



# imPULSE

A Periodic Newsletter of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission ISSUE 37 • MARCH 2014



## HURRICANE SANDY HEROES AWARDED CARNEGIE MEDALS

**Michael T. McDonnell**, left, and **Dylan Patrick Smith**, right, teamed up to rescue six people from drowning on Oct. 29, 2012, the day that Hurricane Sandy struck the northeast coast of the U.S. As the hurricane's winds created a catastrophic storm surge that inundated the streets of their Rockaway Beach, N.Y., neighborhood, a fire broke out and spread quickly toward the house where McDonnell and others were living.

Under McDonnell's direction, the residents assembled the makeshift line, including twine and extension cords, that McDonnell is shown holding. By then, Smith responded on his surfboard from his nearby home to help. He took the free end of the line across the street, where it was secured to another neighbor's house. One by one, he and McDonnell then ferried the other residents to safety, using the extended line as a guide. Two of the residents who were rescued, Kathryn Gregg and Jim DiBenedetto, are also shown in the photo, which appeared in *People* magazine. (The photo is by David Yellen and is used with permission.)

McDonnell and Smith were each awarded the Carnegie Medal in December for their actions, as were 18 others from throughout the U.S. (See pages 6-9.) Sadly, Smith's award had to be made posthumously, as he died two months after his heroic act, in an accident in Puerto Rico.



## WALL OF HONOR

*When H. Daughtry Perritt recently moved his pet-supply business into new offices in an industrial park in Florence, Ala., he looked for something meaningful to serve as decor. Familiar with the Carnegie Hero Fund, he chose photos of Carnegie Medal awardees and had 22 of them framed, along with the summaries of their heroic acts. "The stories of these people mean much to me," he says. See page 12. Photo by Perritt's daughter, Haley Perritt.*

## 2013 in review: 77 heroes recognized by Commission during its 110th year

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

*Whenever heroism is displayed by man or woman in saving human life, the Fund applies.*

Taken from the Commission's Deed of Trust, which was penned by Andrew Carnegie in 1904, those words represent the goal that the Hero Fund sought to attain in 2013, its 110th year of existence. Our work centered on recognizing acts of heroism from across the United States and Canada, with 77 Carnegie Medals awarded from among 833 nominations. As is the case each year, the 2013 awardees represented a wide geographical distribution, hailing from 31 states in the U.S. and three provinces in Canada.

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## SECURING THE ESSENTIALS AMIDST BUFFERING CHANGE

By Mark Laskow, Chair  
Carnegie Hero Fund Commission



The Carnegie Hero Fund's unwavering mission is to recognize and reward the enduring human impulse to heroism, to take mortal risk to save a fellow human. This focus on the unwavering and enduring does not mean, however, that changes in society have no effect on

what we do. Societal change swirls around us and, among other things, affects the very nature of the rescues our heroes undertake. It is likely, as well, that massive societal changes had a role in Andrew Carnegie's decision to create the Hero Fund itself.

All of this came to mind while reading an article by Rebecca J. Rosen in *The Atlantic*, "Almost No Americans Die From Lightning Strikes Anymore—Why?" Rosen draws on demographic data to come up with a sensible answer: We don't get hit by lightning because we don't get out much anymore. In 1880, a relatively large portion of North Americans worked outdoors, primarily in farming. Today that proportion is dramatically lower, and lightning deaths have declined in lockstep. Lightning strikes have also become less lethal as rescue services have become more available and emergency medical care has improved. These changes are reflected in the cases the Hero Fund considers. Rescues from farming accidents and runaway trains are down. Rescues from burning vehicles in automobile accidents and assorted roadside mayhem—surely not factors in 1880—are up. What remains unchanged, as far as we can see, is the impulse to heroism in the human heart.

When Carnegie (1835 - 1919) was a child, the Second Industrial Revolution was creating vast changes, many of which shook and shaped his family's life. The changes were both geographic and social, as the family's situation went from relatively comfortable to precarious. Carnegie's father, William, was a handloom operator who never successfully adapted to the arrival of automation. As a result, the family moved from Dunfermline, Scotland, to Pittsburgh, where Andrew took employment at age 13 as a bobbin boy (working 72 hours a week for only \$1.20...that's less than two cents per hour!).

As a man and an industrial titan, Carnegie himself wrought enormous change as he created the modern steel industry. Despite this turmoil, or perhaps because of it, we see in Carnegie an impulse to seek balance

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*Awardees of the Carnegie Medal in 2013 included Nathaniel Bacon of New Hampton, N.Y., who saved a woman from drowning in the Tennessee River in Selma, Ala. (see page 6). He is shown here with the woman's mother, Beatrice Woods, in a photo by Tim Reeves of The Selma Times-Journal, used with permission.*

## 2013 in review

(continued from cover)

By type of act, 'burning' was the most populated category, with burning-vehicle rescues numbering 27 and burning-building, 10. Rescues from drowning numbered 19, followed by assault rescues, 15. The 'animal' and 'falling' designations each accounted for two rescues, and 'electrocution' and 'exposure,' one each. The last case exacted the ultimate toll of the hero, **Michael Wayne Pirie**, an 18-year-old college student who died of harness-hang syndrome and hypothermia attempting to save a friend from the same fate while they were exploring a cave. Hurricane Sandy created a storm of threats for two of the heroes, who faced swift currents in their neighborhood's flooded streets and flames spread by 75 m.p.h. winds as they worked together to evacuate residents of a burning house. In addition to Pirie, five rescuers lost their lives in the performance of their heroic acts, accounting for 7.8% of the total. Over the life of the Fund, 1,987 posthumous awards have been made, or 20.6% of the total of 9,653.

The 2013 heroes were predominately middle-aged: There were six heroes in their teens; 13 aged 20-29; 20 aged 30-39; 24 aged 40-49; 11 aged 50-59; and three over 60, including the oldest, **Alan B. Hall** of Land O'Lakes, Fla., who at 65 died after helping to save a young girl from drowning in the Gulf of Mexico. Next oldest was 64-year-old **Pamela Jones-Morton** of Estero, Fla., who climbed into an overturned and burning sport utility vehicle to save its driver, finding and saving a small child in the process. One of the two youngest awardees, **Alec Justin Smith**, 16, of San Jose, Calif., threw himself onto the slick bank of the Merced River near the top of 317-foot-high Vernal Fall to snag a boy from the swift current at what had to be the last possible second (see page 6). By gender, the year saw three heroines (4% of the total, compared with the historical 8.9%); in addition to Jones-Morton, they included **Stacey L. Feiling** of Mount Pleasant, Pa., who was fatally shot while attempting to save a woman being assaulted by her husband, and **Katherine Lee Osiecki**, who swam 225 feet into Long Island Sound at night to save a woman from drowning (pages 8 and 9).

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## \* OVERHEARD \*



## SOUNDS OF MUSIC BRING SOLACE TO FAMILY

A concert on Nov. 21 by the 70-member Symphonic Band of the University of Florida, Gainesville, was the setting for the posthumous presentation of a Carnegie Medal to the family of **Michael Wayne Pirie**. Appropriately, the concert was titled *Remembrances*, and it featured various tributes to America, including a commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Pirie, of Oviedo, Fla., was a student at the university—and a member of the drum line of its marching band—when he died at age 18 on Feb. 12, 2011, while attempting to save a friend. Members of the drum line, wearing jerseys with Pirie's number on them, attended the concert, at which the medal was presented to Pirie's parents, Sandra Haines and Brent Pirie, and sister, Rebecca Pirie. They are shown at center in the above photo, along with Douglas R. Chambers, the Hero Fund's director of external affairs, in necktie at center right.

The medal was presented before the final piece, *Angels in the Architecture*, was played. Composed by Frank Ticheli, the work unfolds as a dramatic conflict between two extremes of human existence, divine and evil, and opens with a solo of lines from a Shaker song: "I am an angel of light...I have come to protect my chosen band and lead them to the promised land."

Pirie's heroic actions took place during an expedition by him and nine other college students at Ellison's Cave in Pigeon Mountain at LaFayette, Ga., one of the largest caves in the U.S. The group's leader, Grant S. Lockenbach, 20, became stranded while descending by line into a 125-foot-deep pit. When Lockenbach shouted for help, Pirie donned a harness and descended on another line. He reached Lockenbach and remained in communication with other students at the top of the pit for several minutes, but by the time rescuers arrived and recovered the men, both had succumbed.

Pirie's legacy is kept alive at the university by a scholarship established by the drum line, and the second scholarship grant was given the night of the concert to one of the drum line members.

