



Impulse

A periodic newsletter of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission

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BOARD NOTES

3 DECADES OF SERVICE MARKED BY THE PEOPLE MET ALONG THE WAY

*By Mark Laskow, Chair Emeritus
Carnegie Hero Fund Commission*

It was 29 years ago that the late, great Tom Hilliard asked me to become a member of the Hero Fund Commission. I didn't have a clear idea of what I was getting into, but I trusted Tom. As usual,



Mark Laskow

I was right to do so. When the Hero Fund leadership asked me to serve as President in 2001, I jumped at the chance. Again, it was the right choice. What an incredible two decades it turned out to be! I can describe what made it all so special in just one word: People. But let me divide "people" into three groups.

The first group who lit me up for 29 years actually consists of one person – none other than Andrew Carnegie. The Carnegie Hero Fund is still alive and vigorous after 119 years partly because of his endowment, but mostly because of his brilliant vision. He had such moral and practical clarity to his vision of heroism that it is a joy to work for its realization.

The second group of people who brought joy to this mission are the citizens of what I call Carnegie World. (You, my valued readers, are participants in Carnegie World yourselves.) First among them, and closest to me, are the staff and board members of the Hero Fund, my great companions and friends of 29 years. Some of my closest relationships are with members of ►



*Carnegie Hero **Andrew Parent**, his wife Ann, and their dog Charm pose in front of an Andy's Tow Service truck. Tow truck owner Parent recently donated \$5,000 to the city of Oneida, New York, to be put toward a dog park in its Fourth Ward.*

Carnegie hero donates grant money to the dogs

By Roger Seibert / Oneida Dispatch

Local tow truck owner **Andrew Parent** recently received a \$5,500 grant from the Carnegie Hero Fund for a burning vehicle rescue that he and fellow Oneida, New York, resident **Roger Combs** made in 2021, attempting to save truck driver Jack Pylman of Utica, New York.

That money has gone to the dogs.

Parent said with his award money he made a \$5,000 contribution to a dog park that will be built in Oneida's Fourth Ward.

"I know of a bank in Oneida that gave ten thousand dollars, and I also wanted to help," he said.

Parent's business is located in the Fourth Ward.

Parent said he hopes his contribution will be an example to Oneida's other business owners. ► p. 4



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this group. I worked with two remarkable chief executives of the Hero Fund, Walter Rutkowski and Eric Zahren. There might not be two more different men on this planet, but each demonstrated superb energy and ability pursuing Andrew Carnegie's vision. Both became great friends.

Beyond the Hero Fund itself are the people of the other 20 or so Carnegie organizations in the United States, Canada, and Europe. The late Vartan Gregorian of the Carnegie Corporation was especially kind and generous to the Hero Fund, one of the smallest of Andrew Carnegie's creations, and he was equally so to me. He involved me in his effort to build a community among the Carnegie organizations. It was a mystery why, but I loved being part of what he was doing. This also introduced me to two remarkable great-grandchildren of Andrew Carnegie, Linda Hills and William Thomson. Linda has long been a member of the Hero Fund Commission and Will a leader in Carnegie World in general. Will laid on some challenging tasks, but the two of them provided energy and vision that made it all easier.

The most important group of people is the third, the Carnegie heroes themselves. It is an honor to understand their stories and deeds and such a pleasure to meet them in person. Occasionally some kind soul will compliment me on the wonderful work of the Hero Fund. I thank them, but quickly add that it is the Carnegie heroes themselves who did the real work and all too often paid a very real price. We are just the scribblers who chronicle their deeds or, in this writer's case, comment on them. One of the great things about the first two groups of people I am thanking is their respect for and deference to the heroes. It's not about the Hero Fund, it's about the heroes.

There are tradeoffs in all of this. As stirring and inspirational as the rescues are, the price paid by Carnegie heroes can be steep, and this has had a deep personal impact on me. The hard reality is that about 20 percent of the Carnegie Medal recipients die in the rescue attempt. Others suffer serious injuries and, in my experience, almost all the rescuers have a lot to deal with emotionally in the aftermath. We are still learning about this. Sometimes someone will wonder out loud in my presence if they could have found the courage to perform one of these heroic rescues. I always advise them, "Pray that you never find out." This heroism thing is a serious business.

I can condense the joys and difficulties of 29 years in one episode, a ceremony ►

Local Carnegie hero scholarship fund gets boost this summer

This summer, nearly \$33,000 was raised for a memorial scholarship in honor of Carnegie Hero **Forrest L. Willey**, leaving organizers hopeful about the future of the fund.

On Oct. 5, 1966, 15-year-old student David Black approached the Grand Rapids Middle School with a loaded .22-caliber pistol. He shot and seriously wounded one of his intended targets, 14-year-old Kevin Roth, a fellow student who Black felt had teased him. Willey, then 58, the director of secondary education at the Grand Rapids Middle School, heard there was a student with a gun on campus and did not hesitate to go directly to the scene. He approached David and asked for the gun. David shot at Willey and missed with the first bullet, but continued to shoot at him causing Willey to collapse. Black then fired a couple shots at the police before fleeing the property. Willey died eight days later.



Forrest L. Willey

Willey was awarded a posthumous Carnegie Medal by the Hero Fund and is listed on the Memorial to Fallen Educators on the campus of Emporia State University in Emporia, Kansas. In October 2013, a memorial bench was installed outside of the Robert J. Elkington Middle School in Willey's honor. The money for the bench was raised by local Itasca, Michigan, area resident, Rachel Bledsoe, who is dedicated to raising awareness of the ongoing problem of bullying.

“By funding this scholarship, we all have a hand in accomplishing Mr. Willey's goal of helping students, something he gave his life for.”

The Hero Fund provided a monthly stipend to Willey's widow, Lucille A. Willey, from 1968 until she remarried in 1975.

In fall 2016, on the 50th anniversary of the school shooting, the Grand Rapids High School Class of 1966 established the Forrest Willey Memorial Scholarship in Willey's honor at the Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation. Forrest Willey's son, Bob, was a 1966 classmate, and they wanted to do something to honor Forrest Willey.

Each year, the Forrest Willey Memorial Scholarship fund provides two scholarships: one for a Grand Rapids High School graduate and one for a Northern Lights Community School graduate.

Community Foundation Chief Development Officer Mindy Nuhring said that fundraising for the scholarship had stagnated until this summer when several reunion classes got involved in promoting the fund.

“It is hard to know how much suffering Forrest Willey prevented by leaving the safety of ►



*A memorial dedicated to fallen educators, including Carnegie heroes **Forrest L. Willey, John A. Klang, and Michael T. Landsberry**, was unveiled June 12, 2014, on the grounds of Emporia, Kansas, State University, home to the National Teachers Hall of Fame. Intended to be a permanent tribute to U.S. educators who “gave their all” for their profession, according to Carol Strickland, then director of the teachers hall of fame. There are 176 names on the memorial.*

his office that day. Had he not intervened we don’t know how many students might have lost their lives. One thing we do know, Mr. Willey intentionally placed himself between the shooter and the intended target. That should make him a hero in anyone’s estimation. By funding this scholarship, we all have a hand in accomplishing Mr. Willey’s goal of helping students, something he gave his life for,” says Rick Blake, Class of 1966.

