hero Fund on my Facebook page. The first story was posted on April 26.

It is clear there are many regular readers. Some “like” practically every post. Others are compelled by a particular story to finally speak up and comment that they appreciate a daily dose of “faith in humanity.” A few have waited until they had a chance to speak to me in person to voice their approval. And one friend even posted a story she found in the archives herself. Regardless, everyone is amazed that there are people doing such incredible acts of selflessness, and everyone is supportive. Many hope they could do the same if given the opportunity.

“I feel that Mr. Carnegie believed the Commission itself should save heroism from being drowned out by the evil and negativity in the world.”

While the stories have not “gone viral,” I believe this means I have found the perfect niche. If stories of heroes are unexpected, then that is where they need to be told in order to do the most good. Whether or not they receive much attention, I feel it is necessary to offer a constant voice with a positive message encouraging belief in heroism. While few readers may have the opportunity to “go and do likewise,” at least the rest will see the possibility as being a little more likely.

In his 1905 letter, Mr. Carnegie encouraged the Commission to publicize the heroic deeds it rewarded in hopes that it would propagate good in the world. If we are to continue “living in a heroic age”—another Carnegie belief—the inspiration that heroes create for the rest of us must proliferate in these new media as well. According to the Fund’s archives, 3,656 individuals have been recognized for performing water-related rescue acts; I feel that Mr. Carnegie believed the Commission itself should save heroism from being drowned out by the evil and negativity in the world. That has been my goal with this project too. I hope Mr. Carnegie would approve.

Eldred, 27, is a first-year student at the Law School of the State University of New York (SUNY), Buffalo. He became aware of the Hero Fund while listening to a podcast of NPR’s Radiolab that originally aired Dec. 14, 2010. “Learning about the Commission and the people it honors has helped change my outlook on life and human values,” he says.

Aiding fellow man

(continued from page 11)

law and business. When I needed it, the Carnegie Hero Fund provided financial assistance.

In a more subtle way, the medal and the Carnegie Hero Fund have had another important effect on my life. They have made me keenly aware of what one person can do to make the world a better place for others. At the time that I received the medal, I wondered why Andrew Carnegie had spent millions of dollars to recognize the heroic actions of a relatively small number of people. Gradually I came to realize his wisdom. He was not simply rewarding momentary individual courage. He was highlighting the overwhelming importance of saving a single human life. He was laying the foundation for this to be done in a myriad of ways—not simply in response to physical peril. He was inspiring others to come to the aid of their fellow man, whenever and however necessary.

At Harvard I became a “big brother” to a group of young boys from the roughest part of Boston, taking them to Fenway Park to see the Red Sox, the Museum of Fine Arts to see Picassos and the mummies, Harvard to swim, and Cape Cod to see just how big the world is. Thus began decades of commitment. I have not done all that I should, but I have tried to do what I can. For example, I have used my education and experience in law and business to prolong the lives of companies in collapsing industries and thereby preserve the jobs and dignity of hundreds of working families. I have chaired South Carolina Legal Services, which offers legal aid to 850,000 men, women, and children in poverty. My wife, Allison, and I have helped revitalize Greenville High School, located in a section of our town where life for many is hard. Our children, now grown, have followed in our steps.

I mention these things not for personal applause, but to illustrate the impact of Mr. Carnegie on my life directly and indirectly the lives of countless others. It began with that visit by Mr. LeDonne to a small boy in the middle of nowhere long years ago. As sure as I believe in Heaven above, every now and then I look upward to thank Mr. Carnegie and hope that he looks down on me in approval for how I have used his incomparable gift. 

Muller, 62, who practices law in Greenville, S.C., is a 1973 graduate of Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., and he also received degrees from Harvard in law and business in 1976. He has just finished a term as president of the Harvard Alumni Association.

Carnegie heroes violate social norms

(continued from page 10)

When my students read these stories or watch the *Heroes Among Us* video, I often hear comments like “I would be too scared to do that” or “That person is incredible.” Some students are simply struck silent. Their reactions demonstrate exactly what I am trying to teach: Carnegie heroes violate social norms, but in one of the most positive ways imaginable. They are positive deviants and amazing individuals. The Carnegie heroes teach students far more than the concept of positive deviance, however. From their stories students find inspiration and the courage to recognize their own heroic potential. By sharing their stories in my classes, I hope to continue to honor the Carnegie heroes and their families. 

*Wallace, a doctoral student at Pennsylvania State University, is creating a web version of the university’s undergraduate course, *Sociology of Deviance*, and is embedding the Hero Fund’s centennial video, *Heroes Among Us*, in the course’s lesson pages. The video is available for viewing on the Hero Fund’s website (www.carnegiehero.org), and copies are available for \$3 by contacting Doug Chambers, director of external affairs: doug@carnegiehero.org.*

FROM THE ARCHIVES

He dived into the path of a train in a rescue attempt

Eighty-six-year-old Neeley P. Harrison of Humphrey, Ark., was walking home after stopping at a hardware store and post office, slowed by age and rheumatism, on Aug. 27, 1962. At the hardware store she had told the owner that she dreaded walking her normal route to and from the town's business district because of ditches being dug for a sewer line. Her route took her across a set of two parallel railroad tracks, and that afternoon, as she trudged toward them, she was apparently oblivious of an approaching train. Perhaps the noise of the idling motor of a ditch-digging machine lulled her senses.

The engineer of the 104-car freight train saw Harrison approaching the tracks and, sounding the horn, presumed that she would certainly stop before the train passed. He did not then slow the train, which was traveling below the speed limit at 57 m.p.h. In addition, the warning lights and bells at the crossing had been activated.

One of the construction laborers on the sewer project was **Clodis McCuien**, 24, of Conway, Ark. He was standing atop a mound of dirt about 25 feet from the crossing and saw Harrison walking into the crossing. Without hesitation, he ran down the mound and toward her. By then, the lead locomotive was just 150 feet away, and the engineer applied the emergency brakes, knowing that the train could not stop in time to spare anyone on the track.

McCuien jumped toward Harrison, intending to push her beyond the second track, out of the path of the train. With his shoulder he struck her in the shoulder, and, although his momentum carried him across and away from the track, Harrison, who outweighed McCuien by almost 50 pounds, fell to the track and was immediately struck by the train's first locomotive. She died at the scene. A step on the lead locomotive had contacted the heel of McCuien's left boot as he dived from the track.

*Mr. McCuien*

From his fall, McCuien suffered cuts on his shoulder, hands, and thigh. He was taken to the hospital but was not detained, and he returned to full-time work in three weeks. The incident was covered on the front page of the local newspapers the following day, and the editor of *The Daily Ledger* of nearby Stuttgart wrote the Commission to propose McCuien for an award. In her supporting statement, the owner of the hardware store wrote, "This was strictly a voluntary act of heroism, and this man should be commended for it. He did not know the woman but was only performing a courageous act without any thought for his safety."

After an on-site investigation, with examination of the scene and interviews of witnesses and railroad personnel, the Commission awarded McCuien a silver Carnegie Medal and \$750. In 2000 he died at age 62.—*Marlin Ross, Case Investigator*



Division Street railroad crossing in Humphrey, Ark., where Carnegie Medal awardee Clodis McCuien attempted to push an elderly woman from the path of a freight train

**Carnegie Hero Fund Commission**

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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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(The Hero Fund's) place is to become the recognized agency watching, applauding, and supporting, where support is needed, heroic action wherever displayed and by whomever displayed, white or black, male or female—at least this is my hope.

—Undated private correspondence to the Hero Fund

✦ 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.

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