Impulse

A periodic newsletter of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission

ISSUE 87 • FALL 2026



Johnson's family at the Aug. 24, 2026, ceremony. From left to right: father, William (Bill) Johnson, a retired Detroit Firefighter; ex-wife Suzette; daughters Kyndall and Hayden; and brother Jamal Johnson, also a retired Detroit Firefighter.

BELLE ISLE MEMORIAL HONORING CARNEGIE HERO UNVEILED

A permanent memorial honoring Carnegie Hero **Sivad H. Johnson** was unveiled Aug. 24 on Belle Isle in Detroit, near the site where he lost his life attempting to save three children from drowning in the Detroit River six years earlier.

Johnson, a 49-year-old off-duty fire sergeant and 26-year veteran of the Detroit Fire Department, was visiting Belle Isle with his 10-year-old daughter on Aug. 21, 2020, when he was alerted that three children were struggling in the swift-moving river. Johnson entered the water without safety equipment and advanced toward the children as a boat also responded. The children were safely removed from the water, but Johnson submerged and did not resurface. His body was recovered the following day.

Johnson was posthumously awarded the Carnegie Medal for his heroic actions. Detroit Fire Commissioner Eric Jones presented the medal to Johnson's father, William, and brother, Jamal, during the Detroit Public Safety Foundation's "Above and Beyond" awards ceremony on Nov. 18, 2021. ▶ p. 5

Florida Troubadour earned hero legacy with rescue attempt

If you've never heard – or even heard of – **Gamble Rogers**, it can be tricky to condense his performance style into a snappy phrase. On his tombstone, Rogers is described as a guitarist, humorist, and "folkteller" who "carried Florida's magic and myth across the land." Folk musician Mike Agranoff explained Rogers as "sort of like a cross between Chet Atkins, Mark Twain, and Merriam-Webster," as he was a skilled fingerpicker, a satirist, and a wordsmith.

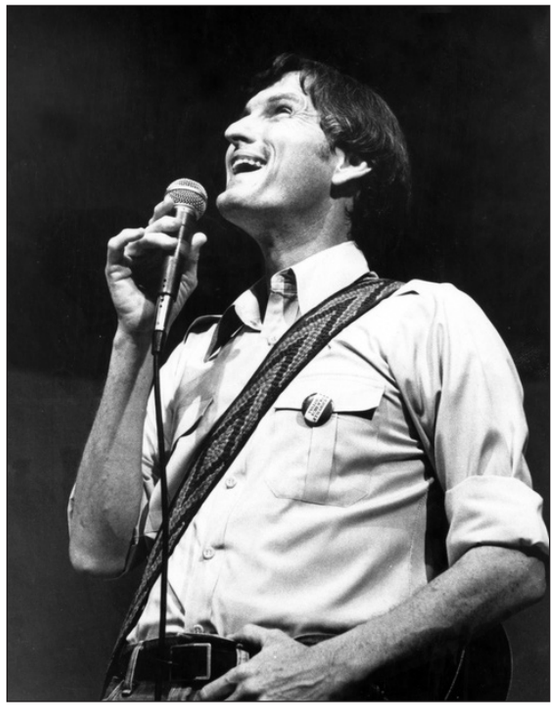
Once asked on a radio show to categorize himself, Rogers modestly demurred.

"Well, I ain't nothing more than a whiskey salesman," he said, according to Bruce Horovitz's 2018 biography, Gamble Rogers: A Troubadour's Life. "I play in these dives and the more whiskey they drink, the more money I make."

He surely was more than that. A beloved folk singer and storyteller dubbed "The Florida Troubadour," Rogers also is a Carnegie hero for his fatal attempt to save a Canadian tourist from drowning 35 years ago.

Frequently on the road although his career fell short of major commercial exposure, Rogers' schedule was clear on Oct. 10, 1991, when he was camping with his wife, Nancy, and some friends at a state park in Flagler Beach in his native Florida. He could have been booked for a music festival that coming weekend, but the arrangements fell through, Horovitz reported.

As it was, Rogers, 54, of St. Augustine, was nearby when a strong current in the Atlantic Ocean pulled a 48-year-old man away from the beach. The waves were about 6 feet high and there were no lifeguards stationed in the area. Rogers waded into the water with an inflated air mattress, to which he and the tourist's son-in-law held as they kicked out toward the man. When they were within about 10 feet of him, a wave submerged the man, who ▶



State Archives of Florida/Robert S. Blount.

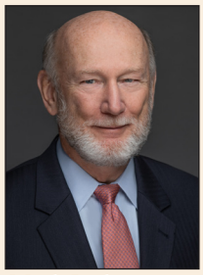
Gamble Rogers, *who died in 1991 attempting to rescue a man from drowning, populated his albums and performances with anecdotes of the people, places, and things of "Oklawaha County," a concocted rural region of north Florida that purposefully misspelled its muse, the Ocklawaha River.*

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BOARD NOTES

CARNEGIE'S OWN 'SOCIAL EXPERIMENT' DRAWS ON QUALITIES FROM THE HEART

By Mark Laskow, Chair Emeritus
Carnegie Hero Fund Commission



Mark Laskow

Although Robert Owen shared a Scottish heritage with Andrew Carnegie, Owen was more likely to have employed Carnegie's father in one of his textile mills than to have worked alongside him. Owen developed a reputation in Scotland for treating his workers particularly well. He decided to launch a utopian community in the United States based on community ownership of property and equality of incomes. He lavished resources on his project to give it the best possible start. He bought a town, Harmonie, Indiana, with 20,000 acres, 160 existing buildings, working mills, and farms already producing food. To bring this dream to life, Owen recruited a group of inhabitants that included scientists, teachers, and geologists.

Owen's ultimate objective was to create a "New Moral World, a world of enlightenment and prosperity leading to human happiness defined as mental, physical, and moral health enjoyed in a rational way of life … to replace the Old Immoral World of ignorance, superstition, selfishness, and suffering," according to Dr. Donald E. Pitzer, a University of Southern Indiana historian, whose 1989 Ohio Journal of Science article chronicled the transport of prominent scholars to the American Frontier in the 1820s.

Nevertheless, Owen's experiment failed. Despite endless wrangling among the residents and constant innovation and inventive tinkering by Owen, a good portion of the residents did not work but subsisted on the work of others. Many productive members of the community found this intolerable. By early 1827 New Harmony had failed and was abandoned.

What has that to do with our Carnegie Heroes? Well, they, too, are a minority within their communities who perform difficult and dangerous work for the benefit of others. We recognize them as heroes and present them with medals precisely because they do for others what almost no one else is willing or able to do. Unlike the residents of New ▶

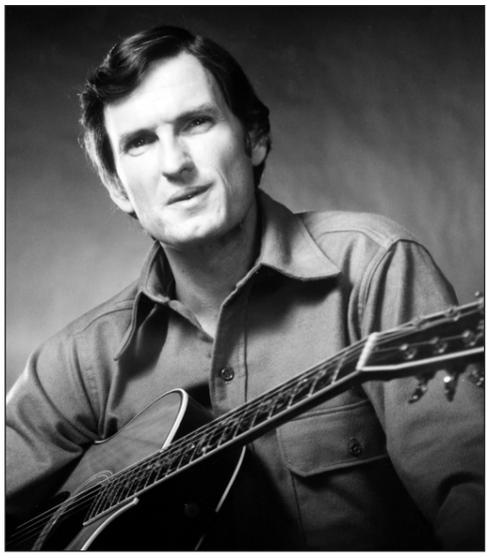
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Gamble Rogers

then resurfaced about 50 feet away. As Rogers, who was tiring, and the son-in-law attempted to kick back toward shore, another wave swamped them and they fell off the mattress. While the son-in-law crawled back atop the mattress and was able to return to the beach, Rogers submerged and did not resurface.

The perilous conditions also thwarted others' efforts to rescue the tourist, spurring a fire chief to later tell a newspaper reporter, "We came within an inch of having six drownings." Using rescue equipment, first-responders recovered Rogers about 300 feet from shore and the tourist twice that distance.

One of the most impressive parts of Rogers' choice that day is that any rescue try would have been daunting for him.



State Archives of Florida/Evan Streeman.
On his tombstone, Rogers is described as a guitarist, humorist, and "folkteller" who "carried Florida's magic and myth across the land." This portrait is from around 1977

"Growing up with him and knowing how generous he was, I'm not surprised he was the first to respond in that time of need," his brother, Jack Rogers, told The Florida Times-Union for a Sept. 25, 1992, story announcing the posthumous Carnegie Medal award. "He had an arthritic condition that essentially fused his spine as a teenager, so it was dangerous for him to swim at all under those circumstances, but he never thought of his own limitations."

Florida dignitaries honored him by renaming the park Gamble Rogers Memorial State Recreation Area at Flagler Beach. A middle school in St. Augustine also is named after Rogers.

The son of a renowned architect, Rogers, born James Gamble Rogers IV, opted to pursue a folk music career instead of joining the family business. Rogers populated his albums and performances with anecdotes of the people, places, and things of "Oklawaha County," a concocted rural region of northern Florida that purposefully misspelled its muse, the Ocklawaha River. Some described his stories – sung or spun – as Southern Gothic, and his monologue cadence was comparable to that of a preacher.

In a dose of irony, Rogers is featured in Heartworn Highways, a cult classic documentary highlighting the "outlaw country" movement, in which whiskey is as much of a character as the performers. Rogers sings his original, "Black Label Blues," calling out for Jack Daniel's whiskey, although Horvitz disclosed in his book that Rogers – despite the whiskey salesman quip – wasn't a drinker.

During his career, Rogers played with influential musicians like Pete Seeger and Doc Watson and inspired others like Jimmy Buffett, a friend who dedicated his 1994 Fruitcakes album to him. To this day, performers pay tribute. The 32nd annual Gamble Rogers Folk Festival is scheduled for an April weekend in his home county. (That's St. Johns County, not Oklawaha.)

Perhaps there is no better synopsis of Rogers' stage presence than that offered by an ordinary fan, identified as Jacquie Bennett of Boca Raton, in a letter to the Boca Raton News after the rescue attempt.

"On many occasions, I had the privilege of sitting in the audience while Gamble lovingly stroked the strings of his guitar and told amusing stories that endeared him to every person in the room," Bennett wrote. "When a joke is told in a long-winded way, the listener often gets antsy. Gamble had a way of making that wind feel like a ride on the wings of Pegasus; you clung with anticipation for the next thrilling word."

— *Chris Foreman, assistant investigations manager*

FRIENDS REMEMBERED

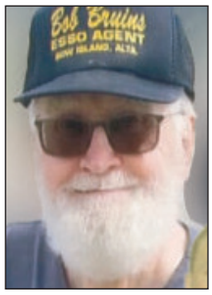
Friends Remembered is a collection of tributes to Carnegie heroes, beneficiaries, and others we have lost since the last edition of *Impulse*. They are listed chronologically by date of passing.

For Carnegie heroes, the tribute appearing here will also be added to their hero page on the Hero Fund's website.