About \$32,800 has been donated to the fund since May, Nuhring said.

The Community Foundation manages donations for several causes in the Grand Rapids area.

Donations for the scholarship fund can be made on the Foundation’s website, gracf.org or mailed to the Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation at 350 NW 1st Ave., Suite E, Grand Rapids, MN 55744.

This article contains a reprint of the May 29, 2022 article appearing in the *Grand Rapids (Michigan) Herald-Review*. ☼



ATTENTION GRADUATING CHFC SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

The Carnegie Hero Fund now provides honor cords representing the Tartan plaid of Andrew Carnegie to Hero Fund scholarship recipients. 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.

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awarding the Carnegie Medal to the survivors of 12 coal miners who died attempting a rescue of a co-worker in the Brookwood Mine disaster in 2001.

The families of the rescuers, parents and wives, almost all with children, assembled in the rotunda of the Alabama State Capitol in Montgomery. Alabama Gov. Donald Eugene Siegelman and I presented the Medal to the families -- a glorious and excruciating task. The weight of what had been lost hung in the room. What could a handful of medals mean in the face of that? What could my words possibly mean? Fortunately, I could fall back on Merle Travis, America’s true poet laureate. For whatever

reason, I had memorized his words:

It’s dark as a dungeon, damp as the dew.

Where the danger is double and pleasures are few.

Where the rain never falls and the sun never shines,

It’s dark as a dungeon way down in the mine.

The most important group is the third, the Carnegie heroes themselves. It is an honor to understand their stories and deeds and such a pleasure to meet them in person.

I don’t know if this helped the families, but it did stabilize me and help me fight back the coming tears. So, I confessed what I believed, that words and medals could not bring back their sons, husbands, and fathers. But what the Hero Fund could do, I said, was to recognize and proclaim to the world their heroic deed, performed in the lonely dark of a dungeon more than a thousand feet below the earth. We could pledge that what they had done that day would not be forgotten. It was a terrible scene there, with the grieving families. It was also glorious. It is glorious work to keep that promise to those 12 men and to all the more than 10,000 heroes who have earned the Carnegie Medal. ☼



BEHIND THE SCENES

HERO FUND WELCOMES DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS WITH PASSION, PURPOSE, AND PROFICIENCY

Melissa Wade came to the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission in early September as the fund's first-ever Director of Operations, bringing with her a wealth of non-profit experience.



Melissa Wade

"I am thrilled to join the Hero Fund staff. Honoring heroes for saving others is an exciting cause to serve, and I'm looking forward to contributing to the organization's innerworkings to keep the Hero Fund as relevant and efficient as ever," Wade said.

This newly created position will work closely with Fund President Eric Zahren and oversee the organization's day-to-day operations including human relations, outreach, vendor relations, program and data management, and special projects.

"The Hero Fund has been awarding the Carnegie Medal for 118 years, and we

continue to do that well," said Zahren. "But Melissa joins a storied cause at a time of important change and pursuit of wider goals for the fund envisioned by Mr. Carnegie. Melissa has the vision and skillset to help us keep pace with new challenges as we continue to recognize and support civilian heroism in the 21st century."

In her own words, she shares about what brought her to the Hero Fund:

At the beginning of my career, I thought I wanted to be a TV news reporter, so I did an internship at a TV station. Let's just say that at the end of my internship that thought ►

When I learned about the operations position at the Hero Fund, it was truly a no-brainer. It immediately resonating with my core beliefs and desire to help others.

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Hero's grant money goes to the dogs

"We should support the city, and by that, I mean doing more than just paying taxes," he said. "Of course, I understand that times are tough and not everyone can give."

The project is one of many the city has undertaken in an effort to renew its downtown business district.

"I know the dog park has been a struggle to complete. They've been talking about it for literal decades," said Parent. "When I contacted my councilwoman to ask how I could help, she said the project was exactly \$5,000 short, so it worked out."

Parent owns a Goldendoodle named Charm, who also approved of the donation.

"When I went to meet an official involved in the project at the site, I had my dog with me then, and she ran around, played, and then laid down to take a nap," Parent said, laughing.

Parent, a former paratrooper with the 101st Airborne Division, and Combs are two of 16 recipients of the Carnegie Medal for the second quarter of 2022. The medal is provided through the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission and is North America's highest honor for civilian bravery.

The medal is given to those who risk their lives saving or attempting to save someone in danger. About 20 percent of its recipients have died during their acts of heroism. It is awarded four times a year, and the acts of courage must be able to be verified.

The award includes \$5,500 as a gift, the majority of which Parent donated to the dog park.

On June 21, 2021, Pylman, 73, was driving his truck along Route 5 towards New Hartford. For unknown reasons Pylman's truck left the road and struck a utility pole. The pole fell and scattered live wires along the road. Pylman's truck overturned and caught fire. He was trapped beneath it.

Combs, 74, a retired information specialist who also lives in Oneida, braved the fallen wires and helped Parent get a hold of Pylman. They dragged him away from the fire to safety.

"I could not have rescued Jack without the help of Roger Combs," Parent said.

Pylman was airlifted from St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Utica to SUNY Upstate Medical Center in Syracuse. He died there seven days later.

"I am very humbled to have received this award," Parent told the Dispatch in a previous interview. "People have died earning this award."

Parent said he and Charm are looking forward to being there for opening day of the dog park slated for the end of the summer. ☼



Andrew Parent's dog Charm, a Goldendoodle, visited the site of the future dog park with Parent. 'She ran around, played, then laid down to take a nap,' he said.

FRIENDS REMEMBERED

Bruce A. Baxter, about 72, died Wednesday, June 22, 2022.

In 2008, Baxter, then 58, rescued an elderly woman from burning in Petaluma, California. The 87-year-old woman was in the living room of her doublewide mobile home after an accidental fire broke out in that room. Her next-door neighbor, Baxter was alerted to the fire by the structure's smoke alarm. He responded to the scene, gained entry through the front door, and saw the woman, whose attire was aflame, sitting on a couch in the far end of the living room. He crossed the smoky room to her, lifted her from the couch, and patted out the flames on her attire. Grasping her, Baxter ushered her to the front door and outside to safety as flames spread quickly to engulf that end of the mobile home, destroying it. The woman was hospitalized for treatment of severe burns and died of her injuries two months later.

Baxter worked as an accountant. ☼



Ronald L. Baliko

Ronald L. Baliko, 83, of Brown City, Michigan, died Saturday, Aug. 27, 2022.

He was born and raised in Detroit. He married Susan Wilder on March 5, 1977, and retired as a skilled tradesman after 37 years with Ford Motor Company.

