



imPULSE

A Periodic Newsletter of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission ISSUE 5 • MARCH 2006

ON THIS DATE

An enhancement to the Hero Fund's Web site (www.carnegiehero.org) allows readers to link to the summary of a heroic act that took place "on this date" in the Commission's history.

The idea came in November from Patrick O'Malia of Bellevue, Pa. "I would like to see a 'hero of the day' on your site," O'Malia emailed. "I would use this to be inspired and to remember the heroes every day."

The feature commenced Jan. 1. Readers need only click the "On this date" button on the lower left corner of the site's homepage to view a selected act of heroism that occurred that day. Given that 8,961 awards have been made during the Hero Fund's 102 years, an average of 24 cases took place every day of the year, statistically speaking, including Feb. 29, leap day.

As the cases are not chosen randomly, the Commission welcomes requests—by awardees, their families, or others—to feature a specific heroic act on its anniversary date. Requests are to be submitted to Douglas R. Chambers, director of external affairs (doug@carnegiehero.org), who assures that every effort will be made to have the requests accommodated.

In other "Web" news, what do Michael Redice, of Charlotte, N.C., and Stephen F. Coenen, of San Francisco, have in common? In addition to being named Carnegie Medal awardees in September, each is the subject of an on-line profile that is appearing on the Hero Fund's site over the next several weeks. Redice was recognized for his efforts in saving a young boy from attack by four pit bulls, and Coenen received his medal for intervening in a beating assault in his French Quarter neighborhood in New Orleans.



Mr. Redice



Mr. Coenen

2005 IN REVIEW

Hero Fund's second century off to solid start

By Sybil P. Veeder, Chair • Executive Committee

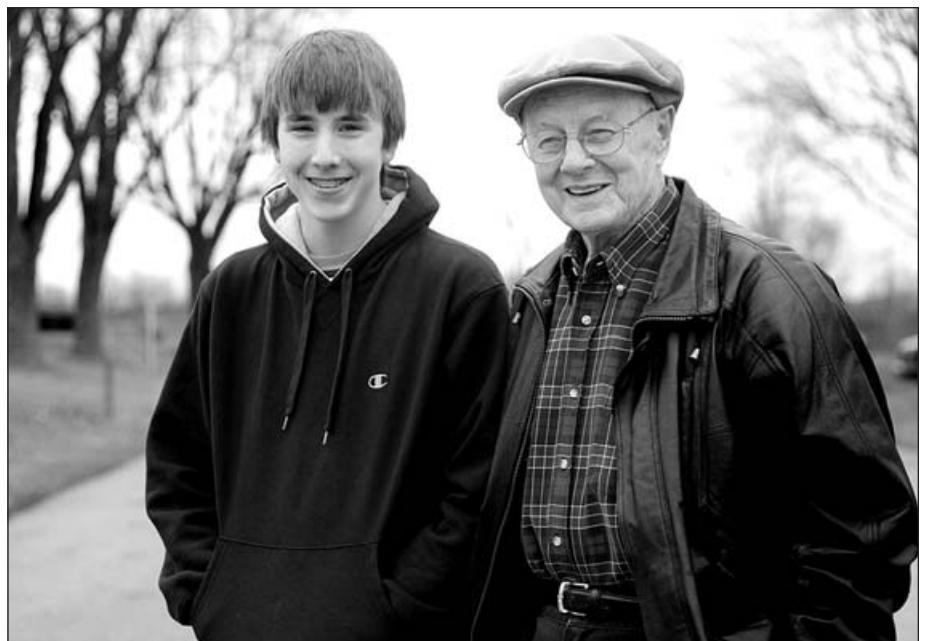
(Note: The following report was given at the 102nd annual meeting of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, held Feb. 16 in Pittsburgh.)

Capitalizing on the Commission's strengths, the Executive Committee oversaw a strong year in 2005, the first full one of our second century:

MISSION As a result of Andrew Carnegie's foresight, our core and only mission remains viable after 100 years. There appears to be no shortage of those who put the betterment of others first, even to the extreme.

MANAGEMENT There have been no changes on the board in two years. Three of our members (William P. Snyder III, Arthur M. Scully, Jr., and Frank Brooks Robinson) have, in fact, reached or exceeded 40 years of continuous service, and three staff members marked 20-, 30-, and 50-year hiring anniversaries in 2005. During the year, the Committee solidified the Commission's governance by adopting various ethics standards that call for commitment to "honesty, integrity, and openness in their dealings" by both board and staff members.

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Mark J. Friedrich, 16, of Edinburg, Ind., and his former neighbor, Edward L. Hudson, 82, of Seymour, Ind., are the youngest and oldest awardees of the Carnegie Medal in 2005. They fought off 80-pound Rottweilers that had attacked a small girl in their Seymour neighborhood on January 26, 2004.



