



Impulse

A periodic newsletter of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission

ISSUE 66 • SUMMER 2021

HERO FUND SUPPORTS NATIONAL HEROES DAY, BRAVE OF HEART FUND

Guided by founder Andrew Carnegie's intentions, the Hero Fund has recently entered into two new partnerships — one to recognize the heroism and sacrifice of healthcare workers and volunteers during the COVID-19 pandemic and the other to continue to shine a light on all heroes through the creation of a National Heroes Day in the U.S.

National Heroes Day

On July 20, Reps. Jason Crow and Ed Perlmutter,

representing Colorado's sixth and seventh districts, introduced a resolution in the U.S. House of Representatives to designate July 20 as "National Heroes Day" to honor the sacrifices of everyday heroes.

"The (Colorado movie theater shooting) tragedy brought to light incredible heroism by the first responders and medical teams whose tireless efforts saved lives, those who carried the wounded to safety, and those who sacrificed themselves to save others," stated a joint press release from the offices of Crow and Perlmutter, as well as organizer Anita Busch and the Hero Fund.

"The Carnegie Hero Fund is proud to support the National Heroes Day initiative and its efforts to shine a light on everyday heroes all around us," said Eric Zahren, president of the Hero Fund. "A national day of honoring the selflessness of our society's everyday heroes is long overdue."

The goal of the resolution is to designate every July 20 as National Heroes Day to serve as a reminder to exhibit the same spirit of courage and service shown by everyday heroes by performing good deeds and engaging in community service or other charitable ► p. 7

**NATIONAL
HEROES
DAY**



You are a true blessing in my life!
Thank you for being there. I will never
forget what you did for me!
Have a piece of cake for me!
Aja

Soon after Carnegie Hero **Seth T. Stein** reconnected with Aja Anderson, whom he saved from a burning car 17 years ago. Earlier this year Anderson sent a "You saved the day!" cake. "It was worth the wait," Stein said about the reunion with Anderson and her two children.

Hero connects with woman, children he saved from burning car 17 years earlier

Conversation flows easy from 2005 Carnegie Hero **Seth T. Stein**, and humor comes even easier, which is probably why Stein's first reaction to hearing that the person he saved 17 years ago wanted to connect with him was to crack a joke.

"Should I start the call asking what took her so long?" he asked when a Hero Fund staffer contacted him to find out if he was interested.

In 2004, Aja Anderson, then 25, was leaving an abusive marriage.

"I packed everything up in like 48 hours, and had gotten very little sleep," she said.

Late on April 30, she left, her car packed to the gills, with her two children, 6-year-old Jatae Queen and 5-year-old Jamia Queen. About an hour out from her mother's Virginia home, she fell asleep at the wheel in New Kent, Virginia.

The car left the highway and entered a wooded median before coming to rest, its engine block on fire.

Stein was driving nearby and witnessed the accident. He ran to the car, where Carnegie Hero **Robert B. Gottschalk** was unbuckling Anderson's seat belt and pulling her from the car.

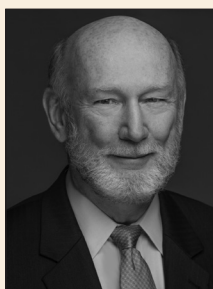
"I remember her screaming, 'Save my kids,'" Stein said. ►



BOARD NOTES

HERO FUND STILL TAKING CUES FROM CARNEGIE'S CLUES, A CENTURY LATER

By Mark Laskow, Chair
Carnegie Hero Fund Commission



Mark Laskow

I have a mental tic that kicks in when I'm working on Carnegie Hero Fund matters. When faced with a novel question, the question pops into my mind, "WWCD?" You guessed it, that's "What would Carnegie do?"

Fortunately, Andrew Carnegie left us plenty of clues about his thinking on many aspects of Hero Fund operations. He was a man of action, but a man of words as well.

The most definitive of his words relevant to us are the "Deed of Trust" by which he created the Hero Fund. You might say it is our constitution.

The Deed of Trust created the Hero Fund, defined its mission, and set boundaries by which it must operate. It's not long, about 868 words, about the length of this column. Although it is now 117 years old, we still refer to it regularly to be sure we are meeting the mission in the way Carnegie specified.

We also have access to some other materials which shed light on what Carnegie was thinking when he wrote the Deed of Trust, including his edits to draft documents.

I myself once suggested simplifying the name of the organization to "Carnegie Hero Fund," dropping the word "Commission," but a Hero Fund staffer found a draft of the Deed of Trust in which, just as I suggested, the name had been trimmed back to the three words. Alas, on that draft Carnegie, in his own unmistakable hand, had restored the word "Commission." Why? I don't know, but the Hero Fund is his creation and if A.C. says it is a "Commission," then a "Commission" it shall be!

Once the Hero Fund was created, Carnegie lived another 15 years until his death in 1919. He kept a lively interest in the Hero Fund, allowing us to look to his correspondence from the period for guidance on issues we face. For example, as we consider possible responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is helpful to read his advice to the Fund managers that they not neglect doctors, nurses, and other caregivers.

And we always keep before us his injunction that "The Hero Fund is to become the recognized agency, watching, applauding, and supporting where ▶

▶ from p.1

Hero connects with woman, children he saved 17 years ago

He opened a back door, unbuckled Jamia and removed her from the backseat. As flames spread to the interior, Stein returned to the backseat and, after attempting to pull Jatae, Stein realized his legs were pinned between the seat and the door.

Stein recalled asking Jatae if he knew of Superman, and, after Jatae nodded, told him on the count of three they both were going to pretend to be Superman, and Jatae was to push with all his might.

It worked, and Stein pulled Jatae into the backseat with him and then carried him from the car. Despite spreading and growing flames, Gottschalk had stayed with Anderson at the side of the car, and after securing the children, Stein returned to the car a third time to help Gottschalk drag Anderson to safety. Anderson had critical injuries from the accident, but she was not burned.

"I think (Anderson) gives me more credit than I'm due," Stein said with an air of casualness.

"I mean, I'm glad I was able to do it, but it was literally like, right place, right time. This was just a thing I did 20 years ago," he added.

But for Anderson the accident and rescue was a wake-up call, literally and figuratively.

"At that time in my life, I was full of doubts about the decisions I was making. I wasn't sure if leaving my husband was the right choice. I wasn't sure if I should turn the car around. I think I needed a hard knock to put a period on that chapter of my life and move forward," Anderson said.

The accident and the risk that Stein and Gottschalk took to save Anderson, Jatae, and Jamia changed everything for Anderson — "my career path, my thought processes, even the way I live my life," she said.

After recovering, she purchased a home, enrolled in nursing school and became a licensed practical nurse, and is working toward her bachelor's degree in nursing. She underwent gastric bypass surgery and now prioritizes health and exercise, something she failed to do before the accident.

Jatae, now 24, enrolled in the Marine Corps and Jamia, now 23, attends law school, opportunities for which Anderson partly credits Stein.

