



Impulse

A periodic newsletter of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission

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U.S. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt signing letters. She wrote more than 8,500 columns that appeared in 92 publications.

FIRST LADY'S COLUMN TOUCHES FAMILY OF CARNEGIE HERO

U.S. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt wrote more than 8,500 columns that appeared in newspapers around the country from 1935 to 1962. Entitled "My Day," Roosevelt wrote about whom she met, where she travelled, what she was reading, and how she went about dealing with the pressures of public life. Among the columns, she mentions Susan B. Anthony, King George IV, Gene Kelly, Willa Cather, and Carnegie heroes **Guy E. Quinn** and **Bradford Gainer**.

In her May 5, 1943, column she writes about receiving word that Quinn and Gainer were awarded the Carnegie Medal.

"I am happy that both these cases gained recognition," she said. "I think that we should be grateful for the spirit which recognized that deeds of heroism should be acclaimed. I am sure that every time a man or his dependents receive such recognition, it is of value to the country."

In the frigid temperatures of January, 1943, a fire started in a mine in Pursglove, West Virginia. Smoke drifted through the mine passages to areas where men were working, and Quinn, a ► **p. 8**



Hero Fund President Eric Zahren, left, and his wife Laura Zahren flank Vartan Gregorian, president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, during an informal gathering of the leaders of Carnegie institutions in 2019 in Dunfermline, Scotland — Andrew Carnegie's birthplace. Gregorian died unexpectedly April 15, 2021. He was 87.

Carnegie Corp. leader and Hero Fund friend Vartan Gregorian dies at age 87

Vartan Gregorian, president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, philanthropist, and Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient, died Thursday, April 15, 2021. He was 87.

Carnegie Corporation announced his unexpected death the following day stating that he was hospitalized the week earlier for testing related to stomach pain.

"The Corporation has lost a devoted and tireless leader — an extraordinary champion of education, immigration, and international peace and security, and steward of Andrew Carnegie's legacy. We, his colleagues, have lost a mentor, an inspiration, and, for so many, a very dear friend," stated the Carnegie Corporation announcement.

Gregorian, was born April 8, 1934, to Samuel and Shooshanik (Mirzaian) Gregorian in Iran. His mother died when he was 6, and he and his sister were raised by their grandmother. At 15, he ran away from his father's home and finished his high school education in Lebanon, and from there immigrated to the U.S. to attend Stanford University, earning a bachelor's degree in just two years and graduated with a PhD in 1964.

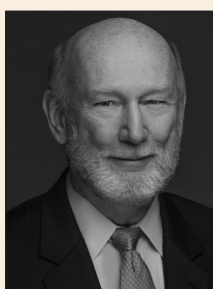
He then went on to teach: history at San Francisco State University, the University ►



BOARD NOTES

'CARNEGIE WORLD' UNITED UNDER LEADERSHIP OF LATE CARNEGIE CORPORATION PRESIDENT

By Mark Laskow, Chair
Carnegie Hero Fund Commission



Mark Laskow

Vartan Gregorian is no longer with us. For a quarter of a century he has been the energetic center of the world of philanthropy created by Andrew Carnegie.

The power of his leadership flowed not just from his

presidency of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, but also from the strength of his intellect and the warmth of his personality. His death is a great loss to the Hero Fund, to the collected Carnegie organizations, and to American intellectual life. It was also a personal loss to those at the Hero Fund who worked with him over the years.

As President of Carnegie Corp. from 1997, Gregorian transformed the relationships among the 20-some organizations endowed by Andrew Carnegie that continue to operate today. I refer to them as "Carnegie World."

Gregorian had no official role in any of the other organizations in Carnegie World, but he had a very persuasive personality and the largest endowment in the group. When he invited Carnegie World to gather in New York in 2001 to establish the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy, they came!

Gregorian thus launched the incredibly successful Medal of Philanthropy — the Nobel Prize of philanthropy — and at the same time created the practice of biennial meetings of Carnegie World.

Before Gregorian, we had never done this on any regular basis. There were certainly bilateral relationships: I have read historical accounts that suggest Carnegie Corp. and the Carnegie Institution for Science cooperated closely. The Carnegie Hero funds in North America and the UK had been in regular communication, and both organizations attempted to contact and establish some communication with the Hero Funds in continental Europe. But the biennial gatherings for the Medal of Philanthropy changed everything.

The participating organizations exchanged information and, even more important, built enduring links among the leaders involved. In addition, the allure of the Medal of

► from p.1

Carnegie leader Vartan Gregorian dies

of California at Los Angeles, the University of Texas at Austin, and University of Pennsylvania, where he was appointed the founding dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in 1974. During this period, Gregorian developed his talents for recruitment and fundraising — work he found unexpectedly fulfilling. Four years later he became the 23rd provost of the university, responsible for guiding its overall educational mission, a post he held until 1981.

It was during his tenure at Penn that Gregorian applied to become a United States citizen. At the official ceremony, he was asked to deliver remarks on behalf of the newly naturalized citizens who had just taken the oath. His speech expressed his commitment to his adopted country: "Like many other immigrant forefathers of ours, we have come not only to enjoy the benefits of America but to contribute to its development, to its growth and to its welfare. We have come to contribute to the achievement of what is left undone or unfinished in the agenda of American democracy. We have come to contribute to that perfect union."

Gregorian's next position, from 1981 to 1989, garnered him national acclaim as what the *New York Times* coined "the savior of the New York Public Library." When he took the position as the library's president and chief executive officer, the institution was in crisis: it was broke, the main building was in severe disrepair, its staff was demoralized, its hours of operation had been cut back to as little as eight hours a week for some branches, and there was no esteem for the institution. Gregorian reached out to the city's political and philanthropic communities and, according to Librarian of Congress James H. Billington, "enticed, inveigled, and corralled the state of New York and New York Public Library to provide the model of how you could revive a great institution."

The *New York Times* called Gregorian's appeals "a voice of conscience." He told *The New Yorker*: "Think of a lone person in one of our reading rooms, who has just read a book, a single book that has perhaps not been read in 20 years by another living soul, and from that reading comes an invention of incalculable importance to the human race. It makes a man tremble."

In all, Gregorian raised \$327 million in a public-private partnership, allowing the Library to become once again the intellectual, scholarly, and cultural repository for the nation.

In 1989 Gregorian was eager to return to academia, and accepted the presidency of Brown University, where he ran a successful capital campaign that doubled the university's endowment, raising over \$500 million, and brought in 275 new faculty members, including 72 new professors. Gregorian left behind a flourishing campus and academic community when he returned to New York City in 1997 to become the 12th president of Carnegie Corporation.

Andrew Carnegie established Carnegie Corporation of New York in 1911 to "promote the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding." The Corporation's work focuses on the issues that Andrew Carnegie considered of paramount importance: international peace, the advancement of education and knowledge, and the strength of democracy. According to the statement issued by Carnegie Corp., Gregorian often remarked that his years as its leader greatly widened his perspective about the impact and importance of philanthropy as practiced by institutions such as foundations as well as by private citizens, noting that "the societal benefits of all this philanthropy are beyond measure."

At the Corporation he grew its endowment from \$1.5 billion to \$3.5 billion and grants received during his tenure went toward strengthening education, ►

“Think of a lone person in one of our reading rooms, who has just read a book, a single book that has perhaps not been read in 20 years by another living soul, and from that reading comes an invention of incalculable importance to the human race. It makes a man tremble.”



Vartan Gregorian, president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, hugs Big Bird before the big, yellow bird left the stage at the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy ceremony held Oct. 3, 2017, in New York.

international security, democratic institutions, and global development. Domestically, he emphasized reforms in teacher training and liberal arts education; abroad, he stressed scholarships for social sciences and humanities.

He also found new ways to bring together the more than 20 sister organizations established by Andrew Carnegie, including the Carnegie Hero Fund. He inaugurated the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy in 2001, which honors philanthropists from all over the world, chosen by the Carnegie organizations, who have dedicated their private wealth to the public good.

Hero Fund Board Member and Carnegie's great-granddaughter Linda Hills expressed her sadness in hearing the news of Gregorian's passing.

"I just wanted to express my own very deep sadness for the loss of this extraordinary man whom I knew as a personal friend, but who was vastly more than that," she wrote to the Commission. "I knew Vartan Gregorian also as a sincere and stalwart friend of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission and its sister hero funds abroad. Vartan's interest and support in all of my great-grandfather's institutions in many ways set him apart from any of his predecessors at Carnegie Corporation."

President George W. Bush awarded Gregorian the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2004. In addition, Gregorian was decorated by the French, Italian, Austrian, and Portuguese governments. He received scores of honorary degrees and was honored by countless cultural and professional associations. Gregorian also served on numerous boards: the National September 11 Memorial & Museum, the American Academy in Berlin, the J. Paul Getty Trust, Aga Khan University, the Qatar Foundation, the McGraw-Hill Companies, Brandeis University, Human Rights Watch, The Museum of Modern Art, the Library of Alexandria, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and others. In 2015 Gregorian cofounded the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative, which was created on behalf of survivors of the Armenian Genocide and seeks to address some of the world's most pressing issues. It administers the Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity, for which Gregorian served on the selection committee.

Gregorian was the author of *The Road to Home: My Life and Times*; *Islam: A Mosaic, Not A Monolith*; and *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880–1946*.

Gregorian was preceded in death by his wife, Clare Russell Gregorian. He is survived by his three sons: Vahé Gregorian and his wife Cindy Billhartz Gregorian of Kansas City, Missouri; Raffi Gregorian of New York City; and Dareh Gregorian and his wife Maggie Haberman Gregorian of Brooklyn, New York. He is also survived by five grandchildren: Juan, Maximus, Sophie, Miri, and Dashiell; and a sister, Ojik Arakelian of Massachusetts and Iran. ☘

► from p.2

BOARD NOTES

Philanthropy ceremonies drew in European Hero Funds who had not previously been in close touch.

Among the Hero Funds, these changes had substantial benefits, much beyond making new friends. The health of the continental European Funds varies, and all have benefitted from the encouragement and exchange of ideas at our meetings.

Gregorian took that a step further and oversaw several grants to the North American Hero Fund which we have used to support the European Funds. We allocate these funds in consultation with the UK Hero Fund. On the whole, Gregorian did much to ensure the health and survival of the Hero Funds in continental Europe.

Beyond these organization initiatives, Gregorian was personally kind and welcoming to the leadership of our Hero Fund. He recognized and deeply respected Walter Rutkowski's knowledge of all things Carnegie. (Walter was chief executive of the Hero Fund from 1995 to 2017.) He was also quick to recognize the leadership abilities of Walter's successor, Eric Zahren. Gregorian embraced Eric and warmly welcomed him to Carnegie World.

He was also most kind to me, involving me in projects which broadened my knowledge of Carnegie World and made me a little more fit for my Hero Fund role. The point isn't so much that he was helpful to me, but rather how typical this was of him, something that he did easily and willingly for others.