This edition includes **Thomas S. McKenzie, Ronald W. Hunter Sr., Roger Brian Nelson, Samuel W. Hall, Donald James Sack, Marcia J. Walton, Gale L. Galloway, Louis L. Fisher,** and **Steven A. Rauser**.

THOMAS S. MCKENZIE

Carnegie Hero **Thomas S. McKenzie**, 78, of Bow Island, Alberta, died Thursday, July 16, 2026.



Thomas S. McKenzie

McKenzie was born on Nov. 5, 1947, to John and Denise McKenzie in Peterborough, Ontario. He joined the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and spent 28 years of service in Olds, Stettler, Ponoka, Slave Lake, Bow Island, Wabasca-Desmarais and the Calgary Airport. He retired in Bow Island.

On Sept. 23, 1988, on Bow Island, McKenzie, then 40, entered a burning house multiple times to search for his elderly neighbors inside. After multiple entries, he found one occupant, 75-year-old Francis A. Doran, and he removed him from the home with assistance from other bystanders. He entered the home in what would be his final attempt to search for Doran's wife, Margaret, 78, but could not find her, and smoke and flames forced him from the home. Francis Doran was hospitalized overnight for second-degree burns, and he recovered. Margaret Doran succumbed to effects of the fire. McKenzie sustained minor burns to his elbows, knees, and arms; he recovered.

McKenzie had many interests that included bowling, curling, fishing, baseball, track and field, and cards. McKenzie enjoyed working with his hands, always willing to help anyone he could when in need.

McKenzie is survived by his wife Irene McKenzie; daughters Shannon McKenzie Bael and Neilly Becker; and four grandchildren.

RONALD W. HUNTER SR.

Carnegie Hero **Ronald W. Hunter Sr.**, 69, of Blacksburg, South Carolina, died Wednesday, July 22, 2026.


Ronald W. Hunter Sr.

Hunter was born in Gastonia, North Carolina, to William Franklin Hunter II and Betty Jean Presley Hunter.

On Dec. 9, 1991, in Gastonia, Hunter responded to gunshots being fired at his neighbors, 33-year-old Tammy H. Anderson, her 12-year-old daughter, and another girl, 7. Another neighbor barricaded himself in his house across the street and was firing at the woman and girls. Hunter, then 35, heard the shots and moved toward Anderson's driveway, where he was shot in the back. Shouting "Get down!" he continued approaching the Anderson house, into which Anderson and the other girl escaped. Anderson's daughter was fatally wounded. Hunter collapsed to the ground, where he lay until the sniper surrendered to police more than four hours later. Hunter was hospitalized for treatment of multiple and severe gunshot wounds, which required surgery.

Hunter is survived by wife Tina Milwood Hunter; children, Michael Hunter, Ronald Hunter Jr., and William Pearson; a brother, William Hunter; a sister, Susie Hunter; four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Hunter was preceded in death by daughter, April Michelle Hunter, and brother, Ricky Hunter. ▶

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BOARD NOTES

Harmony, Indiana (its modern name), that does not dissuade Carnegie Heroes from their efforts. And while the residents of New Harmony gave up after fewer than three years, the Carnegie Hero Fund has been chronicling the rescues of its heroes for 122 years now and, of course, the heroes were at work long before the Hero Fund was formed and there is every indication heroism will continue.

You might argue that New Harmony was an economic failure that had nothing to do with heroism. But economics is just a special subset of the broader study of human behavior. Andrew Carnegie and his Hero Fund with an even narrower segment of human behavior.

What is different? Could it be that New Harmony dealt with economic greed and the Carnegie Hero Fund deals with more idealistic concerns? It appears from history that along with Owen the early settlers of New Harmony were sincere idealists who wanted the whole idea to work, but for some of them, so long as it did not involve doing actual work themselves. The laggards of the New Harmony community, who brought about its failure, may have joined the community with idealistic political views, but that was not enough to get them out into the fields to work for the food which they themselves would eat.

The Carnegie Heroes, on the other hand, pay a terrible price at times. They risk death to attempt a rescue which will not benefit themselves in any way. These people are clearly driven by something more powerful than intellectual ideas or social beliefs. They seem driven by something they find in their human soul, which moves them to do this.

It is interesting to contrast the motivations of Robert Owen and Andrew Carnegie. Owen's motivation was clearly intellectual; it looked to the "head."

According to historian Dr. Penelope Harris, "Owen firmly believed that ignorance was the cause of crime and social unrest, and could be resolved through education, leading to a better and happier way of living." Harris, a retired Fellow of the Institute of Administrative Management, has studied 1800s America, including the lives of architect Jospeh Hansom and Robert Owen extensively.

When Andrew Carnegie created the Hero Fund, he seemed to be reaching for something within the human heart, something beyond rational calculation. He crafted the Carnegie Hero criteria to exclude any kind of financial incentive to make a rescue. ▶



Drew N. Peterson

HERO FUND ELECTS 2 NEW BOARD MEMBERS

At its Sept. 15, 2026, meeting, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission elected two new members – Drew N. Peterson and Ngoc L. Thai.

Drew N. Peterson is vice president at the Sarah Scaife Foundation, a grant-making organization focusing on public policy programs. He also serves as an adjunct instructor at the University of Pittsburgh's School of Public and International ▶ p. 16

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BOARD NOTES CONT.

Most recipients never knew the Carnegie Medal existed before they attempted their rescue. Even among those that were aware of the medal, there is no evidence that receiving it ever factored as motivation. The motivation to do what they do came, perhaps less from their brains than from their hearts and souls. Aren't we all the wonderful beneficiaries of that!

(In case you are interested in the New Harmony experiment, I have included a link to the online essay that motivated me to write this article: New Harmony, Indiana - Wikipedia and QotD: The history of New Harmony, Indiana « Quotulatiousness. I am indebted to the author of the essay but be clear that I applaud neither the creation of the New Harmony community nor its failure.)

▶ from p.3

ROGER BRIAN NELSON



Roger Brian Nelson

Carnegie Hero **Roger Brian Nelson**, 78, died Thursday, Aug. 6, 2026, in Santa Barbara, California.

Nelson was born June 3, 1948, in Santa Barbara.

On Aug. 4, 1966, while on a hike with Nelson, who was 19 years old at the time, 12-year-old Sally J. Hammel lost her footing on the smooth rock bank of a small watercourse and began to slide toward the water. Nelson squatted and grasped Sally by one of her ankles. They both slid into the shallow water, and the swift current carried them toward a 10-foot waterfall below which there was a pool 15 feet in diameter with nearly vertical rock sides. Noting a jagged outcropping of rock at the edge of the watercourse, Nelson pushed Sally toward midstream. She cleared the rock, but Nelson was swept against it, sustaining spinal and muscular injuries. Sally was carried over the waterfall and submerged briefly in turbulent water at its base. Nelson, in great pain, went over the waterfall in a diving position and was submerged briefly in water 10 feet deep in the pool. Using his legs as little as possible because of the pain, Nelson swam 4 feet to a point behind Sally, who was caught in the waterfall's turbulence. Nelson took hold of her and pulled her clear of the backlash. Sally aided by kicking her legs as Nelson, experiencing severe pain, pushed her ahead of him while swimming 10 feet to the only point at the side of the pool where exit was possible. Others aided them from the water. Sally was unharmed. Nelson was taken to the hospital for treatment of two fractured vertebrae and torn muscles. He recovered.

Nelson lived a life marked by a steady commitment to people in need. He specialized in the design of homeless shelters and went on to design many throughout the United States, including the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission. He also served as a Sergeant in the United States Army. Faith and church life were an important part of his life, donating much of his time and talent to The Ranch Church in Solvang.

Nelson enjoyed many activities outside of his professional career, including surfing since he was just 10 years old. He loved racquetball and later pickleball, and hosting parties.

Nelson is survived by wife Marcia Lee Warner; two sons Daniel Nelson and Jeremy Nelson; and two grandchildren, Noah and R.

SAMUEL W. HALL



Samuel W. Hall

Carnegie Hero **Samuel W. Hall**, 86, died Tuesday, Sept. 1, 2026, in Confluence, Pennsylvania.

Hall was born on Dec. 20, 1939, in Confluence to Charles and Olive Hall.

Hall was a U.S. Army veteran and a former fish warden in Lancaster and Lebanon counties. For a time, he oversaw 17 counties in northwestern PA. He was also a former substitute mail carrier in Confluence and an avid fisherman.

On May 14, 1969, in Lititz, Pennsylvania, Hall, then 29, responded to the bank of a lake when the rowboat of Fay H. B. Slike, 21, and her husband, William W. Slike, Jr., 28, had capsized. The Slikes were submerged briefly in water 10 feet deep and Fay Slike then flailed at the surface and screamed for help. William Slike alternately rose and sank making only weak arm movements. Hall removed bits of his clothing and then waded and swam 150 feet to Fay Slike. She had submerged briefly again ▶

FRIENDS REMEMBERED

SAMUEL W. HALL CONT.

and had become hysterical. She grasped Hall and caused both to go under. Hall surfaced with Fay Slike clinging to him. He slapped her and she relaxed her hold on him. Hall then towed her 100 feet to a life preserver, and she held to it while Hall swam 100 feet farther to where William Slike had submerged in water 12 feet deep. Although tired and somewhat winded, Hall submerged 3 feet and brought to the surface William Slike, who was by then unconscious. Hall towed William Slike 100 feet back to where his wife was clinging to the life preserver 150 feet from the bank. By that time Hall was extremely weary. A man in a canoe reached them and Hall grasped the craft with one hand while with the other he helped to support both William and Fay Slike by holding their arms on the life preserver. Towing all three by Hall's hold on the canoe, the man paddled the craft to wadable water. William Slike was hospitalized. He recovered fully in two weeks.

Hall is survived by wife Donna Hall; two brothers, Ed and Ted Hall; four Godchildren; and niece, Barbara Conn.

Hall was preceded in death by brothers Fred and Paul Hall.

DONALD JAMES SACK



Donald James Sack

Carnegie Hero **Donald James Sack**, 73, died Friday, Sept. 4, 2026, in Shelter Cove, California.

Sack was born April 5, 1953, in Eureka, California, to Ernie and Georgia Sack.

Sack was a seasoned commercial fisherman and started at a young age. He helped his dad and his two brothers, Ron and John, on his boat, the Johnnie Lee. They travelled up and down the west coast from the Columbia River to Southern California in search of salmon and albacore, and in the winter, they fished crab around Eureka and Trinidad.

Sack had a love and passion for music at an early age. In his early years, he played with Poison, the Dale Hustler Band, Tight Squeeze, Bishop Mayfield, 99 Degrees, Small Craft Advisory, FOG, Top Dead Center, and Black Sand. He was the founding member of the Breakers Band, who have donated many gigs to help good causes. Sack also had a passion for the outdoors and hunting.