"I pray that you somehow understand how much your actions have left a positive imprint on my life and ultimately changed my life," Anderson wrote in a text message to Stein after connecting.

Every April 30, on the anniversary of the accident, Anderson's mother sends her a link to the Hero Fund's account of the rescue. This April, Anderson noticed a new link on the Hero Fund's website — "Request More Information on a Hero," which sends users to a contact form.

"I had been trying to find them on and off for years," Anderson said. "There's not months, weeks, or days that go by where I don't think about what these men did for me, and I wanted to make sure they were OK, and I wanted them to understand how much it meant to me that they saw a burning car in the middle of the woods and came to my aid. I didn't want anything to happen to me or them without being able to say thank you." ▶

“There’s not months, weeks, or days that go by where I don’t think about what these men did for me, and I wanted to make sure they were OK.”



*Carnegie Hero **Seth T. Stein**, left, poses with his family, from left, sons Greyson, 7, and Jack, 8, and wife Nicole. Stein said recently connecting with Aja Anderson, the woman he rescued from a burning car 17 year ago, is meaningful for both of them.*

The Hero Fund then contacted Stein to make sure a reunion was something he wanted. Without any hesitation, Stein agreed and after a few days, Anderson called Stein.

"I was so nervous," Anderson said. "How do you thank someone for saving your life? I don't have a million dollars to try to repay him, not that it would be enough anyway."

But Stein's relaxed manner put Anderson at ease "instantly," she said.

They spent an hour on the phone that night, updating each other on their lives and retelling the story of the accident and rescue from both their perspectives.

"I was just hoping that (the rescue) didn't affect his life in a negative way and that doing something that big and kind-hearted and thankless and good meant everything to me," Anderson said.

For Stein, the "genuine and sweet" connection has been meaningful as well, he said.

"Connecting with this family has made me realize that I truly made a difference in their lives. It's humbling that she thinks I'm her 'angel' or whatever, but it does feel like the rescue, my actions have more purpose now," he said.

Stein also connected with Jatae, who didn't remember the accident, until Stein mentioned Superman, which cracked the easy-going exterior of Stein, now a father of two young boys.

"Then he got emotional, and I got emotional," he said, choking back tears as he retold the story.

"Even before I knew them, I knew I would do it again if presented the opportunity, but now it's like, this was well-worth it," Stein said. "I would do it again a million times over."

Anderson said that since connecting with Stein, they've shared texts on birthdays and holidays.

Anderson even sent Stein a bundt cake with a plastic life preserver adorning the top with a card that read, "Thanks a bundt! You saved the day!"

The families plan to keep in touch.

"He said, 'Well now you're stuck with me,'" she said. "And I said, 'That is very much desired.'"

Anderson said her next step is to try to connect with Gottschalk or his family. ☸

—Jewels Phraner, editor

► from p.2

BOARD NOTES

support is needed, heroic action wherever displayed and by whomever displayed – White or Black, Male or Female – or at least this is the hope."

All of this might lead you to ask another question, "WWCT?" That is, what would Andrew Carnegie think of our world today, a century past his death? What would he think of the technology, social changes, and "divisive politics" we enjoy or endure today?

We don't have the kind of written record on this, but, again, there are clues. For example, he got his break in business as a personal telegrapher to railroad managers. He was an "advanced communications technologist" in his day!

I think he would have loved satellite communications, mobile phones, and the internet. He particularly would have appreciated how railroads have brought all of those technologies together to vastly simplify problems he faced, such as unscrambling backups caused by breakdowns, weather, and the like.

As for social change, Carnegie was generally ahead of his time. Based on his personal history and struggle, he would certainly be pleased by the availability and quality of the education available to all today. And based on his leadership in his day, such as his major support for Booker T. Washington and his Tuskegee Institute, I'm confident Carnegie would be delighted with our progress on many major social issues.

As we ponder our "divisive politics," remember Carnegie experienced the Hayes-Tilden election of 1876 (Google it!), which I submit makes our current situation look placid. Well, placid-ish. As for social media madness, Carnegie could watch Grover Cleveland's opponents accuse him of fathering an illegitimate child by chanting "Ma, Ma, where's my Pa?" at campaign rallies. Twitter can be tough, but is it tougher than that? Carnegie might not have admired what we are experiencing, but I doubt he would have seen it as anything new.

All in all, my take is that Andrew Carnegie would be disappointed that on some issues we have not improved much beyond his day, but would even more delighted in the progress that we have made on many other issues ... and by our continued determination to improve.

But most of all he would be delighted that amid all the changes and turmoil of our modern society, exceptional citizens continue to step forward and risk their lives to save others, displaying the enduring spark in the human spirit that Andrew Carnegie sought to recognize with his Hero medal. That is constant, and the mission he laid on his Hero Fund is as relevant as it was the day he signed that Deed of Trust. ☸



PRESENTING



San Diego Police Chief Brian Nisleit, left, presents the Carnegie Medal to Carnegie Hero **Jonathan Wiese** on June 3 in front of San Diego Police's monument to its police dogs.

A year earlier San Diego Police K-9 officer Wiese 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. Before sunrise, a truck containing the 47-year-old father and two 2-year-old girls left the road at the top of the cliff and entered the ocean. 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.

"The police officer and the father in me just kind of kicked in. You have seconds to come up with a plan, and you hope it works, and fortunately for me and the other officers that were there it worked that day, and we're all here today because of it," Wiese told Good Morning San Diego after the incident.



From left, Fairfield (Connecticut) Police Chief Robert Kalamaras and Captain Antonio Granata; First Selectwoman Brenda Kupchick; Carnegie heroes **Jonathan and Matthew Goldfarb**; and police Sgt. Michael Stahl pose for a photo after a July 7 ceremony in which Kupchick and Kalamaras presented the Carnegie Medal to the brothers for a rescue two years earlier. Jonathan is a resident of Fairfield.

The brothers entered the frigid December waters of Lake Mohegan near Fairfield 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, then a 26-year-old physical therapist; and Matthew, 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 grasped the man, and Matthew 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.

"The actions of both Jonathan and Matthew Goldfarb represent an outstanding act of heroism," Kalamaras said at the ceremony. "The brave actions of these men, who risked their own lives, were most deserving of recognition."

According to Kalamaras, it was Fairfield police officers who nominated them for the Carnegie Medal.

"These heroes are very deserving of this high honor and have made our community very proud," said Kupchick.

Fairfield Police Deputy Chief John Bucherati and Capt. Keith Broderick also attended the presentation.

PRESENTING



Photo by City of Boca Raton Communications & Marketing Department

Boca Raton (Florida) Mayor Scott Singer, left, poses with, from right, Zachary Bihr, director of municipal services for Boca Raton; Carnegie Hero **Shawn H. Turner**, who works as a plumber for the city; and Turner's mother, Anna Turner, after a June 16 ceremony in which Singer presented the Carnegie Medal to Shawn Turner on behalf of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission.

