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■ Canadian trucker a finalist for Goodyear Highway Hero award

By: *Jan Westell*

INNISFIL, Ont. -- A split second decision saved others, but ultimately took the life of an Ontario truck driver, who was forced off the road by street-racers near Bradford, Ontario last summer.

As a result of his heroic act, David Virgoe of Innisfil, Ontario, has been recognized named a finalist for one of trucking's most prestigious awards for heroism: Goodyear's fifth annual North American Highway Hero Award.

The 48-year-old driver for Wilburn Archer Trucking, based in Norwood, Ontario, was driving his empty tanker along Hwy. 400 near Bradford, Ontario, last summer, when he was faced with three cars weaving in-and-out of traffic. After he was cut off by one of the street-racing cars, Virgoe drove his truck into the median guardrail. Rather than allow his truck to slam into oncoming traffic, he swerved to the right, crossed the highway, and drove into a ditch along the right side of the road.




The father of three and grandfather of five didn't survive the tragedy, but due to the quick, selfless reaction that saved the lives of countless others, Virgoe has been hailed as a hero. It was an incident didn't go unnoticed by Goodyear.

"This year, we are honouring one driver posthumously, and our thoughts and prayers go out to his family, as well as those of the victims who lost their lives on North American roads and highways," said Steve McClellan, vice-president for commercial tire systems for The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. "Time and again, truck drivers have emerged as bona-fide heroes. When motorists need help, they've stopped and put themselves in harm's way."

The winner will be announced March 27 at the Mid-America Trucking Show in Louisville, Ky. Founded by Goodyear in 1983, the Highway Hero program recognizes professional truck drivers and the often unnoticed, life-saving rescues and roadside assistance they provide as their jobs take them across North America.

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