## 2013 in review

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Establishing the Carnegie Medal in the public's consciousness as well as securing its tradition and meaning with new holders have been the goal of personal presentations initiated over the years since our centennial a decade ago. Douglas R. Chambers, director of external affairs, largely coordinates the initiative, finding that, especially in death cases, the personal attention is well received and appreciated. In March, he and Mark Laskow, then Hero Fund President, traveled to Kansas to present the medal to two sheriff's deputies who exposed themselves to great threat while saving the driver of a burning pickup truck, and later in the year Chambers

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This was as close as you can come and still come out alive.—Chief of the Golden Valley, Ariz., Fire District, speaking of efforts by him and **Robert P. Davies**, Carnegie Medal awardee #9640, in saving a woman from her home in the face of rapidly advancing flames.

It's all still kind of a blur to me. Holy cow.—**Chris Ihle**, Carnegie Medal nominee #85956, who pushed an elderly couple's disabled car from a railroad track as a train bore down.

Scale has a lot to do with being heroic. It's because Goliath was so big that David was so heroic. It's because the ocean is so enormous that Lindbergh's flight was so heroic. It is the juxtaposition of human scale against other kinds of odds which seems to put the human dimension in the miniscule. It's when human dimension rises to be equal to the scale of the challenge that our hearts go out to heroes, and we are influenced by them.—**David McCullough**, Pulitzer Prize-winning author and historian.

She said the baby was still inside the house. As soon as I heard those words, something happened that I can't even explain to myself.—**Matthew Phillip Schons**, Carnegie Medal nominee #85228, who rescued the child from a fire.

I've never done anything like that in my life. I am a very rational person. I don't take risks.—**Keith G. Smedema**, Carnegie Medal nominee #85517, who jumped 30 feet from a bridge to save a woman from drowning.

## BOARD NOTES

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between tradition and stability on the one hand and change on the other. As a boy, under the guidance of his uncle George Lauder, he found something to hold on to in Scotland's history and heroes. As a man, he created institutions that would buffer the shocks of society's rush to modernity through education, access to books, scientific research, the promotion of peace, and, yes, recognition of traditional heroism.

Amidst the First Industrial Revolution the English poet William Blake wrote:

*And was Jerusalem builded here,  
Among these dark Satanic Mills?...*

*...I will not cease from Mental Fight,  
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand:  
Till we have built Jerusalem*

Andrew Carnegie was both a product and a builder of such "dark Satanic Mills," but his philanthropic project left us much with which to shape a better world out of that, to remind us of our own essential humanity, to build our "Jerusalem."



### CARNEGIE HERO RECEIVES COAST GUARD GOLD MEDAL

**Connor M. Bystrom**, 24, of Holmes Beach, Fla., who was awarded the Carnegie Medal in June 2012, was cited for the same rescue when he was given the U.S. Coast Guard Gold Lifesaving Medal at a ceremony in December in Miami, Fla. He is shown with both medals in a photo taken by his mother, Jean Bystrom.

Bystrom's heroism took place on Sept. 24, 2011, when he and a group of friends were spear fishing in the Gulf of Mexico six miles off the coast of Florida. One of his friends, Charles J. Wickersham, whom Bystrom had known since their days in kindergarten, was in the water about 25 feet from their party's boat when he was bitten on the thigh by what was thought to be a nine-foot-long bull shark. He struck the shark on its nose with both fists, causing it to release him, but he was left bleeding profusely. Bystrom jumped from the boat, swam through the bloodied waters to Wickersham, and returned him to the boat, where the others pulled him aboard. Wickersham required surgery, including significant suturing, but he recovered and was with Bystrom at the Coast Guard ceremony.

Since the rescue, Bystrom started veterinary training at St. George's University, Grenada, where he is currently a student. Hero Fund scholarship aid is being given to him to defray the costs of tuition.



First established by an act of Congress in 1874, the Coast Guard medal, given in grades of silver and gold, is one of the oldest in the U.S., with more than 600 gold medals having been awarded in 140 years. The medal is given to any person—military or civilian—who rescues or

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## 2013 in review

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made personal presentations in Ontario and Vermont and to Pirie's parents. (See photo, page 3.) In June, Joe Walton of the board and Walter Rutkowski, then Executive Director, joined Chambers in hosting a presentation at the medical center in Greensburg, Pa., where Feiling worked. Her husband, parents, and coworkers were present, as were one associated rescuer, **Mark A. Garsteck**, and the family of another, **John E. Swartz**. A bronze plaque dedicated in Feiling's memory added significance to the event, the plaque supplied by Matthews International of Pittsburgh, providers of the Hero Fund's grave marker.

Not all medals remain with the recipient or the family. In two instances they came back to the Hero Fund. The first, in June, was secured at a garage sale in Florida and was returned to the office after the buyer's grandchildren researched the medal and concluded that it was not theirs to keep. Attempts to reach known family members of the 1925 awardee were fruitless. The second medal—a silver—was secured through purchase from a collector. As that 1911 hero has no known descendants, we contacted two museums to gauge interest in a permanent loan of the medal for display, and interest has been expressed by both. In other outreach activities, Chambers assembled a collection of some of the better case-minute sketches in an exhibition he called *The Art of Rescue*, and display was made at two local Carnegie Libraries with each accompanied by a talk on the Hero Fund. A sampling of the sketches appeared in the June issue of *impULSE*.



*Presentations of the Carnegie Medal in 2013 by Douglas R. Chambers, left, the Hero Fund's director of external affairs, included one at the December meeting of the Warren, R.I., Town Council. Being honored was retired Warren firefighter, Patrick J. Rimoshytus, who a year earlier pulled a woman from her burning automobile after an accident in Warren. Rimoshytus sustained first- and second-degree burns in the rescue. Photo, by Ted Hayes, is provided as a courtesy by the Warren Times-Gazette.*

the medal for attempting to save a neighbor boy from drowning in a flooded culvert. Both men died in the attempt.

The Fund's other staple grant-giving opportunity is its beneficiary program, whereby need-based monthly payments are made to heroes disabled by their heroic acts and to the dependents of posthumous awardees. At year end, grants were being given to 66 individuals throughout the U.S. and Canada for a total award payment of \$302,935.

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## 2013 in review

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The Committee took Hero Fund participation into a broader scope of activity by its members attending the biennial presentation of the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy. The event, inaugurated by the Carnegie Corporation of New York in 2001, was held for the second time in Edinburgh, Scotland, in October and included exhibitions celebrating the legacy of native son Andrew Carnegie as well as the art of Andy Warhol, a graduate of the Carnegie Institute of Technology. Committee members in attendance included Laskow, Dan D. Sandman, Susanne C. Wean, Nancy L. Rackoff, Linda T. Hills, and Ann M. McGuinn, the latter of whom was instrumental in securing the Warhol exhibit.

Those Committee members, along with Rutkowski, well represented the Hero Fund at an informal meeting to which representatives of all nine extant Carnegie hero funds were invited, and turnout, from funds in the U.K., Sweden, Switzerland, and Italy, reflected enthusiasm for establishing an organized body. Toward that end, the group formed the Carnegie Hero Funds World Committee and reviewed a draft of bylaws and rules that had been prepared by Laskow. Funding for that committee's activities had been secured through a grant of \$150,000 from the Carnegie



*Sybil P. Veeder, Ph.D., has chaired the Executive Committee since 2002. She joined the Commission in 1992.*

Corporation. Particularly notable at the meeting was the participation of Dr. Gabor Toth, secretary of the *Fondazione Carnegie* of Italy. Other international news of note involved Hills, who, representing the Carnegie Family, traveled to the Netherlands in late summer to attend the centennial of the opening of the Peace Palace of The Hague, the construction of which was funded by a grant from her great-grandfather.

Members of the Executive Committee are to be thanked for their dedication last year in keeping the Hero Fund on track and moving ahead. I commend the staff also for their attention to the myriad details needed for the skillful, and artful, execution of the Hero Fund's work. All of us together are fortunate to play a role in this part of Andrew Carnegie's grand vision. 

### OFFICERS CITED FOR 2010 FIRE RESCUE



Officers **Jason Ewing** of the Clarkston, Wash., Police Department, center, and **Dustin E. Hibbard** of the Lewiston, Idaho, Police Department, right, received their Carnegie Medals from Lewiston Mayor Kevin Poole at a meeting of the Lewiston City Council in October. The men were cited for rescuing the occupant of a smoke-filled apartment in Lewiston on Nov. 28, 2010, when Ewing was a reserve officer for the Lewiston department.