Turner, then 33, was driving in Boca Raton when a nearby motorist suffered a medical emergency and passed out. Her vehicle entered a deep, murky canal. Turner stopped, removed his pants and shoes, and swam to the car, where he saw the 34-year-old woman, unconscious, in the driver's seat. As the car sank, Turner fully entered the vehicle, released the woman's seat belt, and pushed her through the driver's window to a man who also responded to the car. As the vehicle fully submerged, Turner swam from the vehicle.

"Shawn, what you did exemplifies the best of not only what we hope for our employees and residents, but for humanity," Singer said at the presentation.

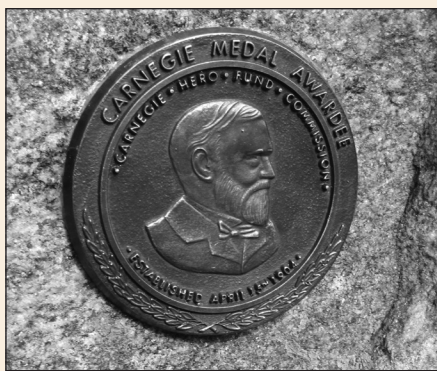


LEFT: U.S. Rep. John Carter, left, presents Williamson County Sheriff's Deputy **Jonathan A. Hudash** with the Carnegie Medal on June 9, 2021, at the Deputy A.W. Grimes Law Enforcement Training Center, while Williamson County Commander James David read Hudash's rescue citation. More than a year earlier, Hudash responded to the scene of a two-car crash in Round Rock, Texas. Despite heavy smoke and flames issuing from inside the van, Hudash twice reached inside to release a 22-year-old man from his seat belt, and then pulled him from the burning car.

"To be honest during the incident, all I could think about is there is no way that I wasn't going to get this man out of that car," Hudash said at the presentation.

Carter represents Texas' 31st district.

TOP: A video shown during the presentation that depicts Hudash, third from right, running to the accident, minutes before he rescued the driver.



GRAVE MARKERS AVAILABLE TO FAMILIES OF DECEASED AWARDEES

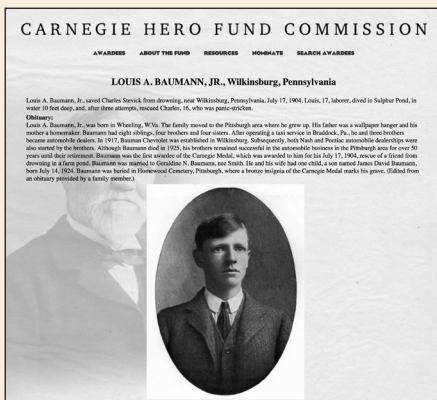
To further honor those who have been awarded the Carnegie Medal, the Hero Fund is pleased to offer at no cost a bronze grave marker to the next of kin of any awardee who has passed away.

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.

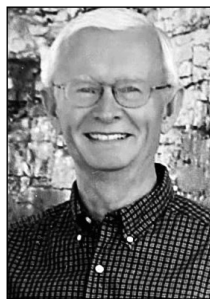
To order the medallion, email us at carnegiehero@carnegiehero.org or call 1-800-447-8900.



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.

FRIENDS REMEMBERED



John H. Brinkman

John H. Brinkman, 84, of Mason City, Iowa, died Saturday, April 3, 2021, at Mercy One North Iowa Hospice surrounded by his family.

When Brinkman was 16, he helped save Eugene F. Fitzgerald, also 16, from drowning in a pond on July 4, 1952, in Colo, Iowa. Eugene was a poor swimmer and became exhausted, submerging briefly at a point 35 feet from the bank.

John and others heard Eugene's calls for help and ran to the bank. John kicked off his shoes and swam to Eugene. The boys submerged. John brought an inert Eugene to the surface.

Feeling weak and having difficulty breathing, John could barely maintain his hold on Eugene and couldn't make any progress towing him.

Another woman, her husband, and a teen, towed Eugene to wadable water. Meanwhile, John swam 15 feet to a dock. He was fatigued and winded, but recovered.

Brinkman was born Dec. 29, 1936, to N.H. and Mildred (Kimberly) Brinkman. As a child, he worked on his Uncle Harold's farm, the location of his heroic act. A proud member of the Colo, Iowa, community, Brinkman graduated from high school in 1955 and went on to attend Kemper Military School in Kirksville, Missouri. In 1962, he graduated from the University of Iowa with his Doctor of Medicine degree.

Brinkman and his wife, Maxine, who were married 57 years, met in Houston before moving to Minneapolis where Brinkman completed a residency in internal medicine and a fellowship in Endocrinology with the Veteran's Association through the University of Minnesota.

Preceding the Vietnam War, Brinkman served in the U.S. Army as a Medical Corps captain in Honolulu.

After moving to Mason City, Iowa, Brinkman worked as an internist at Park Clinic and at Mercy Medical Center. He went on to fulfill roles with the Iowa Foundation for Medical Care, the Iowa Medical Society, the Iowa Board of Medical Examiners, as a fellow with the American College of Physicians and the American College of Endocrinology, and as Mason City Health Director for 16 years.

Brinkman also trained medical students and residents as a Clinical Associate Professor of Internal Medicine at the University of Iowa's Carver College. In 2004, he was honored with the Carver College of Medicine Distinguished Service award.

Brinkman's 40 years as a practicing physician came to an end when he retired in 2002, but he continued to serve his community until 2010. He especially enjoyed serving the elderly and area farm families.

Brinkman was a member of AMA, IMS, Cerro Gordo County Medical Society, and Alpha Omega Alpha. He served as a Board member for the Newman Foundation and North Iowa Fair Association, and was also a Boy Scout leader for the Hoover troop.

According to his loved ones, Brinkman enjoyed spending time with family, fishing, making homemade pickles and fudge, reading, and walking his beloved pug, Suzy.

Brinkman is survived by his brother, Harold; wife, Maxine; children, Paul, Sarah, and David; and four grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his sister, brother-in-law, and nephew.

Shane Douglas Burger, 46, of Pavilion, New York, died Monday, June 21, 2021, at Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester, New York, after battling a lengthy illness.

Burger received the Carnegie Medal in 2003 for rescuing Christine E. Flint from burning after a July 17, 2002, car accident in Stafford, New York, left her unconscious in the driver seat of her vehicle, which was wedged underneath a tractor-trailer.

Burger, 27, restaurant manager, witnessed the accident and stopped at the ►

scene. He attempted to open Flint's door.

Flames licked the trailer and car as Burger leaned through the window of the driver's door and attempted to free Flint, who was still wearing her seat belt. Withdrawing because of the heat and smoke, Burger re-entered and released her seat belt. He leaned into the car again and pulled Flint through the window to safety before flames engulfed the car.

Burger sustained lacerations to his arms and suffered minor smoke inhalation. He recovered.

Burger was born October 18, 1974, to parents Douglas and Lorna Burger. In 1993, he graduated from Pavilion High School and went on to attend St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York.

Burger worked in restaurant management at Batavia Downs, Creekside Inn, Taco Bell, Tully's, and Woody's.