He received the Carnegie Medal in 1976, after he saved two children from a burning apartment building in 1974 in Utica, Michigan. The mother of a 2-year-old girl and 3-year-old boy ran to Baliko's neighboring home and

alerted him to a fire in her home. Then a 35-year-old equipment driver, Baliko entered the burning living room, and despite dense smoke and spreading flames, made his way to the bedroom, where the children had by then lost consciousness. Breaking a window, Baliko dropped the kids to the ground below. Flames were spreading into the bedroom as Baliko then jumped from the window, falling onto his back and suffering broken vertebrae. The toddlers were revived, and Baliko recovered after hospitalization.

Baliko enjoyed landscaping, boating, riding motorcycles, building and flying remote-control airplanes, playing cards with family and friends, and cruising the back roads in his Side-by-Side with his dog.

Ronald is survived by his children Brian, Ronald, Brandy, and Michelle Baliko; brother, William Baliko; and grandchildren, Nicholas and Jessa Baliko. ☼



GRAVE MARKERS AVAILABLE

The Hero Fund is pleased to offer at no cost a bronze grave marker to the next of kin of any awardee who has died. The 3.75-inch medallion is designed to replicate the look of the Carnegie Medal, and can be displayed on an awardee's stone or bronze headstone or on a flat-faced urn. For information, email us at carnegiehero@carnegiehero.org.

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DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

had vanished.

Fortunately for me, there was a position available at another station that would allow me to utilize my education and skills in a different capacity in the Marketing and Creative Services department.

That role was my introduction to many nonprofit organizations in and around the Pittsburgh region, and I've never left the nonprofit sector since. Since then, I've been blessed to have positions that were all connected in one way or another to nonprofit organizations that help people.

Those are the aspects of my career that have meant the most to me.

When I learned about the operations position at the Hero Fund, it was truly a no-brainer. It immediately resonated with my core beliefs and desire to help others.

Melissa joins a storied cause at a time of important change and pursuit of wider goals for the fund envisioned by Mr. Carnegie.

This organization celebrates individuals who have sacrificed themselves for a complete stranger, while providing much needed help to those affected by the incident. It's a role where I'm able to combine my professional experience of working for profit, non-profit, and government organizations with what I now believe is my purpose.

It is an honor for me to serve as the Director of Operations for the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission.

For me, it combines some truly wonderful attributes of humanity. We often encounter cases where the lives of entire families have been changed all because of one incident.

I am as grateful to be a part of this organization as the recipients are to receive awards from the Commission.

I'm excited to be a part of this work, all that it does and all that it will do. ☼



PRESENTING



Carnegie heroes **Anthony Peterkin**, left, and **Jaden DeShawn Peterkin**, right, stand proudly with Hero Fund President Eric Zahren after he presented the father and son with the Carnegie Medal at a ceremony in the Cumberland County (North Carolina) Public Library on Sept. 23.

On April 11, 2021, the father-son team sustained injuries after removing their neighbor who had collapsed in his burning Fayetteville, North Carolina, home. The 88-year-old man was lying on his kitchen floor after a fire broke out at the rear of the house. Peterkin, 52, a training technician, and Jaden, a 17-year-old high school student, ran through the home's attached garage to an interior door. From there, the older Peterkin proceeded to the home's kitchen where flames engulfed the floor, ceiling, and walls. Crawling, Peterkin found the man and dragged him toward the garage door where Jaden assisted. Peterkin and Jaden placed him on a small rug and dragged him to safety. The man died the following day from injuries sustained in the fire.

Zahren praised the courage and selfless action of the father and son, who worked in concert without regard for their own safety to attempt to save the life of another.

"Because what these gentlemen did, what every Carnegie hero has done, is (to) have laid their life down," Zahren said. "They didn't know whether they'd pick it back up again, whether it would be given back to them or taken away. But in acting, they already made that choice and accepted whatever that outcome. The other person in those moments mattered more."

Peterkin expressed gratitude for the honor and offered continued help to the victim's family, who were in attendance at the presentation.

"My life has changed," he said.

Carnegie Hero **Ross C. Johnson**, left, poses with Rep. John Rutherford in his Jacksonville office after Rutherford presented Johnson with the Carnegie Medal Sept. 6.

In May 2020, Johnson, then 19, saved a 13-year-old who was carried 450 feet from shore by a rip current in the Atlantic Ocean off of Neptune Beach, Florida. Rough conditions made it difficult for the boy to stay afloat. Johnson, of Jacksonville, Florida, was at the beach and, upon seeing the boy, entered the water despite 4-foot waves. He swam to the boy, grasped his forearm, and towed him back toward shore, but the boy repeatedly submerged him in an effort to keep himself above the surface of the water. Johnson repositioned the boy to hold him across the chest and then backstroked toward the beach. At about 75 feet from shore, Johnson was nearly exhausted and struggled with keeping them both above the water's surface, but two men took the boy from Johnson and brought him to the beach.

Johnson said he "floated, limped onto the beach. I don't remember ever being that exhausted before. I was 100 percent on empty."

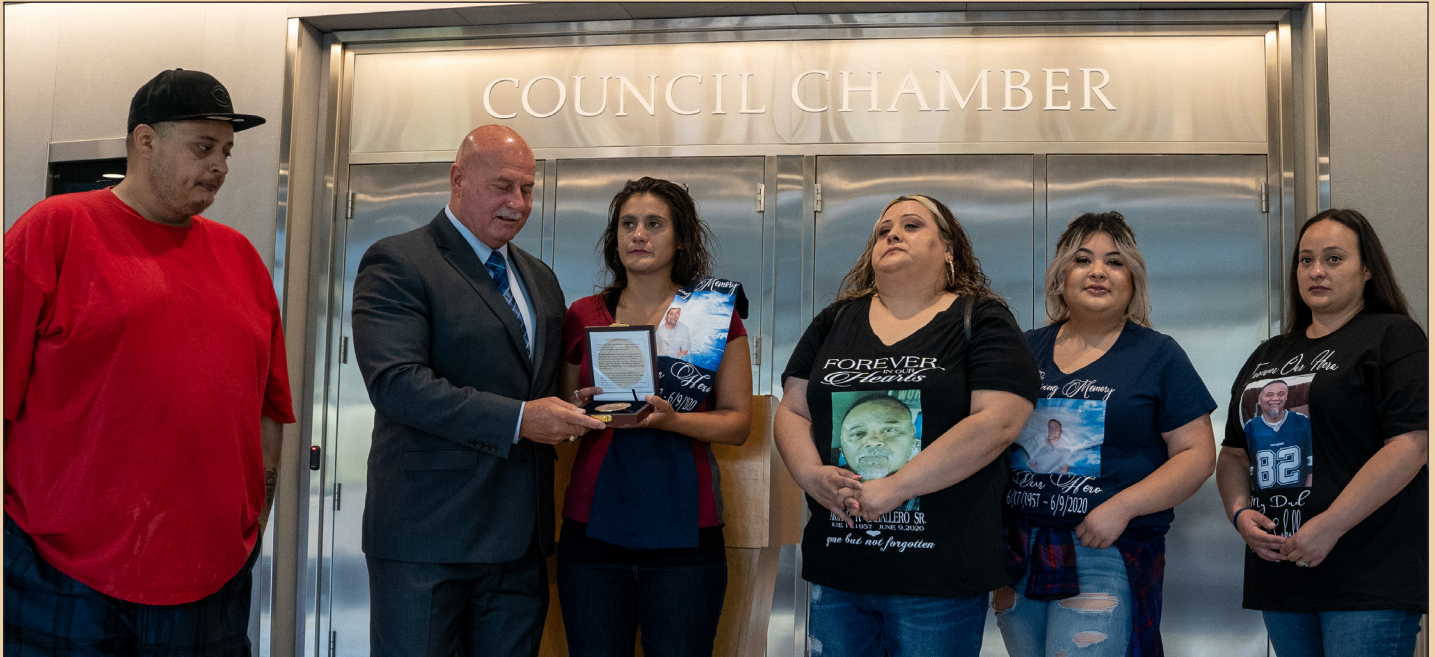
The private ceremony included Johnson's parents, Bill and Heather Johnson.