Lastly, Vartan Gregorian was a wonderfully warm and interesting man. He was born and raised an Armenian in the largely Azerbaijani city of Tabriz. There's a mix for you! His grandfather owned a caravansary, a sort of rest stop for camel caravans. He himself attended an Armenian elementary school, then a Russian one after the Soviets occupied northern Iran during World War II. He arrived in the United States in 1956 with those two languages plus Persian, but no English. Combine that personal history with his grace and warmth, and you would want to talk to him for hours. He was Provost at Penn, rescued the New York Public Library, served as President of Brown and then led Carnegie Corp. from 1997. Along the way he always championed the interests of the Armenian people.

While our hours with Vartan Gregorian have ended and there will be no more, for the people he touched, the imprint of this wonderful man will remain for the rest of their own hours. ☘



PRESENTING



Rick Ramsay, the sheriff in Monroe County, Florida, left, and Hero Fund Chairman Mark Laskow, right, presented the Carnegie Medal to Carnegie Hero **Donald C. Lowrie** during an on-air segment of the "Morning Magazine" show on US1 Radio in the Florida Keys on Feb. 3.

On May 6, 2018, Lowrie, of Islamorada, Florida, was outside his home in a condo complex when he heard an 8-year-old girl screaming from a neighboring unit. Following the sounds, Lowrie, who then was 50, ran to the front door of the condo, where the girl had just been severely wounded by two adult dogs. The girl's mother had intervened and allowed the girl to flee to an upstairs bedroom.

When Lowrie arrived, the dogs chased him, causing him to fall down a flight of stairs and break his wrist. One of the dogs — a male pit bull — bit him in several places, while the female pit bull mix stood nearby, barking.

Both Lowrie and the girl were taken to the hospital with major injuries requiring surgery.

"Just to tell you how serious [this award] is, 20 percent of the people who receive this Medal actually died in the rescues," Laskow said before presenting the Medal to Lowrie.

"He's going to be able to cherish and remember a difficult time in his life but a time where he made a difference in some young girl's life who's here today because of Don and his efforts as a hero," said Ramsay, whose office responded to the scene.

Lowrie, who works as a mechanic for the Monroe County government, came to the Hero Fund's attention when Laskow read a story about county officials publicly recognizing his actions. Daryl Greenlee, the county's fleet manager, also attended the presentation. ❄

Historical society 'chronicles' 15 Carnegie heroes from Smith County, Texas

Historian Carol Kehl knows there are exactly 15 Carnegie heroes who hailed from Smith County, Texas, at the time of their heroic acts. She also knows intimate details about their rescue acts, their family lives, how they spent their grant money, and where they are buried. She has met their descendants and photographed the Carnegie Medals that have been passed down for generations.

In what turned into a months-long research project, Kehl set out to tell the stories of these 15 men. These written accounts, which contain more than 50 footnotes

documenting Kehl's primary sources, were recently published in the 2020 edition of *Chronicles of Smith County, Texas*, a 100-page magazine the Smith County Historical Society publishes nearly every year since 1962.

"*Chronicles* has been published for decades," said Kehl. "There is an amazing amount of Smith County history that has been saved and put in a form that has been readily accessible by historians, researchers, and family members."

As to the origin of these "great, American stories," called that by *Chronicles* editor Vicki Betts, Kehl came across some information in the historical society's archives that mentioned a couple Carnegie heroes.

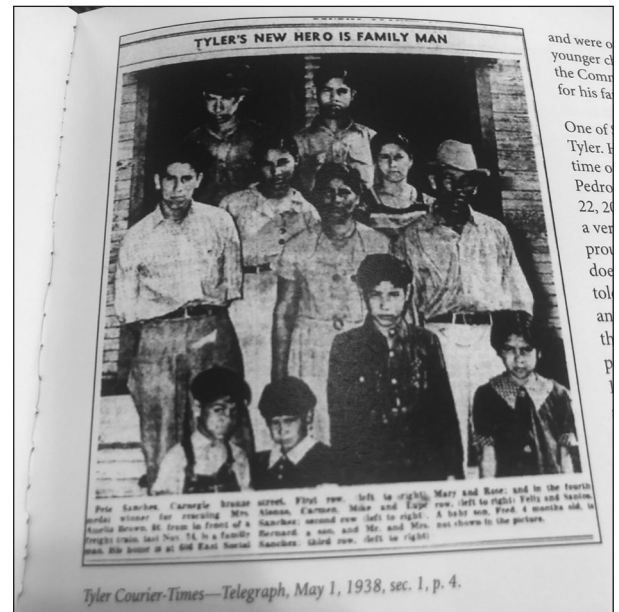
"It was such a little blurb of information," she said. "Another member had gone online and printed out their summaries. There were a couple issues of *Impulse*, but that's it."

But that's all it took for Kehl's curiosity to ignite.

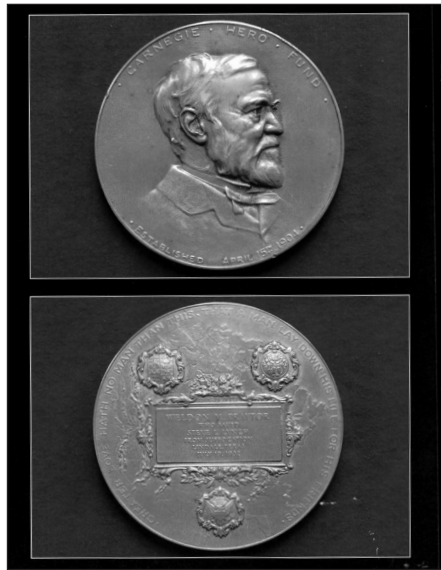
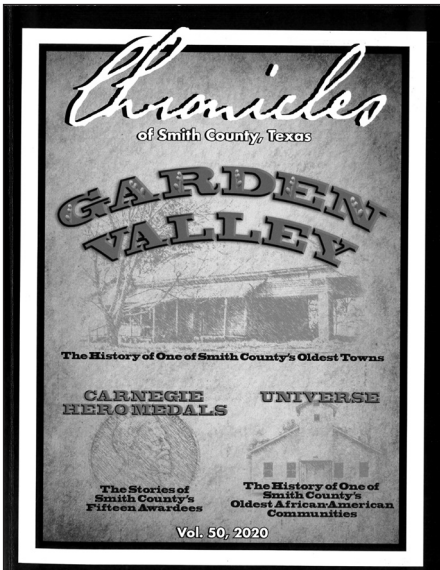
"I instantly wanted to find out more about these people, and particularly wanted to see if I could find their descendants," she said.

Well cases overwhelmed the early Smith County heroes — **William G. Wills**, **S. Rance Gregory**, and **Beecher Roberts** took turns digging out a 17-year-old boy who was trapped in sand that had caved in a well in 1912; **Luke Erwin**, in 1925, held his breath and was lowered into a gas-filled well, where he tied a rope around a collapsed man, and they both were hoisted to safety; seven years later, **Weldon M. Praytor** was the only one who volunteered to enter a well to rescue a farmer who was suffocating at its bottom from sulphur dioxide fumes; **Ralph H. Potter** braced his legs and back on the sides of a well and shimmied to its bottom in 1936 where his 2-year-old niece lay; and, in 1953, **Arthur Phaup** lost consciousness at the bottom of a well after he tied a rope around a farmer who had passed out from carbon monoxide poisoning. They both were hoisted to safety, and Phaup was revived.

Three other heroes risked dying of suffocation in a sewer, where one after another lost consciousness during their rescues: One man was working in the sewer when he lost consciousness and collapsed with his head under water. **Morris A. Neeley** descended into the sewer, removed the man's head from the stream and then ►



A photograph of a scanned newspaper clipping showing Carnegie Hero **Pedro Fernandez Sanchez**, on right in hat, with his family, as it appeared in Carol Kehl's *Chronicles* article.



The front and back covers of Chronicles of Smith County, Texas, a yearly magazine published by the Smith County Historical Society. The 2020 edition featured an article on the 15 Carnegie heroes to hail from Smith County. Carnegie Hero Weldon M. Praytor was photographed for the back cover.

lost consciousness. **Gregory W. Dickens** then entered the sewer and tied a rope around Neeley before he lost consciousness. Finally, **James David Richardson** tied to a rope himself and entered the sewer three times to remove each man, one at a time.

There were two separate incidents on the Tyler railroad tracks: **Irvin P. Holmes** grabbed a 9-year-old boy off the tracks as a train approached in 1921, and **Pedro Fernandez Sanchez** rescued an 87-year-old woman, who was hard of hearing, from being struck by a train, as she walked on the rails as a freight train approached from behind in 1937.

In addition, on Lake Tyler, **Russell H. Bowdoin** suffered second-degree burns while saving his friend from burning in a boat that had suddenly and violently caught fire in 1950.

Finally, the first Smith County resident who was awarded the Carnegie Medal was **Jules Deauman, Jr.**, who died on Feb. 17, 1912 at the age of 14, trying to save his nephew from drowning at a pond near Troup, Texas, and the most recent Carnegie Medal awardee is **Richard W. Stock**, who rescued an 8-month-old baby from the backseat of a burning car in 1986.

“Teenagers can be heroes as well as people of middle age. Heroes can be railroad workers, college students, farmers, or military servicemen on leave. Crises can occur at abandoned wells, along railroad tracks, at fish ponds, or when a car is involved in an accident. Sometimes an ordinary citizen witnesses such an event and rushes to the scene to selflessly attempt to save a fellow citizen. Not all heroes are rewarded, but 15 Smith County, Texas, residents have been awarded medals for the valor on such occasions by the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission,” Kehl concluded in the article, which was a point that she said really stuck with her.

Writing this article “made me realize how many people are willing to help somebody in need without being asked. It just impresses on you that there’s just a lot of really good people, a lot of really good people in this country,” she said.

But it wasn’t just about the heroic act themselves. It was about who the heroes were before and after the act, as well as the futures of the people saved.

Betts said a story that particularly touched her was the story of Carnegie Hero Pedro Fernandez Sanchez.

“For a family that probably had escaped the Mexican Revolution and had come to the U.S. and were barely making it, this award was everything,” Betts said. “You got to see how the award helped establish them, and the newspaper tracked their progress.”

Kehl agreed — she said Sanchez and his wife Maria became American citizens ► p.9

PRESENTING



Tollard (Connecticut) Town Manager Michael Rosen, left, and council Chairwoman Tammy Nuccio, right, pose with Carnegie Hero **Edward S. Cyr** after presenting the Carnegie Medal to him at the town office on Jan. 7. Cyr, then a 57-year-old telecommunications technician, saved a 66-year-old man from burning inside an SUV on Nov. 1, 2019. He partially entered the vehicle, leaned across the man to release his seat belt as flames from the rear licked the back of the front seats, and then removed him from the car.

“It is truly an honor to have you in our midst,” Nuccio said during the presentation. “I’m proud of you.”



Carnegie Hero **Seth Robert Bond** stands with Tallmadge, Ohio, Mayor David G. Kline after Kline presented the Carnegie Medal to Bond on March 2 at the mayor’s office.