In addition to being named a Carnegie hero, Burger was also honored with the VITA Samaritan Award for performing CPR on a co-worker in cardiac arrest.

Burger is survived by his parents; his son, Kaden; aunts; uncles; and cousins.



James E. Spruill

James E. Spruill, 86, of Williamston, North Carolina, died Sunday, July, 11, 2021, at his home.

In 1957, Spruill was named a Carnegie Hero for saving 40-year-old Josephine R. Cox, who would later become his mother-in-law, from drowning in Williamston, North Carolina, on July 24, 1956.

Cox was driving when she lost consciousness, and her vehicle plunged into the Roanoke River. The vehicle headed downstream in water 25-feet-deep.

Spruill, 21 at the time, ran to the bank and dived into the river. He swam quickly to the car and held to the door while he extended his head and shoulders through the open window.

He grasped Cox's arm and had partially removed her from the vehicle when it suddenly began to sink. Water rushed in and forced Cox back into the vehicle. Spruill maintained his hold and was carried beneath the surface where he pulled her through the window.

Having been submerged for more than 30 seconds, Spruill was nearly exhausted. He surfaced with Cox and towed her 40 feet to Spruill's father who met them in a rowboat. Cox, who was still unconscious, was hospitalized for 10 days. Spruill was tired. Both recovered.

Spruill was born June 17, 1935, to Carl Hugh Spruill and Willie Holland Speller of Martin County, North Carolina.

As a member of the U.S. Army, Spruill served two years in El Paso, Texas, and four years in the Reserves. He then worked as a typesetter and iron worker before a 32-year-long career at Weyerhaeuser, a timber, land, and forest company.

Spruill is survived by his daughters, Jennifer Spruill Leggett and Diane Spruill Singletary; two grandchildren; and his brother William Spruill.

He was preceded in death by his wife Mary Lou Cox Spruill and two siblings.

Spruill enjoyed reading, hunting, fishing, and spending time with his grandchildren. ❀

► from p.1

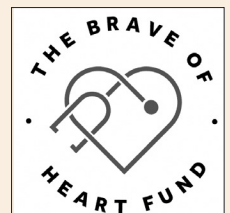
HERO FUND SUPPORTS NATIONAL HEROES DAY, BRAVE OF HEART FUND

activities — something that Carnegie also desired with the creation of the Hero Fund.

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

Brave of Heart Fund

Earlier this year, the Hero Fund donated \$100,000 to the Brave of Heart Fund, established to provide financial and emotional support to the surviving family members of frontline healthcare workers and volunteers who lost their lives to COVID-19.



The financial contribution comes after the Hero Fund's executive committee voted to provide recognition and support to frontline workers who risked their lives aiding in the care of those with COVID-19. The committee found their endorsement from Hero Fund founder Andrew Carnegie, who wrote in the century-old organization's Deed of Trust that, "No action (is) more heroic than that of doctors and nurses volunteering their services in the case of epidemics."

Commission member Peter J. Lambrou, M.D., added, "The Hero Fund is proud to partner with the Brave of Heart Fund to support those who have lost loved ones who committed to selflessly serve others. And we commend and support all those who continue the fight."

Brave of Heart was co-founded by the Foundations of New York Life and Cigna, industry-leading financial and health service organizations, alongside charitable partner, E4E Relief. Over the last year, the fund has granted \$17.6 million to more than 510 surviving families from 40 states around the country.

"We are honored to receive this generous donation from the Carnegie Hero Fund," said E4E Relief CEO Holly Welch Stubbing. "We have been overwhelmed with the incredible stories of dedication and sacrifice shared by the surviving families of healthcare heroes that the fund has supported thus far. The Carnegie Hero Fund is an ideal partner to both honor those legacies and to reach more eligible families to support." ❀



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 10,238 since the Hero Fund's inception in 1904. The latest awards were announced June 23. The next announcement will be made in September.

Despite knowing the dangers of silos and the propensity for the buildup of suffocating gases inside them, **Steven T. Boesl**, a 49-year-old farmer of Brandon, Minnesota, immediately entered the top of a silo where his 47-year-old brother, Curtis F. Boesl, and 11-year-old nephew, Alex P. Boesl, had collapsed moments earlier on Dec. 21, 2019 in Brandon. Firefighters were arriving and waiting on breathing apparatuses, but Boesl urged everyone to hurry, quickly climbing the ladder 35 feet, dropping from a hatch in the silo's top about 7 feet to the top of compacted corn. A fire chief at the top of the opening saw Boesl collapse almost immediately. Minutes later, a fire captain wearing a breathing apparatus entered the silo and removed all three to safety, but they ultimately died.



Steven T. Boesl



Ryan D.A. Horne



David J. Brown



Jamey Ruth Klassen



Marc F. Romano

on the outside of the car grew and spread. Driving nearby, 36-year-old sales manager **Ryan D.A. Horne**, of International Falls, Minnesota, spotted the flames. After trying to open the vehicle's driver-side doors, he opened the rear hatch and entered the vehicle, climbing into the cargo area and then the back seat. Mart extended her arm between the front seats to reach for Horne, who pulled her into the backseat and ultimately out of the vehicle. Flames grew to engulf the car, heat causing the tires to pop as Horne helped Mart away from the car.

friend who was having difficulty returning to the bank due to a strong current. **David J. Brown**, a 41-year-old regional manager of Shakopee, Minnesota, responded to the scene, where he removed his shirt and shoes and swam to one man, whose head was barely above the surface of the water. Brown pulled the man to the bank where he collapsed, and Brown returned to the river for the second man, who was gasping for breath. Grabbing a nearby life ring and the man, Brown swam the man back to a dock, where others assisted. The friend was rescued by another person.

After a May 14, 2019, accident in which her SUV left the road and crashed into woods in Birchdale, Minnesota, 74-year-old driver Janet F. Mart was trapped inside the car as it burned. Trees and brush blocked the car's front doors from opening, as flames

Two men, ages 34 and 35, started to struggle in a swimming area of the Gull River at a cabin resort in East Gull Lake, Minnesota, after they entered the 57-degree water May 26, 2019, to save another

Sixteen-year-old **Jamey Ruth Klassen** of Guelph, Ontario, entered Lake Huron July 26, 2020, after she overheard others on the bank near Collingwood, Ontario, making a 911 call about 40-year-old kayaker Christopher G. Robertson drowning. She swam 600 feet to the man's overturned kayak, but by the time she reached the area, the man was no longer at the water's surface. Diving 12 feet, she found the man at the bottom of the lake and brought him to the surface. As she held him with one arm, she swam to shore with the other, shouting for help. Eventually a man on a paddleboard responded and took the man to shore where they revived him.