"Ross demonstrated a great deal of courage and his willingness to act in a moment of need speaks to his leadership qualities and personal values," Rutherford said in a Facebook post about the ceremony.



Photo by Julie Griner, press secretary to Rep. John Rutherford.

PRESENTING



Fresno (California) Mayor Jerry Dyer, second from left, presents the Carnegie Medal posthumously awarded to **Arthur R. Caballero, Sr.**, to his family. Pictured from left are Caballero's son Arthur Caballero, Jr., daughters Desiree Caballero and Melissa Caballero, granddaughter Dezire Puentes, and daughter Michelle Escobedo at a ceremony held in Caballero's honor on Aug. 24.

On June 9, 2020, Arthur Caballero, Sr., drowned after saving a girl struggling in the Kings River in Sanger, California. After being caught in a swift current, the 7-year-old girl was dragged away from her family. Fishing from the river bank nearby, Caballero, a 62-year-old painter, entered the cold water fully clothed and swam to the girl, grasping her and thrusting her back toward the riverbank where others helped her to safety. The current pulled Caballero downstream and out of sight. Almost an hour later, responding authorities located Caballero, unresponsive. He had drowned.

"No amount of medals or recognition can bring Arthur back – but, we, at the City of Fresno and our friends at the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, hope that this gesture makes them proud of Arthur and the courageous man he was," said Dyer.



Hero Fund President Eric Zahren, center, presents the Carnegie Medal to **Christopher Lee Taylor**, left, and **Patrick J. Driscoll**, right, during an Aug. 9, 2022, private luncheon in Dayton, Ohio.

Though the two awarded acts were unrelated, the two heroes agreed to a joint presentation, each travelling about 40 miles from their respective homes to receive their Carnegie Medal.

"In the consideration of heroic acts, we typically focus on one individual in one moment in time. But today we are fortunate to celebrate and recognize two separate moments in which two people acted in behalf of strangers," said Zahren. "These men had not previously met. But in their meeting today we see the commonalities in the hearts of these heroes that transcend time and distance."

On Oct. 13, 2020, in New Carlisle, Ohio, Driscoll rescued a couple from their burning and overturned plane after it crash-landed in a field. Driscoll, also a pilot, rushed to the passenger side of the plane, crouched atop the plane's wing, which contained a fuel tank, reached inside, and released the passenger's seat belt, freeing her. He escorted her a few feet away from the plane before approaching the pilot's side. He again crouched atop the wing as flames intensified and spread before reaching inside to unbuckle the pilot's seat belt. He pulled the man from the plane and carried him to safety before the aircraft was engulfed in flames.

Eighteen days later, Taylor rescued a man after a two-story Greenville, Ohio, home caught fire on Oct. 31, 2020. Taylor, a forklift operator, was driving nearby when he noticed an orange glow coming from the second story of the home. He approached a side door, and unsure if anyone was inside, ducked into the doorway and called out. Taylor heard the man moaning and entered the house. Navigating thick smoke and intense heat, Taylor made his way up the stairs, where he found the man unconscious near the top. As flames moved closer to them, Taylor picked up the man, cradling him, and carrying him down the stairs to safety.



OVERHEARD

If it weren't for those officers trying and trying and trying to get him out, he wouldn't be here today. I tried so many ways to get in that house. I couldn't do it, and they did. – Father of man who was pulled out of burning home by **Dylan M. Goetsch**, Carnegie Medal awardee #10128, and **Christopher W. Schmoker**, Carnegie Medal awardee #10129

If it wasn't for Calvin, we'd probably be having a funeral. Most civilians won't put their lives at risk and do this. – Fire chief on the actions of **Calvin Parham**, Carnegie Medal Awardee #10186

It is my opinion that Robert and Jamie Whitley have clearly surpassed what the term "Good Samaritan" is. The Whitleys' actions are what everyone should strive for if faced with a similar dangerous and stressful situation. – Conservation police officer speaking about **Robert J. Whitley**, Carnegie Medal awardee #10192, and **James W. Whitley II**, Carnegie Medal awardee #10193

There were a lot of people at the marina that day, and she, without hesitation, dove in and acted with her heart. She put herself in harm's way and did not shy away from the danger she was putting herself into. She is the definition of a true hero! I am amazed. – Daughter of man saved by **Hiedi Johnston**, Carnegie Medal awardee #10239

We're calling him not just a Good Samaritan, but our Apollo Beach hero. – Sheriff who responded to scene of water rescue where Carnegie Medal awardee #10262 **Kristoff Jaleel Murray** died attempting to save a father and son

My first words to those gentlemen (were) 'you guys are heroes.' And I still feel that way to this day. There were a lot of people on the beach this day and there were only two individuals that entered the water. – National Park Service Ranger speaking of **Justin Leland Perry**, Carnegie Medal awardee #10277, and **Jason Hadfield**, Carnegie Medal awardee #10278

I, for some reason, put myself in that scenario and asked myself what would you do. That guy is a hero. Really what life is about. Putting others before yourself. Amazing. – Facebook commenter on the actions of **Frank Williams, Jr.**, Carnegie Medal awardee #10060

He did some pretty heroic things today. – Fire marshal regarding **Steven W. Fitzpatrick**, Carnegie Medal awardee #10120

Four new board members join Carnegie Hero Fund Commission

The Hero Fund Commission recently announced the election of four new members at its Sept. 13 meeting.



Alex DiClaudio

Alex DiClaudio is a founding partner and managing director at Bedford Management Partners, a private capital group that specializes in sustainable infrastructure and technology investing. A Carnegie Mellon University graduate, he has served as president of the CMU Alumni Association Board, and is also an independent entertainment producer.



