



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
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## **Delegate Carrico Commends VMS Workers for Saving Smyth County Lives -- Smyth County Residents are Safe After Massive Flooding --**

**Smyth County, VA** – On Wednesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2003, while Smyth County residents were in the midst of recovering from 4.5 inches of rain in the span of 24 hours, three brave bystanders risked their lives to help four fellow citizens. Crews from VMS – a transportation asset management company that services Smyth County – had been working nonstop to unclog drains and clean debris from ditches. Three men from the VMS team, Jamie Bradley, Stephen Price, and Eric Joines saved four lives that day.

“There were many examples of neighbors helping neighbors during the recent storms in Smyth County,” said Delegate Bill Carrico. “However, these acts of heroism were brought to my attention recently and I felt that these men needed to be commended. They work hard for our community and on that day they went beyond the call of duty to help their fellow citizens. Their bravery is an example and inspiration to all of us as we give thanks for our friends and families during this Thanksgiving holiday season.”

On that Wednesday morning Jamie Bradley and Stephen Price came upon a mini-van in the roadway on Route 609, Riverside Road. The mini-van had stalled out in 4 feet of water. The driver, a young woman, and her infant, were pulled to safety as the men pulled the van out.

Later that same day, Bradley and Price discovered a small S-10 truck in the same flood waters as the van. A man who was afraid to tread water occupied the truck. The men waded into the water and pushed the truck out for the stranded man.

Later in the afternoon on their way home from work, Bradley and fellow VMS employee Eric Joines noticed a car that was floating down the South Fork of the Holston River. Bradley retrieved his binoculars from the crew truck and looked to see if anyone was in the car. He saw no one so they assumed the driver had gotten out safely. A few minutes later as Joines looked back at the car, he noticed what he thought was a person in the water, lodged against the bank. He shouted at Bradley to bring the binoculars; they, indeed, had spotted a person. They quickly grabbed some ropes from the crew truck and tied them together, tying one end to Bradley and the other end to Joines. Joines then swam out into the 40 degree water to the man and tied the rope to him. He helped hold the man’s head out of the water while Bradley pulled them both to safety. After making this rescue, they learned that the gentleman was 72 years old with a pacemaker and was also diabetic. The man was taken to the Smyth County Hospital where he was treated for hypothermia.

“It is heart-warming to hear about neighbors helping each other. This example of selflessness makes me proud to represent the residents of this region. It is yet another great reason to live and raise a family in Smyth County,” said Delegate Carrico.

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