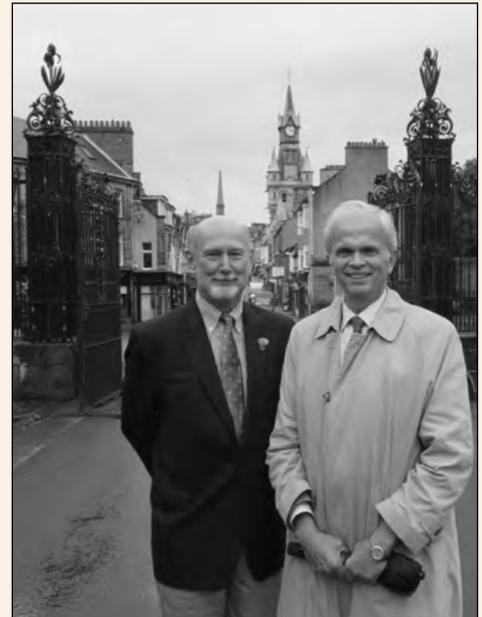


Said Hibbard, "All five of us (officers) set out to do the same thing, with Jason and I fortunate enough to pick the right door. But those other guys would have done the same thing, as would the majority of the officers in our department." Both Hibbard and Ewing required hospital treatment for significant smoke inhalation during the rescue.

### HERO FUND NAMES CHAIR, ELECTS NEW PRESIDENT

Mark Laskow, the seventh president of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, has been appointed to the newly created position of board chair, and Walter F. Rutkowski, executive director since 1990, was elected president, both changes effective as of the Dec. 17, 2013, meeting of the organization's Executive Committee.

Laskow, who joined the Hero Fund in 1992 and was elected president in 2001, said the change in his title was made to reflect current foundation governance structure. Rutkowski joined the organization in 1973 as an on-site case investigator and in 1986 was elected secretary of the board, a title that he retains.



*Messrs. Laskow, left, and Rutkowski in October 2013 at the gates to Pittencrieff Park, Dunfermline, Scotland. The park was a gift from Andrew Carnegie to the residents of the city where he was born.*

### COAST GUARD GOLD MEDAL

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attempts to rescue another from "drowning, shipwreck, or other perils of the water."

Other recent Carnegie Medal awardees who received the Gold Lifesaving Medal include **Ross McKay Barfuss**, of Aloha, Ore., who died at age 16 attempting to save a boy from drowning in rough surf of the Pacific Ocean on March 8, 2008, and **M. L. Skutnik III**, who helped to save a woman from drowning in the Potomac River at Washington, D.C., on Jan. 13, 1982, after a jet crash during a winter storm.



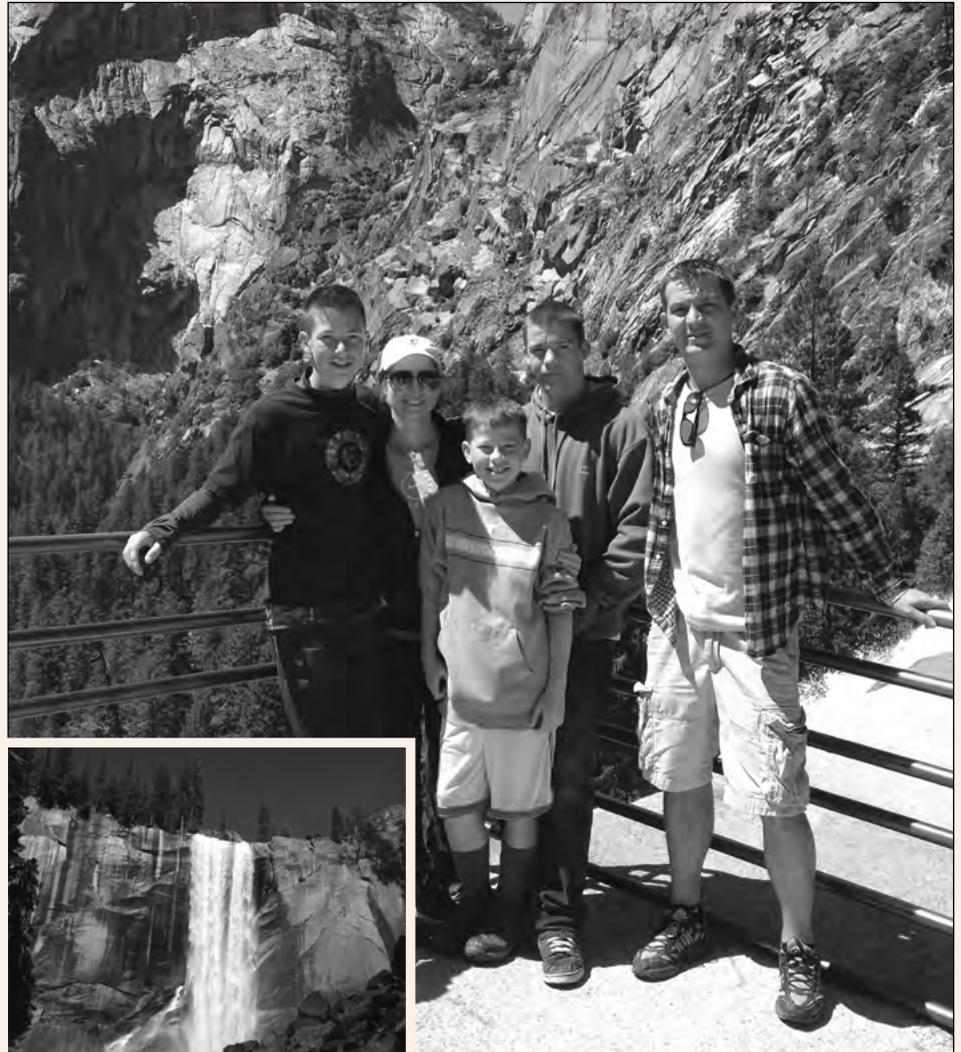
LATEST AWARDEES  
OF THE CARNEGIE MEDAL

SINCE THE LAST ISSUE OF *imPULSE*, THE FOLLOWING 20 INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN AWARDED THE CARNEGIE MEDAL, BRINGING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS TO 9,653 SINCE THE HERO FUND'S INCEPTION IN 1904. THE LATEST AWARDS, WHICH WERE ANNOUNCED ON DEC. 20, ARE DETAILED ON THE COMMISSION'S WEBSITE AT WWW.CARNEGIEHERO.ORG. THE NEXT ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARDEES WILL BE MADE ON MARCH 26.

**Joshua H. Meltzer**, 38, a graduate student from Bowling Green, Ky., saved Erica R. Gagnon, 39, and others from drowning in Lake Superior at Duluth, Minn., on July 2, 2012. While swimming, an 11-year-old girl had difficulty attempting to return to the beach against the four-foot waves and strong outward current. Gagnon and another woman entered the water for her but also had difficulty. Having just arrived at the beach, Meltzer swam to the other woman, who was closest to shore, and returned her to wadable water. He then turned and swam to Gagnon, who was with the girl at a point about 150 feet out, the waves repeatedly submerging them. Telling Gagnon that he would return for her, Meltzer started to swim the girl to shore, but the current and overtaking waves impeded his progress, and he shouted for help. After a hard swim, Meltzer felt sand beneath his feet, worked his way to wadable water, and handed the girl off to others. He then swam out to Gagnon and with another man took her to safety.

**John Bigwood** saved Glenda J. Gully, 49, from an assault by a gunman in Sacramento, Calif., on Feb. 21, 2012. After the gunman shot and killed a man in the parking lot of an office building, he chased Gully into the building's lobby and, firing again, threatened her as she sought refuge at the security desk. Bigwood, 57, a land surveyor from Fair Oaks, Calif., was in an adjoining room. Hearing the gunfire, he stepped into the lobby and saw Gully and the assailant. When Bigwood walked toward the assailant and stood between him and Gully, the assailant told him he was going to shoot Gully, and then he pointed the gun at Bigwood and threatened him. As Bigwood advanced, the assailant lowered his gun, Bigwood then convincing him to leave the premises. The assailant exited the building, Bigwood following. Outside, the assailant shot himself, inflicting a mortal wound.