On March 25, 2000, in Shelter Cove, Sack, then 46, responded to the scene where a hiking group had been swept into the Pacific Ocean by the strong backwash of breaking waves. Sack was in his boat about 6 miles away and learned of the situation by radio. Finding one of the victims beyond the breakers, Sack secured her and took her to another boat that had responded. Returning to the scene to look for other victims, Sack saw 37-year-old Martin Poirier at a point closer to shore. Sack took his boat into the breakers and maneuvered it to a point near Poirier. After shouting to get Poirier's attention, Sack threw him a line as he turned his boat to face the breakers. Poirier grasped the rope and held it as Sack towed him from the breakers. Sack then positioned Poirier against the boat and secured him by an arm as he single-handedly took the boat to calmer waters. Another fisherman boarded the boat and helped Sack pull Poirier from the cold water. Sack took Poirier to shore where Poirier was taken to the hospital and stayed overnight for treatment of having nearly drowned and hypothermia. He recovered. Sack twisted his right knee, but he too recovered. Three members of Poirier's hiking group drowned.

Sack is survived by wife, Susan; four children, Molly, Sam, Georgia and Luke; and seven grandchildren, Raine, Sariyah, Naiya, Samara, Karina, Derek, and Ryder; and two great grandchildren. ▶ p. 16

▶ from p.1

SIVAD JOHNSON MEMORIAL

Both men also served as Detroit firefighters.

Detroit Mayor Mary Sheffield joined Johnson's family, friends, and fellow firefighters for the Aug. 24, 2026, dedication of the memorial plaque, located along a pedestrian walkway near Belle Isle Beach.

"Sgt. Sivad Johnson gave his life to save three young girls, and there is no greater example of selflessness or service than that," Sheffield said. "This memorial ensures that generations of Detroiters will know his name, remember his sacrifice, and understand the extraordinary example he set for all of us."

Johnson had previously received the Detroit Public Safety Foundation's Medal of Valor in 2017 for rescuing a man trapped on the second floor of a burning apartment building. Following his death, the Detroit Fire Department named a rescue boat in his honor.

Deputy Commissioner Robert Stokes, who attended the fire academy with Johnson, said his final act reflected a lifetime of service.

"Sivad's final act of bravery wasn't out of character – it was exactly how he lived every day," Stokes said. "He always put others first, even when doing so meant putting himself in danger."

The new plaque provides a permanent place for the community to remember Johnson's courage and sacrifice. An identical plaque was presented to his family during the ceremony.



Termed by the city of Detroit, "a memorial to mark a hero's sacrifice," the plaque is located on the far east edge of Belle Isle Beach, along the island's pedestrian walkway, in Detroit.

PRESENTING



William Anthony Rubio was presented with the Carnegie Medal by his work supervisor Robert Bowen at a small presentation held at the Colorado Grill on July 26 in Franklin, Kentucky. Rubio and Bowen work for Tyson Chicken in Franklin.

Rubio was awarded the Carnegie Medal for Heroism after pulling a truck driver from inside his burning vehicle on Jan. 13, 2025.

Following an early-morning collision in Bagdad, Arizona, Rubio responded to a burning tractor trailer on the opposite side of the highway. Flames at least 6 feet high burned at the front of the engine area and outside the rear of the cab. Rubio crossed a dirt median and ran to the tractor trailer, where he attempted to open the driver's door. After he was unsuccessful, Rubio climbed onto the exposed engine and then punched his way through the cracked windshield. He leaned into the cab to his waist and could see flames burning at the cab's rear wall. Rubio placed his arms under the arms of the driver, 62-year-old Edward Moorehead, and maneuvered him out from under the steering wheel. Rubio lifted Moorehead onto the engine and then descended to the ground together. Moorehead was disoriented and stepped into the path of an oncoming tractor trailer. Rubio grabbed him in time and pulled him back as he narrowly avoided the vehicle. Rubio and Moorehead crossed the lanes to safety at the median, where they waited inside Rubio's vehicle for emergency personnel. About 15 seconds after they were clear, an explosion occurred and flames intensified. Moorehead suffered abrasion to both knees, a laceration on his thigh, and a head injury. Rubio inhaled smoke but recovered without medical treatment.

At the ceremony, Rubio, second from left, was joined by, from left, his wife Courtney Bussey, son Brayden Russel, and daughter Brooke Bussey, as well as fellow coworkers at Tyson.

Columbia, Tennessee, Mayor Chaz Molder presented the Carnegie Medal to **Samuel Hardin Adcock** at Columbia City Hall on Sept.10, 2026.

Adcock was awarded the Carnegie Medal after he and co-rescuer James Alan Garner rescue a man from drowning on May 23, 2025.

At a boat ramp in Chickasaw Trace Park in Columbia Colin McNary, 25, who was severely autistic, ran into the Duck River and was swept downstream by the current. On the south side of the boat ramp, Adcock, then 26, and James Alan Garner, then 41, both from Columbia, were with Garner's family when they saw McNary get carried downstream.

Adcock immediately waded out to the channel and swam downstream to try to reach McNary. Garner then entered the water and swam downstream to catch up to McNary and Adcock. About 1,000 feet downstream, McNary was swept into a calmer area of the river, where Adcock caught up with him and grabbed him. McNary struggled to stay afloat and submerged Adcock, who pushed McNary away to get air. Adcock stood on an underwater tree limb and grabbed McNary before he pushed him toward the riverbank.

Garner had then arrived and positioned himself behind McNary. The two men pushed and pulled McNary to a large tree root on the riverbank, where they waited for first responders.

The riverbank had a steep, rocky ledge that prevented them from climbing up into the woods. Garner swam upstream about 120 feet to find an alternative route to climb out of the river but was unable to locate one and swam back to the others.



Garner kept McNary calm until a rescue boat could take him back to the boat ramp, where his parents waited. An ambulance took him to a hospital.

The boat then returned to pick up Adcock and Garner. McNary, Adcock, and Garner were tired and cold but not injured. Adcock and Garner were still wet when they later visited the hospital to check on McNary.

"Samuel's actions that day demonstrated tremendous courage and selflessness," said Mayor Chaz Molder. "He saw someone in danger and immediately put his own safety at risk to help. We are proud to recognize Samuel as a Columbia hero and to celebrate this well-deserved honor with him and his family."

PRESENTING



Georgia Governor Brian Kemp and his wife, Marty Kemp, center, presented two Carnegie Medals at separate presentations held Sept. 14, at the Governor's Ceremonial office in Atlanta.

First, Kemp presented the Carnegie Medal to the family of posthumously awarded **Anderson Chase Childers**. Among his family members who attended were, from left, Childers' mother Nancy Childers, children Brooks, Barrett, and Arabella, and his wife, Nataley.

Childers was awarded the medal in March after he drowned after entering the ocean where several distressed swimmers were calling for help on July 13, 2025, near Pawleys Island, South Carolina.

A group of people were caught in a longshore current and a strong rip current in the Atlantic Ocean when they called out for help. Several swimmers were stranded in the crosscurrent about 150 feet from the beach where no lifeguards were stationed. On the beach, 38-year-old Childers, from Dallas, Georgia, was with his wife and three young children when he heard the calls for help and responded. Childers ran into the ocean, and he swam out to help them. Ultimately, he reached a point beyond some people in the crosscurrent. Police concluded that Childers might have perceived another person was in danger. Another man reacted to Childers' urgency and left the beach to swim out. By the time the man later reached Childers, he was unresponsive. The man attempted to tow Childers, but they separated in the rough surf. All the struggling swimmers safely returned to shore, including the man who attempted to tow Childers. Police, firefighters, and the Coast Guard then searched for Childers and later found him after he drifted a considerable distance from where he was last seen. He had drowned.

Nataley Childers took to Instagram to express the mixed emotions and the honor it was to accept the medal on her husband's behalf to recognize his selfless courage.

"No medal could ever measure the life Chase lived, the lives he touched, or the enormous space his absence has left," she said. "But what an incredible gift it is for our children to see their dad's courage and selflessness honored in such a meaningful way."

Governor Kemp also presented the Carnegie Medal to March recipient **Brian K. Patterson**, second from right, who saved an 11-year-old girl from a burning vehicle in Midway, Georgia, on July 8, 2022. At the presentation with him was his wife Kendra Patterson.

Following a collision on a highway, 11-year-old Alexa Tschantz was trapped in the rear seat of her mother's burning sedan after it had collided with a dump truck and struck its fuel tank that caused both vehicles to burst into flames. Driving on the same road and witnessing the accident was Patterson, 36, from Ludowici, Georgia. Patterson and his teenage son exited their vehicle and ran to the sedan where they escorted Alexa's mother to safety about 50 feet from the vehicle. She told Patterson that Alexa remained in the back seat and he ran back to the burning vehicle. He was able to see Alexa's left arm from being illuminated by flames amid thick smoke in the passenger cab. Patterson then leaned into the vehicle to his shoulders, grasped Alexa's left arm, and then pulled her across the seat, out of the vehicle. At that point, he dragged her to safety and removed his shirt to try to smother flames burning on Alexa's clothing. A bystander arrived with a fire extinguisher and successfully helped Patterson extinguish the flames. Patterson and his son then stayed with Alexa until emergency personnel arrived to take her to a nearby hospital. Alexa suffered fractures to each of her orbital bones and burns that covered 70 percent of her body. She spent about three months in the hospital recovering from her injuries. Patterson suffered singing to hairs on his arms and face but did not seek medical attention.

When it was announced he would receive the medal, Patterson was humble upon hearing that he had been honored. He was grateful that he was in the right place at the right time and that the young girl made it out of the situation alive.

"I just couldn't believe it. I'm like 'that's really, that's really awesome.' I'm really honored to receive an award for something like that, but at the same time, it's kind of strange to me because I feel like that's just something we should do as good people," said Patterson.

"It feels great that I was able to prevent a very catastrophic thing from happening. Because no one deserves to be cut short, you know. I think things happen for a reason, and I was in the right place at the right time for that."

PRESENTING



Former Utah State Rep. Val Potter, right, presented the Carnegie Medal to Carnegie Hero **James Peasnall**, center, at a Sept. 16, 2026, presentation during the Box Elder County Commissioners meeting held at the Box Elder County Courthouse. Potter represented the Office of U.S. Sen. John Curtis. With Peasnall was his wife Tiffany Peasnall.

Peasnall was awarded the Carnegie Medal for Heroism for helping to rescue a man and a 10-year-old boy from drowning on May 19, 2024.

After the boy fell into the fast-flowing Ogden River in Ogden, Utah, his father, a man in his mid- 40s, jumped in to grab the boy and the current swept them both downstream. Peasnall, then a 46 year-old off-duty sheriff's deputy, was at a nearby playground with his family when he heard their screams. He sprinted along the riverbank and jumped headfirst into the water, on top of the father and his son. Peasnall wrapped his arms around the father and son as he landed and all three briefly submerged. He surfaced with both, wrapping his left arm around the father, while the father held the son. Peasnall swam with his free arm and approached a tree that stuck out of the water, toward the shore. Peasnall pushed the father onto the tree near the water's edge, but the father let go of the boy, who was carried away by the current. Peasnall swam after the boy as the child disappeared underwater. He submerged several times until Peasnall located him and pulled him to shore about 150 feet downstream of the father. Peasnall heard more screams, climbed out of the water, ran back to where the father clung to the tree. He reentered the water and carried the father on his back up onto the riverbank. The boy and his father were cold but uninjured. Peasnall was cold, suffered bruises from striking rocks, and vomited water for about a day, but he declined medical attention.

