



LIFESAVING SOCIETY®  
*The Lifeguarding Experts*

# Investiture *citations*

## Investiture of Lifesaving Honours

RESCUE AWARD CITATIONS

OCTOBER 5, 2009 | ROYAL ALBERTA MUSEUM | EDMONTON, AB

# Casey Peirce, Darcy Peirce, Heather Peirce and Bob Peirce

SPRAY LAKE RESERVOIR, NEAR CANMORE, ALBERTA - July 26, 2008

**THE RESCUE COMMENDATION CERTIFICATE** recognizes an outstanding rescue by a person who is not a Lifesaving Society award holder.

**THE LIFESAVING MEDAL** may be awarded to a person involved in a rescue or attempted rescue that took place in Alberta or the Northwest Territories. It may also be awarded to a resident of Alberta or the Northwest Territories involved in a rescue that took place elsewhere. A Bar for Bravery may be awarded when the nature of the rescue placed the rescuer's life in considerable danger.

**THE COMMENDATION CITATION** may be awarded to a person who is deserving of recognition for a humanitarian act.

On July 26, 2008, Casey Peirce, her mom Heather, her dad Bob and her sister Darcy were on a late afternoon bike ride at the very remote Spray Lake Reservoir. Little did they know that their family outing would turn into a rescue ordeal when they heard calls for help from two people in the centre of the lake, from an overturned canoe.

Darcy immediately began trying to call 911 on her cell phone. Casey and Bob assessed the situation and started out to swim over to the people in distress. Bob soon had to turn back even though he was a strong swimmer; as the water was a body numbing cold. Confident that she could get herself out and back to safety, Casey continued on, taking 15 minutes to reach the people in the frigid water. She knew that her experience and triathlon training would pull her through.

When she reached the canoe, she found a middle aged man straddled on top partially submerged to his waist and the woman was clinging to the side, submerged to her chest. At this point they had been in the water for about 90 minutes; fortunately they were wearing their lifejackets. Casey tried to get them to release the canoe, so that they could flip it over. This couldn't be done, as unbeknownst to Casey, a motor held the canoe upside down.



LIFESAVING SOCIETY®  
*The Lifeguarding Experts*

# Investiture *citations*

Page 2 of 2

As the woman was turning blue, Casey then decided to tow them closer to shore until help arrived. She grabbed the canoe rope, tied it around her wrist and began towing them. The 10°C water was so cold that Casey soon could not feel either her feet or hands. She soldiered on for the next 45 minutes, bringing them within 50 feet from shore. Casey's strength was waning and the cold was taking its toll.

Bob was waiting for Casey, just 40 feet from shore, ready to go in to help. When Casey got within throwing range, he threw her a rope and pulled her in the rest of the way. By this time Casey had been in the water for at least 60 minutes. Amazingly, she had dragged the victims, their canoe and motor, plus other paraphernalia. All in all she pulled an astounding 600 pounds a full kilometre that day.

Bob and Heather carried the victims from the water and began to warm them up, giving them what little dry clothes that they had. Meanwhile, Darcy had spent the whole time trying to maintain connections to rescue personnel with her cell phone. The cell phone repeatedly lost connection; even so Darcy calmly and succinctly directed them to their location.

With their attention directed to the couple, it took a while for the family to notice that Casey remained in the water fully exhausted from the ordeal. Heather had to help her daughter out of the water. With Bob's help, remarkably, Casey found the strength to return to their jeep, 4 kilometres away – and then back to the warmth and security of their camp and friends.

Heather and Darcy remained with the couple, trying to warm them. With no rescue in sight, they started to move the couple across the beach, hoping to get through the woods and towards the road. Eventually a conservation officer and camp manager arrived with a truck. It was only then that the couple was able to get some much needed heat.

It is for her dogged determination, courage and selfless heroism along with her coolness of mind that Casey Peirce is awarded the Rescue Commendation Certificate and the Lifesaving Medal with the Bar for Bravery. For their coordinated actions, Darcy Peirce, Heather Peirce and Bob Peirce are awarded the Commendation Citation.

Casey Peirce received the prestigious HRH Prince Michael of Kent Certificate of Merit from the Royal Life Saving Society – Commonwealth in June 2009.