High school student **Alec Justin Smith**, 16, of San Jose, Calif., saved a boy from going over Vernal Fall in Yosemite National Park, Calif., on April 9 last year. A 9-year-old boy entered the Merced River just above the 317-foot fall and was carried downstream by the swift current



*Carnegie Medal awardee Alec Justin Smith, second from right, is shown with his parents, Justin, right, and Melissa, and brothers, Nolan, left, and Peyton, at the brink of Vernal Fall (inset) in Yosemite National Park, Calif. On that day's outing, Alec vaulted the railing to snatch a 9-year-old boy from the swift current, keeping him from going over the 317-foot-high fall.*

toward the brink of the fall. In another party on the bank at the scene, Alec was alerted to the situation. He immediately ran to the river, jumping over a three-foot-high railing en route. At the water line, he lay on the smooth granite bank, which was slick, and, holding by one arm to a knob in the rock, extended his body partially into the 36-degree water at a point about 20 feet from the fall. With his other hand he grasped the boy when the boy came within reach. Alec pulled the boy onto the bank, where another man then helped to secure them as they regained their footing. (See photo.)

**Alfredo Serrano** and **Dennis M. Shaw**, both of Bridgeport, Conn., rescued Marjorie A. Meketa from an assault in Bridgeport on Dec. 22, 2011. At midday, Meketa, 77, was walking home from a grocery market when a large, deranged man ran at her from behind, tackled her to the pavement, and stabbed her repeatedly with a piece of glass. Nearby, Serrano, 45, maintenance

worker, witnessed the attack. Yelling at the assailant, Serrano ran to him and struggled against him to separate him from Meketa. Serrano was cut on both hands in the attempt. Shaw, 53, who also witnessed the attack from nearby, responded by then, despite limitations to his mobility. He joined Serrano in fighting the assailant, who outweighed each of the men, and together they kept him away from Meketa. Police arrived shortly and arrested the assailant.

University student **Nathaniel Bacon**, 29, of Calverton, N.Y., saved Priscilla Woods, 38, from drowning in the Alabama River at Selma, Ala., on Jan. 8 last year. Woods was struggling to stay afloat in the river at a point about 70 feet from the closer bank. His attention having been attracted to her earlier, Bacon drove to a point at which he could park and then ran about 650 feet to the scene. At the bank, Bacon removed his outer attire and entered the river, the water

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**LATEST AWARDEES***(continued from page 6)*

temperature of which was 49 degrees. He swam to Woods, grasped her, and, stroking with his free arm, pulled her toward the bank. Halfway there, a shift in their position caused Bacon to submerge. Resurfacing, he established a hold on Woods again and continued swimming her toward the bank. A fisherman helped him drag Woods from the river. (See photo, page 2.)

**Robert P. Davies**, 48, a contractor from Golden Valley, Ariz., helped to save his neighbor, Charlotte Sowards, 92, from her burning house on Dec. 21, 2012. Sowards was in the bedroom at one end of the house after fire broke out at the other end. Flames spread quickly, filling the structure with dense smoke. Davies saw smoke and responded to the scene. He climbed through a window into the bedroom and supported Sowards there so that she could breathe. The arriving fire chief also entered the room, and he and Davies made repeated attempts to lift Sowards to the window but were unsuccessful. With flames starting to breach the room, Davies and the chief took Sowards to another window. The chief braced his shoulder beneath Sowards, and as Davies lifted her by an arm, the men boosted her to the window and maneuvered her

head first through it, to men outside who lowered her to the ground. Davies and the chief then exited to safety, flames soon engulfing the bedroom.

**Keith Knight** of Hooksett, N.H., and **Scott Frye** of Nashua, N.H., saved Steven R. Marques from his burning automobile after a highway accident in Andover, Mass., on April 29, 2012. Marques, 61, was trapped in the vehicle after it overturned onto its driver's side and caught fire on its undercarriage. Knight, 41, a passing firefighter, stopped at the scene and, reaching through the vehicle's broken-out windshield, pulled on Marques but realized that he was trapped by his legs. Frye, 45, a state trooper, also witnessed the accident and responded. He climbed head first into the vehicle and located the lever securing the driver's seat. He released the seat, enabling him to free Marques's legs. Frye then grasped Marques and, as he backed from the car pulling him, Knight also grasped him, and together the men pulled Marques to safety. Flames grew shortly to engulf the car. Frye required hospital treatment for smoke inhalation and a cut to one knee.

**William Michael Browne**, 46, of Wrightwood, Calif., helped to save a boy from falling from a highway overpass in Victorville, Calif., on Sept.

19, 2012. A 16-year-old boy stood on the outside edge of a concrete parapet of the overpass and held to a fence there. The overpass spanned a multi-lane interstate and was about 25 feet above the highway surface. A crisis negotiator for the sheriff's department, Browne was called to the scene, but the boy was unresponsive to him and others present. When the boy appeared to be fainting, officers secured finger holds of his attire through the chain-link fence. Without proper equipment, Browne mounted the parapet, scaled the six-foot-high fence, and lowered himself to the parapet's outer edge. He advanced to the boy, straddled him, and held him to the fence. After several minutes, firefighters extended a ladder from the highway to them and lowered the boy to safety, Browne following. (See photo.)

**Jesse C. Garcia IV**, 50, of Adkins, Texas, saved Morgan C. Bryant from a burning automobile after an accident in Adkins on Nov. 3, 2012. Bryant, 19, was trapped in the driver's seat after the nighttime accident, in which flames broke out at the front of the vehicle and entered its passenger compartment. Conscious, she screamed for help. Garcia, a police officer for a neighboring municipality, was on his way home when he came upon the scene. He leaned through the driver's side of the car and attempted to release Bryant's safety belt but found that it was jammed. Holding the belt to the flames issuing from the console area, Garcia pulled and stretched it until it broke as it caught fire, and spreading flames ignited his uniform near the shoulder area. After freeing Bryant of the belt, Garcia lifted her from the car. Flames grew shortly to engulf and destroy the vehicle. Garcia was treated at the emergency room for first- and second-degree burns to his right arm and the right side of his face.

**James Russell Jenkins**, 30, a technician from Columbus, Ohio, died attempting to save Elijah T. Walker, 5, from drowning in the pond of an apartment complex in Columbus on Feb. 7 last year. Elijah broke through ice covering that section of the pond and held to the edge of solid ice at a point about 50 feet from the bank. Driving by, Jenkins was alerted. When Elijah floated face down in the open water, Jenkins started across the ice toward him, but cracking and breaking ice took him to his hands and knees. He then crawled toward Elijah but fell through the ice at a point about 10 feet from him. Breaking a path through the ice, Jenkins reached the boy and, cradling him, kept his head above the surface of the 39-degree water while calling for help. Jenkins soon submerged but was able to keep Elijah's head out of the water until he too submerged. Responding divers recovered both: Jenkins could not be revived, as he had drowned, and Elijah died three days later. (See photo.)



*Lt. William Michael Browne, a crisis negotiator for the San Bernardino County, Calif., Sheriff's Department, went above and beyond the call of duty when going to the aid of a young man about to fall from the outside edge of a freeway overpass. Browne scaled a six-foot-high fence, stood on the inches-wide ledge, and kept the man from dropping 25 feet to the highway. Firefighters removed both to safety. Photo, by James Quigg, is provided as a courtesy by the Daily Press of Victorville, Ca.*

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## LATEST AWARDEES

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Passing motorists **Scott E. Teuscher**, 35, a courier from Roseville, Calif., and Jason R. Ivey, 41, a handyman and caretaker now from Brookline, Mass., rescued Amy L. Stapleton-Horn from her burning automobile after a highway accident in Grass Valley, Calif., on July 12, 2012. Unconscious, Stapleton-Horn, 37, remained in the driver's seat of the car after it struck a tractor-trailer in the vicinity of its fuel tanks. The tanks burst into flame, setting fire to the tractor and its flatbed trailer, the car coming to rest in close proximity to the flames. Teuscher and Ivey stopped at the scene. Despite the growing and advancing flames, Teuscher went to the driver's side of the car, opened the front door, and, leaning inside, unfastened Stapleton-Horn's safety belt. As he began to pull her out, Ivey helped take her from the vehicle and carry her across the highway. An explosion at the tractor-trailer sent flames to the car, and both vehicles were shortly engulfed. (See photo.)



*Scott E. Teuscher, inset, a driver for FedEx, snapped the larger photo when he came upon the fiery wreckage of a tractor-trailer that had just collided with an automobile. Then realizing that the car was occupied, he went to its driver's side in the face of advancing flames and with another man pulled a woman to safety. The photo of Teuscher is by John R. Hart and is courtesy of The Union, Grass Valley, Calif.*

**Katherine Lee Osiecki** of East Hampton, N.Y., saved a woman from drowning in Napeague Bay, off Long Island Sound, at Amagansett, N.Y., on April 21 last year. At night, a 57-year-old woman cried for help while treading water at a point about 225 feet from shore. Osiecki, 21, a university student who lived nearby, heard her and with her boyfriend responded to the beach, where, with the aid of a flashlight, they saw the woman bobbing in the water. Osiecki

removed her outer attire and entered the water, the temperature of which was 47 degrees. She swam to the woman, who reached out as if to grab Osiecki. Osiecki submerged to avoid contact, and then, positioning the woman to float on her

back, she reached across the woman's chest and, supporting her with her hip, swam back to shore, guided by the flashlight. In wadable water, Osiecki stood and helped the woman walk to the beach. Osiecki, cold and tired, sustained cuts to her feet, and she recovered. (See photo, page 8.)