Kevin Hiles

Kevin Hiles, the executive vice president and chief operations officer of the Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, has worked for the Carnegie Museums since 2002, including as interim president from 2018 to 2020. A CPA and Certified Retirement Services Professional, Hiles has also served as chief financial officer for the Carnegie Museums and director of finance and business operations for both The Andy Warhol Museum and Carnegie Science Center.



Andrea Ross

Andrea Ross holds a Master of Science degree in pediatric-adolescent mental health nursing and has served on hospital boards, committees, and foundations, including Mountain Lake Community Service in Lake Wales, Florida; Long Trail School in Dorset, Vermont; Arlington Community Foundation in Arlington, Virginia; and president of the Association for the Care of Children's Health's Washington, D.C., affiliate.



Lee Tilghman

Lee Tilghman joined The Dietrich Foundation in 2015 and serves as a managing director, as well as volunteering on the executive board of the Laurel Highlands Council: Boy Scouts of America. Prior to Pittsburgh, Lee was an active duty officer in the U.S. Army.

"We are excited to welcome these four stellar individuals to the Commission, who bring decades of business, civic, and non-profit experience in Pittsburgh and beyond", said Eric Zahren, the Hero Fund's President and Chair. "As importantly, they each have developed a strong connection to the Fund's mission to recognize and support selfless civilian heroes." ❀

LATEST AWARDEES OF THE CARNEGIE MEDAL

Since the last issue of *Impulse*, the following 17 individuals have been awarded the Carnegie Medal, bringing the total number of recipients to 10,324 since the Hero Fund's inception in 1904. The latest awards were announced Sept. 19. The next announcement will be made in December.

A 39-year-old university student entered the 42-degree Blanche River multiple times to rescue a 7-year-old girl who was being carried downstream. On May 2, 2021, Emilia I. Fontana fell from a boulder into the swift-moving river near Kirkland Lake, Ontario. **Alec Daviau** of Kirkland Lake saw Emilia being carried downstream and ran along the bank to catch up to her. At one point, he entered the river, but the frigid temperature took his breath away and he was forced to exit. As she was carried toward a man-made dam, Daviau continued to run along the river following her. She submerged and Daviau lost sight of her. He climbed a hill to get a better vantage point and after spotting something below the water's surface, he slid down the bank and reentered the river, swimming about 25 feet from the bank. Searching with his hands under the surface of the water, he felt Emilia's hair and pulled her to the surface. Bringing her to the bank, he started resuscitation. Others who arrived at the bank took over the first aid and Emilia was revived. She was hospitalized overnight for hypothermia. Daviau was cold after the rescue and had difficulty breathing and walking. He also sustained lacerations and contusions to his legs. Both Emilia and Daviau recovered.



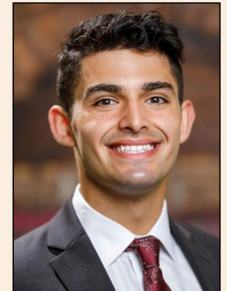
Working out on a New York pier over the East River, **Jameson Lobb** and **Raphael Jafri** responded to shouts of help from a bystander who noticed a 54-year-old man floating motionless in the river on Oct. 4, 2021. Lobb, a 24-year-old banking analyst of New York, jumped into the river fully clothed and swam to the man as he submerged. Reaching him, Lobb submerged, grasped him and brought him to the surface of the water. By then, Jafri, 24, a machine learning support engineer also of New York, arrived and Lobb positioned the man on Jafri's chest. With Jafri grasping his upper body and Lobb holding to his legs they swam him at least 100 feet to a pier. While Jafri held the man to the pier's barnacle-covered fender, Lobb climbed onto a beam and together they used a rope and a life ring to secure the man's head above the surface of the water as he regained consciousness. Bystanders had gathered on the pier and helped Lobb and Jafri lift



Alec Daviau



Jameson Lobb



Raphael Jafri

the man onto the pier. Lobb climbed onto the pier and, nearly exhausted, Jafri remained in the river until a police boat arrived. Lobb and Jafri suffered cuts on their arms and went to the hospital for evaluation.



A 28-year-old laborer died June 13, 2020, while saving his 8-year-old son from drowning in the Trinity River off of Fort Worth, Texas. **Saul Ortiz Marquez** of Justin, Texas, immediately entered the river after his son slipped and fell into the tributary stream and was carried into the river. Marquez entered the water, grasped the ▶



Jameson Lobb and Raphael Jafri secure a 54-year-old man above water with a rope after towing him more than 100 feet to a pier in the East River on Oct. 4, 2021. The two roommates were working out on a pier when they noticed him floating motionless in the water and immediately jumped into action.

Photo by Elliot Rodriguez.



*Carnegie Hero **Saul Ortiz Marquez** with his two sons, from left, Diego and Mateo Ortiz. Marquez died June 13, 2020, saving Diego from drowning in the Trinity River off of Fort Worth, Texas. Photo courtesy of the Ortiz family.*



LATEST AWARDEES

boy, and attempted to return to the bank with him. A woman entered the river and took the boy from Marquez and brought him to safety. Marquez submerged and did not resurface. Divers recovered his body about an hour later; he had drowned.



Three Los Angeles police officers responded to a Jan. 9 accident in which a plane had crash-landed at an intersection of a railroad track and a four-lane road in Pacoima, California. The plane straddled the single train track and local emergency officials responded. Officer **Christopher Bryant Aboyte**, 28, was assigned to monitor the condition of the plane's pilot, Mark Jenkins, 71, while officers **Damien Castro**, 28, and **Robert Michael Sherock**, 34, directed traffic and controlled the scene. Suddenly, a crossing gate descended and a five-car, 600-ton commuter train traveling at



Christopher Bryant Aboyte



Damien Castro



Robert Michael Sherock



Allen Noble Corson, Jr.



least 72 m.p.h. approached the crossing. Castro ran to the cockpit and tried in vain to open the mangled cockpit door, but it wouldn't budge. Sherock then ran over, joining Aboyte and Castro. They reached into the plane and, together, hoisted Jenkins over the dashboard and out through the windshield area. Placing him on the pavement, they dragged Jenkins away from the plane. Four seconds after his removal, the train struck the plane. The officers were not injured.

A 26-year-old slot machine attendant from Taftville, Connecticut, was dining July 3, 2019, with his parents and fiancée at a Worcester, Massachusetts, restaurant, when he heard screaming from elsewhere inside the facility. **Allen Noble Corson, Jr.**, ran in the direction of the noise where he saw a man attacking 31-year-old Amanda Dabrowski. Corson confronted the assailant, wrestling and pinning him to the floor. As they struggled, the assailant, who was wielding a knife in each hand, stabbed



Body camera footage from Los Angeles Police officer **Robert Michael Sherock** showing Metrolink train striking the crashed Cessna as officers drag injured pilot Mark Jenkins, 71, from the wreckage in Pacoima, California, on Jan. 9, 2022. Sherock and officers **Christopher Bryant Aboyte** and **Damien Castro** had moved the pilot about 15 feet from the plane when it was struck.



