

PARK DISTRICT OF OAK PARK

2009

COMMUNITY
SERVICE
AWARDS

FEBRUARY 18, 2010



PARK
DISTRICT
OF OAK PARK

WE MAKE A LIVING BY WHAT WE GET;
WE MAKE A LIFE BY WHAT WE GIVE.

- SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL

WELCOME

The Illinois Association of Park Districts and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association annually present Community Service Awards to individuals and organizations in recognition and appreciation of the outstanding contribution and unselfish devotion for the advancement of parks, recreation and leisure in the community and the state of Illinois.



Too often, we are consumed with our day-to-day tasks and forget to recognize the good work of others that helps make our successes possible. Tonight we celebrate our partnerships with community organizations, citizens, and governmental bodies that contribute to our mission of providing quality parks and recreation experiences to the residents of Oak Park. Congratulations to all of this year's recipients of the IPRA Community Service Awards.

ALICE TULLEY

FOPCON

Presented by Henrietta Yardley

Alice Tulley was new to Oak Park in 1989 and was looking for some way to become more involved in the community. The Oak Park Conservatory was within walking distance and was advertising for volunteers – Alice responded. She initially came to work in the greenhouses but soon was tapped to train as a docent. Before long Alice was teaching school children who visited the conservatory about rainforest and desert plants from around the world. With her background in plant biology she realized the need for a science-based tour of the three eco-systems represented there and went to work to develop one that is still used and still relevant 15 years later.

Alice was invited to join the Board for the Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory where she has served for 10 years holding a variety of positions. Alice became the newsletter editor and under her leadership, the newsletter quickly expanded to cover all aspects of conservatory events, classes and accomplishments. The Friends collaborate each year with the Oak Park/River Forest Garden Club and the Park District to sponsor a garden walk; Alice chaired this event and has been involved in many different capacities to make the garden walk possible.

Every spring, the Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory have a major fundraiser, the Scented Plant and Herb Sale. Alice has volunteered in some capacity or other for each of the sales, from stocking plants in the sales area, to greeting and answering shoppers' questions to chairing the event in four non-consecutive years. Thank you, Alice, for your years of generous and positive response to each call for a volunteer to take a leadership role and for your extraordinary service to the Oak Park Conservatory and the Park District of Oak Park.

SANDY LENTZ

FOPCON

Presented by Commissioner Lise Valentine



Sandy Lentz began volunteering at the Conservatory when the old Earth Shelter was still in operation. She celebrated its demolition in 1999 and the construction of the new Conservatory Center in 2000. This construction displaced the outdoor gardens adjacent to the shelter and Sandy's passion has always been to see the gardens restored. When Sandy became president of the Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory, she made it one of her priorities. She participated extensively in the master planning process for the conservatory's exterior in the summer of 2008 which included the development of a beautiful new garden area just south of the Rubinstein Room. She marshaled major gifts from FOPCON and from the Rubinstein family for the garden project as well as contributions from additional donors. These additional funds along with the capital improvement funds allocated by the Park District will allow the Herbert Rubinstein Memorial Garden to become a reality this September, one year ahead of schedule, thanks to Sandy's persistent work.

In addition, Sandy has served on the Park District's Greening Advisory Committee, contributing to the drafting of the environmental policy documents and participating in the Green Team park stewardship pilot project in Field Park. This year she is co-chair of the stewardship project. Thank you, Sandy, for your many years of leadership and volunteer service to the Oak Park Conservatory and your continued dedication to the Park District of Oak Park.

STEVE WITT

VOP Director of Building and Property Standards

Presented by Neil Adams



Steve Witt, Director of the Building & Property Standards Department for the Village of Oak Park, has been of great assistance to the park district since 2005, especially with all the new park district capital improvements starting in 2006. Steve is our "second pair of eyes" when planning and constructing park projects. His professionalism brings a wealth of architectural and engineering knowledge, and solutions to complex codes, guidelines and ordinances. He ensures our improvements are compliant and safe for all of our patrons. Steve also clarifies detailed architectural and engineering information with our consultants and contractors. He has assisted us with various improvements, including, but not limited to Longfellow Park & Center, Fox Park & Center, Rehm Park, the Conservatory, and Wenonah Tot Lot.

Steve, we want to thank you for all your assistance and willingness to help support the mission and vision of the Park District of Oak Park. In many respects, you help make our projects a success. Thank you. It is our pleasure and privilege to present to you this IPRA Community Service Award.

OAK PARK TOWNSHIP YOUTH SERVICES

Presented by Board President Mark Gartland

Oak Park Township Youth Services has been a highly valued partner of the Park District from its inception. Youth Interventionist staff and continues to consult, advise and support the Park District in its attempt to serve the community. Youth Services employees at the Township, including John Williams, Director; Roberta White, Administrative Assistant; Robert Simmons and Conchita Tamondong, Youth Interventionists; and Bert Patania, Team Supervisor; have helped the Park District navigate through challenging issues in our parks. In particular, their assistance was appreciated in working with teens who displayed inappropriate behavior at Longfellow and Barrie Parks in recent years. Youth Services has consulted with the Park District on ways to eliminate unruly behavior, facilitated neighborhood problem solving meetings, and presented training sessions on early warning signals, as well as ways to address unacceptable teenage behavior in the parks.