HEROISM IN A SAFER SOCIETY



By Mark Laskow, President
Carnegie Hero Fund Commission

A common question about the Carnegie Hero award is, "How many people can win the medal every year?" The question even comes up in conversations with our international counterparts at the Hero Funds established by Andrew Carnegie in 10 Western European countries. Do we have a quota, giving a limited number of medals to the "best" rescues?

The answer is simple. The Carnegie Hero Fund Commission attempts to find every rescue act with the potential to warrant recognition, and we award the medal in every case that meets our criteria. The standards are rigorous—and deeply rooted in the philosophy articulated by Carnegie—but the process is in no sense a competition among deserving rescuers.

As a consequence, the number of awards varies with the number of qualifying cases we can identify. In recent years, that has been about 100 cases per year. There seem to be two conflicting forces at work. On the one hand, our society is generally getting safer, and professional fire and rescue services are much more pervasive than in 1904 when Carnegie created the hero award. Consider that it struck us as unusually tragic when 12 miners died recently in West Virginia. That was not quite as unusual before World War I when coal mining was widespread, much more labor-intensive, and much, much more dangerous.

On the other hand, changing technology plays a role, perhaps increasing the number of rescues. Consider the cases that involve a "runaway vehicle." Not unusual among the awards from a century ago are rescues from wagons drawn by out-of-control horses, or even mules. In the first such case, in 1905, an Atlanta man grabbed the reins of one of a team of horses pulling a landau containing a six-year-old girl and a maid. Dragged a distance, the hero threw the horse, which then fell on him. One of the more dramatic cases, occurring in Arkansas in 1936, involved a horse and a train. We haven't seen a runaway-horse rescue in many years, but rescues involving motorized vehicles are not at all rare. On the facing page of this newsletter is the account of a Fairfax, Va., woman who saved her niece from being struck by an approaching motorboat. The case was awarded in December.

The nature of danger may change over time, but not so the valor of the hero.

Meanwhile, if you would like to read a rescue story worthy of the old cowboy movie serials, visit our website (www.carnegiehero.org) and search for the 1936 Arkansas rescue. It's a thriller!

Hero Fund's second century off to solid start (continued from cover)

MEANS Solid performance by a portfolio under prudent management has resulted in near-record holdings, which in turn allows for expanded programs and levels of aid. The Committee increased the hero's initial grant for the first time in six years and in June implemented a new program whereby awardees are eligible for assistance with the cost of treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) brought on by their heroic actions.

Much of the Committee's time was given over to casework, its primary function. Ninety-two acts of heroism were selected for recognition. The traditional categorizing of awardees...

By geography: 86 medals went to residents of 28 U.S. states, and six went to residents of four Canadian provinces. California and Pennsylvania were home to the highest number of U.S. awardees, 10 and nine respectively, and in Canada, Ontario and British Columbia each claimed two heroes.

By age: Five of the awardees were in their teens at the time of their heroic acts, 20 of them were in their 20s, 19 in their 30s, 27 in their 40s, 14 in their 50s, four in their 60s, and three were over 70. The oldest and youngest awardees were co-rescuers in the same act: Mark J. Friedrich, 14, responded to an 8-year-old neighbor girl under assault by two 80-pound Rottweilers, and his neighbor, Edward L. Hudson, just five days shy of his 80th birthday, responded to Mark's aid when the dogs then turned on him. Mark and the girl required hospital treatment for bite wounds, and they recovered.

By gender: Nine of the year's awardees, or 9.8%, are female, in keeping with the traditional 8.9% over the life of the Fund.

By type of act: Twenty-five rescuers acted in behalf of drowning victims, and 18 responded to those endangered by burning buildings. Burning-vehicle rescuers numbered 16 for the year. Nine heroes responded to victims under human assault, and eight acted in animal-assault cases, including two California men who literally fought off the mountain lion that was mauling a friend during a forest hike. Moving-vehicle rescuers numbered seven, and five men were cited for saving two construction workers from the bottom of a deep shaft following a coal-mine explosion. The remaining categories are ice, two rescues; and suffocation and submerging vehicle, one each.



Dr. Veeder, a retired psychotherapist, joined the Commission in 1992 and has chaired the Executive Committee since 2002.