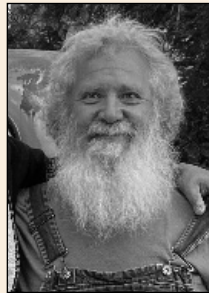
On a boat nearby, 26-year-old deckhand **Marc F. Romano**, of Kailua Kona, Hawaii, immediately jumped into the Pacific Ocean after hearing a swimmer screaming for help off the coast of Waikoloa, Hawaii, on Jan. 2. As Romano, swimming with a foam floaty, approached the woman, 68-year-old Jeri L. Douglas, he noticed a cloud of blood surrounding her. She shouted that she had been bitten by a shark. Romano instructed the woman to hold to one end of the floaty and towed her to a responding boat. At the beach, Romano and others carried the woman to arriving paramedics, who applied a tourniquet to stanch the bleeding from her leg. Douglas suffered bite wounds to her calf, a broken leg bone, and wounds to her ankle and toe, and continues to recover. ►

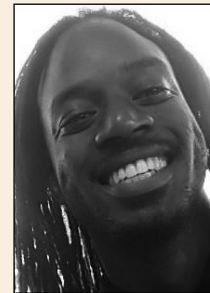


Carnegie Hero **Jamey Ruth Klassen**, left, backstrokes toward shore while towing a 40-year-old kayaker who was drowning after his kayak overturned in water near Guelph, Ontario, on July 26, 2020. Jamey swam 600 feet then dove 12 feet to bring the submerged man to the surface. Photo courtesy of Duncan Bristow.

On Aug. 13, 2019, from inside his Rescue, California, home, Carnegie Hero **Scott D. Morrison** heard a sedan collide with a boulder and tree about a quarter-mile away. The vehicle came to rest upright but ignited dry grass around it; its 39-year-old driver, Raymond M. Jerrett III, remained unconscious inside with his legs trapped in its center console area. Blocked by fire from accessing the driver's door, Morrison, a 59-year-old retired diesel mechanic, ran to the front, passenger door, opened it, and entered the vehicle. Flames engulfed the driver's side and Jerrett's clothing was burning. Morrison pulled Jerrett partially out of the vehicle, then freed Jerrett's feet, and removed him fully. He patted out flames on Jerrett's clothing and dragged him farther from the car. Jerrett was airlifted to a burn center for treatment of severe burns. Morrison was also treated at an area hospital for smoke inhalation and second-degree burns. He recovered.

Three young children, ages 10, 6, and 3, were canoeing with their father April 26, 2019, in the Salmon River near Riggins, Idaho, when the canoe tipped and the children and their father entered the cold, swift-flowing water. From the bank nearby, the children's uncle as well as their cousin, **Keawe Michael Pestana**, a 34-year-old, Donnelly, Idaho, laborer, who was deaf and could not speak, entered the water and swam into the river on a course to intercept the children, but the current carried


Scott D. Morrison

Keawe Michael Pestana

Antonio Morgan

Lucas Y. Silverio Mendoza

them downstream past them. The uncle, tiring, exited the river, but Pestana remained in the river. He was last seen in a circular current near the bank, before submerging and drowning. The current pushed the children and their father into a calm eddy about a half-mile downstream, and they exited the river, unharmed.

A July 28, 2020, highway accident left 23-year-old motorist Keilen Robinson unresponsive inside his vehicle with the driver's side against the highway's center median in St. Louis County, Missouri. As nearby motorist **Antonio Morgan**, 34, a business operator of St. Louis, Missouri, responded, fire broke out under the hood and burned against the car's windshield. Morgan entered the vehicle through the front, passenger door, and kneeling on that seat, attempted to pull Robinson toward him. Smoke filled the car's interior and, as flames intensified, one bystander encouraged Morgan to abandon the rescue. After retreating for air, Morgan entered the vehicle again, released Robinson's seat belt, and tugged.

A sudden explosive sound forced Morgan out of the car, but Robinson's upper body fell outside the passenger door, and Morgan returned to drag him to safety.

After smoke filled his Bronx, New York, sixteen-story apartment building in the early hours of June 9, 2019, 19-year-old student **Lucas Y. Silverio Mendoza** and his family descended the building's stairs, he and his cousin assisting his grandmother, who had mobility issues. Around floor 14, the family passed 3-year-old Yasleen Moreno, who was crying and alone in the stairwell. Instructing his cousin to continue helping his grandmother down the stairs, Silverio Mendoza turned back, returned to the 14th floor landing and reached for Yasleen. Before he could get to her, flames and smoke exploded through a trash compactor chute door, buckling nearby walls, blowing open several nearby doors including the one to the stairwell and filling the area with flames and smoke.

The explosion badly burned Silverio Mendoza and Yasleen, separating them, and blowing Silverio Mendoza down a full flight of stairs where he hit his head on a concrete wall. The cousin retrieved Silverio Mendoza and, along with others, helped him from the building. Yasleen was later found on the 12th floor by a firefighter, who carried her to safety. Both Silverio Mendoza and Yasleen died later due to their injuries sustained in the blast. ►



*Carnegie Hero **Antonio Morgan** was driving nearby when he saw a vehicle crash into the median of a St. Louis (Missouri) County highway on July 28, 2020. As smoke filled the car's interior, Morgan entered the vehicle and attempted to pull the 23-year-old driver from the car, but was waylaid by the driver's seat belt. After retreating for air, and entering again, Morgan released the driver's seat belt and tugged. A sudden explosion forced Morgan to retreat, but he returned and dragged the driver to safety.*



LATEST AWARDEES



A natural gas explosion on Feb. 15, 2019, decimated a Heber City, Utah, vacation home and trapped 37-year-old Lori R. Walker in the basement, critically injured, under a collapsed ceiling and furniture while flames broke out on the first floor, growing and spreading rapidly. Working together, neighbors **Eric Andrew Staten**, a 52-year-old firefighter of Heber City; **Mark Pierce**, a 50-year-old river guide of Sandy, Utah; and **Nathan Hammond**, 34, a general contractor of Heber City, responded to the burning home. Staten, who was off-duty, out of his fire department's jurisdiction, and using a fire axe he kept at home as a decoration as his only piece of safety equipment, searched the main floor of the house for Walker, but did not find her there. But hearing her call from below him, he exited, and met by Pierce and Hammond, they waded through deep snow to enter the structure's basement. Guided only by their cell phone flashlights they continued to search, as fiery debris fell into the basement and, at times, onto them. They found Walker, and working together, Staten and Hammond moved the debris enough for Pierce to drag Walker free. Staten placed Walker on his shoulder and carried her from the house, where the men then used a coat as a sling to drag Walker through the deep snow to arriving emergency responders, as the log home became

fully engulfed with flames. Walker was burned on more than 30 percent of her body and sustained severe injuries from the impact of the explosion. She continues to recover.