Bond was awarded the Carnegie Medal for being one of three bystanders to respond to an Akron, Ohio, sidewalk where a woman had been shot twice on June 16, 2019. Bond ran to the woman to tend to her wounds and was doing so when the assailant shot her a third time. Bond ultimately joined in with another man to subdue the assailant and gain control over his gun and a knife.



And the work went on: Carnegie Hero Fund officers look back at 2020



Hero Fund Chair Mark Laskow

Andrew Carnegie would have been well acquainted with the “unprecedented” circumstances facing the Carnegie Hero Fund – and the entire world – in 2020.

The first known cases of the 1918 flu pandemic were recorded in Kansas in March 1918. The third worldwide wave of the epidemic was just receding when Carnegie died in August 1919.

The 1919 pandemic killed more people than the one we face today, but Hero Fund Chair Mark Laskow said that he thinks our founder would be pleased to see that his Hero Fund has continued its work with minimal interruption while protecting its hard-working staff.

“The biggest step in accomplishing all of this was the almost instant ‘virtualization’ of the Hero Fund’s operations,” Laskow said. “Until the pandemic started, we had felt little need to adopt systems for remote work, but Hero Fund staff recognized the potential impact of the pandemic early on and picked up on the new system quickly and the work went on.”

The Hero Fund doesn’t have an official motto, but maybe it should be “... and the work went on,” as it has for 117 years, Laskow said.

And through it all the Carnegie Heroes go on as well, risking their lives for others amid pandemics, world wars, depressions, and everything else. They are the people who are there when we need them.



Executive Committee Chair Sybil Veeder

In her annual report to the Commission, Executive Committee Chair Sybil Veeder agreed, saying that despite the need to work and meet remotely after March 2020, the work of the Fund continued with little disruption.

Three of the four quarterly Executive Committee meetings last year were conducted remotely, and additional protocols were added for enhanced case screening meant to counteract the disadvantage of having to forego in-person deliberations.

Of specific note was Carnegie’s instruction in the Commission’s 1904 Deed of Trust that there (is) “no action more heroic than that of doctors and nurses volunteering their services in the case of epidemics.”

The Commission took notice, and at its 2020 annual meeting in June passed a resolution to explore ways to recognize and honor those who have placed themselves in harm’s way to care for those afflicted by the novel Coronavirus COVID-19 through a monetary donation or permanent monument “to the many selfless individuals who have exhibited heroic action during this global pandemic be considered, as appropriate recognition, lasting memorial, and clear pronouncement as to the extreme heroism displayed in behalf of mankind.”

AWARDEES

Once again, our heroes in 2020 were diverse in all respects: There were 67 awards for 58 total acts, most frequently, the 14 rescues from a burning vehicle, followed by 13 each of drowning and burning building rescues. The least frequent rescues were categorized as an elevation rescue, an ice rescue, and rescues from the path of a moving vehicle and a submerged vehicle. The oldest Carnegie Hero awarded in 2020 was 86-year-old **Fusako M. Petrus**, and the youngest was 17-year-old **Marcus Gil**. They came from 27 US states and 3 Canadian provinces. Fifteen heroes gave their lives, almost doubling 2019’s total of eight. ▶



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The Hero Fund’s quarterly newsletter, *Impulse*, is available as an electronic PDF that comes to subscriber’s inboxes instead of their mailboxes.

If you would like to change your subscription to the paperless, electronic version, please contact carnegiehero@carnegiehero.org.



Before refinishing. After refinishing.

HERO FUND OFFERS CARNEGIE MEDAL REFINISHING

The Hero Fund will, at no cost to the recipient or their families, arrange for refinishing to aged and tarnished Carnegie medals.

The medals will be returned as close as possible to their original luster by the Fund’s medal manufacturer.

Send medals via registered mail to:

Carnegie Hero Fund Commission
436 Seventh Ave., Suite 1101
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Please allow at least one month for the medal’s return.

GRANTS

Each of 2020's awardees received a one-time grant of \$5,500. Awardees (pre-retirement) are also eligible for scholarship assistance, defined as aid applied toward the academic costs of tuition, books, and fees.

In 2020, \$215,856 was spent by year's end on scholarship assistance. The students who receive the scholarship assistance are diverse and impressive, each a hero themselves or a dependent of a disabled or posthumous awardee.

Regarding the beneficiaries, who are primarily the widows of posthumous awardees, \$266,490 was paid in 2020 in monthly installments that averaged \$407, marking increases in all categories; the number of beneficiaries increased by two from 2019 to 51 at the end of the year.

OUTREACH

Press coverage of heroic acts and awarding was robust, and the website and social media accounts saw continued increases across the board. Staff rolled out a newly redesigned website in March. In addition to a fresh and inviting new look, the site was upgraded to include an abundance of resources for heroes, their families, and general public that has dramatically increased communication with stakeholders.

Personal medal presentations to awardees suffered during the pandemic, given restrictions and the primary concerns for the safety of all involved. We look forward to getting back on track in 2021.

The Roll of Honor, Volume I, documenting all Carnegie Medals awarded from 1905-2017, was completed and printed, fulfilling Carnegie's instructions in the deed of trust that a "finely executed roll" be published and displayed. Calligrapher John Stevens continues to provide annual hand-drawn entries for the stunning Volume II.

ABROAD

During 2020, the annual grant was disbursed to the Italian Fund in support of operations. The worldwide pandemic hampered hero fund operations across the globe, but they have all forged ahead.

ORGANIZATIONAL

No membership changes occurred at board level in 2020, though there was an expansion of the Governance Committee; in terms of membership and scope.

At the staff level, part-time Administrative Assistant Janet Thomas joined the staff in January. Also joining the staff as a contractor for the year was Financial Manager Autumn Gindlesperger.

"Despite the pandemic, it was a seamlessly productive and memorable year for the Hero Fund," Veeder said.



Finance Committee Chair Tom Wentling



Hero Fund Treasurer Dan Sandman

The Carnegie Hero Fund Commission's investment portfolio enjoyed a gain in market value of 13% over the previous year.

The portfolio is managed by The Investment Fund for Foundations through its TIFF Centerstone Fund as of October 2020 and the less-liquid TIFF Keystone Fund.

Hero Fund spending in 2020 totaled \$2.06 million, which was below both the year's budget of \$2.185 million and the self-imposed 5.5% spending cap of \$2.513 million. The spending cap was adjusted by the Committee to 5%, effective for 2021.

"Despite the turmoil of the last year, the Commission moves forward on solid financial footing," said Dan Sandman, treasurer of the Hero Fund. "Once again this year, I wish to thank the Finance Committee for their stewardship and dedication."

And the work goes on for 2021: The Hero Fund announced its first quarter of awardees in March and continues its work of finding the heroes of our generation. ☸

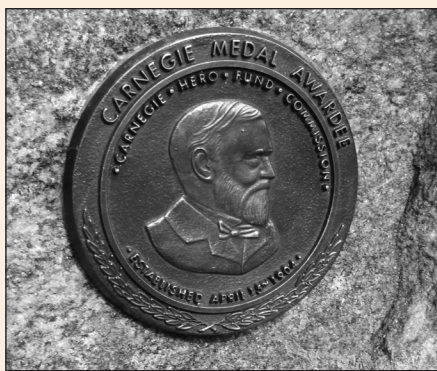
**PRESENTING**

Carnegie Hero Fund Commission President Eric Zahren, left, presents the Carnegie Medal to **Leslie E. Shaffer** at a park gazebo in Akron, Ohio, on March 11. After a private lunch with Shaffer, her oldest daughter, her partner, and Hero Fund Case Investigator Joe Mandak, she received the medal for being one of three bystanders to rush to the aid of a woman being shot on an Akron street on June 16, 2019.

The woman was shot twice, but Shaffer, risking gunfire, helped the victim and the youngest of her three children into Shaffer's car to escape. ☸



Carnegie Hero **Pierre Joseph Gibbons**, center, stands with his daughter, Taylor Gibbons, left, and son, Jeremiah Gibbons, a Baltimore firefighter, right, after receiving the Carnegie Medal for heroism. Gibbons risked his life when he entered a burning Baltimore row house across from his own in an attempt to rescue his elderly neighbor on Sept. 23, 2019. Gibbons carried the woman nearly to safety before he collapsed inside the row home where both were badly burned and suffered smoke inhalation. Gibbons recovered after 280 days in the hospital, but his neighbor died about a month after her rescue. Baltimore Fire Chief Niles R. Ford presented Gibbons' medal on behalf of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission in a brief ceremony in front of Gibbons' row house on Jan. 13, 2021. At the ceremony, Gibbons was able to reunite with the firefighters and medical personnel who assisted in his survival. ☸



GRAVE MARKERS AVAILABLE TO FAMILIES OF DECEASED AWARDEES

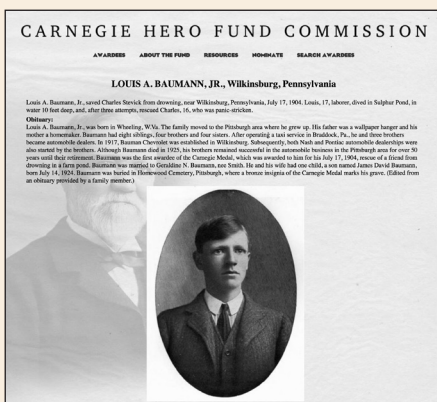
To further honor those who have been awarded the Carnegie Medal, the Hero Fund is pleased to offer at no cost a bronze grave marker to the next of kin of any awardee who has passed away.

The size of the medallion is 3.75 inches in diameter and is designed to replicate the look of the Carnegie Medal.

It can be displayed on an awardee's stone or bronze headstone, or on a flat-faced urn.

The medallion will be sent with a packet containing supplies to affix it and directions for application.

To order the medallion, email us at carnegiehero@carnegiehero.org or call 1-800-447-8900.



OBITUARIES SOUGHT TO COMPLETE HERO FUND'S HISTORICAL RECORD OF AWARDEES

Written accounts of the awardee's life, such as contained in an obituary, are sought for addition to the awardee's page on the Commission's website. Please send to the Hero Fund at carnegiehero@carnegiehero.org.

► from p.1

First Lady's column touches family

42-year-old mine foreman of Morgantown, West Virginia, instructed others to notify other groups of men to evacuate the mine. Quinn soon learned that a group of 11 men had not been warned of the fire, and he called for volunteers to help save the men from suffocating.

Joined by Gainer, 31, of Pursglove, and one other, Quinn walked more than 2,000 feet toward the fire through dense smoke to warn the men, whom they failed to find. Quinn collapsed from lack of oxygen. Gainer and the other man carried him toward safety, but ultimately had to leave him to summon help. Quinn and the other 11 men were removed from the mine later, all having died. Gainer suffered from the effects of the smoke and gas for two days after the incident, but he recovered.