Concluding that these types of actions are representative of *the best that humans have to offer*, the Commission elected to expand on its mission by seeking greater exposure of the heroes and their deeds. Five medal presentations were made in 2005, including one in Thunder Bay, Ont., involving Commissioner Alfred W. Wishart, Jr., who urged other board members to participate in the program when available. A quarterly newsletter for awardees and Hero Fund friends—*impULSE*—was inaugurated early in the year, and work to introduce the heroic ethic to school students by means of curricula and presentation was begun. There was greater exposure for the organization itself as was evidenced by its strong showing at the third biennial presentation of the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy, which took place in Edinburgh, Scotland, in October. Six board and staff members made the trip, which included a visit to Dunfermline, Carnegie's birthplace. Finally, word of the Hero Fund's work was taken to Sri Lanka by the executive director, who spoke at the annual awards ceremony of that country's civilian bravery foundation.

The Committee also oversaw administration of the heroes' awards. Each award consists of the medal, a standard financial grant, scholarship eligibility, and assistance with the

2005 ANNUAL REPORT 'JUST OFF THE PRESSES'

The Hero Fund's annual report for 2005 has just been printed and is available for distribution. The report carries details of the 92 heroic acts awarded during the year.

Copies of the report are being mailed to the 2005 medal recipients and otherwise are available on request. Drop us a line at impulse@carnegiehero.org or call toll-free at 1-800-447-8900.

LATEST AWARDEES
OF THE CARNEGIE MEDAL

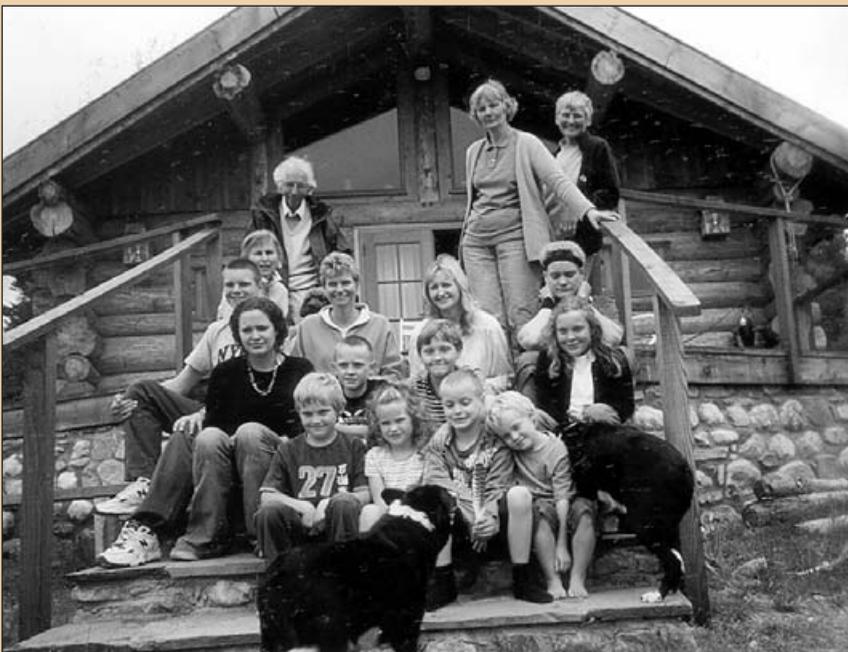
costs of unmet medical expenses incurred as a result of the act. Continuing aid is available for heroes disabled by their actions and for the dependents of those heroes who die in the performance of their acts, and certain other benefits are available in the death cases. In addition to the increase in the standard grant, from \$3,500 to \$4,000 for heroes named in 2006, there was also an increase in scholarship giving during 2005. Tuition and book/fee grants totaling \$88,262 were given to 34 applicants, as compared with \$75,150 given in 2004 to 28. Continuing monthly aid to 75 beneficiaries totaled \$251,000 for the year. Seven funeral-expense grants averaging \$3,350 were given to families of posthumous awardees. In a new benefit offering, the staff worked with a professor of psychiatry from the University of Pittsburgh to direct help, including assistance with cost, to those heroes suffering from mental effects of their actions.

Letters of acknowledgement from medal and benefit recipients are often touching, and none more so in 2005 than one from Valerie Shaw of Ellsworth, Kan., whose husband Kevin was cited posthumously for saving a woman from a burning pickup truck. "Even though the rest of the world has moved on with their lives," she wrote, "I know because of you my husband will never be forgotten. Please know how thankful I am for people like you." The sentiments are a sufficient call for us to remain committed to this work. 

GREAT SCOTS

Anyone wanting to know if Andrew Carnegie has any descendents need look no further than the steps of this log cabin in the Highlands of Scotland. Shown here are no less than two great-granddaughters (sisters Mary and Margaret Thomson, standing at right); two great-great-granddaughters (sisters Elaine Whiteman and Jenny Staite, seated in the center, above the younger children), and 10 great-great-great-grandchildren. (Two family friends are in the upper left corner of the gathering.) The family members pictured are also the descendants of Margaret Carnegie Miller (1897-1990), who was the sole child of Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) and his wife, Louise Whitfield Carnegie (1859-1946). Margaret was the mother of four.