In an email to the Hero Fund, Potter stated it was great to spend time with James and Tiffany to honor his bravery.

Potter was joined by Commissioners Tyler Vincent, Boyd Bingham, and Lee Perry in a photo with Peasnall holding the medal.



Virginia Gov. Abigail Spanberger, center, presented the Carnegie Medal to Carnegie Hero **Major Metzger**, left, at a Sept. 16 presentation held at Major's Virginia Beach, Virginia, middle school. At right, Bryce Rader, the boy Major saved, was also at the ceremony.

Major was awarded the medal for saving 6-year-old Bryce from falling off a ski lift on Jan. 26, 2025.

At the Nellysford, Virginia, ski resort, Bryce struggled to stay in a bench seat on a chairlift. Bryce was one of four children on the seat, including then-10-year-old Major. As the lift ascended, Bryce was sliding out of the seat. Major grasped him and attempted to pull him onto the seat. By the time workers were alerted to bring the lift to a complete stop, Bryce had fallen entirely off the seat and was being held by Major, who was leaning forward and down. At that point, the bottom of the seat was about 16 feet above the rugged, sloped ground. Major continued to hold Bryce's arms with both of his gloved hands while wearing a helmet and skis of his own until a ski patrol arrived with a safety mat. They stood below the seat and advised Major to let Bryce go after he dangled precariously for about four minutes during the incident. Bryce fell to the pad, bounced off it, and suffered a small bump on his head. Medical staff evaluated Bryce and he did not require additional treatment. He recovered. Major rode the chairlift to the top of the ski run and offloaded with the girls. His arms were sore, and he was shaken. He did not require medical treatment.

"Major Metzger's bravery represents the very best of Virginia – and he demonstrated it at the young age of only 10 years old," said Spanberger. "Our entire Commonwealth thanks you for fearlessly risking your life to save your friend. I know how incredibly proud your parents and family are of you for your actions last January, and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, I am honored to present you with the Carnegie Medal."

"Major showed remarkable courage in helping his friend who was in danger, but more than that, despite his young age, he made the conscious and selfless decision to accept the consequences of applying the same danger to himself through action, and we are proud to recognize him with the Carnegie Medal," said Eric Zahren, Hero Fund President. "We're grateful to Governor Spanberger for helping us honor Major and for making this such a meaningful occasion for him, his family, and his school community."

PRESENTING





North Carolina Senator Lisa Barnes, right, presented the Carnegie Medal to **Jason Leary** at a Sept. 22 presentation held in Nashville, North Carolina. Nash County Sheriff Keith Stone was also at the event and gave remarks.

Leary was awarded the medal after he attempted to save a 24-year-old woman from drowning during flooding in Spring Hope, North Carolina, on Aug. 6, 2025.

The floodwater swept a minivan with Lottie R. Alston inside to the edge of a ravine that overflowed its bank and flooded a nearby highway. She stood on the frame of the vehicle's front passenger window with her stepfather in the driver's seat. On-duty police lieutenant Leary, 52, from Washington, North Carolina, had responded to the highway and saw Alston holding onto the vehicle in the water. Leary used his radio to request fire rescue personnel when he was alerted that Alston had fallen into the water. Seeing her taken downstream, Leary gave the officer his radio and ran toward the water's edge. He jumped into the ravine still wearing his uniform and boots. Leary came within 5 feet of a completely submerged Alston and attempted to locate her when he, too, submerged.

He felt around for her in the water but was unsuccessful and taken downstream by the swift current about 90 feet. As he was carried, his body struck a downed tree that extended across the ravine below the water's surface. Leary tried to climb over it but could not. He rolled his body so that the force of the water pushed him under it. He resurfaced and was taken another 90 feet, where he saw an oak tree on the bank and grasped it. The water repeatedly splashed his head and went into his mouth, causing him to have difficulty breathing and to let go of the tree. Leary was taken downstream to a point about 300 feet from the van, where he grasped trees on the bank. He braced his legs on one of the trees for stability and used his flashlight to signal for help. A police sergeant and fire personnel responded to the opposite bank where they threw a rescue rope at him. Leary grasped it and they pulled him from the water to safety. Alston and her stepfather, who had at some point also exited the vehicle, were later found as water receded. They both had drowned. Leary suffered scratches and bruises to his ribs but recovered.

Leary was joined on stage by Sheriff Stone, Spring Hope police Chief Nathan Grant, and Spring Hope Mayor Kyle Pritchard.

Pritchard praised Leary at the event for his bravery and said that it was an honor to have him as a member of the police department.

"Heroes are born out of tragedy, and he truly risked his own life to jump in those floodwaters and to save someone else," Pritchard said.

"I was shocked, honestly," Leary said about receiving the medal.

Leary said that he struggles with guilt despite risking his own life to save Alston.

"I took comfort in knowing that there was nothing else I could have done. If there was, I would have done it. It was just an unsurvivable situation, and I got lucky," Leary said.

On the one-year anniversary of the incident, Leary returned to the site where Alston and her stepfather had been swept away. To honor them, Leary laid flowers at a nearby tree.

"We hope that the families, especially the mother who lost her husband and daughter in the same day. We hope she's coping, and we hope you know that we did all we could," Leary said.

PRESENTING



Hero Fund President Eric Zahren, left, presented the Carnegie Medal to **Sadia Khan** at an Oct. 4, 2026, ceremony held along the Rideau River in Ottawa, Ontario, where Khan rescued a 6-year-old boy from drowning in June 2024.

The ceremony at Brantwood Park included a traditional smudging ceremony and remarks from First Nations Elder Albert Dumont, who participated in presenting the medal to Khan. Family, friends, and children gathered to celebrate Khan's heroism and take part in a special activity along the riverbank.

Speaking about the hope that acts of heroism inspire, Zahren said, "Sadia, through her remarkable choice and action, at risk to her own life, saved a life, which is extraordinary. But even more, her example helps us all to believe and believe more strongly."

On June 30, 2024, Khan entered the fast-moving waters of the Rideau River at Hog's Back Park after a 6-year-old boy slipped into the rapids. She reached the boy and struggled to hold him above water as the current swept them approximately 300 feet downstream, repeatedly submerging her and slamming her into rocks. Khan eventually secured a foothold and pushed the boy onto a rock before pulling herself to safety. The boy recovered, while Khan sustained injuries that required long-term physiotherapy.

Following the medal presentation, Khan and children attending the ceremony decorated river rocks and gifted them to the river.

Carnegie Hero Fund President Eric Zahren, left, presented the Carnegie Medal to **Dustin Colson Leaning** at a private presentation held Oct. 27 in Boston with friends and family members in attendance.

Colson Leaning was awarded the medal after his June 30, 2025, rescue of a 37-year-old man from drowning in the Mississippi River near La Crescent, Minnesota.

The man had been driving a pickup truck on an interstate when he suddenly felt faint. After pulling into a rest area, he lost consciousness and crashed through brush into the river. Colson Leaning, 32, of Boston, was parked at the rest area with his partner when they heard the crash. The two ran to the shoreline, where they saw the pickup floating about 60 feet from shore.



While his partner (now wife) called 911, Colson Leaning entered the river and swam to the truck, which was submerged to its door handles. Inside, he saw the semiconscious driver bleeding from the face as water poured into the cab.

As the current carried the truck farther from shore, Colson Leaning attempted to open several doors without success. He then braced his feet against the truck and pulled open the rear driver's-side door as the vehicle began to sink. With water rushing into the cab and forcing the door closed, Colson Leaning wedged his shoulder and foot between the door and frame to hold it open. He grasped the driver beneath an elbow and pulled him from the vehicle as the man pushed himself outward.

The two swam to a nearby tree branch, where they rested before continuing to a boat-ramp dock. The driver was treated at a hospital for injuries sustained in the crash. Colson Leaning was uninjured.

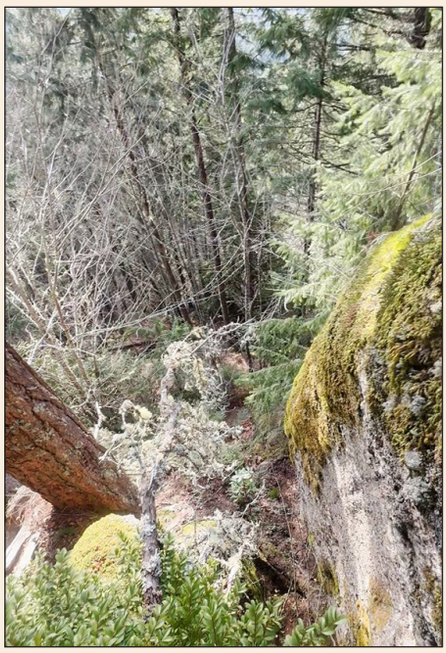
Colson Leaning and his wife, both avid outdoor enthusiasts, shared that in the moments immediately following the crash, they were in shock. Colson Leaning initially froze when he saw the truck enter the river, but his wife helped spur him into action. He then entered the water and carried out the rescue.

"What struck me about Dustin's admitted moment of hesitation, was its honesty. We recognize his decision to act, which Dustin made with encouragement from his wife, putting his own life at risk to save a stranger," Zahren said. "It reminds us that courage isn't the absence of fear, or even confusion. Just the opposite. It's the willingness to act in the moment despite it, and without the luxury of full clarity, when someone else's life is at stake."

LATEST RECIPIENTS OF THE CARNEGIE MEDAL

Since the last edition of Impulse, *the following 16 individuals have been awarded the Carnegie Medal for Heroism, bringing the total number of recipients to 10,597 since the Hero Fund's inception in 1904. The latest awards were made in September. The next announcement will be made in December.*

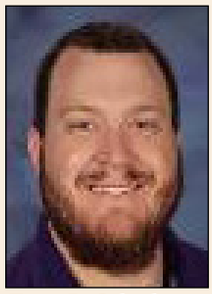
A teenage girl was playing in the surf of the Atlantic Ocean off Ocean City, New Jersey, on July 19, 2024, when she, her brother, and her mother were caught in a rip current and were pulled into deeper water. From the beach, 38-year-old attorney **Brandon D. Walcott**, from Marmora, New Jersey, noticed the family being pulled away from the shore. Familiar with the water conditions, Walcott rushed to the water's edge and signaled to the family to determine whether they needed assistance. There, he encountered a young boy in the same party as the family, who was struggling to remain standing in wadable surf. Walcott carried the boy to safety on the beach and returned to the water. Walcott swam about 80 feet toward the family, who had continued to be pulled away from the shore. Once near enough, he instructed the mother and the brother to tread water while he swam to the girl, who had submerged. Walcott dived underwater and searched for her until his hand brushed her arm. He pulled her to the surface and, seeing she was struggling to breathe, struck her back until she expelled water from her mouth. The girl panicked and flailed, but Walcott grasped her shirt and held her at arm's length before pulling her out of the rip current as the mother and brother followed. The group eventually made it to shallow water where bystanders, including Walcott's wife, helped the girl onto the beach. The mother and brother made their way to shore on their own. The girl and her family had refused medical treatment from responding emergency personnel. Walcott was fatigued by the rescue but otherwise unharmed.