Gainer and, posthumously, Quinn were awarded the Carnegie Medal April 30, 1943. The third man who assisted with the rescue did not receive the Medal. According to Hero Fund records, he was responsible for failing to notify the men originally, and Hero Fund requirements state that heroes must be free from responsibility in creating the danger.

A ceremony was held at the site of the Pursglove mine a month after the awarding, and Roosevelt and her husband attended.

"Here the ceremonies were held for the presentation of Carnegie Hero Fund Medals ... two awards were made, one to a man's family for his heroic death, and one to a man who came through alive," she wrote. "It was very thrilling to be able to take part in these ceremonies."

Quinn's family received a monthly stipend of \$65 until his widow, Anna Quinn, remarried in 1946. Gainer received \$500 from the Commission, which he used to relocate his family to Ohio, according to his great-granddaughter Emma DiGiulio, who recently visited the Commission in Pittsburgh to learn more about Gainer.

Although Gainer's descendants treasured his Carnegie Medal, they did not know that Eleanor Roosevelt had written about the patriarch until recently.

Christine DiGiulio, granddaughter to Gainer, who died in 1967, was researching her family tree in the wake of daughter Emma's genetic test results, when she came across the columns.

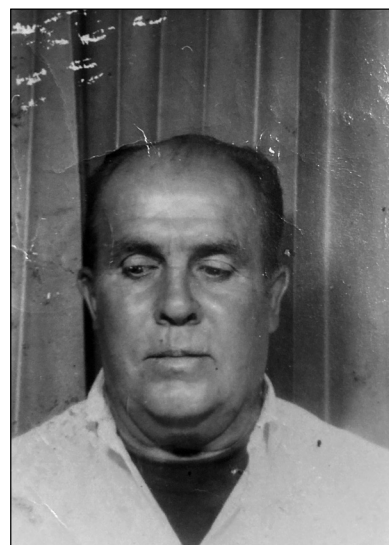
"Everyone was really excited," Christine recalled. "I woke up my husband at like 3 a.m. to tell him."

Rose Sickafoose, daughter to Gainer and mother to Christine, is, perhaps, the most touched by Roosevelt's mentions of her father. She called the Hero Fund to tell them about the discovery.

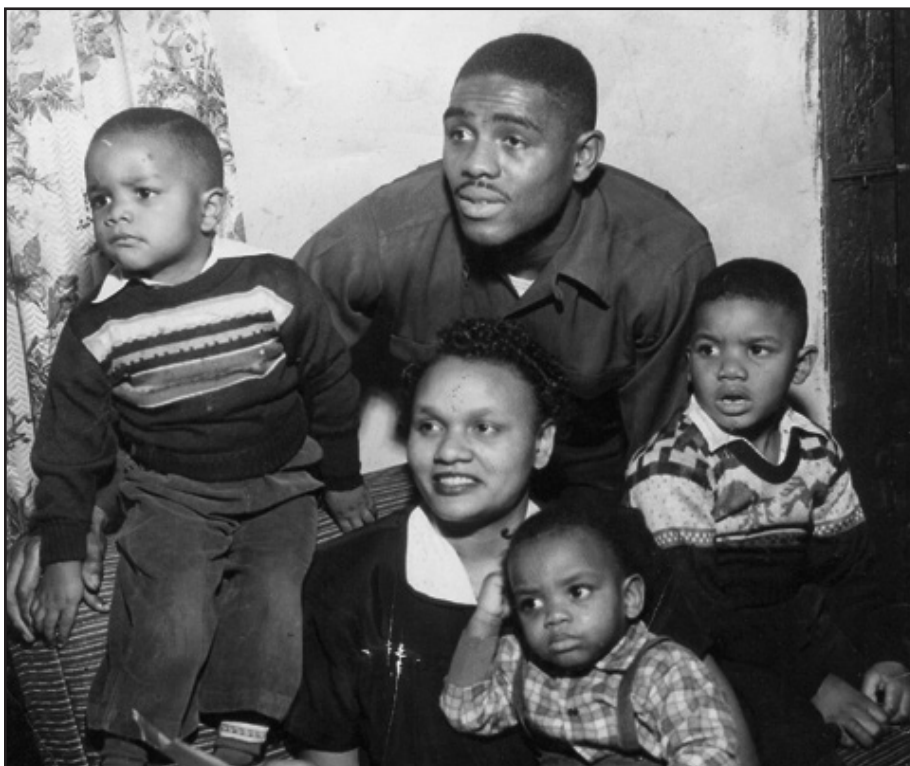
"My father was a kind, loving, family man, who loved God. He's always been our hero, and we have always been so proud of him, but the fact that Eleanor Roosevelt took her time to recognize him — that's truly giving him the recognition he deserves," she said. "What a great way to remember him."

George Washington University has cataloged and indexed all of Roosevelt's columns as part of the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project. The columns "chronicle her development from awkward 'diarist' to skilled advocate for the New Deal, civil rights, the United Nations, and myriad other domestic and international concerns. In sum, 'My Day' offers a remarkable window into ER's public and political life," the website states. ☼

— *Jewels Phraner, editor*



Bradford Gainer
Photo courtesy of Rose Sickafoose,
Gainer's daughter.



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

For the greater love of Rudell Stich

By Glen Sharp
NYfights.com

Rudell Stich died on a Sunday – June 5, 1960 – the day before he was to sign for a rematch with the No. 1-ranked welterweight in the world, Luis Rodriguez. Stich's record was 27-7, with 13 of those wins by KO, and *Ring Magazine* consistently ranked him as one of the top five contenders in his division.

Stich was Rudell's nickname as well as surname, and he grew up in the tenement section of Louisville, Kentucky. Fighting mainly in the Louisville area in the early part of his career, he would eventually get to see a bit of the world through his boxing career, fighting one bout in St. Louis, beating Kid Fichique in Havana, and fighting in Sydney, Australia; Honolulu, Hawaii; and New York's Madison Square Garden. A natural welterweight who had trouble finding guys who would fight him at 147 pounds, Stich would regularly fight guys heavier than him.

He was so frustrated with the lack of progress in his career that he considered, even as late as 1958, leaving boxing behind. Stich had a full life – employment at a meat packing plant, prominence as a member of Grace Presbyterian Church, and a family life with wife Rosa Mae and six children, five boys and a girl. Rudell III, Donald, Rodney, Perry, Darryl Lamarr, and Janet Lynn.

But his knockout of middleweight Charlie Cotton was Stich's big break, and when he beat the then-No. 2-ranked Isaac Logart, Stich would find himself regularly fighting in New York. The Garden is where he first fought Gaspar Ortega. He beat Holly Mims in New Orleans, as well as guys like Yama Bahama and Tombstone Smith. He would lose a split decision to the great Rodriguez in August 1959 and split a pair of fights with Ralph Dupas.

Stich was a busy man, rising at 3:30 a.m. for his roadwork, working his shift at the packing house, and then training at manager Bud Bruner's gym on Shelby Street for a couple hours. He fought 12 times in 1958, and eight in 1959. He liked to fish for relaxation, especially on the Ohio River, near McAlpine Dam.

In 1958, Stich rescued Joseph Shifcar of Elizabeth, Indiana, when Shifcar fell in to the river near the dam. Stich was a good swimmer, and jumped into the river to pull Shifcar out. He was awarded a Carnegie Medal for risking his life to save another, ► p. 17

► from p.5

HISTORICAL SOCIETY 'CHRONICLES' 15 CARNEGIE HEROES

and bought a house in Tyler with the award money.

"The family was so proud of Pedro and to be recognized as outstanding members of the community," Kehl said.

Although Kehl requested records from the Hero Fund for the story, she also did extensive research elsewhere. She looked up newspaper articles dating as far back as 1912, she researched the burial locations of the heroes online, traced U.S. Census records, obtained death records from the Texas Department of State Health Services and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and pulled birth and marriage indexes from Ancestry.com.

"I'm 76 years old," Kehl said. "And I'm in good health and active for my age, and doing things like this is a challenge for me. It's good for your mind, and I have always really enjoyed doing research."

Kehl said she's been interested in "saving history" for decades, and immediately began work with the Smith County Historical Society when she and her husband moved to Tyler in 2007.

Kehl said some of the best moments of her research was interacting with family members of the heroes. Praytor's family was nearby and met with Kehl at the Smith County Historical Society.

They brought Kehl photographs and brought in the Medal that Praytor's grandson "has been safeguarding," Kehl said. "I got some wonderful stories from them, they were so proud to share their ancestor's story, and I really loved that."

Betts said the article excited the society and was a great addition to this year's magazine.

"I actually knew one of the winners," she said proudly, "But I didn't know that he had gotten the award until after the article had come out. It was such a nice surprise."

Kehl said she has her eyes out for more hero stories now.

"What I don't know is who it was that got interested in [nominating] these heroes [for the Carnegie Medal] or even if it was the same person over and over again," she said. "But I have been paying attention to the news to make sure I don't miss an opportunity to nominate someone. These acts of heroism have to be happening all around us."

To obtain a copy of *Chronicles*, visit the society's online store at smithcountyhistoricalsociety.com.



—Jewels Phraner, editor



LATEST AWARDEES OF THE CARNEGIE MEDAL

Since the last issue of Impulse, the following 18 individuals have been awarded the Carnegie Medal, bringing the total number of recipients to 10,220 since the Hero Fund's inception in 1904. The latest awards were announced March 24. The next announcement will be made in June.