Kenneth S. Andreen



Frank P. Axiotes



Suzanne Fortin

Corson in his left side. Dabrowski had slipped from the assailant's grasp and was sitting against a wall with fatal stab wounds. Two other men joined Corson in securing the assailant until police arrived and arrested him. Dabrowski died of her wounds. Corson received sutures and recovered.



Twenty-nine-year-old Lucia M. Mendoza struggled in the turbulent spillway water of Wright Patman Lake in Texarkana, Texas, after the car she was in left the road and entered the water and submerged on April 4, 2021. Mendoza exited the car, but was submerged multiple times as the current carried her toward open floodgates downstream. **Dustin Wayne Roach**, a 35-year-old construction worker of Ashdown, Arkansas, was fishing at the scene and dived in the water after seeing the woman bobbing in the water. He swam about 50 feet to her, grasped her and swam her toward the bank of the lake. Reaching a point about 40 feet from the bank, Roach

struggled to catch his breath and spit up water that he had ingested. Others on the bank threw them a fishing line, which he secured around his torso. Still holding to Mendoza, he swam the rest of the distance to the bank while those on land pulled them to safety.



A 45-year-old man remained in his Pittsburgh home after flames broke out on the second story on Feb. 24. Local delivery driver, 48-year-old **Kenneth S. Andreen** was driving nearby when he saw smoke and flames issuing from the top story of the home. He opened the front door and called out for anyone inside the structure. Carsten B. Molt responded from the first-floor living room. Despite heavy smoke inside the home, Andreen went to Molt, placed him over his shoulder and left the house as conditions inside the house deteriorated. Molt sustained smoke inhalation and was treated at a hospital. Andreen also inhaled smoke, but he recovered later that day. ►



*The burned-out wreckage of a Sept. 25, 2020, multi-vehicle, interstate accident, in which Carnegie Hero **Frank P. Axiotes** helped remove the trapped driver of the SUV that was on fire and crushed between the highway median barrier and a tractor-trailer. The driver was not burned. Photo courtesy of Nebraska State Patrol.*



*Firefighters extinguish a fire in a mobile home after a March 6, 2021, propane tank explosion caused unsafe conditions inside the home. Neighbor **Suzanne Fortin** saw smoke issuing from the home and entered it to guide its 75-year-old occupant outside to safety. Photo courtesy of Cowichan Valley Citizen.*



LATEST AWARDEES



A Sept. 25, 2020, multi-vehicle highway accident in Lincoln, Nebraska, left Madison R. Daly, 21, in the driver's seat of a sport utility vehicle that was pinned between a tractor trailer, concrete barrier, and a third vehicle. Flames broke out immediately. Pinned under the crumpled dashboard and steering wheel, Daly could not free herself. **Frank P. Axiotes**, a 49-year-old salesman from Elkhorn, Nebraska, was driving nearby and stopped at the scene. He ran across the highway to the barrier and reached through the driver's window to pull Daly out, but he couldn't remove her. He jumped onto the vehicle's hood and punched the windshield attempting to gain access to Daly. Another man arrived and Axiotes returned to the driver's window where they, together, pulled Daly out of the car. Shortly, Daly's vehicle was engulfed in flames. Although Daly suffered accident-related injuries, she was not burned. Axiotes sustained lacerations to his hand and was treated at the scene; he recovered.



A March 6, 2021, propane-related explosion left 75-year-old David M. Munce dazed and motionless at the stove inside his Duncan, British Columbia, mobile home. Neighbor **Suzanne Fortin**, 70, heard the explosion and saw smoke issuing from Munce's home. Fortin entered the mobile home, where flames had broken out behind the stove and along the rear wall. Fortin went to Munce and guided him outside to safety. The fire eventually engulfed the mobile home. Munce was hospitalized for more than a month and underwent grafting surgery on his hands. Fortin was uninjured.



Five Massachusetts police officers will receive the Carnegie Medal after helping three teens struggling to stay afloat in Green Hill Pond in Worcester, Massachusetts, on June 4, 2021. Worcester officer **Scott Morin**, 26, was the first to arrive at the scene and entered the deep, 52-degree water of the pond fully clothed. He swam about 35 feet and grasped a 15-year-old boy and 14-year-old girl each by the hand and towed them to wadable water near the bank. Morin was nearly



Scott Morin



Amy M. Waterman



Angela C. Consiglio



Steven Barnett

exhausted after the rescue and was taken to the hospital by ambulance. He was later released and recovered. Officer **Enmanuel Familia**, 38, also with Worcester police, also responded to the pond, where others alerted him that a 14-year-old boy remained in the pond and had submerged. Fully clothed, Familia entered the pond and swam about 60 feet toward the teen's last known location, but he shortly struggled in the water and submerged. By then state trooper **Amy M. Waterman**, 47, and Worcester officers **Angela C. Consiglio**, 51, and **Steven Barnett**, 56, had arrived and entered the pond to search for the teen, then swam to where Familia was last seen. Though all three officers dived

multiple times to locate Familia, they could not find him. Fire officials arrived and ordered all of the officers out of the water. Waterman and Consiglio, nearly exhausted, exited the water, and were taken by ambulance to the hospital. They were later released and recovered. Barnett remained in the water where Familia was last seen to mark the position for fire department divers. He too was taken to the hospital by ambulance where he was treated and released. Familia and the 14-year-old boy were recovered by divers later that day; they had drowned. ☹️



*The Familia family: from left, daughter Jayla Amani, wife Jennifer, Carnegie Hero **Enmanuel Familia**, and son Jovan Enmanuel. Enmanuel Familia drowned June 4, 2021, while attempting to rescue a teen who had submerged in Green Hill Pond in Worcester, Massachusetts.*

PRESENTING



From left, Jersey City (New Jersey) Mayor Steven Fulop and Ryan Chu, honorary mayor for the day, present Carnegie Hero **Anthony Stephen Capuano** the Carnegie Medal at a private ceremony held Sept. 29 in the Mayor's Office.

Two years earlier Capuano entered the 50-degree Newark Bay near Bayonne, New Jersey, after witnessing a man struggling to escape his car after it plunged into the bay. Responding to cries for help, Capuano, a 29-year-old aquatic program administrator, removed his prosthetic lower leg, scaled a nearby fence, scrambled over large rocks, and entered the water. He swam to the driver's door of the car, grasped the man under the arms, and pulled him through the driver's window despite rising water levels inside the sinking vehicle. Capuano positioned the man on his back and swam toward the shore where others assisted the driver from the bay.

The mayor's office issued Capuano a certificate and formally thanked him for his bravery on social media.