A still photo from a video taken by ***Matthew Robert Clark*** *looking down the rock chimney that he scaled during his rescue of Stephen Parson, 75, on Feb. 6, 2026, in Duncan, British Columbia. Parson was hang gliding when he crashed and was left hanging after suffering severe injuries. Clark freed him from his harness and took him to a safe location, adminstering first aid while they waited for a rescue helicopter.*



Brandon D. Walcott



Evan R. Scheck



Erik Opal



Michael D. Shoemaker Jr.

Two boys were riding their bicycles on May 9, 2024, in Spencer, Iowa, near a flooded bank of the Little Sioux River when floodwater swept the boys downriver. Separated from their bicycles, one boy ended up in wadable water amid a thicket of trees and bushes. The other, 12, reached the concrete base of a utility pole on the flooded bank and climbed atop it just above the water's surface. **Evan R. Scheck**, a 28- year-old teacher from Spencer, was coaching a school tennis team when a couple alerted him that the boys were struggling to exit the river. Scheck, another coach, and members of the tennis team ran to the flooded bank, where Scheck removed his shoes and socks and entered the water. With the other coach helping him locate the boys in the brush, Scheck waded through waist-deep water to the first boy and helped him to safety. He then turned his attention to the 12-year-old, who remained stranded at the utility pole farther out in the floodwater. Scheck waded about 60 feet through submerged brush and then swam another 60 feet through swift, cold water that was too deep to stand in. After reaching the pole, he found a spot where he could stand in chin-deep water, where he convinced the boy to climb on his back. Scheck attempted to swim back to shallower water, but he submerged and realized he could not touch the bottom. He returned the boy to the pole, where the boy climbed onto the base again. Within minutes, police arrived with a rescue disc with a rope. An officer waded into chest-deep water and threw the disc to Scheck, who then coaxed the boy back into the water. Holding the boy with one arm, and the rescue disc and rope with the other, Scheck kicked toward safety while the officer pulled them through the water. They eventually reached wadable water and all three exited the floodwater to safety. The boy was uninjured. Scheck suffered minor abrasions to his feet and lower legs but was otherwise unharmed.

Chad J. Opal, 42, was outside his Council Bluffs, Iowa, home with two of his children on Dec. 23, 2025, when he smelled smoke coming from a neighboring vacant house that he also owned. Investigating, Opal unlocked and opened the home's front door and found a man sitting on a couch in the living room. After a brief exchange, Opal turned to call 911, when the man lunged at him and hit him with the butt end of a 5-inch hunting knife, knocking out several teeth. The assailant then repeatedly stabbed Opal in the face, head, and side. Opal fought back, throwing him from the porch. As the struggle moved outside, the assailant stabbed Opal again. Opal shouted that he had been stabbed and his 16-year-old son, **Erik Opal**, heard him from his bedroom in his family's home. Erik called 911 as he ran outside, where he saw his father and the assailant struggling near the street. Believing the man was armed, Erik ran to them and tackled the assailant, which allowed Opal to break free. The assailant then struggled with Erik. Rejoining the struggle, Opal laid across the assailant's legs to hold him down until police responded and took him into custody. Police later found the knife used to stab Opal on the other side of a fence next to the vacant house, at least 50 feet away from where Erik intervened. Police believe the assailant discarded the knife after the ▶

initial attack but before following Opal toward the street, the altercation continued until Erik intervened, still believing the assailant was armed. Opal suffered multiple stab wounds. He was hospitalized and underwent dental surgery. Erik sustained a cut to his arm but did not require treatment. He recovered.

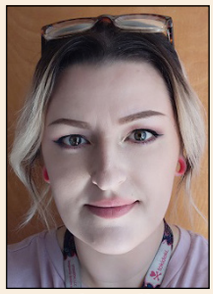
A Nov. 18, 2023, fire broke out in the bedroom in a 63-year-old man's first-floor Vancouver, Washington, apartment, trapping him inside as the unit filled with thick, black smoke. **Michael D. Shoemaker Jr.**, a 41-year-old maintenance worker who lived directly above the burning apartment, heard an explosion and ran outside. After learning the 63-year-old had not yet exited his home, Shoemaker, who suffered from asthma, entered the smoke-filled apartment without a shirt. Guided by sounds emanating from the man, Shoemaker felt his way through the apartment to the bedroom and attached bathroom. Going to his hands and knees, Shoemaker found the man on the floor. Unable to get the man to his feet, Shoemaker saw the orange glow of flames in the bedroom and ran outside for a fire extinguisher. Returning to the bedroom, he emptied the extinguisher on the nearby flames to little effect. Shoemaker then called out to his son, who crawled through the smoke to bring him a second extinguisher, which also had little to no effect. Directing his son to leave, the son exited the apartment. Shoemaker briefly exited the apartment a second time to catch his breath. He returned to the man, grasped him under his knees, and dragged him to the front door, where Shoemaker's son and a neighbor helped pull the man outside. The man suffered severe smoke-inhalation injuries and burns to his head, shoulders, and arms. He was hospitalized for several months and, at the time of the Hero Fund's investigation in 2026, was still recovering. Shoemaker suffered mild inhalation injuries, causing coughing and shortness of breath, as well as first-degree burns to his chest, back, and arms. He recovered.



Matthew Robert Clark



Jakaiden Rynearson



Amanda Williams



Glen R. Sprowl Jr.

Semiconscious and injured, 75-year-old Stephen Parson remained hanging in the harness of a hang glider that, on Feb. 6, 2026, had crashed into the side of the 2,585-foot Mount Prevost in Duncan, British Columbia. Parson came to rest about 200 feet from the top of the mountain into a tree just above a vertical, narrow gully. In addition to his injuries, his harness straps dug into his legs and began to cut off circulation, creating a life-threatening situation of hanging harness syndrome. **Matthew Robert Clark**, a 24-year-old electrician from Victoria, British Columbia, was among several paragliders who had landed in a field at the bottom of the mountain. After hearing over the radio that Parson had crashed, Clark joined two other paragliders and a police officer, who drove and hiked up the mountain. Clark, the officer, and one of the paragliders climbed a steep 40-foot slope to the base of a vertical "chimney" rock formation. Without climbing gear, Clark scaled the 27-foot, narrow chimney by bracing his back against one slippery, moss-covered wall and his feet against the other. He then climbed up another short incline to reach Parson. Using a knife, Clark cut Parson free of his harness and dragged him to a level area near the edge of the chimney. There, he administered first aid and stayed with Parson while awaiting rescue teams. Two ground rescue teams arrived but were unable to reach them. Clark remained with Parson for several hours until a rescue helicopter arrived and lowered a doctor to their location. After stabilizing Parson, the helicopter crew hoisted him from the mountain and took him to a waiting ambulance. The helicopter later returned to extract Clark and the doctor. Parson spent eight days in the hospital with injuries including several fractures, a gashed leg, and a concussion. He underwent weeks of physical therapy to regain full use of his legs from the suspension trauma. He fully recovered. Clark was not injured.



*A still photo taken from a video by North Shore Rescue, shows **Matthew Robert Clark** on Mount Provost in Duncan, British Columbia, on Feb. 6, 2026, with a rescue blanket the helicopter crew lowered to keep Stephen Parson warm. Parson was hang gliding when he crashed into the side of the 2,585 foot mountain and was left hanging from his harness while severely injured. Clark scaled his way up to Parson without climbing gear and administered first aid to Parson while they waited for the helicopter crew to rescue them.*

On Aug. 11, 2024, Zaneta Winters, 35, was shot in the head by her estranged partner inside her Peoria, Illinois, house. Winters collapsed near the front doorway while her 5-year-old son screamed in distress outside. About 15 seconds after the gunshot, 19-year-old store clerk **Jakaiden Rynearson** emerged from her house directly across the street. She jogged toward the Winters' house, calling out, "Hey, you OK?" and for someone to call 911. Rynearson entered the front yard and approached the door, where the boy was standing. The assailant emerged from the side of the house and repeatedly shot Rynearson, leaving her critically wounded in the yard. ▶



Larry Pickett Sr.



Mason E. Marshall



Jose Villalta



Brent A. Delaney

He then fled and was later arrested by police. Winters and Rynearson were taken to a hospital in critical condition. Winters died the following day. Rynearson, who was shot in the head, neck and back, died from her injuries 2.5 months later. The assailant was convicted of two counts of murder and sentenced to life in prison.

A 28-year-old man was lying on a curb in Vallejo, California, on Aug. 11, 2025, as an assailant held him down and stabbed him repeatedly in the face and head with two steak knives. A 37-year-old delivery driver from Vallejo, **Amanda Williams**, was driving to work and saw what she initially thought was a fight. She stopped, rolled down her window, and told the men she was going to call the police. The assailant told her to leave, but Williams then noticed the blood on the victim's face and the knives in the assailant's hand. The victim cried out for help, saying the assailant was trying to kill him. As Williams began calling 911, the assailant raised the knives to stab the victim again. Williams swung open her car door, ran across the street, and grabbed the assailant's right wrist with both hands. The assailant stood and the two struggled for control of the knives. Still gripping his wrist, the assailant pushed Williams into the street and against her car. Williams used her free hand to grab the blades and twist them out of the assailant's hand. As soon as she had control of the knives, she fled the scene with them. The assailant jumped into Williams' still-running car and drove away. He was later arrested. The victim was treated at a hospital. Williams suffered minor cuts to her hand but was otherwise uninjured.

A 59-year-old man armed with two handguns opened fire inside a crowded bar in Trabuco Canyon, California, on Aug. 23, 2023, first shooting and wounding his estranged wife and then striking several other patrons. The assailant continued firing as he moved outside before going to the parking lot, where he retrieved a shotgun from his truck. Among the patrons seated outside the front of the bar was 53- year-old shop manager **Glen R. Sprowl Jr.,** from Stanton, California. Surveillance video captured him entering the bar shortly after the assailant exited the bar. Sprowl returned outside and moved around the side of the building toward the parking lot. As he did, he encountered multiple people, and witnesses said he tried to rally them to pursue the assailant. Carrying a pocketknife, Sprowl continued toward the gunman and reached the base of a ramp to the parking lot. The assailant fired a shotgun at Sprowl, striking him four times in his upper body; Sprowl collapsed. The assailant shot two other people before sheriff's deputies arrived about four minutes later. They engaged in a shootout, and deputies fatally wounded the man. Nine people were shot by the assailant, three of whom were killed, including Sprowl, who died at the scene.