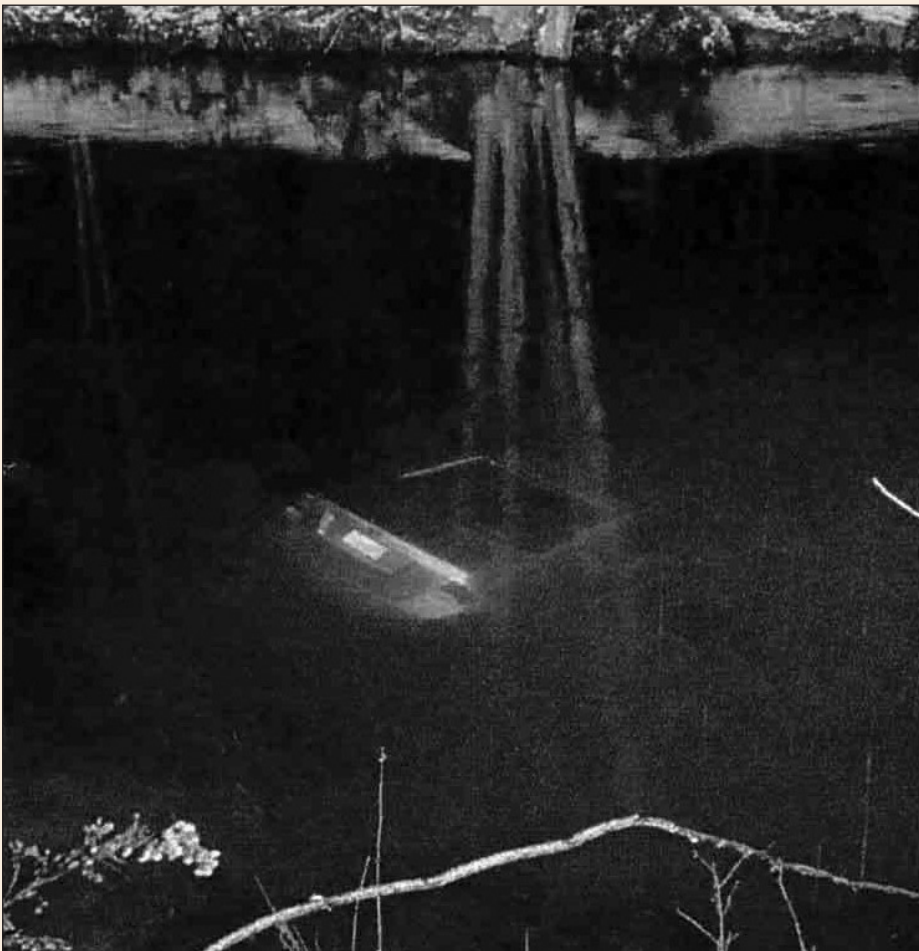
Carnegie Hero **Norman Tanner Olsen** is still recovering from injuries sustained while saving a man from burning on Sept. 1, 2019, at a remote mountain campground near Kamas, Utah. A 59-year-old man attempted to light a campfire using gasoline but accidentally spilled some of the fuel on himself, which ignited and engulfed him in flames. Olsen, 23, a university student of Holladay, Utah, immediately ran to him, grabbed him in a bear hug and took him to the ground. As the man, fully aflame, continued to burn, Olsen used his arms and body to smother the flames. Others poured water on the man's smoldering clothing, and both men were taken to the hospital for treatment of severe burns.

Christopher Etre was driving in Grafton, Massachusetts, the night of Dec. 13, 2019, when he saw a car slide off the road and enter the

Quinsigamond River. A construction company owner, 48-year-old Etre, of Upton, Massachusetts, stopped at the scene, and after following the car as it drifted downstream, entered the frigid water and, while carrying a large wrench, swam 30 feet to the car, which had submerged completely except for its rear. Etre broke out the rear, driver's-side window but was unable to remove the car's 18-year-old passenger. Climbing onto the car's roof, he used the wrench to break the rear windshield and then pulled the glass from it with his hands. He grasped the woman by the arms and assisted her from the vehicle. They both swam to safety on the opposite bank. The woman was not injured, and Etre recovered from cuts on his hands.

After a plane crash on Oct. 2, 2019, at a Windsor Locks, Connecticut, airport, employees, including 28-year-old operations supervisor

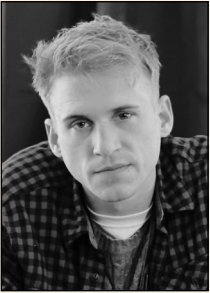
Andrew J. Sullivan, of Enfield, Connecticut evacuated to a nearby parking lot. The crash had caused the wing of the vintage military bomber to break from the fuselage and careen into a metal-framed, vinyl building, its fuel catching fire and igniting the vinyl. Sullivan searched the lot for his 51-year-old co-worker who had been working in the burning building. Failing to find him among the evacuated, he went to search for the man, whom he heard calling for help from inside the building. Unable to enter the building through its doors that were blocked by fire, Sullivan ripped a hole in a vinyl maintenance flap and entered. In thick, black smoke, Sullivan called out and shone his cell phone flashlight. Sullivan reached the man at a point about 70 feet inside the building. Sullivan led them back to the torn flap where they exited to safety. Sullivan later recovered from burns to his fingertips and forehead. ►



*A car that on Dec. 13, 2019, entered the frigid Quinsigamond River in Grafton, Massachusetts, continued to sink until it was completely submerged. Minutes earlier, Carnegie Hero **Christopher Etre** pulled an 18-year-old from the car. Photo courtesy of the Grafton Police Department.*



***Norman Tanner Olsen** in recovery at University of Utah's burn trauma center following his rescue of a 59-year-old man from burning at a campsite near Kamas, Utah on Sept. 1, 2019. Photo courtesy of the Olsen family.*



Norman Tanner Olson



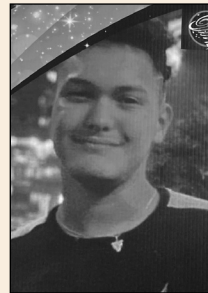
Christopher Etre



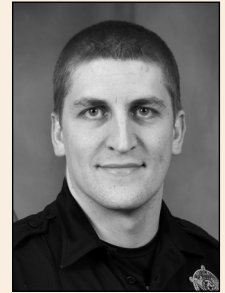
Andrew J. Sullivan



Kendall D. Flowers



Christian Alexander Burgos



Jonathan A. Hudash

A day at the lake turned deadly for a group of teen boys in Cutler Bay, Florida, on Sept. 27, 2018. Two of the boys were swimming in a deep lake, when a 16-year-old began to struggle and call for help. **Kendall D. Flowers**, a 17-year-old Miami high schooler, was on the bank, and entered the lake with others to help. Reaching the boy, Kendall positioned himself behind his struggling friend and pushed him toward the bank before submerging. The other boys made it back to the bank, but Kendall did not resurface. Divers recovered him from the lake; he had drowned.

Despite rescue efforts by a crowd of people, 17-year-old **Christian Alexander Burgos** drowned Sept. 30, 2019, after saving a 9-year-old boy and returning to rough water to save the boy's mother. The mother and son struggled to stay afloat in rough surf in Biscayne Bay

off the coast of Miami, Florida. Upon seeing their distress, Burgos, a Miami student, who was wading closer to shore, swam to them and quickly towed the 9-year-old closer to shore. He returned for the boy's mom, who was panicking. She clung to him, and he submerged. Others rescued the mother and then beachgoers formed a human chain to bring Burgos to shore, but, by then, he was unresponsive. He died at the hospital two days later.

A Williamson County, Texas, sheriff's deputy went above and beyond his duties on April 15, 2020, when he partially entered a burning van to remove a 22-year-old passenger. **Jonathan A. Hudash**, 28, responded to the scene of a two-car crash in Round Rock, Texas. Despite heavy smoke and flames issuing from the van, Hudash extended his arms and hands through the open passenger window, but blistering heat made it impossible for him to unlatch the man's seat belt. Hudash reached in again and cut the

shoulder strap with a pocketknife. He grasped the man's arms and tugged, but he lost his grip. Hudash grasped the man's belt, pulling on it until the man's upper body came through the window opening. He then fully pulled him from the vehicle and dragged him to safety. The man was taken by ambulance to the hospital for treatment of his extensive injuries, including severe burns, but later died. Hudash was treated at a hospital for burns to his hands. He was released and later recovered.

Michael Robert Keyser, who received the Carnegie Medal 30 years earlier for saving a motorist from being electrocuted after a 1990 single-vehicle accident, will posthumously receive a second Carnegie Medal for attempting to save the driver of an overturned tractor-trailer on Jan. 19, 2020, in Apple Valley, California. Keyser, a 49-year-old mine worker of Hesperia, California, was driving at night when he saw the overturned semi-truck, with ►

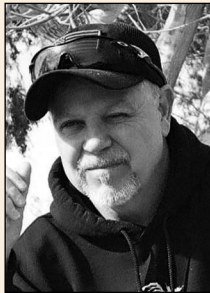


*The aftermath of the building from which Carnegie Hero **Andrew J. Sullivan** rescued his 51-year-old co-worker after a vintage B-17 bomber crashed nearby at Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks, Connecticut, on Oct. 2, 2019. The burning wing of the plane crashed into the building where the man worked, trapping him inside as it burned. Sullivan tore a triangular flap in the building's exterior and entered to locate the man in thick smoke and led him to safety.*



LATEST AWARDEES

its tractor extending about 3 feet into the roadway. Keyser stopped and, on foot, crossed the highway and approached the scene. At the truck, he pounded on the truck's windshield



Michael Robert Keyser

with a flashlight as the truck driver stood inside the cab, unable to lift himself out of the opened driver's window. Within seconds, another semi-truck hauling two trailers containing hundreds of pounds of flammable lighter fluid struck the overturned semi, pushing it and Keyser off the highway into the desert. The trucks immediately erupted in flames. Keyser and the man he was trying to rescue died.



Upon hearing screaming on May 22, 2020, outside his Willington, Connecticut, home, **John A. Franco**, 80, approached a 23-year-old man who was standing over a 62-year-old man on the ground slashing him with a sword. Retired auditor and neighbor to the victim, Franco shouted at the assailant to stop the assault. Franco moved closer to the scene; his neighbor had been severely injured, with wounds to his hands, head, and upper body. The assailant, who



Jonathan L. Goldfarb

was larger than Franco, turned his attention to Franco and attacked, slashing at his hands and head. Franco fell near his driveway, and other neighbors responded. The assailant fled the scene and was arrested later. The neighbor died on his way to the hospital. Franco was hospitalized one week and spent another week in a rehabilitation center. He underwent surgery to repair serious wounds to both hands, and his left hand remains disabled.



Two brothers entered the frigid Dec. 22, 2019, waters of Lake Mohegan near Fairfield, Connecticut, in 2019 to save a 24-year-old man who had entered the lake to retrieve a dog that had broken through ice partially covering the lake. In open water about 100 feet from shore, the 24-year-old and the dog struggled in the water. **Jonathan L. Goldfarb**, a 26-year-old physical therapist of Fairfield, and **Matthew**



Matthew Goldfarb



Mark S. McAuliff

Goldfarb, a 30-year-old Howell, New Jersey, teacher, responded and ran to the scene. They entered the water and moved ice out of their path as they swam to the man. Jonathan Goldfarb grasped the man, and Matthew Goldfarb grasped the dog, and they swam back to shore and exited the water. The men were treated at the hospital for hypothermia, lacerations, and contusions, but they recovered.



A 34-year-old woman was driving on a Boca Raton, Florida, road on Feb. 23, 2020, when she suffered a medical emergency and passed out. Her vehicle veered off the road and entered deep, murky water in a canal. **Shawn H. Turner**, a 33-year-old plumber from Boca Raton, was ►



The remains of a burned-out plane that crash-landed on June 25, 2020, in a Centerville, Utah, field. Brothers **Lyle Berglund** and **Bradley Jay Berglund** suffered second-degree burns while rescuing the plane's two occupants. Photo by Kristin Murphy, Deseret News.

driving nearby and stopped at the scene. He removed his pants and shoes and swam to the car, where he could see the unconscious driver inside. As the car sank, Turner fully entered the vehicle through the front, passenger window, released the woman's seat belt, and pushed her through the driver's window to another man who had responded. As the vehicle fully submerged, Turner swam from the vehicle, and, after helping the other man untangle the woman from her seat belt, they brought her to safety on the bank.