The cabin, owned by Margaret Thomson but given over to family use, is on grounds bordering Skibo, an ancient estate purchased by Carnegie in 1897. "We had a hut on an island at Skibo when we were kids," Thomson writes, "and used to camp out there forever. If we took all the boats and the canoe no one could get to us—it was brilliant! We have a loch now but no island, so the cabin was the next best thing. There is a wonderful view to the firth and westward to the sunset. The kids love it."



SINCE THE LAST ISSUE OF *imPULSE*, THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS WERE AWARDED THE CARNEGIE MEDAL, BRINGING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF AWARDEES TO 8,961.

THE LATEST AWARDS, WHICH WERE ANNOUNCED ON DEC. 15, ARE FULLY DETAILED ON THE COMMISSION'S WEBSITE, WWW.CARNEGIEHERO.ORG.

Eugene Barrett, Jr., 47, a carpenter from Charlotte, N.C., rescued Amber A. and helped to rescue Mark E. Moose from a nighttime fire on June 18, 2004. Barrett awoke to flames in his neighbor's house, then he broke into the structure and removed Amber, 3. A firefighter helped him rescue Amber's father, 38. They were hospitalized for treatment of smoke inhalation and minor burns.

Robert Lee Hanson, 42, a railroad engineer from Triadelphia, W. Va., and **Robert L. Slyder**, also 42, a radio producer from Wheeling, W. Va., saved Mildred M. Thompson, Jamie L. Holeczy, and others from drowning on Sept. 17, 2004. Thompson, 80, and her great-niece, Holeczy, 22, were trapped in Thompson's house by floodwaters of a nearby creek, which was swollen with runoff from hurricane rains. Wading in repeated trips through the swift current, Hanson and Slyder removed them and others to higher ground.

Construction supervisor **Colin Morgan**, 29, of Vancouver, B.C., rescued Tex Daw from assault in Vancouver on Dec. 29, 2003. Daw, 46, was being held up at knife-point in the video rental shop he operated. Morgan overpowered the assailant, sustaining a cut hand that required suturing, and held him for police.

Samuel Justin Johnson, 51, a retired air traffic controller from Las Vegas, Nev., saved Jeffrey H. Richards from a burning airplane at a North Las Vegas airport on Sept. 23, 2003. Small planes being flown by Richards, 60, and Johnson collided on the runway and caught fire. Johnson freed himself and, although badly injured, removed Richards from his plane's wreckage. Both required hospital treatment, Johnson's injuries including a second-degree burn to an arm and permanent damage to an eye.

Robyn S. Boggs, 45, of Fairfax, Va., saved her niece, Sarah J. Planakis, 11, from being struck by a boat on Aug. 17, 2003. Both were swimming in the Potomac River near Stafford, Va., when an 18-foot motorboat veered toward Sarah. Boggs, a bartender, swam to her and submerged her but was struck by the boat herself and was badly injured. The loss of an arm left her disabled.

Off-duty California Highway Patrol Officer **Jon Kitamura**, 45, saved Desiree O. Lopez, Melvin Miller, and two others from a burning sport utility vehicle after a highway accident in Grimes, Calif., on Aug. 28, 2004. With the vehicle burning in its front end, Kitamura, a passerby, pulled Lopez, 18, through a front window, then he entered the vehicle through its rear window and removed Miller, 21, and two others. Kitamura recovered from smoke inhalation and cuts.

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Hero Fund aid ‘appreciated by all’ after 1906 ‘quake

DEED OF TRUST PROVISION HELPS ACCIDENT VICTIMS

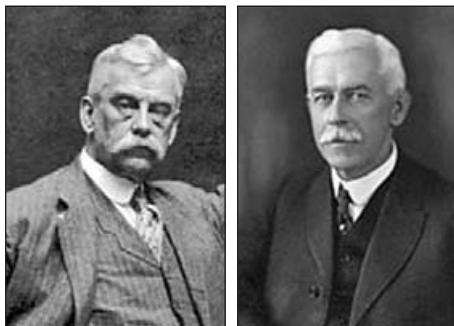
April 18, 2006, will mark the centennial of the great San Francisco earthquake, perhaps the most discussed earthquake in history. As many as 3,000 may have died in the tragedy, and an estimated 225,000 were left homeless, out of a population of 400,000.

As damaging as the 47-second earthquake and its aftershocks were, the fires that burned out of control afterward destroyed much more property. More than 500 city blocks in the downtown core were destroyed. Damage estimate at the time was around \$400 million.