An SUV left a Fort Montgomery, New York, roadway and struck a utility pole on Aug. 31, 2025, bringing the pole and live power lines down onto the vehicle and roadway. The lines included a primary line carrying more than 12,000 volts and a secondary line carrying more than 200 volts. Semiconscious, the driver, 65-year-old David N. Denton remained inside the vehicle. **Larry Pickett Sr.**, 46, a Raleigh, North Carolina, business owner was driving nearby with his family and stopped near the scene. Seeing Denton inside the vehicle, in need of help, Pickett and his 20-year-old son, a West Point cadet, approached the car, stepping over a downed power line in the roadway. By then, flames had broken out along the vehicle's passenger side. Despite power lines lying on the SUV and visible electrical arcing beneath it, Pickett opened the driver's door and leaned inside. After four attempts, he managed to remove Denton's seat belt. Pickett's son then also reached into the vehicle and, together, they pulled Denton free. As they moved Denton away from the SUV, Pickett tripped and fell to the ground within inches of one of the downed lines. He quickly regained his footing and, with his son, carried Denton across ▶



*A photo captured by the family of **Larry Pickett Sr.**, 46, and his 20-year-old son on Aug. 31, 2025, after they rescued the driver. Pickett reached inside an SUV to save a semiconscious David N. Denton, 65, with a downed pole and live power lines that carried more than 12,000 volts surrounding the vehicle. Denton's vehicle had crashed into the pole in Fort Montgomery, New York, and brought down the power lines. Pickett and his son stepped over the power line in the roadway and opened the door where they managed to remove Denton's seat belt. They pulled him from the vehicle and took him to a grassy area across the road. The vehicle was soon enveloped in flames and firefighters extinguished the blaze from a distance. Both Pickett and his son avoided electrocution.*

the road to a grassy area. Flames grew to envelop the vehicle seconds after the rescue. Firefighters extinguished the blaze from a distance because of the live power lines, which were later de-energized remotely. A fire chief at the scene and an electrical engineer who later reviewed the incident agreed that the vehicle and surrounding ground should have been electrified. Neither could explain how Pickett, his son, and Denton avoided electrocution. Denton suffered abrasions and was taken by ambulance to the hospital, where he was treated and released. He recovered. Pickett was uninjured.

An April 1, 2026, fire broke out at ground level outside a Lancaster, Ohio, duplex. Trapped on the upper floor was 27-year-old subcontractor **Mason E. Marshall**, his fiancée, their 5-year-old daughter, and their 8-month-old son. The fire rapidly spread up the outside of the building, flames extending above the roof, filling the house with thick, black smoke. With the only exterior door of their home blocked by smoke and flames, Marshall entered his daughter's bedroom and dislodged a window air conditioner to create an escape route. Marshall picked up his daughter and held her outside the window as neighbors brought a ladder to the house. As they extended the ladder up to the window, Marshall could be heard saying, "I have to get the baby, you guys. Hurry!" A responding police officer climbed up the ladder, took the girl from Marshall, and carried her to the ground. Although an officer urged Marshall to follow him down the ladder, Marshall instead turned away from the opening and disappeared from the window, remaining inside to search for his fiancée and son. Marshall was later found in his daughter's room. His fiancée and son were found nearby in a separate room of the house. All three had died because of carbon monoxide poisoning due to smoke inhalation.



Mason Laney



Logan Green



Eslam Saad



Luke Nelson

A Dec. 27, 2025, fire broke out on the patio of a one-story house in Stockton, California, and spread to the adjacent home. **Jose Villalta**, a 68-year-old custodian, awoke to heat and smoke and roused his wife and other family members, including his son and son's partner. His son then moved to an adjacent bedroom and alerted his children, 13-year-old Marcos Villalta and an 11-year-old daughter. Once outside, the family realized Marcos remained inside the burning house. Villalta announced he was going back for Marcos and ran through the open front door. Marcos' father attempted to follow him, but the door was thrown shut before he could enter. After repeatedly ramming the door with his shoulder, he forced it open and re-entered the house. Inside, he found Marcos in the living room and led him to safety outside before returning to the house for Villalta. By then conditions had deteriorated and smoke and encroaching flames turned him back. Firefighters and emergency medical personnel arrived shortly. Marcos was taken to the hospital where he was treated for burns to his ears and face. He recovered. Firefighters located Villalta near the front door but were unable to reach him in time. He died in the fire.

In the morning on June 16, 2025, a fire broke out inside an 82-year-old man's Alton, Nova Scotia, home. Welding Supervisor **Brent A. Delaney**, 60, from Alton, was driving to work when he saw the fire and pulled over. Delaney had known the man for decades. A woman who was also stopped at the scene after seeing flames saw Delaney on his hands and knees at a doorway at the opposite end of the house calling inside for the man. After the woman called 911, she lost sight of Delaney. She told the dispatcher that she believed Delaney had entered the burning house to reach the man. When first responders arrived, the house was fully engulfed in flames. Delaney and the homeowner were later found deceased inside the house near one another. Delaney died of smoke inhalation.



*A still image taken from a video by the Pickett family showing **Larry Pickett Sr.** falling to the ground near live power lines after he and his son removed David Denton from his crashed SUV in Fort Montgomery, New York, on Aug. 31, 2025. Pickeet and his son avoided electrocution and carried Denton to safety. The vehicle was soon enveloped in flames that had to be put out by firefighters.*

A 55-year-old mother and her 15-year-old son were riding a personal watercraft on the Illinois River near Morris, Illinois, on Sept. 14, 2025, when it capsized, throwing them into the water. They were directly in the path of a tugboat pushing a fleet of 11 barges approaching them at about 4 m.p.h. The mother and son unsuccessfully attempted to right the watercraft as the massive barge platform drew closer to them. More than 200 feet away, two 19-year-olds from Minooka, Illinois, pipefitter **Mason Laney** and maintenance laborer **Logan Green**, saw the pair in the water and realized they were not moving out of the tow's path. Laney and Green boarded another personal watercraft, and, while Green drove, Laney faced the rear so he could reach for the mother and son. They maneuvered close to the pair as the barges continued toward them, and Laney grasped the boy's hand as Green accelerated away. When they were at a point 10 feet from his mother, the boy let go and swam back to her. Green circled the watercraft and returned ▶

for the boy as the approaching barges were only about 20 feet away. Laney grasped the boy by his hand and by his life jacket while Green accelerated away again, towing him to safety. About two seconds after they cleared the area, the barges struck the overturned watercraft. The mother had remained close to the watercraft and was submerged. She resurfaced several minutes later unresponsive and, while she was revived at the scene, she died a few weeks later. Laney, Green, and the boy were uninjured.

Off a beach near a Fort Lauderdale, Florida, resort, a 10-year-old girl was playing in shallow water with her sister, 11, on June 15, 2025, when she started to struggle in a rip current. Lifeguards had left for the evening, and the current swept the girls farther from the shore. Their father, who had been sitting in the sand near the surf, ran into the water to help the girls. On the beach, 32-year-old chemist **Eslam Saad**, of Dublin, Ohio, heard screaming and saw the 10-year-old struggling to stay afloat in water about 120 feet out. Saad ran into the surf, waded a few feet, and then swam out to her. When he reached her, he grabbed her hand and pulled her to the surface. Panicking, she wrapped her arms around his neck and pulled him underwater. Saad tried to loosen her grip, but she would not let go. Saad turned to shore and started to swim underwater with the girl clinging to his neck. Occasionally, he would surface for air until he reached shallow water and stood. The girl climbed onto his shoulders and then jumped into the shallow surf. Saad walked onto the beach as lifeguards arrived and helped the girl to shore. Saad collapsed on the sand and was treated by first responders. The girl's sister had made it out of the water, but their father remained missing. Ocean rescue personnel found him unconscious in 8 feet of water about 150 feet from shore. He was taken to a hospital but could not be revived. The girl was uninjured but taken to a hospital for observation. An ambulance also took Saad to the hospital, where he was treated for near drowning. He recovered.

While driving her SUV in Dallas, on Sept. 25, 2024, 71-year-old Carla Reyna encountered a flooded bridge above a swollen river. As she attempted to cross, the rising water lifted her vehicle off the road, rotated it, and left it resting with its undercarriage atop a submerged guide rail along the edge of the bridge. **Luke Nelson**, 35, a Dallas insurance broker, had driven across the bridge minutes before Reyna amid rising water and heavy debris. He had stopped assessing possible damage to his vehicle when he saw Reyna's plight. Nelson called 911 before handing his phone to a bystander, removing his shirt, belt, shoes, and socks, and entering the floodwater. Nelson waded about 100 feet to the submerged guide rail and walked along toward the SUV. At a point near the vehicle, Nelson encountered a drop-off and submerged in water too deep for him to touch bottom. He moved to the vehicle's driver's door and, locating the guide rail again, anchored his foot against it. Using the rail as leverage, he opened the door enough to reach inside and grasped Reyna. He helped her exit the vehicle before helping maneuver her to its hood. Reyna briefly entered the water, but feareing she would be unable to withstand the current she later said, she returned to the hood. By that time, the hood was submerged, and Nelson used his body weight to stabilize her until responding firefighters arrived. Firefighters parked just west of the flooded creek and extended their truck's 107-foot rescue ladder to within about 20 feet of the SUV. They then threw Reyna a flotation device attached to a rope and pulled her to safety at the ladder. Nelson was then thrown the flotation device and used it to swim to the ladder, which allowed him to exit the water. Reyna suffered bruising to her left upper arm but did not require medical attention and recovered. Nelson suffered minor scratches but did not require medical treatment. He recovered.



*Body cam footage from the Lancaster Police Department shows the home of **Mason E. Marshall**, 27, in Lancaster, Ohio, just seconds after he had passed his 5-year-old daughter to a police officer and disappeared back inside his duplex that had caught fire on April 1, 2025. The fire rapidly spread up the outside of the building and filled the house with black smoke. After his daughter was safe, Marshall left the window to attempt to save his 8-month-old son and his fiancée. Marshall was later found in his daughter's room and his fiancée and son were found in a seperate room nearby. All three died from carbon monoxide poisoning due to smoke inhalation.*



Ngoc L Thai

▶ from p4

BOARD MEMBERS CONT.

Affairs. During more than 14 years in government, Peterson served at the departments of State and Defense, and the White House's National Security Council, working at the intersection of diplomacy, national security, economic policy, technology, and strategy. He serves on boards for WQED Multimedia, the Pittsburgh Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Krach Institute for Tech Diplomacy at Purdue. Holding degrees from Georgetown and Harvard, Peterson lives in Pittsburgh with his wife, Sunny, and their children.

Ngoc L. Thai is the founder, chief medical officer, and chief executive officer of Imagine Pharma, a biotech company focused on the development of a polypeptide to addressing multiple diseases. He also is a highly respected surgeon, specializing in liver, abdominal, kidney, and pancreas transplants. Thai also serves on the board of trustees of the Brother's Brother Foundation, a world aid organization. With both a M.D. and Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh and a bachelor's degree from Cornell University, Thai resides in Pittsburgh's Shadyside neighborhood with his wife, Barbara, and daughters Emma and Ally.