**Richard Brian Andrade**, 32, an asbestos worker from Colorado Springs, Colo., saved his coworker, Joseph W. Doyle, 32, from electrocution at a job site in Colorado Springs on March 16, 2012. While working in an office building, Doyle was removing a junction box from a conduit containing a live, 240-volt line and was shocked while holding to the conduit. Andrade was standing about 10 feet away and saw that he was frozen in place. Concluding that Doyle was being shocked, Andrade ran to him and attempted to tackle him to break his hold of the conduit, but Doyle did not release it. Andrade then grasped the conduit and shook it free of Doyle's hold. Doyle fell to the floor, unconscious, and Andrade sustained an electrical burn to his right leg before he could release the conduit. Andrade revived Doyle and called for help. Both men were taken to the hospital for treatment of electrical burns.

**Vincent Lorenzo Meraz**, 48, a machinist from Escondido, Calif., rescued a woman from an assault in San Marcos, Calif., on Jan. 21 last



*James Russell Jenkins (shown in inset photo with son, Kameron) died a hero when he attempted to save a small boy from drowning in an ice-covered pond last winter. One of his pallbearers was Columbus, Ohio, Police Officer Christopher Smith-Hughes, in white shirt, who joined in the ill-fated attempt. Both Jenkins and the boy drowned. The larger photo is by Tom Dodge and is courtesy of The Columbus Dispatch.*

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## Historian used clues from Hero Fund to research life of great-grandfather

By Lance Lindell

Whatcom County, Wash., Historical Society

Though my wife and I both work in information technology, we have never been in the thrall of social media or online photo sharing. However, with an interest in genealogy and deep roots in Whatcom County, Wash., we have both fallen victim to that great and wonderful time vampire, Ancestry.com. We have spent hours searching through this online repository of names, dates, and details, and we've found a lot we expected and even more that we didn't.

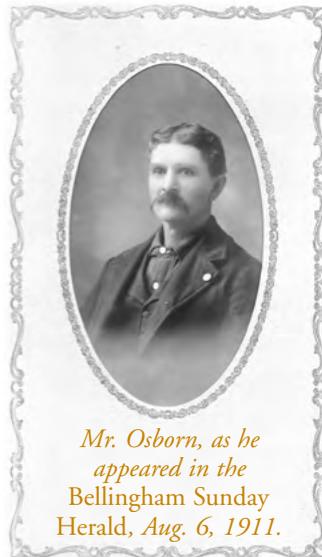
The best story to come out of my family was from the early 1900s. It involved an act of bravery on the part of my great-grandfather, **Randolph Osborn**, of whom I knew very little. His act was commemorated by the Carnegie Hero Fund in a certificate my uncle gave me:

*Randolph Osborn, 45, teamster, attempted to rescue Donald C. Ball, 5, from a runaway, Bellingham, Wash., Sept. 12, 1905. Osborn jumped from his wagon and, standing in the path of the runaway with a long-handled shovel, struck at the horse, which was hitched to a buggy containing the child. He was knocked down and sustained fractures of the skull and other injuries, which disabled him two months. The child escaped injury.*

From a research standpoint, the certificate inverted my usual thrill of the chase. It gave me everything and nothing, as if I were reading a mystery novel back to front. I had a name, a date, and a place, but no plotline or character development. My goal was to learn what happened before and after that fateful day in Randolph's life, my challenge to learn if he lived up to his billing.

I found that in 1905, Randolph was earning about \$2 per day working as a teamster for Bellingham's street department. He drove a team of horses hitched to a dirt wagon and did his best to keep the primitive roads passable. As he had been a farmer for most of his life, he was no doubt proud and protective of his team, which helped him to scratch out a living. Whether driving a wagon or a buggy, it is safe to say he knew horses. In the case of the runaway, it must have been difficult for Randolph to swing a shovel at a horse. A family tragedy a few years earlier might have been what motivated him to act.

On Aug. 2, 1898, Randolph's brother-in-law, Alex Lewis, and nephew, Perley, were killed in a wagon accident near Blaine, Wash. Perley was riding in a farm wagon driven by his father, who tried to beat a Great Northern train to a crossing. From a contemporary news account: "The team and wagon were squarely in the middle of the track when the engine struck them. The wagon and the two persons were hurled to the one side of the track and the horses to the other. The train was stopped as



*Mr. Osborn, as he appeared in the Bellingham Sunday Herald, Aug. 6, 1911.*



*Studio portrait of Donald C. Ball, taken by J. B. Hann of Whatcom, Wash. Handwritten on the back: "Donald Ball for Mr. and Mrs. Osborn, a Merry Christmas." The lace collar and ribbon were common for boys to wear at the time. Until the early 20th century, dresses, tights, puffy sleeves, and sausage curls were gender-neutral fashion for children.*

### LATEST AWARDEES

(continued from page 8)

year. The woman, 40, was pulled from her car by her male companion and was being beaten by him in the street. Standing at his truck parked nearby, Meraz witnessed the attack. He approached the assailant from behind and kicked him, distracting him from the woman. The men grappled, after which the assailant got into the woman's car and drove from the immediate scene. Meraz returned to his truck and was standing at the driver's side when the assailant drove back to the scene and struck Meraz against the truck, badly fracturing his ankle. The assailant then attacked Meraz, who was able to get a hold of him in an attempt to keep him for police. Pulling himself from his outer attire, the assailant broke free and fled the scene on foot but was later arrested. Meraz was hospitalized a week for treatment, including surgery, of his injuries.

(continued on page 14)



*At night, Katherine Lee Osiecki and John Glennon traced shouts for help to a beach near Osiecki's home on Long Island, N.Y., and discovered a woman drowning in an ocean bay at a point about 225 feet from shore. Osiecki removed her outer attire and swam through darkness to save the woman from the 47-degree water. Photo, by Taylor K. Vecsey, is courtesy of East Hampton Patch.*

(continued on page 10)



## SHE ENTERED A DEEP WELL TO SAVE YOUNG GRANDSON

**Nellie Brooks Patterson** was one determined grandmother.

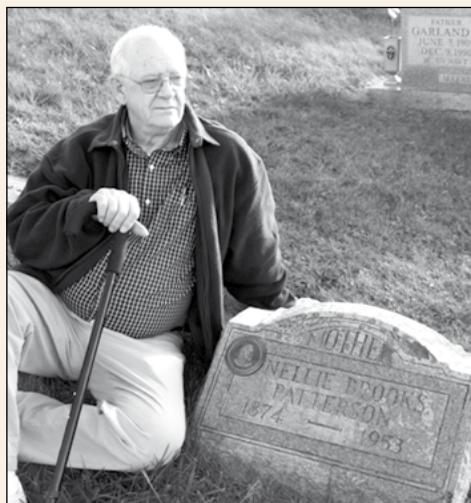


*Nellie Brooks Patterson*

On Sept. 1, 1933, as Patterson's daughter, Elsie Cash, was visiting her at her farm in Lofton, Va., Elsie's 3-year-old son, Delmer, made his way to an 18-foot-deep well about 300 feet from the farmhouse and in some fashion removed its covering and fell in. Thrashing about in water nine feet deep, he cried out for help, attracting the attention of his mother and grandmother.

Patterson, 58, sent her daughter to a neighboring farm for help and then lowered herself feet first onto the stone-lined well, which was about four feet in diameter. Bracing her feet in niches in the wall, she started to descend but then lost her footing, fell into the water, and submerged. Regaining a foothold, she grasped Delmer, held him close, and, bracing her back against the wall, started to climb back to the surface. Delmer was struggling and knocked her glasses off, but Patterson held tightly to him as she ascended. Delmer's mother returned about then with a farmer she had alerted, and they pulled both from the well. Delmer was uninjured, but Patterson was lame for two weeks because of an injury to her knee that she sustained when she fell.