At a meeting in Philadelphia the following day, Hero Fund members discussed making a financial grant to help alleviate suffering in the stricken city. An account of their actions was recorded in 1929—on the Hero Fund’s 25th anniversary—by one of the participants, William J. Holland, who became the Commission’s second president in 1923. Also in attendance were the current president, Charles L. Taylor, and the Hero Fund’s founder, Andrew Carnegie. A portion of the account appears here.

In making the grant, the Commission members referred to the Hero Fund’s founding document, the Deed of Trust, written by Carnegie just two years earlier. In it, he made provision for grants “in case of accidents (preferably where a hero has appeared) to those injured.” In all, the Commission donated \$54,462 toward relief efforts—the equivalent of \$1.1 million today.

The deliberations were not without a lighter moment. Dr. Holland wrote, “Mr. Carnegie quizzically asked if there was evidence that any one had displayed heroism the day before at San Francisco. Mr. Taylor retorted by quoting Mr. Carnegie’s own Deed of Gift, in which he provides that ‘in case the Commission, after caring for pensioners, should have a surplus, it has power to make grants in case of accidents.’ A friendly discussion took place, at the end of which Mr. Taylor remarked to Mr. Carnegie, ‘You are not a member of the Commission. You have parted with your money and left it in care of your friends, and the decision in this case will have to rest with them.’ Whereupon Mr. Carnegie laughed heartily.”



Dr. Holland

Mr. Taylor



San Francisco City Hall after the 1906 earthquake

By William J. Holland • Second President of the Commission

About the middle of April 1906, Mr. Carnegie and the writer were in attendance upon the bicentenary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin, which was being celebrated in Philadelphia, Mr. Carnegie representing St. Andrews University in Scotland, and the writer the Carnegie Museum of Pittsburgh. We occupied adjoining rooms and breakfasted together.

On April 18 occurred the earthquake at San Francisco, followed by a devastating fire. The next morning, Mr. Taylor came into the room at the Bellevue-Stratford, where Mr. Carnegie and I were seated at table. He was filled, as was every one, with horror in view of the catastrophe which had taken place on the Pacific Coast, and no sooner had he seated himself than he said it was his conviction that the Hero Fund should at once make an appropriation for the relief of the sufferers at San Francisco.

We agreed to remit \$25,000 to the mayor of San Francisco and that Mr. Taylor should endeavor to secure the approval of a majority of the Commission. On the same day, we remitted by telegram to Mayor Schmitz \$25,000, which the mayor promptly and gratefully acknowledged.

Mr. Taylor felt, however, that this was not enough. He had suggested that we should also take steps to send provisions and supplies to the devastated city. With the assent of his colleagues, who happened to be in Philadelphia, and those who could be reached in Pittsburgh, Mr. Taylor took immediate steps through Hugh T. R. Vail and Lawrence C. Phipps, who were at Santa Barbara, to purchase needed supplies.

Messrs. Vail and Phipps cheerfully agreed to undertake the task, and 100 tons of goods, consisting of tents, cots, bedding and blankets, and food of various kinds, were purchased at once and placed upon a steamer of the Pacific Coast Steamship Company, which agreed to give free transport. On April 26 this consignment reached San Francisco.

The shipment was quickly followed by others. Messrs. Vail and Phipps stripped the grocery stores and provision houses of Santa Barbara of their surplus stock, sold to the Commission at cost, and rushed it to San Francisco with marvelous

promptness. It was a large undertaking, but in the hands of “captains of industry” quickly accomplished. The total amount expended for the relief of sufferers on this occasion was \$54,462.

A personal reminiscence in this connection may be in order. In 1915, while attending the World’s Fair in San Francisco, the writer made the acquaintance of one of the leading citizens of that city, a man of large wealth, who said to him, “I feel I personally owe you and your colleagues a debt. Some days after the earthquake had occurred, although I had abundant means to pay for provisions, I discovered that the larder in my house was empty. I did not know where to turn, and I then heard that a ship laden with provisions had been sent by the Hero Fund; so I took my market basket on my arm and went to the wharf and came back with needed supplies, which I could obtain at no other place. The prompt action of the body, of which you are a member, was deeply appreciated by all San Franciscans.” ❏

N.Y. SCHOOL SHOOTING STOPPED BY HEROIC PRINCIPAL, TEACHER

The potential for tragedy was in the offing on the morning of Feb. 9, 2004, when a 16-year-old boy entered his high school with a loaded 12-gauge shotgun and fired at two students. They were not hit, although their clothing and backpacks were struck by buckshot.

Fourteen hundred students and 150 faculty were on the premises of Columbia High School, East Greenbush, N.Y., that day as the troubled teen made his way through the second-floor hall. Among them were John P. Sawchuk, 41, an assistant principal, and Michael Bennett, 36, a teacher. Hearing the gunfire, they proceeded through the hall to investigate.