Despite being a poor swimmer, 64-year-old **Mark S. McAuliff** immediately entered the Atlantic Ocean after being alerted to a 16-year-old girl who was struggling to return to shore on Aug. 16, 2019. He had been driving on a beach in Seaside Park, New Jersey, when the girl's sister asked him for help. Donning a life jacket, McAuliff, a 54-year-old retired carpenter of Milford, New Jersey, ran into the water and swam to the girl. The panicking girl grabbed onto his neck, and McAuliff turned her around and grasped her under the arms. He attempted to swim toward shore with the girl, but the current thwarted his efforts. Lifeguards responded and, with a rescue rope and flotation buoys, swam about 180 feet to them. McAuliff and the girl each clung to a buoy and lifeguards on shore towed them to shore. On shore, the girl vomited water and was taken to the hospital. McAuliff was nearly exhausted, but recovered.



Brothers **Lyle Berglund** and **Bradley Jay Berglund** rescued two men from a burning plane after it crash-landed on June 25, 2020,

in a Centerville, Utah, pasture and caught fire. Lyle Berglund, a 32-year-old Roy, Utah, contractor, and his 34-year-old brother Bradley Jay Berglund, a Syracuse, Utah, contractor, were driving nearby and saw the plane crash.

They ran 1,000 feet to the scene and, despite flames and smoke issuing from the plane's nose, Lyle Berglund stepped onto the wing and grasped one of the occupant's arms. Blistering heat drove him back, but he returned and after Bradley Berglund released the man's seatbelt, they both grasped him again and pulled him from the wreckage, dragging him away from the fire to safety. The brothers then returned to the wing. Bradley Berglund, again, reached into the cockpit and released the other man's seatbelt. They pulled the man from the plane and dragged him to safety. Both of the plane occupants later died from their injuries. The brothers were both treated at a hospital for second-degree burns, but they recovered.



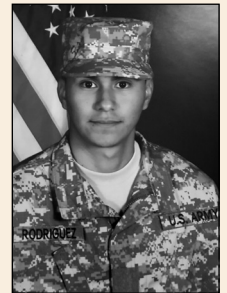
A San Diego police officer used a dog leash to rappel down a 30-foot cliff and then entered the Pacific Ocean to save a man and his two daughters from drowning on June 13, 2020. Before sunrise, the 47-year-old man was the driver of a truck that left the road at the top of the cliff and entered the ocean. The man had left the partially submerged and overturned vehicle and was holding his 2-year-old twin daughters ►



Jonathan Wiese



Kinzo Heath Mibara



Rafael A. Rodriguez



Bradley Jay Berglund, left, and Lyle Berglund



*The burned wreckage of the Enstrom 280FX Shark helicopter that crash landed and burned near Rathdrum, Idaho on June 23, 2020. Carnegie Hero **Kinzo Heath Mibara** pulled a 78-year-old man from the burning wreckage. Photo by Deputy Fire Marshal Chris Larson, Northern Lakes Fire Protection District.*



LATEST AWARDEES

in the water beside the truck, as Officer **Jonathan Wiese**, 43, analyzed the scene. He removed his shirt, ballistic vest, and duty belt, wrapped the 100-foot leash twice around his chest, and other officers at the scene lowered Wiese to the base of the cliff, where he removed the leash and entered the water. Wiese swam to the man, who was larger than him, grasped him, and pushed him and the girls to the base of the cliff. One of the girls was unresponsive, and he secured her to a backpack; officers at the top of the cliff hoisted her, and then her sister, to safety; they were later hospitalized with serious injuries. The father was removed from the cliff by helicopter. Wiese eventually used a surfboard to paddle about 200 feet to a point where he could exit the ocean.



After a June 23, 2020, helicopter crash in a Rathdrum, Idaho, field, 42-year-old attorney **Kinzo Heath Mihara**, of Hauser, Idaho, ran to the scene. By then, one of the two occupants, a flight instructor, had seen flames inside the cockpit and rolled out of it to safety, but a 78-year-old man remained inside amid flames and blistering heat. Mihara and the flight instructor opened the door nearest the man, and Mihara reached into the burning cockpit

to grab the man's arms, but he lost his grip. Taking off his outer shirt and using it to cover his hands and forearms, he reached in again and grasped the man by his shirt, pulling him from the cockpit to safety. Mihara and another motorist with paramedic training who had also stopped at the scene ushered the men away from the flames and the other motorist began first aid. Both men suffered extensive burns and were taken to the hospital. The flight instructor was hospitalized for more than six months and continues to recover. The other man died three days later.

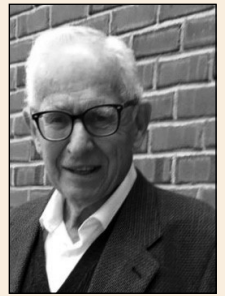


On June 1, 2020, a Nevada state trooper risked his life to help save a woman from taking her own on an overpass over an interstate in Henderson, Nevada. The 30-year-old woman was clinging to the outside of a chain-link fence on the overpass, crying and threatening to fall, when **Rafael A. Rodriguez**, 38, arrived on the scene. Rodriguez spoke to the woman in an effort to calm her and, when other officers arrived at the scene, one of them hoisted Rodriguez onto the fence. Rodriguez climbed up the fence, including over a part at the top which curved inward and then maneuvered toward the woman. Releasing his grip on the fence, he handcuffed the woman's wrists to the fence to secure her. Fire rescue personnel arrived

shortly and removed the woman from the bridge to safety.



A 77-year-old man was spending time in the reading room of a Winchester, Massachusetts, library on Feb. 24, 2018, when a 23-year-old man began stabbing a woman with a 10-inch hunting knife. The woman screamed as the assailant, who did not know her, stabbed her repeatedly in the head, neck, and upper body. **Lester Robert Taber, Jr.**, a retired engineer of Winchester, stood and moved toward the assailant shouting at him to stop. The assailant paused his attack on the woman, and attacked Taber, eventually wounding Taber's upper arm. As Taber engaged with the assailant, the woman attempted to flee, but the assailant chased her and stabbed her until she collapsed, mortally wounded. Other library patrons surrounded the assailant, who was by then unarmed, and he surrendered. Taber was treated at the hospital for a 6-inch laceration to his arm, but he recovered. ☒



Lester Robert Taber, Jr.



*An overturned and partially-submerged pickup remains in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of San Diego, California, after its occupants, 2-year-old twins and their father, were rescued by police Officer **Jonathan Wiese** on June 13, 2020. Wiese used a dog leash to descend a 30-foot-cliff to the ocean, swam to the man who was grasping the girls treading water outside the wreckage, and pulled them to the base of the cliff, where others removed them to the top. Photo by Jim Grant.*

FRIENDS REMEMBERED



James R. Seitz

James R. Seitz, 51, of Denver, North Carolina, died Sunday, Dec. 27, 2020, after a month-long battle with pneumonia and COVID-19.

Seitz received the Carnegie Medal in 2001 for the rescue of Pamela Jordan, 24, from assault on May 20, 1999, in Addison, New York.

Jordan and her young daughter had been abducted from their home in another state by a 19-year-old man. At one point the mother and daughter escaped but the assailant caught up to them and repeatedly struck Jordan. A witness secured Jordan's daughter and notified Seitz, then a 30-year-old teacher, and

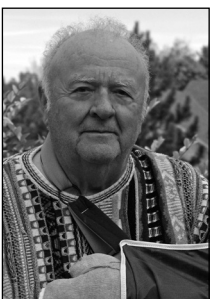
another man, who were approaching the scene. Seitz and the other man stopped their car at the scene and approached the assailant on foot, while Jordan broke free, ran to their car and entered. Producing a knife, the assailant chased after her and stabbed her in the thigh. Seitz and the other man ran to the vehicle and struggled against the assailant, but the assailant was relentless in his attack on Jordan. Seitz pulled Jordan out of the vehicle through the driver's door and took her to a car that had stopped at the scene. As the driver of that car took Jordan to safety, the other man attempted to flee, but the assailant gave chase and stabbed him twice in the shoulder. The assailant fled but was later apprehended by police. Seitz required hospital treatment, then surgery, for an injury to his arm sustained during the assault, and Jordan and the other man required hospital treatment for their stab wounds.

Seitz was born on April 12, 1969, in Newfane, New York, to Dennis and Janice Miriam Seitz. In 1987, he graduated from Williamsville North High School where he earned All-Western New York acclaim in baseball and basketball. In February 2020, Seitz and his father, a coach at Williamsville North, were inducted into the school's Hall of Fame.

He earned a bachelor's degree from Daemen College in Buffalo, New York, in 1993 and a master's degree from the College of Brockport, State University of New York, in 2001. After graduation, Seitz remained in New York where he was a teacher and administrator for more than a decade.

Seitz moved to North Carolina and taught for 14 years, the last 12 at Lincoln Charter School where he was the school's first coach to be a part of two state championships in basketball and golf. He was beloved by his students whom he referred to as his "adopted kids."

Seitz is survived by his father; wife Elizabeth Seitz; and young children Carter and Peyton Seitz; and three siblings.



James Vernon

James Vernon, 81, of Morton, Illinois died Monday, Feb. 8, 2021, at OSF St. Francis Medical Center in Peoria, Illinois.

Vernon was awarded the Carnegie Medal in 2017 for saving 17 children and four women from assault on Oct. 13, 2015, in Morton, Illinois.

Vernon, then a 75-year-old retired information technology specialist, was teaching chess in the conference room of a public library when a 19-year-old man, holding a knife in each hand, entered the classroom, shouting.

The assailant stopped near a table where children were playing chess. Vernon, who was a short distance away, confronted the assailant, distracting him, while the women and children exited the room to safety. The assailant swung one of the knives at Vernon, who raised his left arm to deflect it. Vernon forced the assailant onto a table and subdued him, causing him to release his grip on the knives. Police arrived and apprehended the assailant. Vernon underwent surgery for multiple lacerations to his left hand.

Vernon was born on Oct. 25, 1939 to Herbert and Wilma Vernon of Peoria. In ►

DAUGHTER DISCOVERS DAD'S CARNEGIE MEDAL AFTER HIS DEATH

Carnegie Hero **Herbert A. Moran** was a quiet man, according to his adult daughter, Kristen Solari, of Escalon, California.

It wasn't until after his death that she discovered the Carnegie Medal he had received at the age of 24 for saving a 16-year-old girl from burning after a March 14, 1978, car wreck in Hayward, California.

Moran, of Arnold, California, died Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2020, at Doctors Medical Center in Modesto, California, after a difficult illness. He was 66. Solari contacted the Hero Fund to tell her father's story.

Solari said she knew of his rescue act – and that he was likely en route to or from the hospital where his wife and newborn daughter, Solari's sister, were in intensive care after a complicated delivery days earlier – when he came across the car accident.

Sixteen-year-old Stacy Grimmer left her burning car and slipped on leaked gasoline that had pooled on the roadway. Her body and clothing went up in flames. Moran ran to her, pulled her out of the burning gasoline and patted the flames out. His hands were burned.

"I do not want to spend the rest of my days remembering the difficult days," Solari said. "We could all do better for remembering the good in people."