"Drew and Ngoc bring a wealth of experience, thoughtful leadership, and a strong commitment to service. Their perspectives will be valuable as the commission continues its work recognizing and supporting those who risk themselves for others," said Michael A. Thompson, who chairs the Commission.

▶ from p.5

MARCIA J. WALTON



Marcia J. Walton

Carnegie Hero **Marcia J. Walton**, later Marcia J. Keen, died Monday, Sept.14, 2026, in Sagamore Beach, Massachusetts.

Walton was born in Plymouth, Massachusetts, on Aug. 4, 1944, to Dorothy and Henry Walton.

On Aug. 12, 1958, in Manomet, Massachusetts, Marcia, then 14, entered the Atlantic Ocean after 6-year-old Charles P. Walsh fell from an inflated rubber raft at a point 130 feet from shore in water 10 feet deep. Hearing his calls for help, Marcia ran 300 feet to the water's edge, waded 15 feet, and then swam 115 feet to where Charles had sunk. Treading water, Marcia reached down into the water, grasped Charles, and drew him to the surface. He squirmed in her grasp, coughing and expelling water. After calming him, Marcia drew Charles onto his back, placed her arm across his chest, and began towing him toward the beach. Waves a foot high, caused by a speedboat passing 300 feet away, washed over their heads; and Marcia's legs brushed a submerged rock projection as she passed over it. She towed Charles a total of 115 feet and, somewhat winded, secured footing in water 4 feet deep. A woman waded into the water and took Charles, who then was inert, from Marcia. With Marcia following, the woman carried Charles to the beach, where he was revived.

Walton worked in nursing for over 20 years at Plymouth County Hospital and Cranberry Specialty Hospital. Upon retiring, she joined the staff at her veterinarian's office in Halifax.

Walton enjoyed a shared love of animals with her husband Richard Keen and together they enjoyed horseback riding, skiing, boating, fishing, and gardening. She was happiest when she was on the water or at the beach.

Walton was proceeded in death by her husband on July 23.

Walton is survived by son Michael Williams; stepchildren, Nancy McFarland, Sally Davis, and Phillip Keen; niece, Melissa English; and many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

GALE L. GALLOWAY



Gale L. Galloway

Carnegie Hero **Gale L. Galloway,** 96, died Friday, Sept. 25, 2026.

Galloway was born in Pearsall, Texas, in 1930.

Following the death of his father at only 4 years old, Galloway, his mother, and his four siblings faced the Great Depression. Coming out on the other side of that hardship, Galloway would find a home at Baylor University where he earned a degree in Business Administration and was a distinguished student athlete on the football field.

Galloway went on to serve in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War and earned the rank of lieutenant colonel.

On March 21, 1980, at the William P. Hobby Airport in Houston, Texas, Galloway, then 50, helped save 31-year-old Willis Jackson and 46-year-old Virgil R. Savoy from burning inside a plane that crashed and burst into flames. The two men sat doubled over and unconscious in their seats near the airplane's rear passenger door. Galloway ran to the airplane, reached through the opened passenger door, and pulled Jackson from his seat. After another man helped him drag Jackson clear of the wreckage, Galloway returned to the airplane that was quickly being consumed by flames. Despite the flames, Galloway helped the other man pull Savoy out of the airplane and drag him away. Jackson recovered from his injuries after hospitalization, but Savoy died a short time after he was freed. ▶

FRIENDS REMEMBERED

GALE L. GALLOWAY CONT.

Galloway continued to dedicate much of his time to his alma mater and served on Baylor's Board of Regents from 1990 to 1998, including as chair in 1994-1995. He was inducted into the Baylor Athletics Hall of Fame and Wall of Honor. He was also honored with the Distinguished Alumni Award and the W. R. White Meritorious Service Award.

Galloway was preceded in death by his wife of 64 years, Connie.

He is survived by his children, Tara Lee Galloway, Georgia Gayle Elmore, and Michael Will Galloway, along with numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

LOUIS L. FISHER

Carnegie Hero **Louis L. Fisher** died Saturday, Sept. 26, 2026.

On March 14, 1969, in Tampa, Florida, Fisher, then 25, was a police patrolman who responded to help 20-year-old Brenda C. Noble after her sedan struck a concrete utility pole. Another woman and her 6-year-old son were passengers in the vehicle. By the time Fisher arrived, a police detective had removed the boy and his mother through the door on the passenger side. Fisher ran to the driver's side of the automobile where fire had broken out at the ruptured fuel tank at its front end. Fisher leaned into the automobile to his waist as flames had spread to the interior of the sedan and were increasing. Fisher took hold of Noble and drew her from the automobile as the detective returned to the opposite side of the vehicle to make sure there was no one else in it. Fisher carried Noble as he and the detective moved away from the sedan. It was then that the fuel tank erupted and spread flames throughout the interior. Miss Noble was not burned, but she later succumbed to her injuries.

STEVEN A. RAUSER

Carnegie Hero **Steven A. Rauser**, 47, died Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2026, in Ann Arbor, Michigan.



Steven A. Rauser

Rauser was born Aug. 28, 1979, to Marty and Gary Rauser.

Rauser served with the Detroit Police Department for 23 years, dedicating much of his life to protecting the people of Detroit. He also served with the Tactical Services Section, where his professionalism and determination were deeply respected.

On April 17, 2017, at night in a park in Detroit, adjacent the Detroit River, a woman, 34, fell from a concrete bulkhead into cold, deep water from which there was no easy egress. Rauser, a police officer, responded to the scene accompanied by another officer. Rauser and officer Brian R. Gadwell moved to the top of the bulkhead that was about 6 feet above the water's surface. They observed her struggling to stay afloat and Gadwell removed his duty gear and jumped into the cold water. Gadwell grasped the woman and held onto a steel rod that jutted from the bulkhead but he struggled to maintain his grasp. Gadwell called out hat he was losing his grip, and Rauser jumped into the river. Rauser grasped her with one arm and held onto the rod with the other. She wrapped her arms around Rauser's neck and began to pull him away from the bulkhead. Rauser, who was briefly submerged twice, told her to stop and tried to calm her. Ultimately she disengaged from Rauser and drifted beyond Rauser's reach. A boat responded from nearby and personnel aboard the boat assisted the woman to safety. Rauser and Gadwell were lifted from the water by emergency personnel Rauser was taken to the hospital for treatment of his exposure to the cold water. Both Rauser and Gadwell recovered.

Rauser was described as a man who loved to laugh and he cherished being a father.

Rauser is survived by daughter, Zoey Love Rauser; sisters Kerry Stone, Lisa Boddington, and Kelly Rauser; and nieces, Sydney, Allison, and Madeline.

OVERHEARD

He was generous, kind, and special in more ways that I can begin to explain. He touched everyone he encountered. –Father of **Ricky Lee Sneve**, Carnegie Hero #10275

I felt I was the right person at the right time. If you can do something, do that. – **Mark Pembleton**, Carnegie Hero #10446

And we obviously know that he did exactly what we would expect him to do – what any father would do, hopefully – but him, especially just his character, that's what he was. – Brother-in-law of **Nate Davenport**, Carnegie Hero #10513 who died of electrocution while attempting to save three children in a malfunctioning, electrified fountain

I don't know what would've happened if he hadn't come out, and I'm glad I didn't have to find out. – Police officer saved by Carnegie Hero #10529 **Christopher S. Copeland**

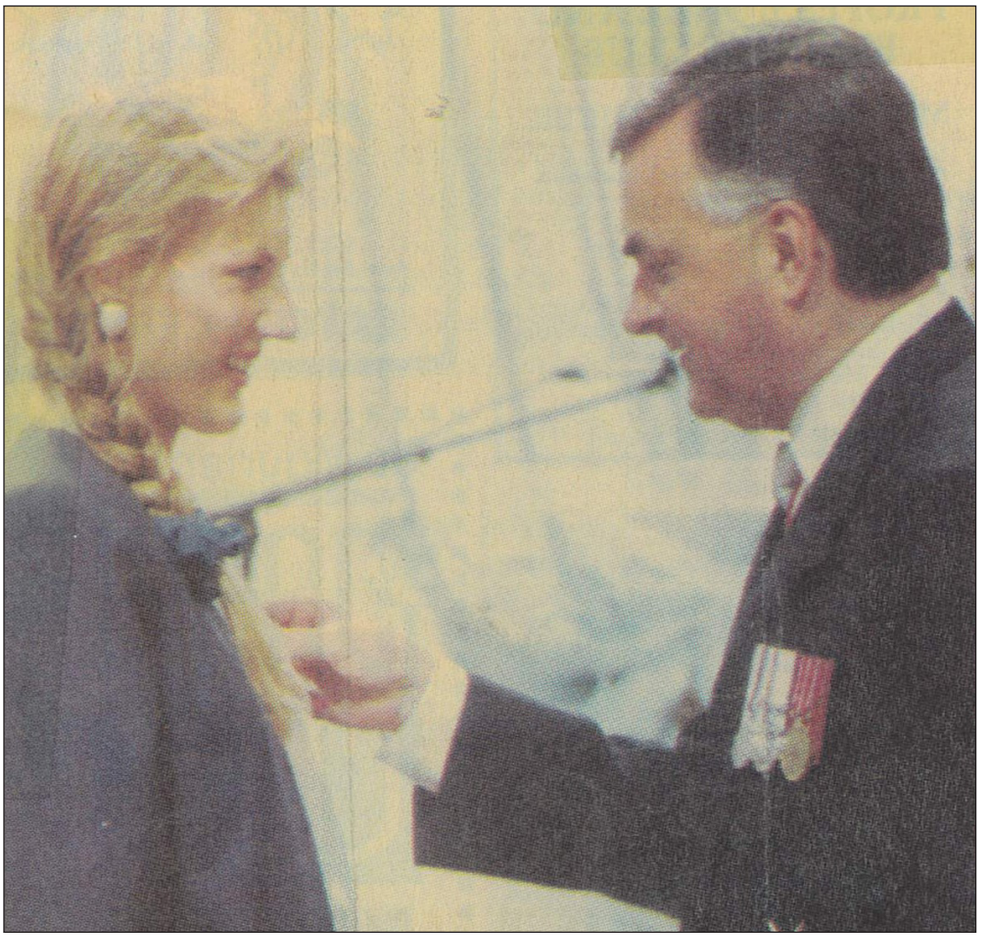
His selfless actions were a reflection of the man he was – brave, loving, and devoted to those he cared about. – Facebook post about Carnegie Hero #10533 **Joshua A. Curtis**

They're heroes in our mind, honest heroes. With their willingness to jump in, in somebody else's time of need, that cannot go unrecognized. – Fire fighter on the actions of Carnegie Hero #10547 **Matt Vasey**

What he did is who he was. Even if it wasn't our family, if he saw anybody in danger, he wouldn't have hesitated to go rescue them. You know, he helped everybody. – Fiancée of Carnegie Hero #10553 **Mark Bryson**, who drowned after rescuing three people who were drowning.

Gary truly was a hero who not only dedicated his life to his children but literally gave his life for them. – Sister of Carnegie Hero #10566 **Gary M. Simard**, who drowned rescuing his son.