Youth Township staff participated in the interviewing process for the Teen Program Supervisor position in 2005 and again in 2009. The Township helped immensely by offering view points and assessments of the candidate pool through resume reviews and participation in interviews. Additionally, the Township assisted the Park District in orienting the Teen Program Supervisor to the community and the teen population. Full access to the Township's interventionist team of employees and the resources they provide has always been available to our staff.



We believe the key to achieving and maintaining an excellent parks and recreation system lies in creating partnerships with other community agencies to provide services in a seamless fashion. The relationship established with the Oak Park Township Youth Services is a true example of such a partnership. Thank you for providing your expertise and support for the advancement of youth in our community.





OAK PARK TOWNSHIP SENIOR SERVICES



Presented by Matt Ellmann

The Park District has worked closely and collectively with the Oak Park Township Senior Services in recent years which has significantly contributed to the advancement of the Park District's Active Adult program area. Whether it is an issue regarding a facility, service or staffing, the Township Senior Services has lent its hand to the Park District as a valued governmental partner.

Township Senior Services worked with the Park District to research and evaluate the feasibility of establishing a joint facility for senior citizens. Representatives of the Township met with and toured numerous senior service centers that provided both recreation and social services.

Senior Services Executive Director, Desiree Scully, has played an integral role in the development and expansion of the Park District's senior programs. Desiree participated in the evaluation of candidates that applied for the Senior Program Supervisor position when it was vacant in 2005, 2008 and again in 2009. She provided her perspective on the skills, traits and talents needed to service this population group and sat in on numerous interviews for candidates under consideration.

In addition, Desiree participated in the Senior Advisory Committee Formation Task Force, offering her expertise to help create by-laws that would serve as the basis for the formation of a Park District Senior Advisory Committee. This group, with Desiree's assistance and support, established the goals and direction for the Senior Advisory Committee which will act as the voice of the Active Adult population in Oak Park.

The Park District extends its gratitude to the Oak Park Township Senior Services, and specifically to Desiree Scully for working with the Park District to increase and improve recreation opportunities for Oak Park Active Adults and ultimately contributing to the betterment of our community.



OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL

Presented by Gary Balling



Throughout the years Oak Park and River Forest High School (OPRFHS) District #200 has opened up their home to the Park District with virtually no limitations allowing us the ability to expand programming and provide more leisure opportunities to the community

OPRFHS has provided the Park District access to its facilities to conduct programs and events that otherwise could not take place, demonstrating what it means to be a true partner. OPRFHS has allowed the Park District use of its sports fields, courts and indoor spaces to facilitate classes, leagues and major special events. A significant contribution has been the High School's support of the annual Frank Lloyd Wright Races event. By providing the Park District use of the fieldhouse, cafeteria, classrooms, hallways and the exterior, the Park District has been able to significantly elevate race quality and service. Additionally, OPRFHS has granted the Park District use of its athletic fields and fieldhouse for indoor and outdoor soccer leagues, badminton classes and tennis lessons. As a partner in the annual 4th of July Fireworks GALA, Oak Park and River Forest High School continues to demonstrate how we can achieve more by working together.



When two tax-supported entities work cooperatively to provide programs and services to its constituents, not only does this maximize tax dollars but also significantly increases the level of quality programs and services. The Park District wishes to thank the Board and staff of Oak Park and River Forest High School for your continued support of parks and recreation in Oak Park and for working together to enhance the quality of life here in our community.



WSSRA

Presented by Commissioner Marty Bracco



The Park District of Oak Park was a founding member of the West Suburban Special Recreation Association over 30 years ago and since then our partnership has grown and thrived. We're a team sharing one goal; to enrich lives through recreation. Teamwork involves much more than merely assembling a group of individuals to work together. Effective teamwork incorporates a phenomenon known as "synergy," where the combined and coordinated actions of people working together produce an effect greater than the sum of their parts. The Park District of Oak Park and the West Suburban Special Recreation Association have such synergy. The way in which we work closely to share resources and offer individual programs as well as inclusion opportunities to the residents of Oak Park is done so professionally, it is nearly transparent to the public.



Our partnership and collaboration was brought to the forefront of our community in 2008 and 2009 when the staff of WSSRA and the Park District, with the guidance of the Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation and several other community organizations joined forces to secure a Kellogg Foundation Access to Recreation Grant in the amount of over \$200,000. The majority of these funds were used to redevelop Longfellow Park and specifically the splash pad and the creative play areas utilizing the concepts of universal design. As part of this grant WSSRA and the Park District organized a community-wide grand re-opening celebration of Longfellow Park to highlight the park's many new accessible features. We also together organized the amazingly successful Ability Awareness Day with over 100 Park District day campers participating in a variety of activities while learning that people with disabilities can do the same things everyone else can, just a little differently. Our sincerest gratitude is extended to WSSRA, our valued partner and collaborator who compliments and completes the many recreation programs and services provided to the residents of Oak Park.

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Mark Gartland, President
Marty Bracco, Vice-President
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2008 COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Altamanu, Inc.
Beth Burdin
Patrick Dahlstrom
Garapolo Maynard Architects, Inc.
Good Heart Work Smart Foundation
Dick McKinlay
Oak Park Public Works
Oak Park School District 97
Oil Dri

2007 COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Jeanna Grant
Terry Harrison
Tim Kelly
The Infant Welfare Society
The Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation

2006 COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Jack Barclay
Edith Kause
Sandra Sokol
Wednesday Journal
Village of Oak Park

2005 COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Spannuth Boiler Company
Patrick Boticelli
William Casey
Judy Shepelak