Three Carnegie heroes will be honored for a July 29, 2019, heroic water rescue in Mosquito Creek Lake near Cortland, Ohio. A 12-year-old boy was with five other children playing in the manmade reservoir when he chased a soccer ball into deeper water and struggled to stay afloat. **Christine L. Beheler**, 41, a stay-at-home mom of Niles, Ohio, who had brought the children to the lake that day, entered the water and swam about 150 feet to the boy, who was panicking. He submerged Beheler as 43-year-old police sergeant **Mark A. Krempasky**, of Warren, Ohio, and 49-year-old teacher **Melinda J. Wilms**, of Salem, Ohio, responded. Krempasky reached Beheler, who



Eric Andrew Staten



Mark Pierce



Nathan Hammond



Christine L. Beheler



Mark A. Krempasky



Melinda J. Wilms

was unresponsive, towed her back into wadable water where others assisted in getting her to the beach. Wilms, who had a pool noodle, reached one end of it to the boy, who held on while she swam back to the beach towing him. Beheler could not be revived, and will receive the Carnegie Medal posthumously. ►



Minutes after the Aug. 13, 2020, rescue in which Carnegie Hero **Scott D. Morrison** pulled the 39-year-old driver from the burning sedan after a highway accident in Rescue, California. Morrison patted out flames burning on the driver's clothing. Morrison was later treated for smoke inhalation and second-degree burns; he recovered. Phot courtesy of El Dorado Hills Fire Department.

Two 17-year-old girls struggled in Lake Manitoba near Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, during a June 3, 2020, outing in which they left drifting inflatables in an attempt to swim back to shore. Carnegie Hero **Renata Bandel**, 52, of Winnipeg, Manitoba, was swimming with her niece about 150 feet from shore when others alerted her to one of the girls about 150 feet farther out. Bandel swam to her, instructed her to turn over onto her back, and tugged her by the back of the life vest toward shore, struggling against choppy waves. About halfway to shore, others swam from the beach to assist the girl to the beach. Although Bandel could not see the other girl, a bystander pointed out her vicinity, and Bandel swam out again, finding the other girl about 450 feet from shore. Towing her in the same manner, Bandel swam about 250 feet before a rescue boat arrived at the scene and assisted Bandel and the girl, who was ultimately treated at a local hospital for hypothermia, to shore.

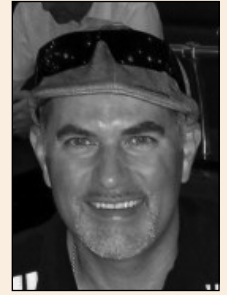
A disgruntled employee opened fire in a city government building in Virginia Beach, Virginia, on May 31, 2019, after killing two men outside.

As the shooter moved throughout the offices shooting others, word spread that there was an active shooter in the building. A group of at least seven colleagues attempted to flee, but they were directed to change course when they encountered 50-year-old **Ryan Keith Cox**, an account clerk of Virginia Beach. Cox directed the group to quietly enter an office and barricade themselves inside. Cox refused his colleagues' pleas to enter the office with them and told one co-worker that he needed to see if anyone else needed help. Shortly, the assailant encountered Cox a few feet from the closed office door, fatally shooting him before shooting others in the building; the colleagues secured in the office were not injured. After a shootout with police, the assailant was shot dead. Cox was among 12 people who died and four people who were critically injured.

In the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of St. Augustine Beach, Florida, Kelly A. Wood, 42, was with two young teens on May 23, 2020, when she was carried away from shore by a rip current. Carnegie Hero **D. Roderick Boothe**, a 50-year-old compliance director of Mableton, Georgia, entered the ocean to retrieve his 9-year-



Renata Bandel



D. Roderick Boothe

old son, who, once safely in wadable water told his father that he heard others shouting for help from farther out. Boothe swam 150 feet through rough waves to Wood, who submerged when he was about 10 feet away. He dived and pulled Wood to the surface. Boothe circled his arm around her chest and, towing her, struggled to return to shore. Once he was in wadable water, he picked Wood up and carried her to the beach, where others assisted. Wood was not breathing and bystanders began CPR on the beach, where she was revived. Boothe, nearly exhausted, struggled to catch his breath. Both Wood and Boothe recovered.



Flames spread rapidly after a Feb. 15, 2019, natural gas explosion inside a vacation home in Heber City, Utah. Three neighbors — Carnegie heroes **Eric Andrew Staten**, **Mark Pierce**, and **Nathan Hammond** — worked together to enter the decimated home and free the 37-year-old owner who was critically injured and trapped in the home's basement. As the rescuers moved the owner in a makeshift sling through deep snow to meet first responders, flames completely engulfed the home.



❖ EXCEPTIONAL GRADUATES ❖

CARNEGIE HERO FIRST IN FAMILY TO ATTEND COLLEGE; WILL PURSUE CAREER IN INDUSTRIAL CHEMISTRY

This past spring, **Robert Hart Morgan** graduated from Colorado State University with a bachelor of science degree in chemical and biological engineering. He was the first member of his family to attend college.

Six years earlier, Morgan saved a 22-year-old woman from drowning after her car entered Lake Loveland on Nov. 28, 2015, in Colorado. The driver remained in the driver's seat as her car submerged in water 7 feet deep at a point 75 feet from the bank.

Morgan and a friend, both 18-year-old college students, witnessed the accident and went to the water's edge. The air was a frigid 19 degrees and the water was near freezing. Morgan removed his outer layers and entered the lake. He swam to the passenger side of the car and broke out the door's window with his elbow.

Water rushed into the passenger compartment. Morgan leaned through the window and pulled the woman from the car as she held to his neck. Morgan towed her to wadable water, and carried her from the lake.

The woman and Morgan required hospital treatment for cold water exposure. Morgan also injured his elbow. He recovered.

"I learned from that day that I'm a person who is not afraid to take action," Morgan said.

As a result of his lifesaving action, Morgan was named a Carnegie hero two years later. In addition to receiving the Carnegie Medal and a financial award, he also became eligible for scholarship assistance.

Between the rescue and the award, Morgan had stopped attending college after completing a mix of classes at Colorado State University and a local community college because he couldn't afford it.

"Being awarded allowed me to continue on with my education and truly focus on that aspect of my life," Morgan said. "I always knew I was smart enough to get through my engineering coursework, and it was very frustrating for me not to be able to continue."

The academic scholarship from the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission allowed him to transfer to Colorado State University and, as Morgan describes it, "become my best self."

From a young age, Morgan's parents encouraged his love of chemistry, buying him do-it-yourself microscopes and chemistry sets.

In high school, his scientific pursuits were further fortified by chemistry teacher Doug Halvorsen, who, in his last semester of teaching, embraced experimentation and highlighted his favorite areas of the subject for his students. ►



Outreach and investigative interns join Hero Fund staff for summer

This summer the Carnegie Hero Fund offered intern positions in the outreach and investigative departments. A Master's student at the University of Pittsburgh's Katz School of Business, Elijah Lambiotte, is spending the summer in the Fund's outreach department and Claire Skirtich, a rising senior in Gannon University's criminal justice program, is spending her time working on investigations. Here they share what drew them to the Hero Fund.

Eli Lambiotte

It wasn't an easy decision to Pittsburgh from my small hometown of Punxsutawney. The tall buildings, busy traffic, crowds of people—to say it overstimulated me was an understatement, especially because I was used to everything being so still. Days would pass in Punxsy and it always stayed the same. I liked it, it was simple and comforting.