Although he was born in Germany, he graduated from Antelope Valley High School in Lancaster, California, where he received a "Good Guy" award by the Lancaster Women's Club.

He went on to work construction for 25 years, while raising Solari and her sister, Tracee. Outside of work, Moran had a passion for aeronautics and was a board member of regional air shows. He was an associate of Lions Club International and was integral in creating and serving on the inaugural board for Manteca Little League. He also coached regional championship girls' softball teams.

Moran enjoyed outdoor activities including boating, snow and water skiing, camping, scuba diving, and travel. He also found delight in reading and music. According to his daughter, he had a soft spot for dogs and other animals.

"My dad was not perfect [...] but he was absolutely one to persevere—something my sister and I have learned to do as well," Solari shared. 🌀



ATTENTION GRADUATING CHFC SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

The Carnegie Hero Fund now provides honor cords representing the Tartan plaid of Andrew Carnegie. The tri-color cord of red, green, and gold also features a tassel tag engraved with "CARNEGIE HERO." Contingent upon individual university policy, the honor cord can be worn at graduation. If you are a graduating scholarship recipient, please contact the Hero Fund at carnegiehero@carnegiehero.org for more information.



ANNUAL REPORTS AVAILABLE ONLINE

The Hero Fund's most recent biennial report (2019-2020) is available online as a PDF.

The annual report contains the 140 heroic acts awarded during 2019 and 2020, including the extraordinary actions of seven children and teens.

The Hero Fund has considered more than 90,000 heroic acts for awarding and by the end of 2020, 10,202 were selected for recognition. Historically, 20 percent of the awards were to those who lost their lives in rescue attempts.

The report is available online (carnegiehero.org/annual-reports/) or by contacting the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission at carnegiehero@carnegiehero.org.

1966, Vernon and Hanna Droell married in Germany.

Vernon served in the U.S. Army for four years, serving in Germany, and working for the U.S. Government in Berlin. He graduated from the University of Maryland in 1967 and went on to work for Caterpillar Tractor, Inc., for 41 years before retiring in 2001.

He enjoyed playing golf and chess, and volunteered at local grade schools. Vernon was a member of Morton Community United Church of Christ.

He was preceded in death by his sister and one infant son.

Vernon is survived by his wife; brother Rex Vernon; son Paul Vernon; and four grandchildren.



Ricky Don Bailey

Ricky Don Bailey, 63, died Thursday, Feb. 11, 2021, at his Clinton, Louisiana, home surrounded by family. His death came after a long struggle with dementia.

When Bailey was 31 years old, he attempted to save 8-year-old Brice L. Willis from drowning in Thompson Creek after the boy stepped into a hole and submerged in deep water on Aug. 6, 1989, in St. Francisville, Louisiana.

Bailey, a welder, and another man immediately ran to the scene. Although Bailey's swimming ability was hindered from a shoulder injury he suffered years earlier, he entered the water and swam toward Brice.

Bailey struggled to stay afloat and called for help. The other man towed Bailey back to the bank. Brice was saved by another rescuer. Bailey was treated at the hospital for nearly drowning, but he recovered.

Born in 1958, Bailey was retired from Wilcrest Field Services, an oil and gas and pipeline inspection firm.

He is survived by his father David Bailey and mother Frances Prather; wife of 33 years, Teresa Saucier Bailey; children Melissa Porter and Morgan Bailey; three siblings; and three grandchildren.



Ronald Larsen

Ronald Larsen, 81, of Elko, Nevada, died Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021.

When Larsen was 57, he rescued 3-year-old Nicholas R. Nolte from burning in his family's one-story home on Jan. 17, 1997, in Elko. Neighbors, including Larsen, then a excavating contractor, responded to the fire and looked for Nicholas and two other children. Larsen climbed through a bedroom window and crawled around the smoke-filled room to search for them, but smoke forced him to return to the window for fresh air. He then crawled toward the burning kitchen and found Nicholas unconscious on the floor of the hall.

Returning to the window with Nicholas, Larsen handed him through the window to others before resuming the search for the other children who were rescued by others. Nicholas and the other children were hospitalized for treatment of burns. Larsen sustained smoke inhalation, for which he was treated at the hospital. In addition to recognition from the Hero Fund, Larsen also received the Citizen's Life Saving award for his actions.

Larsen was born on Oct. 20, 1939, in Georgetown, Idaho to Lyman and Evelyn Larsen, and grew up in Burley, Idaho. He served in the U.S. Army for four years before being honorably discharged in 1964.

He and his wife Patricia were married on Dec. 3, 1965. In 1985 they settled in Elko. Larsen enjoyed golfing and flying as a pilot.

Ron was preceded in death by his wife Pat and six siblings.

Ron is survived by his son Kent Larsen, daughter Rhonda Serrano, and three grandchildren. ☒

► from p.9

For the greater love of Stitch

the first of two such awards Stitch would receive. He is one of only six people to have received the award twice in its more than 100 years of existence.

The excitement about the upcoming Rodriguez fight hopefully leading to a title shot with new champion Benny Paret was a nice turn of events for Stitch. 1960 had begun with a January fight in Chicago against the then undefeated Carl Hubbard being cancelled, and Stitch's license to box being suspended when the Illinois Athletic Commission doctor noticed a cataract in Stitch's left eye.

Manager Bruner explained to the press that he and Stitch knew about the cataract. "We've known about the condition for possibly a year," he said. "Rudell has been going to a doctor periodically and we thought it was clearing up. We've fought in New Orleans, New York, and Miami, and no one paid much attention to it."

"We've been told there's a chance of him losing sight in it if we fight or if we don't fight," Bruner continued. "But we think it is clearing up by treatments. Stitch is using drops in it. No one has told him he can't fight again."

Louisville ophthalmologist, Dr. M.C. Baker, who had been treating Stitch, didn't see why the cataract should affect his career.

Chicago fight physicians were known then for their rigid examinations. Joe Martin, a police officer and local Louisville trainer said, "We always found them very strict with the Golden Gloves boys."

They were too strict for Dr. Baker: "Many persons with worse vision pass examinations for automobile driving every day."

Fortunately an examination at the Mayo Clinic showed Stitch to have 20-25 vision, which resolved the problem. He was free to fight.

The top welters – Aikens, Rodriguez, Ortega, Stitch, Garnett Hart – had all been chasing Jordan for a chance of taking his crown, but with Paret becoming the new champion, Stitch knew that a victory over Rodriguez would greatly strengthen his case for getting a shot before the others.

When Stitch went fishing the day prior to signing for the Rodriguez fight, he was accompanied by his friend, Charles Oliver, Bud Bruner, and Bruner's son.

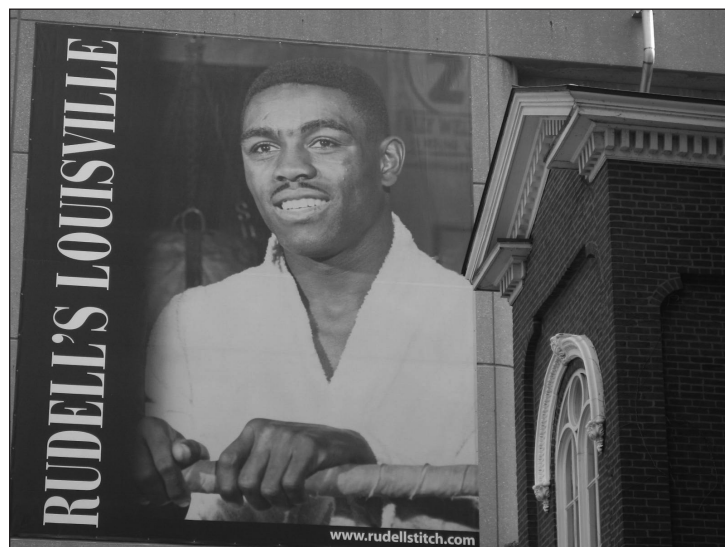
Oliver was apprehensive about walking out on the spillway and held Stitch's hand. When Oliver slipped and fell into the river, he took Stitch with him.

Bruner said it was some time before Stitch could discard his boots and waders so he wouldn't be weighed down in the water. He was making his way to the river bank when he heard Oliver's calls for him and turned back. The 5'8" Stitch swam into the rapids to help his 6-foot, 180-pound friend.

The current carried them to behind a pier where the swirling water of an eddy pulled both Stitch and Oliver underneath. Neither would be seen again until the Coast Guard discovered their bodies later that afternoon.

Witnesses said Stitch would have been safe on shore if he hadn't turned back for Oliver, which was the basis for Stitch receiving his second Carnegie Medal, this time posthumously.

Stitch was an admired man in Louisville, well-known and well-liked. About 1,200 people attended his funeral, and thousands more the viewing.



A mural of Louisville, Kentucky-native Rudell Stitch that was painted and installed in downtown Louisville in 2013.

The Stitch family had moved to a new home in the fall of 1959, and Stitch had taken out an insurance policy on the mortgage, so the house was paid for in full when he died. That, a little life insurance, and Social Security benefits helped to keep the family together. Stitch's mother-in-law, Evie Rice, moved from Detroit to help her daughter Rosa Mae raise the children.

Stitch's son Donald, who would grow up to receive a football scholarship from Jackson State, was 9 years old when his father died, and would be four years older than that when he lost his mother.

The shooting occurred in the early morning hours of Jan. 20, 1964. Mrs. Stitch's mother was visiting her sister for the night, and a man Mrs. Stitch had been dating until a New Year's Eve argument ended the relationship was at the house.

Janet Lynn thought she heard her mother scream during the night. She went to the bathroom and called through the door, but went back to bed upon receiving no answer. Mrs. Stitch's body was found the next morning lodged against the bathroom door, dead of a single gunshot to the upper chest. She was 31 years old. A wounded man, Philander Bryant, 44, was on the floor next to her, with a pistol lying between them. Bryant would die a couple days later at General Hospital in what police would determine was a murder-suicide.

As son Donald would explain years later, his grandmother saved the family after his mother's passing. "She kept all of us together at the house there," he said. "Instead of us getting separated, she took us to church, worked day work, got Social Security, and we never wanted for anything. The lights were never turned out."

Ms. Rice, who was 51 when she took custody of the six children, was absolute about not wanting to see the family separated. "I couldn't run away...", she said. "Their mother wanted them all to go college, and I hope to live to see them all go."

The Hero Fund assisted Ms. Rice with a monthly stipend for the next 16 years.

"Rosa took the children to church and Sunday school (Grace Presbyterian) every Sunday. And I have to do the same," Ms. Rice said, well aware of the challenge that lie before her. The first thing Ms. Rice knew she needed to do was "take driving lessons." ❄

This article first appeared Feb. 10, 2021, on NYFights.com. It was reprinted with permission from author Glen Sharp and Editor and Publisher Michael Woods.



Circle-K clerk saves toddler in runaway truck

On the warm evening of May 19, 1967, 23-year-old mother Toni Diffie fastened her 3-year-old daughter Ginger Lee into a canvas car seat that hung from the backrest of the family's 1965 Ford pickup truck and drive toward the local Bisbee, Arizona, Circle-K market in search of some reading material.