1992: ZOOKEEPER USES SLEDGEHAMMER TO SAVE FRIEND FROM STARVING JAGUAR



*Governor General Ray Hnatyshyn presents the Canadian Medal of Bravery to **Heather Ann Stewart**, 26, after an April 13, 1992, rescue of her coworker Aneeta A. Campbell from a jaguar that attacked her while they worked at a private zoo in Bon Accord, Alberta. Stewart heard screams from Campbell after the jaguar bit into her arm. After multiple attempts to get the jaguar away from Campbell, Stewart acquired a sledgehammer and hit the jaguar until it released its hold of Campbell. They made their way to safety and sought medical help for Campbell's injuries.*

On the morning of April 13, 1992, Aneeta A. Campbell, 25, and 26-year-old **Heather Ann Stewart**, from Bon Accord, Alberta, were working at a local private zoo, where they were assigned to enter the enclosure of an 8-year-old male jaguar.

The big cat was confined to a shelter within a chain-link enclosure while the women entered the pen to leave food and water. The shelter had a sliding door that opened into the display area and a hinged door that opened into the adjoining enclosure. The hinged door was normally secured with a U-shaped clip, which was removed only when the shelter was being cleaned.

According to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the jaguar had been placed on a diet of dry pet food instead of its usual diet of raw meat. It was 30 to 40 pounds under its normal weight and in such poor condition that it was described as "essentially starving to death."

Stewart, who normally cared for the zoo's petting animals, was filling in for an absent zookeeper that day. Campbell had returned to work after an extended absence.

Stewart later stated that the jaguar had been aggressive recently because of the change in its diet, and it "always" went to the door and pushed on it with its nose during feedings.

"A lot of the animals, especially the big cats, were in really poor condition because they weren't being fed a proper diet," Stewart told Roberta Staley from the Edmonton Sun in a January 1993 article. "His character had changed from the first time I worked there."

When the women arrived, the jaguar was already confined to its shelter. According to the investigation done by Hero Fund investigator Susan L. Marcy, Stewart said she believed the U-shaped clip was in place when they entered, though she did not check to see if the clip was in place with her attention focused on the base of the door which the jaguar had chewed.

Campbell told Adrienne Tanner from the Edmonton Journal in a January 1993 article that she felt like she was being stalked by the starving cat as she looked into its eyes.

"It was like looking at someone in a bar, looking away and then looking again because you're attracted to what you've seen," Campbell said. "To him, I probably looked like one of those cartoons of a big steak."

After leaving food in the display area, the women approached the enclosure's south gate. Stewart exited first and began speaking with a female aviary keeper while Campbell remained inside.

As Campbell passed the hinged door of the shelter, the jaguar suddenly lunged against it. Campbell realized that the U-shaped clip was missing and pushed against the door in an effort to keep the animal confined. Unable to hold it shut, she attempted to flee.

The jaguar burst through the door, pursued Campbell, and knocked her to the ground outside the enclosure. Campbell curled into a fetal position, covering her head to protect her neck. The jaguar ▶

seized her left arm in its jaws and bit down, crushing the bone.

"I was screaming. I could feel the bone crushing in my arm," Campbell told Ian Williams and Greg Owens from the Edmonton Journal in April 1992. "(The cat) was so hungry. When he got that first taste of blood, he kept on wanting to taste more."

Campbell screamed for help and caught the attention of the aviary keeper. The aviary keeper ran to a nearby parked truck and started it, hoping that the sound of the engine would frighten the jaguar to release its hold of Campbell, but it did not deter the jaguar's attack.

Stewart saw her friend in mortal danger and immediately ran over to Campbell. She shouted at the Jaguar before hitting the cat with a plastic bucket, but its handle broke.

Determined to get the jaguar away from Campbell, Stewart kicked the jaguar and pulled on its fur and tail. The jaguar momentarily released its grip on Campbell but then grasped her arm again, dragging her toward the pen.

With the attack continuing, Stewart remembered a 10-pound sledgehammer in the nearby truck. She ran to retrieve it, then returned to Campbell, who was still being dragged by the jaguar.

Stewart swung the hammer repeatedly, striking the animal in its rib cage and head until it finally released Campbell. The injured woman rolled away and fled toward the truck as the jaguar staggered and collapsed.

The aviary keeper helped get Campbell inside the truck to safety and Stewart followed.

Once all three women were safely inside, they drove to a nearby concession stand and called for an ambulance. Stewart and the aviary keeper then went to the zoo manager's nearby residence to alert him to the attack. The manager returned to the enclosure and shot the jaguar dead.

Campbell was hospitalized for five days with a broken left arm and lacerations to her arm, leg, and chest. Her wounds required sutures, and she underwent a year of physical therapy. She was unable to work for 10 months. At the time of the Hero Fund's investigation, bone fragments remained in her arm, and she continued to experience pain.

The zoo closed soon after the incident.

An autopsy confirmed the jaguar's deteriorated condition. Dr. Byron Morden, head of the animal disease section of Agriculture Alberta, described the animal as "very thin and emaciated" in an April 1992 interview with Roland Bremner of the Edmonton Sun. Its poor condition was considered a possible factor in its aggressive behavior and attack on Campbell.

In the months following the incident, Campbell spoke openly about her gratitude for Stewart's intervention and her belief that Stewart had saved her life.

"If she wouldn't have been there that day or hadn't done anything, I would have literally been cat meat," Campbell told Adrienne Tanner of the Edmonton Journal in January 1993.

Campbell sought formal recognition for Stewart's bravery, nominating her for both a Governor General's award for bravery and the Carnegie Medal.

"I'm ecstatic. This is my way of paying her back," Campbell said of the nominations.

"When somebody saves your life, you feel like you owe them something."

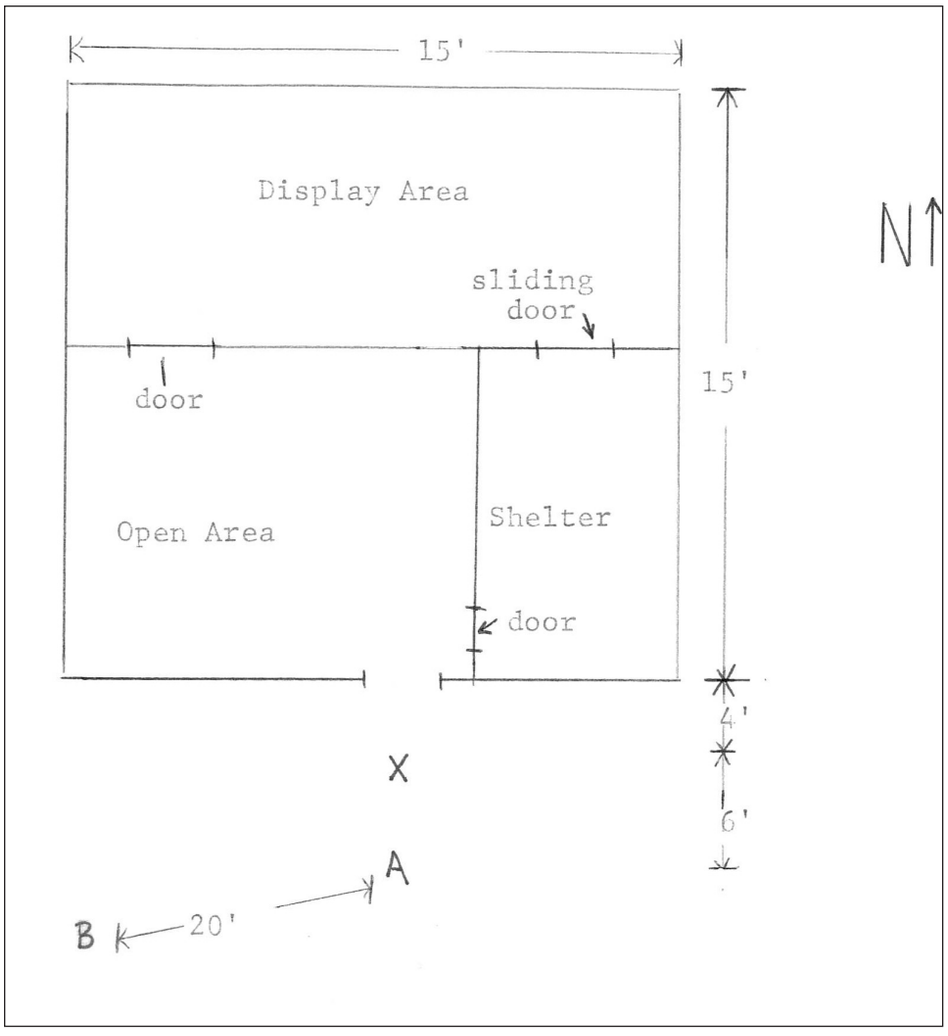
Stewart, however, remained modest about her actions. According to Campbell, Stewart believed that anyone in her position would have done the same.

"She thinks any other person would have done the same things, but I'm not so sure," Campbell said.

Beyond the nominations and public expressions of gratitude, Campbell gave Stewart something deeply personal: a cross that she had worn around her neck for years.

"I had worn a cross around my neck for years and years, and after the accident I gave it to her."

— Griffin Erdely, communications assisstant



*A sketch shows the layout of an enclosure that housed an 8-year-old jaguar that attacked Aneeta A. Campbell, 25, at a private zoo in Bon Accord, Alberta, in 1992. Working with Campbell was 26-year-old **Heather Ann Stewart**. After she exited the enclosure, Stewart heard Campbell screaming and rushed to help. Stewart used a sledgehammer to hit the jaguar and caused it to release its hold of Campbell before they eventually exited the enclosure to safety.*

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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, such as scholarship aid and continuing grants to the heroes and 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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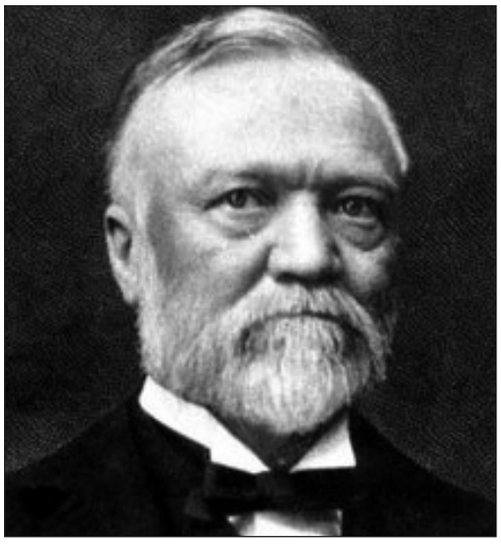
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THE QUOTABLE A.C.



"...the surplus which accrues from time to time in the hands of a man should be administered by him in his own liftime for that purpose which is seen by him, as a trustee, to be best for the good of the people."

—From The Gospel of Wealth, 1889

CONTINUUM

GRAVE MARKERS Bronze grave markers (below), cast in the likeness of the Carnegie Medal, are available at no cost to the families of recipients 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 recipient'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 (2023-2024) are available online or by contacting the Hero Fund.

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