Turning a corner, the two men spotted the assailant about 20 feet away, his back turned toward them. Followed closely by Bennett, Sawchuk ran to the student, grasped him in a bear hug, and attempted to wrestle the gun from him. The student fired the gun again during the struggle, striking an approaching Bennett in the right leg. Sawchuk continued to wrestle with the student and soon convinced him to relinquish the gun. Bennett was not seriously injured.

Each educator’s actions were acknowledged with the award of the Carnegie Medal. The medals were presented by Douglas R. Chambers, the Commission’s director of external affairs, on Nov. 16, 2005, at a meeting of the East Greenbush Central School District Board of Education. Grateful board members joined several students and their parents in applauding Sawchuk and Bennett for their heroism.



Teacher Michael Bennett, left, and assistant principal John P. Sawchuk, right, received their Carnegie Medals from the Hero Fund’s Douglas R. Chambers, center.

LATEST AWARDEES (continued)



Just before he drowned in a heroic rescue attempt, Del'Trone D. Gomillia, 21, of Wilbur by the Sea, Fla., played at the beach with his two-month-old daughter Jada. Photo submitted by the family.

Andrew A. Kindred, 22, a process technician from Portage, Wis., rescued his girlfriend’s son, Desmond N. Julson, 3, from a fire in her apartment in Portage on Oct. 19, 2004. Kindred fled the building before learning that Desmond was in the unit’s bathroom. Barefoot, he re-entered the structure then emerged with Desmond. Both were badly burned and required extensive hospitalization. Kindred died several months later of complications.

Elnora Denmark, 51, of Dallas, Texas, was the caregiver for L. S. Thompson, Jr., when she saved him from his burning house in Dallas on Jan. 1, 2004. Thompson, 79, was in bed when a small airplane crashed into the house and set it ablaze. Dazed by the crash, Denmark delayed her own escape by going to Thompson’s room and carrying him outside. The house was destroyed.

While on vacation in Hawaii, Gilroy, Calif., Police Captain **Scot Smithee**, 39, saved Craig A. and Andrea D. Hilty and five others, including his wife, from drowning on March 8, 2004. Hilty, 23, and his wife, 22, were aboard a 47-foot catamaran with three other couples, including the Smithees, when the craft overturned in rough seas. Smithee was thrown free, but the seven others were trapped in the cabin. Taking one end of a secured line, Smithee dived to gain entry to the cabin, then he guided its occupants to safety. They remained adrift atop the vessel for more than two hours before rescue came.

Del'Trone D. Gomillia, 21, of Wilbur by the Sea, Fla., died Sept. 18, 2004, while attempting to save Cody G. and Terrance N. Szafraniec, Jr., from drowning in the Atlantic Ocean at Wilbur by the Sea. Cody, 9, and his father, 28, were pulled a distance seaward by a strong current. Wading near shore, Gomillia, assistant manager of a business, swam toward them but was himself caught by the current. Rescuers returned all three to shore, but Gomillia could not be revived.

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RESCUED GIRL'S FAMILY EMBRACES HER HERO

When Joseph Anthony Alaimo of West Palm Beach, Fla., helped to save a girl from drowning in the Atlantic Ocean two years ago, he became not only a Carnegie Medalist but a friend of the girl's grateful family.

Alaimo, then 24, a pharmacy student at Palm Beach Atlantic University, and a friend were relaxing and studying on the beach on March 21, 2004, when they became aware of two girls, ages 10 and 13, struggling in the water. Alaimo and his friend ran into the surf to help the girls, who were cousins, as did their uncle, Kenneth R. Slade, 48, of Wellesley, Mass., and several others. Alaimo aided the younger girl a distance toward shore before he was overcome by exhaustion and separated from her.

Both girls made it safely out of the ocean, but, sadly, Slade drowned in the attempt. Alaimo himself had to be rescued, and he required six days' hospitalization for effects of nearly drowning. Slade and Alaimo were both cited by the Commission last April for their roles in the rescue, and Alaimo subsequently received scholarship assistance for his 2005-2006 school year. The Hero Fund makes aid of the type available to all pre-retirement awardees.

Slade's brothers—the fathers of the girls—and their mother, Clair Slade of Boynton Beach, Fla., have since become friends with Alaimo. The friendship was never more apparent than on Nov. 4, 2005, when Alaimo was presented with his medal at a ceremony in Whitehall Flagler Museum, Palm Beach. Slade's medal had earlier been given to his widow.