However, when it became time to choose a college, something about the University of Pittsburgh drew me in. When I visited the campus I was confused and nervous, but also strangely excited. The city of Pittsburgh wasn't still, it moved and breathed with human activity; to me it seemed like it could become the start of a great adventure.

Five years later, I've discovered that Pittsburgh is not only a bustling and endlessly fascinating city, but also one with a rich history. The courses I took on the city's development, along with visits I made to the Carnegie National History Museum were some of the highlights of my time at Pitt, and they were the first things that came to mind when I found the summer internship at the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission.

The cases of bravery and heroism that the Commission deals with are imbued the same excitement that initially drew me to Pittsburgh. Reading about these individuals who perform selfless acts in the face of danger remind me that Pittsburgh, and places like it, will continue to radiate with life and hope.

At this position, I'm excited to contribute to the Commission's thorough and meticulous process of recognizing the deeds of heroes and rewarding them for their fearlessness. I'm also honored to become a part of Andrew Carnegie's legacy. There's no doubt that after this summer, I'll have completed work that I can truly be proud of and will remember for rest of my life.



Eli Lambiotte

Claire Skirtich

I have always been drawn to helping others and being the person people can depend on for anything. Ever since I was a child, I have looked up to law enforcement officials who risk their lives every single day just to help those around them. Watching the news and reading the papers, I always found myself wanting to be them. This innate feeling is what I believe drew me towards criminal justice.

I now attend Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania, as a criminal justice major and psychology minor. I learn from professors who are retired forensics, corrections, and probation officers, as well as those who have worked as FBI, ATF, and DEA agents. Every single class I get to hear stories of their bravery and how they have saved numerous lives.

This summer, I have the honor of continuing to hear, read, and investigate countless stories of the heroes awarded the Carnegie Medal. Although they are not the typical law enforcement stories I am used to, these people somehow impact me more because of how they rose to action even when they were not expected to. I believe that is what truly defines a hero. The Carnegie Hero Fund Commission does an amazing job of honoring individuals who have risked their lives for the sake of others. Their acts of courage deserve all the recognition in the world and more. Hearing their stories inspires me and continues to light the fire in me that strives to help others. ❖



Claire Skirtich



BEHIND THE SCENES

Carnegie Hero Fund Commission gathers for 117th annual meeting

Commissioners pose for a photo taken at a luncheon at the Duquesne Club before the 117th annual meeting on June 16. In addition to usual Commission business, the meeting included the annual election of officers for the coming year, which included Mark Laskow as board chair; Nancy Rackoff as vice board chair; Dan D. Sandman as board treasurer; Sybil Veeder as Executive Committee chair; and Thomas L. Wentling, Jr., as Executive Committee vice chair as well as Audit and Finance committees chair.

Two commissioners receive resolutions for decades of service

Two service anniversaries were also celebrated at the annual meeting. Left: Executive Committee Vice Chair Thomas L. Wentling, left, shows his framed resolution with Board Chair Mark Laskow. Wentling was elected to the board in 1991, and more than 2,700 Carnegie heroes have been awarded the Carnegie Medal during his 30 years of service. He also serves as chair of the Finance and Audit committees.

Right: Thomas McL. Hillman, left, poses with Laskow with the resolution he received for his 25 years of service. Hillman was elected to the board in 1996, and has overseen the awarding of more than 2,200 Carnegie heroes. The resolutions laud board members for their "success in effecting the charitable purposes ascribed to it by Andrew Carnegie" due to "the selfless participation and skill of its members."



Robert Hart Morgan holds his diploma for a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical and biological engineering from Colorado State University. He dons the red, green, and gold Carnegie Hero Fund honor cords, a tassel representing Front Range Community College, and a medal for the College of Engineering.

► from p.12

EXCEPTIONAL GRADUATE: MORGAN

Morgan credits Halvorsen with opening his eyes to the wide range of career possibilities in the field of industrial chemistry—an industry that applies to processes in manufacturing, arts, and the commercial production of chemicals.

"I initially wanted to go to college for business, but he helped me to see that combining your passion with something people will pay you for is an excellent way to start a career," Morgan said.

Morgan hopes to join the military and has been in talks with a Navy recruiter for their competitive nuclear propulsion officer candidacy program, an MIT-sponsored program that includes one year of technical school and other training before working with the advanced systems implemented by the Navy.

Morgan said the program includes hands-on experience as well as completing the first steps toward a master's degree.

In his first meeting for the program, Morgan was thrilled that the recruiter knew about the Carnegie Medal. For Morgan, this moment highlighted the wide-ranging community of Carnegie heroes and those who admire their altruistic acts, he said.

Outside of Morgan's educational and professional pursuits, he enjoys outdoor activities including hiking and biking in the summer and skiing and snowshoeing in the winter.

"Growing up in Colorado I've grown a great appreciation for the outdoors," Morgan said.

Morgan is currently in Sicily, Italy, on a work exchange program, fulfilling a personal goal of traveling to Europe.

Congratulations, Robert! The Carnegie Hero Fund Commission is excited to see what you do next! 🌟

—Abby Brady, operations and outreach assistant/archivist



Two water boxes, one being the figuring box in which Rex A. Lewis and Michael DeWitt Puckett entered to attempt to rescue their coworker Lloyd Hansen.

Rescue inside the water box

Two men attempt to pull coworker from oxygen-deficient, toxic gas-filled unit

On the morning of Friday, October 19, 1984, 50-year-old Lloyd Hansen, senior control operator from Watsonville, California, was working at an inoperative surface condensing unit at a Pacific Gas and Electric Company fossil-fuel power plant in Moss Landing, California, adjacent to the Monterey Bay.

The power plant used steam turbines to generate electricity, using the surface condenser to capture steam exhausted from the turbine and then cool it and condense it for reuse. The condenser pumped sea water, transported to the plant via an underground pipe, through tubes inside a 21-foot-high, semi-circular, steel water box where the steam exhausted. The cold water cooled the steam back into liquid, collected at the bottom of the box.

The condenser was 15 feet wide at its base, tapering up. A 9-foot-wide vertical tunnel under the box contained still seawater that had sat since the broken unit was shut down 38 days prior. As employees worked to fix the condenser, a temporary floor was installed inside the water box, leaving a 3-foot-wide opening at the base of the unit to the tunnel. Workers could enter the water box through either of two small hatches.