*(continued on page 11)*



*David L. Cash, the brother of the rescued child, Delmer W. Cash, was not yet born at the time of the rescue. He is at his grandmother's grave, where the family placed a marker in the likeness of the Carnegie Medal. Markers of the type are available at no cost to the families of deceased medal awardees (see back page).*

## Historian used clues from Hero Fund

*(continued from page 9)*

soon as possible and the train men rushed to the scene of the disaster. Mr. Lewis was picked up several hundred feet from the track, both legs, one arm, and neck broken and the skull badly crushed. The boy was also struck in the head. Both had been killed instantly. Both horses were dead and the wagon was smashed to kindling wood."

Their horrific deaths must have shaken Randolph. He may have been thinking of Perley when he saw Donald Ball clinging to the runaway.

The Carnegie Hero Fund was only a year old when Randolph performed his heroic act. Though Andrew Carnegie had prospered on the backs of laborers like Randolph, he became a committed philanthropist in his retirement years. Whatcom County was an early beneficiary: A Carnegie Library was built in Fairhaven in 1903, followed by a downtown library in 1908.

My Aunt Lennie was my main connection to Randolph. I was about 10 years old when she first showed me an original newspaper clipping from 1911 announcing the award of Randolph's Carnegie Medal. She took the brownish paper down from the knick-knack shelf and unfolded it like the Shroud of Turin. The old clipping had been handled so often it had taken on the texture of cloth. I remember seeing a faded image of Randolph's face and both sides of the medal. That scrap of paper is long gone, but it all came right back to me the day I found the article in the newspaper's microfilmed archives.

I then got around to doing something I should have done in the first place: Asking the Hero Fund if they knew who nominated Randolph. The Commission was very gracious and got back to me in short order: "Our records indicate that the case was called to our attention by Henry C. Beach of Bellingham on Oct. 6, 1905. Mr. Beach had no 'pecuniary interest' in the case." Beach was a lawyer and judge in the police court at Bellingham's City Hall. By the time of the runaway, he had spent many years examining the dark side of human nature. Maybe helping someone win a medal made for a nice change of scenery. Perhaps Mr. Beach saw it as his duty to nominate Randolph for the Carnegie Medal—after all, he was paid by the city to be a good judge of character.

The Commission took the matter under consideration in April 1911, and on May 1 of that year a letter was addressed to Randolph announcing that he had been awarded "a bronze medal and the sum of \$1,000 to be applied toward the purchase of a home." Randolph received his medal on Aug. 1 and was justly very proud of it. He had already chosen a piece of property for his new home and was waiting for a final transfer from the Commission. The award money amounted to 15 months' wages for Randolph. He wanted to buy a farm with it, but his wife wanted to stay in the city. They compromised and bought some land on the edge of town.

It appears Randolph took his recognition in stride—he never entered politics or aspired to high society. Though he never got the farm of his dreams he did have his

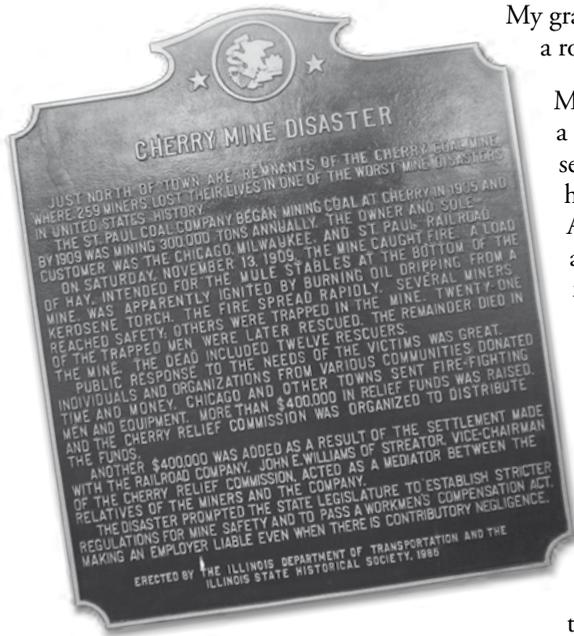


*Mr. Osborn in 1934, just before his death.*

## Case for legacy of massive mine fire built by grandson of disaster's hero

By Harry Peterson  
Gurnee, Ill.

Cherry is a small town in north central Illinois—about 90 miles southwest of Chicago—that was founded by the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad to provide coal for their locomotives. Little did the townspeople know on Saturday, Nov. 13, 1909, that the horrendous events that would occur that afternoon would all but destroy their small town, nor could they realize that those events would make history throughout the country.



My grandfather, **Andrew McLuckie**, played a role in the events of that day.

McLuckie immigrated from Galston, a small town in Scotland, and, once settled, sent for his family to join him. His family consisted of his wife, Annie, their two boys, John and James, and one daughter, Janet, who was my mother. McLuckie was a miner for the St. Paul Coal Co., whose mine was promoted as the safest in the country principally because its illumination was provided by the new phenomenon of electric lights.

On that November day, the mine's electrical system was not working. Water seeping through the floor had caused short circuiting that damaged the generator, and since parts needed

for repair were on order, kerosene torches were pressed into use. Also, it was common to have mules in the mine to pull mine cars to and from the shaft's hoisting cages. Hay and feed lowered into the mine to provide for three dozen mules were also transported by the rail cars, and on that day one of those cars was left directly under a kerosene torch. Sparks fell into the hay and soon it was in flames. Around noon, as the almost 500 men and boys at work in the mine were

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## Historian used clues from Hero Fund

(continued from page 10)



chickens and a cow. His last-known photo shows him in his favorite hickory-striped overalls. He was proof that even a local boy could finally make good.

With his life's work done and his family in good stead, Randolph died a contented old man on June 18, 1934. In a twist worthy of Dickens, his son Ed went to his reward in 1962 believing that Randolph buried some of the Carnegie money on the property. According to my mom, he spent years digging up the yard in hopes of finding a cache of silver dollars. ❧

(Story excerpted with permission from the December 2013 issue of The Journal of the Whatcom County Historical Society.)

15:13

### HE TRIED TO SAVE HIS COWORKER

**Travis Wayne Koehler**, 26, of Las Vegas, Nev., was a journeyman engineer when he died Feb. 2, 2007, attempting to save a coworker who was rendered unconscious while working in a below-ground lift station of a sewer system. Koehler immediately entered the pit and lifted the coworker's head from wastewater, but he too lost consciousness in the oxygen-deficient atmosphere, which contained toxic fumes. Emergency responders removed them, along with another man who had attempted a rescue, but only the second rescuer survived.



**15:13** is a new feature of imPULSE, designed to remember those in the Hero Fund's 110-year history whose lives were sacrificed in the performance of their heroic acts. The name identifies the chapter and verse of the Biblical quote from the Gospel of John that appears on every medal: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Of the 9,653 medal awardees to date, 1,987, or 21% of the total, were recognized posthumously. **They are not to be forgotten.**

II

### SHE ENTERED A DEEP WELL

(continued from page 10)

For her actions, Patterson was awarded the Carnegie Medal and \$500 in 1935.

Patterson went on to raise Delmer at the farm after his parents died, and he took on the name Patterson. At 16, he left home and joined the Army, where, achieving the rank of staff sergeant, he served in the Korean War. The father of three, he died in 1997. Patterson remained at the farm and died there in 1953.



## Case for legacy of massive mine fire

(continued from page 11)



### NEW OFFICE DECOR INSPIRED BY ACTIONS OF MEDAL AWARDEES

By H. Daughtry Perritt  
Florence, Ala.

In the fall of 2012 I moved my business into a new office in an industrial park here in Florence. While I already possessed furniture for the new site, little decor was at hand to transform my office into an area that reflected my personality or interests. I spoke with an interior decorator on more than one occasion about the bare walls that I was slowly becoming accustomed to, but few ideas were coming together. We discussed maps and landscape prints, but nothing really resonated with me.

Being in the pet supply retail business, I encounter people of all walks of life. From my experience, we are a nation with a large part of our citizenry struggling with the effects of moral decay. These effects include complacency, lack of work ethic, a sense of entitlement, and drug abuse. It is sad to me that when an honest individual finds a lost wallet and returns it to the rightful owner, the news media finds this to be newsworthy.

Thinking about the issue of my decor from time to time, I came to the conclusion that I wanted more on my walls than some pictures of the beach. It needed to be meaningful....a conversation starter. I wanted it to be about people who gave what they had to give, to highlight those who were willing to sacrifice so much. I wanted my walls to reflect the words of John 15:13, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for one's friends."

This led me to contact the Carnegie Hero Fund about displaying framed pictures of awardees that would include the accounts of what they did to deserve being recognized by the fund. **Max Adams Morris** was awarded the Carnegie Medal for saving a man from being electrocuted at Fort Benning, Ga., and for attempting to save another man—my uncle, for whom I am named—from the same fate.

