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## Locals lauded for serving community

BY BRENDAN GIBBONS (STAFF WRITER)

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Butch Comegys / Staff Photographer The inaugural Red Cross Everyday Heroes Awards Breakfast on Wednesday morning honored, from left, James Beavers, Bob Rutkowski, Gus Catalano, Robert Dee, Mary Marrara, Brian Munley and Redmond Lines. Bob Nixon, right, accepted the Corporate Good Spirit Award for Steve Kopic.

Dangling deep in a storm drain, suspended by his ankles, Dunmore Assistant Fire Chief Robert Dee remembers seeing a child's boot suspended in a pool of black water.

He remembers stretching to grasp the foot of the 18-month-old boy before the men holding his legs hauled him back up out of the drain, holding the unconscious child in his arms.

Wednesday morning, the American Red Cross of Lackawanna County awarded Assistant Chief Dee, Lackawanna Ambulance paramedic Bob Rutkowski and EMT Gus Catalano for their roles in saving the boy. Their awards were two of seven the Red Cross presented at its inaugural Everyday Heroes Awards Breakfast.

The child had fallen into the storm drain while his mother's boyfriend was placing a car seat holding his infant son into his car.

After Assistant Chief Dee pulled the boy out, Mr. Rutkowski and Mr. Catalano rushed him to the hospital. On the way, they were able to revive the child.

"It showed the whole system worked from start to end," Assistant Chief Dee said of the rescue.

Also awarded were:

-â Archbald police Officer Brian Munley for using CPR and a defibrillator to save a 60-year-old woman.

-â Red Cross volunteer James Beavers for reviving two dogs suffering from smoke inhalation after a fire in 2012.

-â Jermyn resident Mary Marrara for raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for local charities.

-â Wendy's franchise owner Steve Kopic for his donations of food, labor and money to the Red Cross.

-â The entire crew of Geisinger Life Flight for more than 2,500 helicopter flights in central and Northeast Pennsylvania.

A committee of five Red Cross board members chose the recipients after receiving nominations from the public and verifying their stories, said Sherry Nealon Williams, executive director of the local chapter.

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About 75 people attended the event, including uniformed Army National Guard members and police officers.

Officer Munley recounted the incident last year that led to his award. He was responding to a medical call, arriving at the residence of a woman who was not breathing and had no pulse. For the first time, he had to use his Red Cross training, he said.

"You just go through a checklist of what to do when you get there," Officer Munley said.

He applied CPR and used the automated external defibrillator he had in his patrol car, ultimately saving the woman's life. The Archbald Police Department has two defibrillators, and its officers are required to take CPR and first-aid courses, he said.

Officer Munley said he was grateful to the Red Cross for the award and glad a positive story came out of his work.

For Ms. Marrara, volunteerism is simply part of her identity.

Ms. Marrara serves on the boards of the local Red Cross, the Italian-American service organization UNICO, La Festa Italiana, Scranton Cultural Center, Meals on Wheels and the Jermyn Lion's Club.

She said she spends 15 to 20 hours a week volunteering, and she gets back much more than she puts in.

She had a piece of advice for those interested in getting involved in their community for the first time.

"Start small," she said. "Start with one little thing."

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*NOTE: The above article was altered to correct an error. The article originally incorrectly stated the event was the first time Mr. Dee, Mr. Rutkowski and Mr. Catalano were publicly honored for saving a child's life in November 2012. Mr. Rutkowski and Mr. Catalano were honored for the*

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*rescue at Geisinger's 10th annual Emergency Medical Service Provider of the Year Award ceremony in May.*

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