The surface of the seawater was about 14 feet below the temporary floor, where decaying marine life floated. Dangerous concentration of dimethyl sulfide, methyl mercaptan, and hydrogen sulfide gases had built up in the tunnel, though the unit had been vented a number of times in the previous week

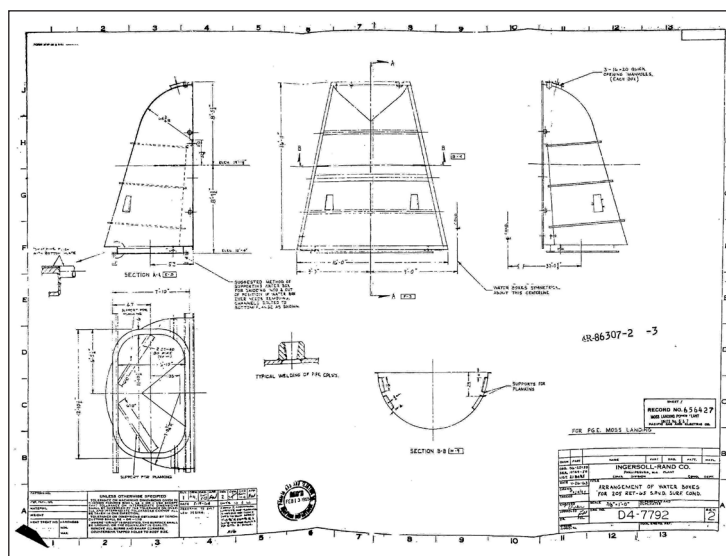


Diagram of the water box contained in an official report by Pacific Gas and Electric Company following the accident in which Rex A. Lewis and Michael DeWitt Puckett attempted to rescue Lloyd Hansen.

after plant workers working to drain the tunnel detected a strong smell.

On the morning of the accident, Hansen called a 23-year-old auxiliary operator and asked him to meet him at the water box.

In the meantime, Hansen entered the water box through one of the 20- by 16-inch hatches. According to a state occupational safety and health division report, several employees saw Hansen inside the water box adjusting the submersible pump intended to drain the sea water from the tunnel. ►

The auxiliary operator and **Rex A. Lewis**, a 30-year-old operating foreman from Watsonville, California, approached the scene but they could not find Hansen. His gloves, hard hat, and wrench lay ominously outside the hatch.

Lewis and the operator actively searched for Hansen, looking through the hatches and down through the temporary floor. The submersible pump had been placed in the water, which was creating turbulence. When it was turned off, the water calmed, and Hansen was floating face-down on the water's surface.

"Help!" called Lewis and the operator.

Michael DeWitt Puckett, 31, mechanic from Fresno, California, and another man ran to the water box.

Other coworkers rushed over with rope for Lewis and the operator to tie around themselves. Lewis and the operator entered the water box.

The operator, getting dizzy, cautioned Lewis to flee the water box, then exited to get more assistance.

From inside, Lewis instructed the men outside the box to lower him by the rope into the water tunnel so he could attempt to retrieve Hansen. Lewis reached the water's surface and placed a hand on Hansen's back to steady his descent.

Puckett then saw Lewis go limp.

"Pull him up!" Puckett shouted.

The workers pulled on the rope to raise Lewis, but he became stuck on the temporary flooring inside the water box and could not be lifted higher.

Without a breathing device or rope, Puckett immediately entered the water box. Suspecting the presence of methane gas in the unit's atmosphere, he tried to breathe as little as possible as he reached toward Lewis through the opening in the floor.

Puckett grasped Lewis under his arms and pulled him up into the water box. As he lifted Lewis to one of the hatches, Puckett began feeling dizzy, and went to the other hatch to get a breath of fresh air.

Meanwhile, those outside the water box struggled to remove Lewis from the opening. Catching his breath, Puckett returned to push Lewis through the access point. Lewis had stopped breathing several times and needed mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. In the interim, Hansen remained inside the water box.

After Lewis had been pulled to safety and revived, Puckett left the water box to fetch a self-contained breathing apparatus that had a small oxygen tank before climbing back through the hatch and affixing the device to his face.

He clambered to secure Hansen, twice running out of oxygen and needing to get a new tank, and once entering the water, only ceasing his efforts once fire fighters arrived.

It took firefighters two hours to retrieve Hansen. He was taken to a hospital and attempts were made to revive him, but were ultimately unsuccessful.

Lewis, Puckett, and the auxiliary operator were the only three employees who had fully entered the water box to effect a rescue, but a total of 31 employees underwent medical surveillance for exposure to the toxic gases inside the tunnel.



A scanned photograph from the file that depicts one of two 20- by 16-inch hatches through which Rex A. Lewis and Michael DeWitt Puckett entered to attempt to rescue Lloyd Hansen.

At the hospital, Lewis was admitted to the intensive care unit where he was treated for methane gas intoxication, lack of oxygen to the brain, and possible aspiration of water. He regained consciousness about five hours later. He was released the next day and made a full recovery.

During a conversation with Hero Fund case investigator Jeff Dooley, Lewis said that when he woke up in the hospital he thought his alarm had gone off and he was late for work.

Unfortunately, Puckett suffered more long term effects from his participation in the rescue effort. After receiving oxygen at the power plant, he experienced uncontrolled vomiting for six months. His doctor attributed this to Puckett inhaling one of the gases present in the water tank.

During his extensive research, Dooley gathered eyewitness accounts of the actions of Lewis and Puckett, consulted the plant manager, reviewed a lengthy and wide-ranging company report, and accessed third-party summaries of the accident to build a solid case for awarding Puckett and Lewis for their heroic deeds.

Dooley learned from the plant manager that Hansen had violated plant safety procedures in trying to drain the tunnel, and that neither rescuer was responsible for Hansen's safety.

However, an independent investigation performed by state occupational safety and health division did find the company at-large responsible. The power company "had been operating for 30 years and should have known that poison gases or lack of oxygen could have existed in their confined spaces, and appropriate measures should have been taken to prevent this type of accident," the report concluded.

In addition to interviewing the two rescuers, Dooley questioned two other employee eyewitnesses to the rescues.

Lewis and Puckett were awarded the Carnegie Medal on December 16, 1986, and were granted \$2,500. ☼

—Abby Brady, Operations & Outreach Assistant/Archivist

**Carnegie Hero Fund Commission**

436 Seventh Ave., Ste. 1101 • Pittsburgh, PA 15219-1841

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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.

Carnegie Hero Fund Commission
436 Seventh Ave., Ste. 1101
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-1841

Editor: Jewels Phraner

Telephone: 412-281-1302 Toll-free: 800-447-8900
Fax: 412-281-5751
E-mail: carnegiehero@carnegiehero.org,
impulse@carnegiehero.org
Website: carnegiehero.org

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

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THE QUOTABLE A.C.

We live in a heroic age. Not seldom are we thrilled by deeds of heroism where men or women are injured or lose their lives in attempting to preserve or rescue their fellows; such the heroes of civilization

— Andrew Carnegie

Hero Fund Deed of Trust, 1904

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.

IMPULSE ONLINE? Should you wish to receive *Impulse* in PDF rather than in your mailbox, let us know.

CARNEGIE HERO FUND COMMISSION

436 Seventh Ave., Suite 1101, Pittsburgh, PA 15219-1841

Telephone: (412) 281-1302 Toll free: (800) 447-8900

Fax: (412) 281-5751

E-mail: carnegiehero@carnegiehero.orgWebsite: carnegiehero.org