ANNUAL REPORTS AVAILABLE ONLINE

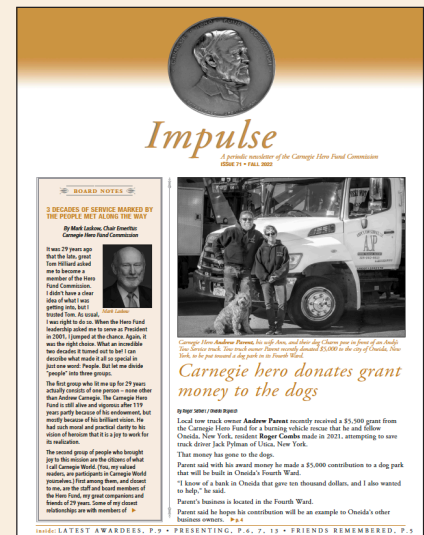
The Hero Fund's most recent biennial report (2019-2020) is available online as a PDF.

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.



SUBSCRIBE TO NEWSLETTER'S E-LIST

The Hero Fund's quarterly newsletter, *Impulse*, is available as an electronic PDF that comes to subscribers' 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.

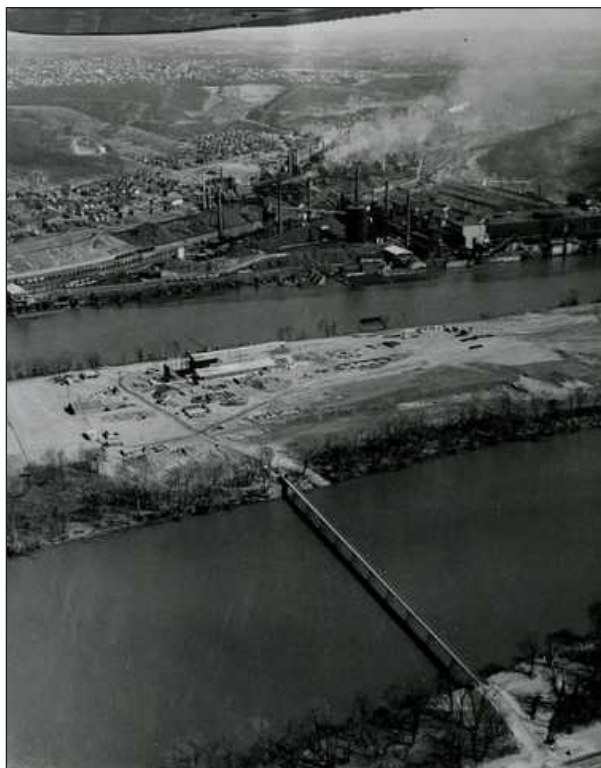
CARNEGIE MEDAL REFINISHING

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.



Aerial view of Browns Island, with Weirton Steel on the far river bank. Photo courtesy of Goldenseal magazine, Weirton Steel.

50 years ago ambulance workers save steel worker from second, third explosions

Brown's Island is a 2-mile-long island nestled in the waters of the Ohio River. Surrounded by the rolling hills of Weirton, West Virginia, this little crop of land was home to a coke factory dubbed "the steel mill of the future." This state-of-the-art facility was intended to pave the way for a brighter, cleaner steel industry capable of reducing pollution and waste. The \$55 million, 87-oven Weirton Steel facility was to be the pinnacle of a more enlightened industry. Still, a fateful morning in December 1972 derailed that steady march toward modernity.

In the northern section of the basement of the Weirton Steel building, a group of workers gathered to sip coffee when several employees smelled gas. A worker ran up to the second floor where he alerted Bernard R. Eafrazi, 54, heater helper, to a potential gas leak in the basement. Another man alerted the first-aid station, which dispatched a nurse and ambulance attendant.

Meanwhile, Eafrazi and others descended the stairs to the figuring section of the basement. As they reached the base of the steps, an explosion blew out the basement ceiling, which was made of at least 6 inches of concrete, and the similar ceiling of the floor above it. In an instant, the lights illuminating the basement were snuffed out, leaving the workers and Eafrazi blind in the darkness of the Weirton Steel facility. The explosion killed 19 men instantly, ripped the basement door off its hinges, ruptured service lines, and started a fire that extended the entire width of a supporting wall dividing the

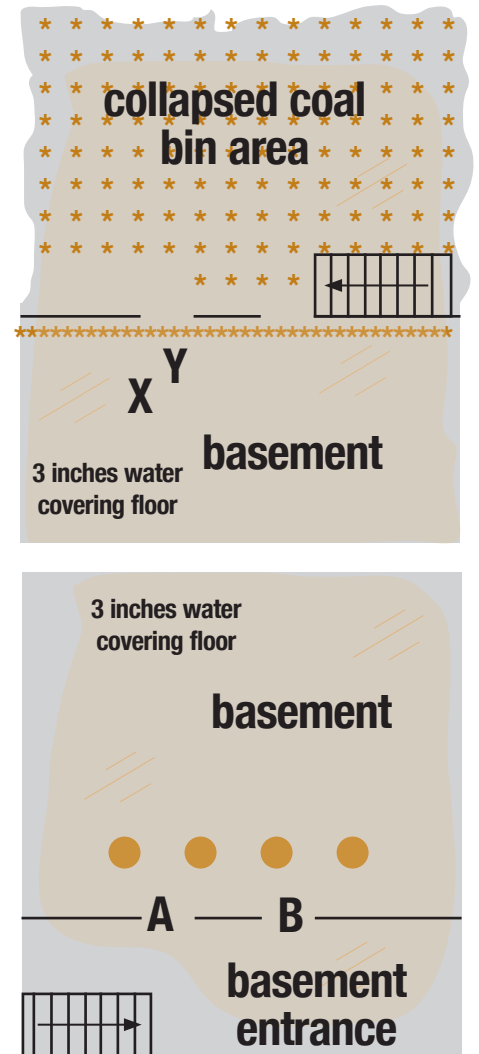
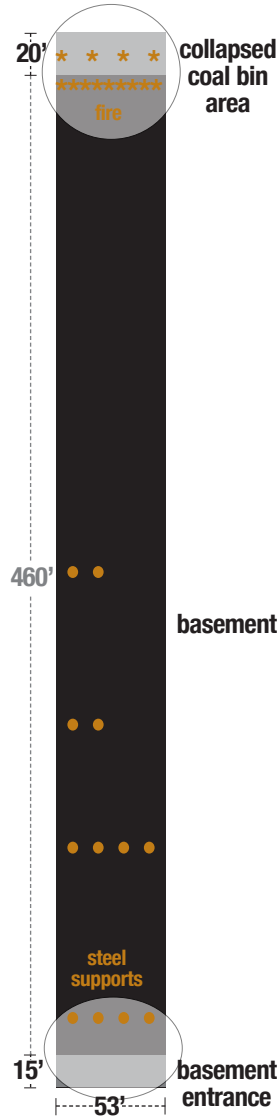
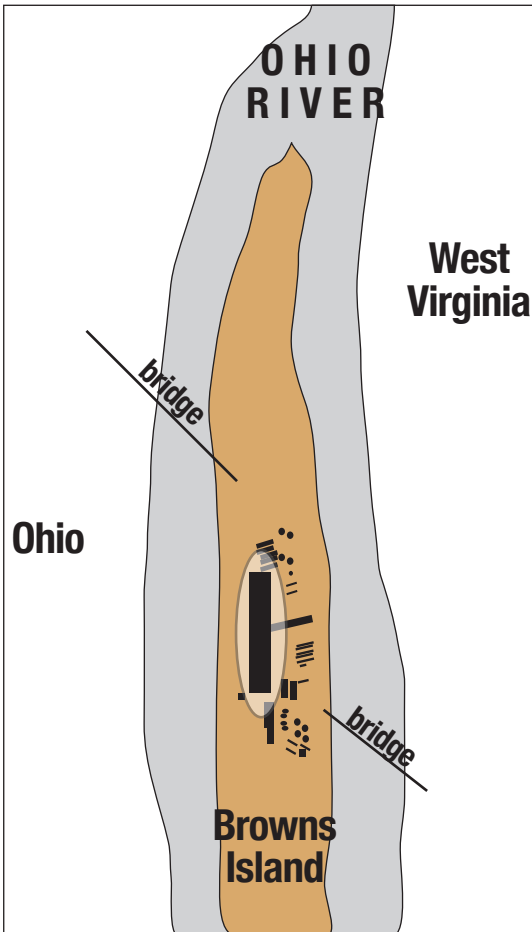
north and south sides of the basement. Eafrazi was positioned next to a vertical steel plate which protected him from certain death from the blast, though he did suffer a major injury to his foot and was rendered unconscious.