Slade's mother and brother David, who is the father of the girl Alaimo helped to save, were present at the ceremony, and each praised Alaimo for his *(continued at right)*



In a ceremony hosted by the Palm Beach, Fla., Police Department, Joseph Anthony Alaimo, second from right, received the Carnegie Medal for helping to save a girl from drowning in the Atlantic Ocean. To his right are the girl's father, David M. Slade, of Greenville, S.C., and grandmother, Claire Slade, of Boynton Beach, Fla. At right is Michael S. Reiter, chief of the department.

ASSIGNMENT: HEROES

Early every school year, Martin Richter, a fifth-grade teacher at Ross Elementary School in the North Hills area of Pittsburgh, asks his students to choose at least six people they consider to be heroes. The students then write of their heroes' accomplishments and how they influenced their own lives. Richter has found that many of his students' first choices are their parents or other family members, while some opt for well-known figures such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Wilma Rudolph, Neil Armstrong, and Mia Hamm.

Near the end of this year's project, Richter invited the Hero Fund to make a presentation to give the students another perspective. In mid-October, Douglas R. Chambers, director of external affairs, talked briefly about Andrew Carnegie, then showed the Commission's centennial video, *A Century of Heroes*. He read accounts of several rescues, some involving children. Numerous questions followed, and it was clear that the students were paying attention. Chambers also presented the school with a copy of the Commission's centennial book, also named *A Century of Heroes*.



Mr. Richter and class



RESCUED GIRL'S FAMILY EMBRACES HER HERO *(continued)*

extraordinary courage that day. They related how grateful they now are to count Joe in their circle of friends. Each was given one of the limited-edition commemorative medals that were struck during the Commission's centennial year in 2004.

Douglas R. Chambers, the Hero Fund's director of external affairs, oversaw the medal presentation, which was hosted by the Palm Beach Police Department. Several of the department's officers had been involved in the rescue, and Chief Michael S. Reiter and his staff went to great lengths to make the ceremony a memorable event.

Flagler Museum was once the home of Henry Flagler (1830-1913), the co-founder of Standard Oil and a contemporary of Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919). Steel beams from one of Carnegie's mills provide much of the museum's structural support. Flagler built the Florida East Coast Railway, which ran from St. Augustine to Key West, and was the primary force behind the development of agriculture and tourism as Florida's two major industries.

BEHIND THE SCENE

Back to work

By Gloria A. Barber, Administrative Assistant • Carnegie Hero Fund Commission

After working 27 years for a major insurance carrier as transcriptionist, group leader, office manager, and paralegal, I decided to retire in 2000. However, I soon found myself with time on my hands and the desire to return to work, at least part-time. In early 2002 I was fortunate to secure an interview with the Hero Fund, which was seeking a part-time administrative assistant.

In short, the job was offered to me, and I accepted it with enthusiasm and began working for the Commission on January 14, 2002. Two years later the position turned into a full-time one.

It's gratifying to be a part of an organization that recognizes the sacrifices made by others to help their fellowman. I have had the opportunity to speak with many awardees of the Carnegie Medal and with the family members of those heroes who lost their lives in their rescue attempts. Their remarks convey how grateful they are to have received the medal and accompanying monetary grants, and they consider the award to be prestigious. Although fairly new to the organization, I believe that it is fulfilling Andrew Carnegie's intended purpose in establishing it.

My primary responsibilities are processing the mail, recording new cases, and sending correspondence during the investigative stage to persons and agencies connected with the heroic acts. I also handle most telephone calls. That in itself can be very challenging, but I make every effort to maintain a business-like demeanor to assist the caller effectively. With the help of our multi-lingual case investigator, I am learning some phrases in Spanish and French to communicate with our non-English-speaking callers.

The Commission's other administrative assistant—hired 51 years ago!—has been my mentor through training and affording hands-on experience in the many facets of the Commission's work. The training is intensifying this year, as I am taking on additional responsibilities, which I welcome. I believe my organizational skills and attention to detail are an asset to the Hero Fund, as is my desire to remain busy. A pleasant result is that I enjoy coming to work each day!

My joys away from the office include spending time with my grandchildren, Tyrie, 8, and Savannah, 5. Any remaining spare time is taken up by classical music, knitting, crocheting, singing, and participating as a member and deacon of East Liberty Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh. As a former member of the board of directors of the Bach Choir of Pittsburgh, I continue to assist with public relations during the choir's concert series. ☒



Ms. Barber

LATEST AWARDEES (continued)

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Officer **Normand Boucher**, 45, saved Mary E. J. Burt from drowning on Jan. 12, 2003, and he helped attempt to save Burt's husband Garry. The couple, both 48, were riding a snowmobile at night when it broke through the ice on the Rideau River near Boucher's home in Manotick, Ont. Boucher lay on the ice and pulled Burt out, then with help pulled her husband out. Burt survived, but her husband succumbed to effects of the ordeal.