Because it was dinner-time, traffic on U.S. Highway 92 was light. The four-lane, east-west highway had no median between the two lanes in each direction; a 6-inch curb flanked the southern edge of the highway, separating the Circle-K parking lot from traffic.

When Diffie arrived at the grocery store, she parked the truck facing north, opposite the market's entrance. Yielding to the incline, Diffie engaged the hand brake and placed the truck in a forward gear.

She entered the market, empty of any customers, and nodded to the store clerk, 27-year-old **Billie Jean Power**, who manned the only check-out counter.

While Diffie perused the magazine selection, Power glanced through the front door and noticed little Ginger Lee in her car seat before turning her attention back to the task at hand.

The next time Power glanced up, the truck was inching backward.

"Your truck's running away!" Power shouted at Diffie as she sprinted from the counter to the main entrance, in pursuit of the runaway truck gaining momentum in reverse.

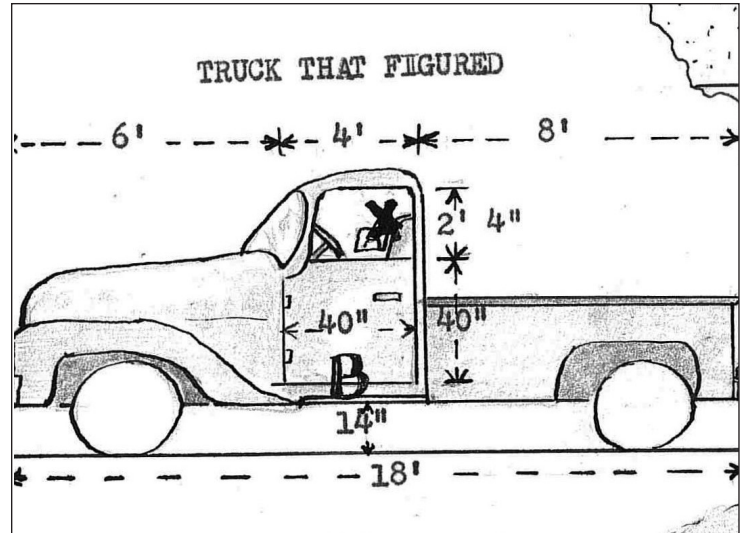
In correspondence with Hero Fund Investigator H.W. Eyman, Power relayed her plan to jump onto the truck's running board, reach into the cab, and pull on its hand brake to stop the vehicle.

As she chased the runaway truck, Power spotted a sedan. The car, driven by Samuel Sorich, Jr., 31, employment agent, approached in the westbound lane of U.S. 92.

During his eyewitness interview, Sorich stated that he believed there was a driver inside the truck and that Power was chasing a customer who had forgotten their purchase.

Power overtook the truck, which was moving at about 10 m.p.h., at a point when it was only 10 feet north of the highway. Just as she had planned, she leapt onto the running board facing toward the truck's engine, reached through the open window with her right hand, and forcefully pulled the handbrake; it had no effect and the truck moved onto the highway.

Sorich slowed to avoid the truck. As Power maintained her hold on the side of the truck, and looked behind her to see what else was in the path of the backing truck, she spotted a small drainage apron on the other side of the highway. In her interview with Eyman, Power said she feared the truck would topple over when it came into contact with the ditch.



Above and right: Scene sketch by Hero Fund Case Investigator H.W. Eyman

Releasing her hold on the faulty hand brake, she grasped the steering wheel with both hands, turning it hard, but Power was too late, and the truck's passenger-side wheels wobbled over the apron.

Miraculously the truck remained upright, and Power held her position on the running board with Ginger Lee in her car seat.

After avoiding initial disaster, Power noticed a van parked on Huachuca Lane, a road made up of sand and clay that was scattered with jagged stones and boulders as much as a foot thick, clumps of sage, and the occasional cacti. Between the level highway and adjacent Huachuca Lane, there was a 5-foot vertical drop, and the truck was gaining momentum.

Power immediately pulled on the wheel to steer clear of the parked van. At a speed of between 15 and 20 m.p.h. the left side of the cab hit the front of the van's fender, crushing Power's pelvis in between the two vehicles while her upper body remained inside the truck.

Following impact, the pickup truck came to rest about 15 feet east and slightly north of the parked van.

Power fell flat on her back in pain. She was badly injured but remained conscious. Ginger Lee was uninjured but crying from all the action.

Sorich had witnessed the crash and quickly parked his car in the Circle-K parking lot. He ran to Diffie, who remained paralyzed in fright at the front of the store, before he sprinted to Power.

A neighbor on Huachuca Lane, Terrell Davis, heard the commotion from his living room and ran outside to render aid.

"I think my pelvis is fractured," said Power while wincing and insisting he not move her.

Davis returned to his home and called for police and an ambulance.

By then, Sorich and Diffie had reached the scene, and Diffie removed Ginger Lee from her car seat.

Sorich, Davis, and Diffie remained with Power until emergency responders arrived.

At the hospital, Power's injuries were detailed: her pelvis was fractured in seven places, her spine and left hip were fractured, and her bladder was ruptured.

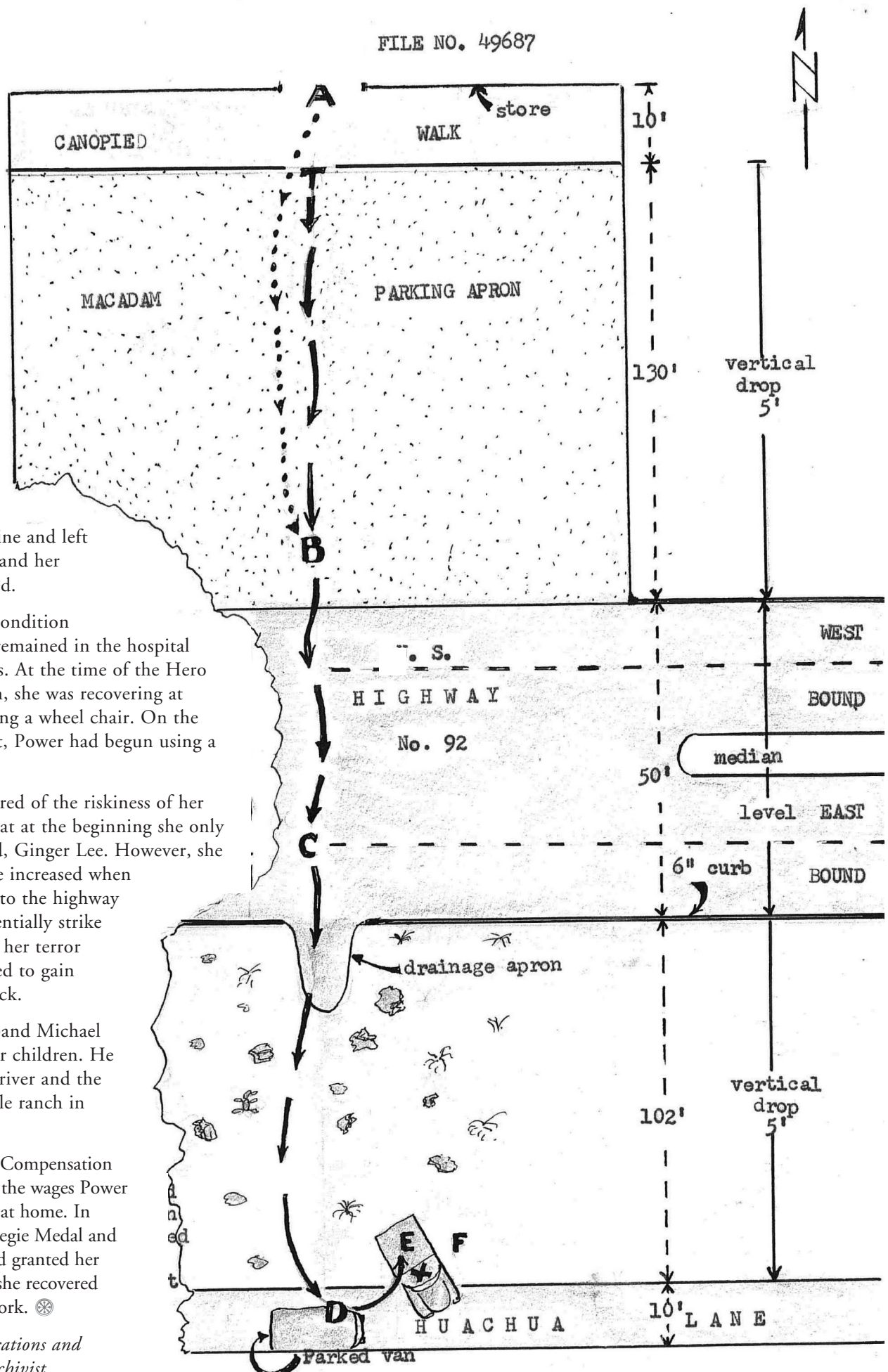
She was in critical condition for seven days and remained in the hospital for nine more weeks. At the time of the Hero Fund's investigation, she was recovering at home, primarily using a wheel chair. On the day of Eyman's visit, Power had begun using a walker.

When Eyman inquired of the riskiness of her act, Power stated that at the beginning she only thought of the child, Ginger Lee. However, she said, fear for her life increased when the truck moved onto the highway where it would potentially strike another vehicle and her terror escalated as she failed to gain control over the truck.

Power and her husband Michael Power then had four children. He worked as a truck driver and the family owned a cattle ranch in Warren, Arizona.

Arizona Workmen's Compensation covered a portion of the wages Power lost as she recovered at home. In addition to the Carnegie Medal and \$750, the Hero Fund granted her another \$400 while she recovered and was unable to work. ☼

— Abby Brady, operations and outreach assistant/archivist





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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 includes 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 online 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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In loving memory of

Dr. Vartan Gregorian
1934-2021



Nowadays, as I sit in my office, I am positioned under Carnegie's portrait, and cannot help but reflect, with some awe, on the responsibility of following in the footsteps of a major historical figure, particularly one who espoused a philosophy about engaging in philanthropy that laid the groundwork for modern-day philanthropic institutions and practices

— Vartan Gregorian
Transparency in Philanthropy, 2003

CONTINUUM

GRAVE MARKERS Bronze grave markers (below), cast in the likeness of the Carnegie Medal, are available at no cost to the families of awardees who have passed. They are designed for mounting on stone or bronze memorials.

MEDAL REFINISHING The Hero Fund will refinish Carnegie Medals at no cost to the owner. The medals are to be sent to the Hero Fund's office by insured, registered mail. Allow a month for the process.

OBITUARIES Written accounts of the awardee's life, such as contained in an obituary, are sought for addition to the awardee's page on the Commission's website.

ANNUAL REPORTS Copies of the Hero Fund's most recent annual reports (2019-2020) are available online or by contacting the Hero Fund.

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