An explosion blew out the basement ceiling, ... killed 19 men instantly, ripped the basement door off its hinges, ruptured service lines, and started a fire that extended the entire width of ... the basement.

Nearby, at Ambulance Service Inc., **Harvey W. Templin**, 33, ambulance attendant, was on duty when he was dispatched to aid the workers trapped in the crumbling basement. He, and another ambulance attendant, **John C. Bowers**, 32, who was off duty, responded to the call, driving to the scene in an ambulance. The duo spent 20 minutes helping workers escape the dust and debris left in the aftermath of the blast, before donning air tanks, which contained 30 minutes of oxygen to go deeper into the building.

By then, Eafrazi revived, moved farther into the basement, and, clinging to one of the steel columns supporting the ceiling, called out for help. Templin and Bowers heard the call and rushed to where the nurse and a group of company officials were located. Company officials and the owner of the ambulance company warned Templin and Bowers against entering the burning basement, which was still littered with debris and wreckage. The duo, along with the nurse, all carrying flashlights, paid them no mind and, carrying a stretcher, descended the stairway into the basement.

The foot of the stairs was dimly lit, but the rest of the basement was cloaked in darkness and the floor was covered in 3 inches of tepid ►



Carnegie heroes **Harvey W. Templin** and **John C. Bowers** entered the burning basement — from points C to A — at the construction site of a 460-foot-long building where an explosion had occurred injuring Bernard R. Eafrazi inside, finding him at X. After carrying him on a stretcher outside to safety at C, Templin and Bowers reentered the burning basement to search for others — from C to Y — before a second explosion occurred forcing them to retreat — YBC — to safety. A third explosion sounded after they exited.

water. Templin and Bowers called out for any survivors but received no response. A firefighter that had descended the stairs offered to tie ropes to the two men to pull them out if the rescue attempt was unsuccessful. Fearing the rope could become an obstacle to their safe return, the two ambulance attendants declined the offer, but they did tie a rope to the stretcher.

Templin and Bowers heard Eafrazi call out for help from the darkness of the basement. The two men feared that Eafrazi would be killed by a second explosion if they didn't act. They headed toward the sound of Eafrazi's voice, their flashlights providing 3 to 4 feet of visibility. The nurse followed them to offer additional light. After 20 feet, she stopped while Templin and Bowers continued. The farther into the basement they walked, the hotter the water at their feet became. They proceeded 420 feet through light smoke and increasing temperatures toward the cries from Eafrazi. Flames issued from the wall as Templin, lifting his mask, yelled out to Eafrazi that another explosion might occur.

Seconds later, they found Eafrazi. The two attendants placed him on the stretcher, and while still holding their flashlights, jogged with him back to the stairway. Once there, Eafrazi informed Templin and Bowers that there were others still trapped in the basement. The two ambulance attendants felt that they would need to return to the

basement once more, otherwise, the men might die without their help. While Eafrazi was being treated for his wounds, a man brought another stretcher to Templin and Bowers. Stretcher in hand, the duo descended the stairs. They proceeded north at a sprint, knowing now that the pathway was clear after their rescue of Eafrazi.

Templin and Bowers, unaware of how much oxygen was left in their tanks, were within about 15 feet of the support wall when another explosion occurred. The explosion was less powerful than the first but resulted in a fireball that issued through one of the basement doorways. The heat of the fireball singed their hair and the concussive force of the blast threw them backward. Fearing they might die, the two attendants retreated toward the stairway. They removed their masks and air tanks and sprinted to the exit to safety. A third explosion occurred about half an hour later.

Eafrazi was hospitalized for 10 weeks for the injury to his foot, as well as first-degree burns to the head, legs, and one hand. Templin suffered minor ringing in his ears. Bowers suffered singed hair. All three men survived the explosions at the Weirton Steel building. Both Templin and Bowers were awarded the Carnegie Medal and a \$1,000 grant each.

— Colin Cavada, communications assistant

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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 death or serious injury 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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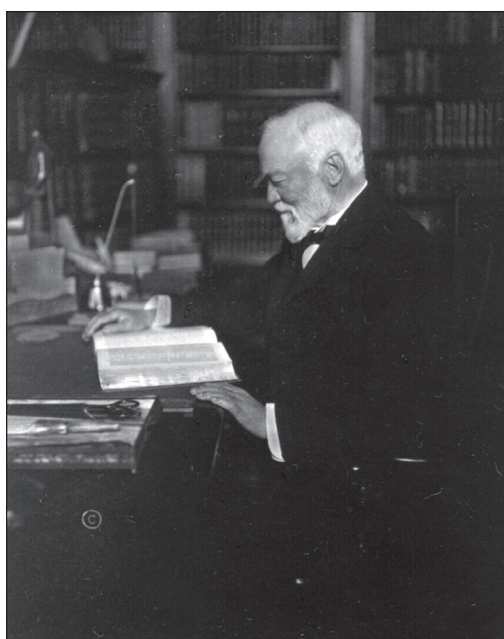
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THE QUOTABLE A.C.

You have made a start, and there is no finish — it goes on forever.

— Letter to Charles Taylor, first Hero Fund president, May 31, 1905

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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