(continued on page 13)



Gravestone of Carnegie Medal awardee Andrew McLuckie, with Hero Fund marker atop it.

beginning their lunch break, word of the fire spread. Neither an alarm was sounded nor an order given to evacuate the mine immediately, as it was considered at first to be a small fire.

The flames spread to the timber works supporting the mine, and at the surface, the seriousness of the conditions in the mine became apparent. One of the mine operators decided to do something to help the miners who were trapped. He ran to one of the cages, announced that he was going down, and asked if there were others who would help him. McLuckie, 31, was one of the first to volunteer. He had been at home preparing to work the night shift at the mine when word of the fire reached him. He responded to the scene immediately.

The miners in Cherry had formed a lodge of the Order of Knights of Pythias, whose main principles are friendship, charity, and benevolence. We believe it was our grandfather's belief in those principles that spurred him to assist in the rescue efforts. He was quite active in the lodge, having served as chancellor.

The volunteer rescuers made repeated trips down into the fiery mine and brought up many men and boys whose lives would have otherwise been lost. After each trip, they would describe the worsening conditions in the mine. On what would be their final trip, the heat and flames became unbearable, and they signaled to be brought to the surface. Confusion in interpreting the signals resulted in a delay in taking the cage to the top, and when it arrived, it held the bodies of 12 men who had entered the shaft as rescuers, their bodies and clothing still aflame. McLuckie was one of the victims. In all, 259 lives were lost in the disaster.

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Three grandchildren of Andrew McLuckie are shown at his grave in Spring Valley, Ill. From left: Carol McLuckie Becker of Kenosha, Wis.; Robert McLuckie of Livingston, La.; and this article's author, Harry Peterson of Gurnee, Ill.

## Case for legacy of massive mine fire

(continued from page 12)

After days of trying to fight the fire from the surface with water and fire suppression chemicals, the mine was sealed so that the fire could burn itself out. When it was reopened a few days later, workers re-entered to retrieve what bodies they could find. As they went about their work, God suddenly provided a miracle. In front of them was a wall of coal, and from the other side of it they heard voices. The wall was quickly opened, and 21 men and boys were discovered alive. They were quickly labeled and forever known as the "eight-day men."

McLuckie's wife gave birth to a baby boy, William Taylor McLuckie, three weeks after becoming a widow, but he lived only one year and five days. He is buried in the same grave as his father.

My mother seldom spoke of her father, but she was very proud of the Carnegie Medal that the family received a year after the disaster. A few times, meaning *very few*, she would bring out the medal. She would show it to me and explain what it was, giving an abbreviated account of why it was awarded to her father. She also had a book, *The Cherry Mine Disaster*, by F. R. Buck, and after her own mother died, she became custodian of those two objects. She cherished them and kept them wrapped in soft cloths and tucked away, almost hidden, in the back of a dining room cabinet.

I read the book only much later in my life. I was never aware of the details of the disaster as I could not speak with my mother about them—she always seemed to want to repress and forget them. Shortly before her death, she informed me that she had given the medal and the book to my cousin Don, who was the oldest of McLuckie's grandchildren. At his death, one of his brothers discovered the medal and the book carefully preserved, wrapped as they were when he received them.

Now the four surviving cousins had to make a decision. Who would take possession of these objects? After several discussions, it was consensus that we place them in the Cherry Library and Museum for display, and the cousins elected me to design and build a suitable case to house them. The library was delighted by having such artifacts, and the book and medal are now prominently displayed, along with other mining memorabilia, including an exquisitely modeled layout of the complete mine. Adjacent to the library is a memorial plaza honoring those who died in the mine. It was dedicated on the centennial of the disaster and includes the name of each victim. Every year, on the Sunday closest to Nov. 13, the library has an open house to commemorate the event. Cherry remains a very small village—population 500 or thereabouts—and anyone visiting in the area would be welcome to visit the library and museum.

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The display case housing Andrew McLuckie's silver Carnegie Medal and related artifacts in the Cherry, Ill., Museum and Library was crafted by McLuckie's grandson, Harry Peterson.

### TO THE HERO FUND

#### REWARDING TO ACT

One of the most proud days of my life. A very rewarding feeling knowing I can act and not just stand and watch, as terrified as I might be. It is good to know oneself.

Douglas Bruce Keltz, Smoke Rise, Ga.

Keltz was awarded the Carnegie Medal in 1981 for helping to save a trucker from his burning rig after a highway accident in Georgetown, S.C., on Feb. 22, 1979.

#### 'HERO' KNOWN BY ALL

Few natives in this population (Indonesia) have the slightest idea who Andrew Carnegie might be. But they all know what a hero is. It is the same word in the Indonesian language as in English.

Link Luckett, Decatur, Ark.

Luckett was awarded a silver Carnegie Medal for his May 20, 1960, rescue of two mountain climbers on Mount McKinley, Alaska. The landings and takeoffs he made by helicopter at the 17,200-foot elevation were the highest to date by any aircraft. Luckett lived in Indonesia for 30 years.

#### NEW OFFICE DECOR

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I'm really happy with how the office project turned out. Those who see it have been very interested in reading the accounts of each event.



Maj. Morris

(Morris's act of heroism took place on July 10, 1941, as he and three other ROTC cadets from Alabama Polytechnic Institute, now Auburn University, were attending summer camp at Fort Benning. One of them, Perritt's uncle, 22, was shocked and knocked unconscious when he came in contact with an energized radio antenna. Another of the cadets attempted to free him but was also knocked unconscious when he came in contact with the antenna. Morris, 23, was severely burned while freeing both men. He and the other cadet survived, but Perritt could not be revived.)

(Morris was graduated from the institute the following June and served with the U.S. Army in World War II, during which he was promoted to the rank of major. He was killed in action on Nov. 28, 1950, while serving in the Korean War, his remains not recovered.)



LATEST AWARDEES

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Neighbors **Michael T. McDonnell** and **Dylan Patrick Smith** of Rockaway Beach, N.Y., helped to save Janet R. Bavasso, Kathryn M. Cregg, and four others from drowning on Oct. 29, 2012. In the darkness, Bavasso, 52; Cregg, 52; and five others, who lived in two adjacent houses in Rockaway Beach, became stranded in them by the catastrophic storm surge of Hurricane Sandy, which flooded their neighborhood with more than five feet of water. A fire that broke out nearby and began to spread in the 75 m.p.h. wind threatened the two houses, and their seven occupants, including McDonnell, 51, a sales manager, gathered to flee together. Their plan was to cross the flooded street to get out of the fire's projected path, despite the floodwater's very swift current and the debris that it carried. McDonnell tied cords and rope together to make a line. Smith, 22, a university student who lived across the street, paddled his surfboard to the scene. Using the surfboard, he took one end of the makeshift line across the street, where another neighbor secured it to his house, and then he returned to the victims. McDonnell and Smith aided Bavasso onto the board, and she was ferried across the street by Smith, who used the line as a guide. Meanwhile, Cregg held to McDonnell's back as he waded and swam across the street, also using the makeshift line as a guide. Despite advancing flames, which had reached the victims' homes by then, McDonnell and Smith returned twice for the remaining victims and took them one at a time across the street to the other neighbor's house. The two houses burned to the ground. (See cover.)

**Philip D. Petr**, 46, a research technician from Blue Hill, Neb., helped to save Dustin Tesdahl, 18, and others from a burning school bus in Blue Hill on Sept. 5, 2012. Tesdahl and six other students, ages 6 to 10, were on the bus when it collided with a truck carrying hay bales. The bus came to rest partially in a ditch with the truck close by, and fire broke out at the wreckage and spread. Petr saw smoke as he approached the scene. Stopping there, he was alerted by a boy who had escaped the bus that others were inside. Petr found that the bus's service door was jammed shut and that its emergency door was blocked by a bale of hay. Obtaining a tool from his vehicle, Petr broke out a window along the driver's side of the bus and, hoisted to it by another man, climbed inside. He handed two of the remaining children out to the other man and then crawled over dislodged seats blocking the aisle to reach Tesdahl, who was badly injured. As the bus filled with smoke under deteriorating conditions, Petr took Tesdahl to the front of the vehicle and handed him out to the other man. Two of the remaining students made it to safety through a broken window. Tesdahl died of his injuries, as did the drivers of the vehicles and another of the students.