Dale L. Saylor, 45, a bank executive, saved Robert S. Taylor from being struck by a train in Hebron, N.D., on Nov. 9, 2004. Taylor, 48, was in a van that was stuck on a railroad track at night. Driving nearby, Saylor stopped at the scene and pulled Taylor from the van just moments before it was struck by a train and knocked 165 feet away.

Matthew James Wilson, 31, of Imperial Beach, Calif., saved Helen N. Sylvia, 13, and two other youths from drowning in the Pacific Ocean at Imperial Beach on Jan. 18, 2004. Helen and two friends were struggling in the rough surf under a pier at points about 300 feet from shore. Wilson, a professional diver and a seasonal lifeguard, jumped 20 feet off the pier three times in the darkness in repeated rescues, towing each of the youths to shore.

Human resources director **Maria Christine Ericson** saved Evan J. Moore from his family's burning house in Swiftwater, Pa., on Dec. 7, 2004. Evan, 1, was in his crib after fire broke out in the one-story house. Neighbor Ericson, 42, climbed a ladder to Evan's bedroom window, then entered the house, found him, and handed him out to others before escaping herself.

Earl E. Cummins, 72, a retired steelworker from Fairhope, Pa., saved Mary E. Shaffer, 76, from her burning house in Hyndman, Pa., on Sept. 29, 2004. Driving by the house, Cummins saw high flames issuing from it. He stopped, followed Shaffer's voice through the smoke, and found her in the kitchen. They fled to safety. Cummins required hospital treatment for inhaling smoke.

Albert Ybarra, 33, a field technician, and **Salvador B. Agustin, Jr.**, 28, a registered nurse, saved Everardo Meza, 4, and his father, Jorge Lopez, 31, from drowning in San Francisco Bay on Sept. 7, 2004, at Hayward, Calif. In a highway accident on a bridge, Everardo, 4, was thrown from a van 20 feet into the bay, and his father jumped in after him. The incoming tide was moving them away from the bridge when passersby Ybarra, of Dublin, Calif., and Agustin, of San Jose, Calif., jumped in after them. The men returned them to the bridge, where all were hoisted to safety.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

SHOOTOUT HERO

The Los Angeles Hall of Justice, a downtown landmark and familiar backdrop on several televised police dramas, such as "Dragnet," was the scene of a heroic act by elevator operator Robert L. Pope on Jan. 21, 1929.

It was about 10:45 on a Monday morning. Two Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies were escorting two state convicts from a courtroom back to the jail section of the building. Both prisoners had arrest records for robbery. In addition, one of them had shot a police officer three years before, then transported him to a construction site, where he handcuffed the officer to framing before abandoning him. (The officer survived.) That prisoner, 27, was handcuffed by his left wrist to the other prisoner, and neither deputy knew that he was concealing a .32-caliber pistol loaded with nine bullets beneath his clothing. How he obtained the pistol would remain uncertain.

From the ninth floor, the deputies signaled for an elevator, and Pope responded in his car, which was seven feet wide and five feet deep. The two prisoners boarded, followed by the two deputies. The prisoners stood behind Pope, who worked the control handle from the front right corner of the car, and the deputies moved into the opposite front corner.

Pope started to take the elevator up. Seconds after the doors closed, however, the armed prisoner pulled out his pistol and aimed it at the deputies, yelling at them to raise their hands and at Pope to stop the elevator.

Out of the corner of his left eye, Pope saw the pistol. He ducked, turned quickly to his left, and clasped both

hands around the prisoner's right wrist. Pope struggled to push the gun upward, but the prisoner fired, the bullet grazing Pope's left shoulder and the noise causing him to incur partial hearing loss in his left ear. Pope then tried to turn the gun against the prisoner, who continued to fire. One of the deputies seized the man by his right arm, and while he and Pope struggled to overpower him, the other prisoner attempted to pull away.

The other deputy opened fire on the armed prisoner. He collapsed to the floor, where, although wounded, he continued to shoot. One of the deputies fired again, knocking the pistol out of his hand. Struck by seven bullets, the prisoner lost consciousness and died within minutes.



Pope's actions were brought to the attention of the Commission, and he was awarded the Carnegie Medal that fall. The following year the Hero Fund granted him \$1,000, which he used as partial payment for a house in Los Angeles. ²⁰⁰⁶

Marlin Ross, Case Investigator

The Hall of Justice in Los Angeles, site of the trials of Bugsy Siegel, Charles Manson, and Sirhan Sirhan, was the setting for a heroic act by Carnegie Medal awardee Robert L. Pope, an elevator operator in the building. Damaged during the 1994 Northridge earthquake, the building now sits empty.



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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