

PARK DISTRICT OF OAK PARK

2015 COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

FEBRUARY 20, 2014

"Everyone can be great, because everyone can serve." - Martin Luther King, Jr.

Welcome

Park District Mission: In partnership with the community, we enrich lives by providing meaningful experiences through programs, parks and facilities.

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 their 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 citizens and community organizations 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 IAPD/IPRA Community Service Awards.







Dee Jeffries

Oak Park Youth Baseball and Softball's goal is to establish quality athletic, recreational and competitive programs with an emphasis on educating participants in the fundamentals of the game while promoting the values of sportsmanship and fair play.

It is estimated that over 5,000 hours of instruction and game time is provided to program participants annually. OPYBS utilizes volunteers to deliver high quality programs to its participants. One of these volunteers who deserves special recognition is Dee Jeffries.

Dee served on the board of Directors of Oak Park Youth Baseball and Softball for 7 years in various positions, including Director, Vice President of softball and President. Overseeing a program with that many participants is monumental. Dee always carried out her responsibilities with the best interests of the players in mind. Prior to her time on the board she was the fundraising director for one of the Eagle's travel teams. During her seven years on the board, participation averaged 1,600 youth ages 6 - 15 annually.

Many thanks to Dee Jeffries for being such a huge part of this program that provide Oak Park youth the opportunity to learn, grow and compete with their peers. Her contributions to the success of this program that continues to be an Oak Park institution are recognized with this award.

Frank Lipo

Frank Lipo has been a friend to the Park District of Oak Park for many years providing invaluable historical background information on parks and facilities for various projects and programs. He has helped us in organizing our historic photographs and identifying key community members and locations for use in our program guide and other communication tools. He has even provided storage space for some photographs that need to be in the capable hands of our community's history expert.

When the Park District celebrated its centennial in 2012, Frank was there to guide us through the development of a historic exhibit which was on display at a variety of events throughout the year including the Anniversary Gala, Annual Egg Hunt, Day in Our Village, Picnic in the Park and FallFest. It was also the featured display at the Oak Park Conservatory and at Village Hall in late 2012. This exhibit is displayed today on the second floor of the Hedges Administrative Center. Frank also volunteered to write four columns in our seasonal program guide during our centennial year which focused on various historical elements of the Park District. Do you know what Park was once called the Cricket Grounds and what park was known as Perennial Gardens? Who is Rehm Park named for? What Parks featured miniature golf courses in the 1930's? Frank provided this information and much more to our residents as he lead us on a walk down memory lane.

Thank you Frank for being so generous in sharing your time and expertise with the Park District and our community. For this and more you are being recognized with the IAPD/IPRA Community Service Award.

(Just in case you are wondering, Ridgeland Common now stands on the Cricket Grounds, Maple Park was once known as Perennial Gardens, Rehm Park is named after Colonel Arthur D. Rehm who served on the Park Board from 1912 until his death in 1941 and miniature golf courses were available in Rehm and Taylor Parks in the 1930s.)





Photo by www.emphotography.net







Jason Geil David T. Kindler Joshua Siegel

In 2012, the Park District of Oak Park observed its centennial with a year-long community celebration. This celebration included large-scale special events for the public, historical displays, giveaways and more. But there was one special project that aimed to memorialize the year in a very unique way. That project was the commemorative People, Parks and Play photography book.

Conceived as an homage to the spirit of recreation in Oak Park, this limited edition book was planned to feature photographs of Oak Park residents just as they use the parks in Oak Park every day – for recreation, for socialization, for exercise and for play. Proceeds from the sale of the book would benefit the Park District scholarship program. With these basic ideas in place, the Park District just needed to ask photographers to take part.

In December 2011, Park District staff approached former Park board member David T. Kindler, who had often provided the Park District with his photographic work in the past, to see if he would consider being involved. David was excited about the project, and brought another local professional, Jason Geil, to the table as well. Oak Park resident Joshua Siegel, who had also shared his shots with staff previously, was invited to participate as well.

And so began a fairly ambitious year-long photography project, aimed at completing the book in time for sale in December 2012. The three photographers worked with staff member Jennifer La Fleur to create a year-long timeline of events and activities to shoot. Their photographs captured everything from staff trainings to summer camps, kids in playgrounds with their parents and grownups playing like kids in the parks, programs like lacrosse, fitness, gymnastics and more. They photographed community events and programs for 11 straight months, and then edited through them before giving the Park District more than 1,000 photographs to choose between for the pages of People, Parks and Play.

These photographers, Jason Geil, David T. Kindler, and Joshua Siegel, donated hours and hours of their time, and gave generously of their talent and expertise to capture the People, Parks and Play of Oak Park. And the result was a memento that truly honors the spirit of recreation in Oak Park.

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