14



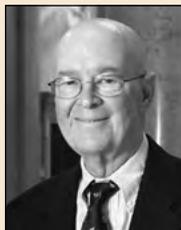
Mr. Spear

**Harold G. Hills**, 66, of Littleton, Colo., died Nov. 21. Hills, who specialized in historic restoration, was the husband of Linda Thorell Hills, a member of the Commission, and accompanied her to Hero Fund meetings in Pittsburgh and to Carnegie-related events in Europe. Most recently the couple attended the centennials of the hero funds in Belgium and Switzerland, and they were at home in the Scottish Highlands among relatives, all descendants of Andrew and Louise Carnegie.

**Philip J. Spear**, Ph.D., 98, of Gainesville, Fla., died Aug. 28. Spear was awarded the Carnegie Medal in 1940 for saving a man from drowning two years earlier at York Harbor, Maine. While fishing in the Atlantic Ocean from the rocky shore, the 47-year-old man was swept out by rough surf. Spear, then a salesman, 24, went after him and returned him to shore, battered by waves and barnacle-covered rocks. In resuming correspondence with the Hero Fund early last year, Spear submitted a recollection of the rescue titled, *How to Impress a Girlfriend*, and *imPULSE* followed up with a story in its June 2013 issue.



Mr. Hills



Mr. Veeder

**Peter G. Veeder**, 72, of Pittsburgh, died Jan. 13. The husband of Sybil P. Veeder, who is a member of the Commission and chair of its Executive Committee, Veeder was a trustee of the Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh and the Carnegie Museum of Art. "In his unassuming way," said the museums' president, David M. Hillenbrand, Veeder "care(d) deeply about giving back." In 2004, the Hero Fund consulted with Veeder on the issuance of its centennial medal, and last year he was instrumental in organizing a museum-patron tour of Carnegie-related sites in Carnegie's native Scotland.

Case for legacy of massive mine fire

(continued from page 13)

In the years following the disaster, a few attempts were made to reopen the mine, but economic conditions were such that a profitable operation could not be sustained. All that remains of the mine site are two huge slag piles, the buildings and machinery having been dismantled and removed and the land returned to farming. On a broader scale, the disaster was the catalyst for historic state and federal labor legislation. The U.S. Bureau of Mines was created six months after the fire, and the United Mine Workers of Illinois convened a panel to investigate the event. The results of these investigations contributed to the Illinois Workers' Compensation Act and eventually to the enactment of other safety and health regulations for miners across the country.

*McLuckie* was one of 14 heroes recognized, 12 posthumously, by the Hero Fund with a silver medal. The other awardees: **Dominick Formento, J. Alexander Norberg, Henry Stewart, Robert Clark, James Speir, John Bundy, John Szabrinski, Charles Waite, John Flood, Walter Waite, George Eddy, Isaac Lewis, Jr., and Joseph Robeza.**



## FROM THE ARCHIVES

*Civilian heroism by cadets at The Citadel*

Student life at The Citadel—a military college—in Charleston, S.C., is highly structured, and the weekend offers cadets a welcome break from their rigorous routine. That was no less true in 1962, when three cadets looked forward to being with their dates on a Saturday afternoon at the beach and then a dance that evening. More than 50 years later, such an outing would perhaps be forgotten, but not the one of June 16, 1962: Two of the cadets, **Gary La Monte Rickley** and **A. Walter McElroy, Jr.**, would be remembered for their extraordinary heroism that day.

It was a sunny, warm morning when Rickley, 20, and his date, Carol Anne Seyle, 19; McElroy, also 20, and his date, a student nurse; and the third cadet and Carole Ann Mathews, 18, drove 30 minutes to the Isle of Palms, one of the state's barrier islands. They proceeded to a beach at the tip of the island, where the intracoastal waterway joined the Atlantic Ocean at Dewees Inlet. No one in the group had been to that beach before, and except for a couple fishing in the inlet, they had the beach to themselves.

The women in the party would later tell the Commission's investigator that they had no intention of entering the water, not wanting to disarrange their hair in anticipation of the dance. The three couples remained on the beach until, under the mid-afternoon sun, the water seemed to promise some cool relief.

One by one the six waded into the ocean. The water was rough, and waves three to four feet high rolled toward shore, and who could resist riding a passing wave? Gradually the six were moving away from shore until, suddenly, they could no longer touch bottom. The tide was rising, with water flowing from the ocean into the inlet, and at the same time an undercurrent flowed away from shore. Mathews grasped onto the third cadet, who struggled to tow her to the beach, and both began to yell for help. Rickley, an athlete and good swimmer with Boy Scout and Red Cross lifesaving training, moved toward them but stopped when his date, Seyle, who was a nonswimmer, yelled to him for help.

Rickley reached Seyle about 140 feet from the beach and told her to hold onto his shoulders as he swam toward shore. The tidal current pushed them toward the inlet, and after towing Seyle 90 feet, almost reaching wadable water, Rickley told her: "I can't make it." He pushed Seyle toward shore and then submerged. Seyle struggled but did not advance. The couple who had been fishing in the inlet removed Seyle to the beach, where she lost consciousness.

Meanwhile, Mathews continued to cling to the third cadet about 160 feet out, and the cadet was tiring quickly. McElroy, who had

had Red Cross lifesaving training and worked as a pool lifeguard the previous summer, swam to them. Mathews released her hold on the cadet and grasped McElroy by the shoulder, causing him to submerge momentarily. Holding her around the waist and calming her, McElroy began to tow Mathews toward shore in a cross-chest carry. After advancing only 15 feet, McElroy was tiring. The waves breaking over him proved especially bothersome, as they caused him to swallow water. Changing his position to lie on his back, facing the oncoming waves, he told Mathews to hold to his left leg.

As he swam toward shore, able to anticipate the breaking waves but unable to see the shore, Mathews warned him when they began to move toward the inlet. They made it safely to the beach, where Mathews lost consciousness and McElroy lay exhausted and gasping for air. The third cadet had also reached shore with difficulty and lay prostrate on the beach.

The nurse revived Mathews, and the woman who had been fishing succeeded in reviving Seyle, who then begged someone to rescue Rickley—the others had not realized that he was still in the water. McElroy said he would search for Rickley, but the others restrained him. A responding rescue squad recovered Rickley's body from the

inlet. The other members of the group were taken to the hospital for treatment, and all recovered. McElroy accompanied Rickley's body to his family's home in Baden, Pa.

A few months later, the president of The Citadel, Gen. Mark W. Clark, contacted the Commission concerning the incident. "I have observed acts of heroism in war and peace and in all areas of life many times," Gen. Clark wrote, "but...I've never been confronted with a more selfless act of sacrificing one's own life." After a thorough investigation, the Hero Fund awarded a Carnegie Medal posthumously to Rickley and another to McElroy, of Aiken, S.C. At a ceremony held on the grounds of The Citadel, the medals were presented by Gen. Clark to McElroy, whose father, Army Col. A. Walter McElroy, Sr., was present, and to Rickley's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert E. Rickley. The Rickleys had lost their only child.

McElroy was also awarded a grant of \$500 by the Hero Fund. He was graduated from The Citadel in 1964, studied briefly at the University of South Carolina law school, and served seven years in the Army, including a tour of duty in South Vietnam. Returning to civilian life, he moved to the Dallas, Texas, area, where he continues to reside and work. Contacted by telephone, he reflected briefly on the incident, his tone almost solemn, and pointed out that his medal is still in his possession and remains cherished.

—Marlin Ross, Case Investigator



*Awarding of Carnegie Medals to Garey La Monte Rickley (posthumously) and A. Walter McElroy, Jr., at The Citadel, Nov. 1, 1963. From left: Rickley's parents, Mrs. and Mr. Herbert E. Rickley; McElroy; and McElroy's father, Col. A. Walter McElroy, Sr.*

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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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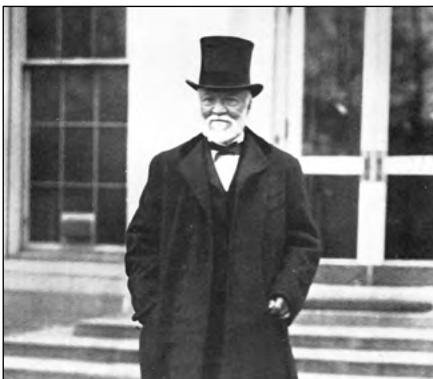
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## ✧ THE QUOTABLE A.C. ✧



*A man's first duty is to make a competence and be independent. But his whole duty does not end here. It is his duty to do something for his needy neighbors who are less favored than himself. It is his duty to contribute to the general good of the community in which he lives.*

—From *The Empire of Business*, 1902

## ✧ CONTINUUM ✧

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