

# MRPA Grand Experience



Since 1967 the Michigan Recreation and Park Association has offered people 50 and over a unique opportunity to stay at the famous Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island.



The all inclusive trip, complete with five-course dinners, provides guests with a wide variety of programs and activities such as tournaments, crafts, dancing and carriage tours that make a stay at this world class destination a truly *Grand Experience*.



2465 Woodlake Circle, Suite 180  
Okemos, MI 48864  
517-485-9888  
[www.mrpaonline.org](http://www.mrpaonline.org)

## 2010 Dates & Prices

*\*Rates shown are per-person, double occupancy*

- Trip #1: Monday, October 4 through Thursday, October 7, 2010 (\$569)
- Trip #2: Monday, October 11 through Thursday October 14, 2010 (\$569)
- Trip #3: Sunday, October 17 through Tuesday, October 19, 2010 (2 night) (\$414)
- Trip #4: Friday, October 22 through Monday, October 25, 2010 (\$569)

For more info contact Mary Winegar at (517) 256-4034 ([mwinegar@mrpaonline.org](mailto:mwinegar@mrpaonline.org))  
or the MRPA Office at (517) 485-9888 ([info@mrpaonline.org](mailto:info@mrpaonline.org))



# Michigan Recreation and Park Association

## 2010 Community Service Awards Ceremony

March 10, 2010  
Hannah Community Center  
East Lansing, MI



March 10, 2010

Dear Community Service Award Winners:

On behalf of the Michigan Recreation and Park Association's nearly 1,700 members, I want to thank you for all you have done to make our communities attractive places in which to live, work and recreate. Tonight is your night: Congratulations!

Vibrant park and exciting recreation programs are the fabric of community...not just places where children play, but havens where families connect...not just places where people jog or exercise, but destinations where health and fitness is celebrated...not just green spaces in urban landscapes, but oases where people and nature can find tranquility.

If parks and recreation programs are the fabric of community, then you, the volunteers and supporters are the threads that hold it all together. Without people like you, the fabric of community would unravel. And for you, the thousands of recreation professionals that comprise MRPA are deeply grateful. Thank you!

With Congratulations and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dennis L. Schoranck".

Dennis L. Schoranck  
Executive Director, MRPA

# Congratulations



Community Service Award Winners

Adaptive Recreation Volunteer  
Jerry Sarasin

and the

Retired Engineer  
Technical Assistance Program  
which assisted the  
Oakland County Parks  
Green Team  
with an energy audit

Great people inspire amazing things...

Thank you, Jim Garrett for  
all you have done for  
Saginaw County, the  
Saginaw Valley Rail Trail is  
a reality because of you!



The Michigan Recreation and Park  
Association would like thank the

East Lansing  
Parks and Recreation Department  
and the Hannah Community Center Staff

For generously hosting the  
2010 MRPA  
Community Service  
Awards Ceremony



Welcome  
to the  
2010 Community Service Awards

Presented by  
Michigan Recreation and Park Association

Introductions

Linda Walter  
MRPA Board President

Presentation of Awards

Carla Scruggs  
MRPA Awards Committee Chair

Youth Sports

Troy Stowell  
MRPA Past Athletic Committee Chair

Margaret Whitehead Seniors of the Year

Becky Paquin  
MRPA Senior Committee Chair

MRPA Community Service Awards

MRPA Awards Committee Members

Closing Remarks

Linda Walter  
MRPA Board President

*Entertainment provided by Marsha Mumm*

## MRPA Awards Committee

**Carla Scruggs**  
Awards Committee Chair  
Saline Parks and Recreation

**Carol Anderson**  
Troy Parks and Recreation

**Sal DiCaro, CPRP**  
Macomb Township Parks and Recreation

**Darin Duistermars**  
Holland Township Parks and Recreation

**Kae Eidson, CPRP**  
Grand Blanc Parks and Recreation

**Terry Fields**  
Oakland County Parks and Recreation

**Portia Fields-Anderson, CPRP, CTRS**  
A New Direction

**Brett Kaschinske**  
Lansing Parks and Recreation

**Angela Verges, CPRP**  
Ypsilanti Parks and Recreation

**Roy Vultaggio, CPRP**  
Oak Park Parks and Recreation

**Linda Walter, CPRP**  
Clinton Township Parks and Recreation

**Wendy Wilmers-Longpre**  
City of East Lansing

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Cooley Law School**

*Nominated by:*  
**Emily Stevens**  
**Lansing Parks and Recreation**

Cooley Law School has generously sponsored our Summer Playground Program for five summers. Each year Cooley Law School students and staff raise funds to send 500 campers to a Lansing Lugnuts baseball game with lunch included! For many of our youth this is the only opportunity they have to attend a Lugnuts game and they are very appreciative. Throughout the years this event has grown to include a parade on the field, kids being part of the starting line up and even throwing out the first pitch. Cooley Law School has been a great partner to Lansing Parks and Recreation and we look forward to many more years to come!



## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*

### Wolverine Sports and Conservation Club

*Nominated by:*

**Barb Gamber  
Livonia Parks and Recreation**

The Wolverine Sports and Conservation Club has exemplified "service" in Community Service since 2006. The members provide financial assistance and volunteer countless hours in their efforts to insure that our youth experience the quality of life that Livonia prides itself. We attribute the success of the Livonia Youth Summer Triathlon, Party @ the REC, "Arctic Chill" Triathlon, Turkey Trot, Outdoor Pool Nights, Rouge Rescue and Youth Golf Clinics & Outings to the Wolverine Sports and Conservation Club. Their determination and love of volunteering is evident when you see smiles, the camaraderie, the enthusiasm, and the family spirit that are displayed at each special event. What a privilege it is to partner with this community organization.

## Youth Sports Coach of the Year

*Congratulations*

### Dave Thacker

*Nominated by:*

**Cristin Spiller  
Oak Park Recreation**

Dave has been volunteer coaching youth baseball and basketball with the Oak Park Recreation Department for the past three years. Dave's reason for coaching is not to win—he enjoys seeing his players improve their skills throughout the season and to develop a passion for the game the same way he did. Year after year, Dave receives rave reviews from parents. They are all very impressed by how much Dave cares for his players, and the way he conducts himself on and off the court. Dave does not just coach his kids; he goes above and beyond the call of coaching duty by developing a strong relationship with his players and their families. If a player needs a ride to practice or they have a personal issue, they feel confident and comfortable speaking with Dave at any time. It has been an honor and a privilege to have Dave as one of my coaches, and I look forward many successful future seasons with him.

## Youth Sports Coach of the Year

*Congratulations*  
**Michele Lewis-Watts**

*Nominated by:*  
**Kristin Kaszeta**  
**Think Detroit PAL**

As a former high school and collegiate athlete, Michele knows the benefit of participating in organized sports and the life lessons a child can learn—teamwork, sportsmanship, and fair play. Michele coaches what is known as the house team for volleyball – girls that were either cut from their school team or attend a school without a team. These girls typically do not know each other at the beginning of the season; they don't live in the same neighborhoods, go to the same schools, or have the same friends. It can be difficult to coach this type of team, but Michele works hard to get to know her players and learns lessons that make her a better coach, and make her girls better people. Michele epitomizes the value of a coach. She helps make Think Detroit PAL a great place to play sports. She helps to build character in the girls she coaches and becomes a better coach and a better person through her experiences. And, ultimately, she is helping to make Detroit a great place to be a kid and raise a family.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Northville Chamber of Commerce**

*Nominated by:*  
**Traci Sincok**  
**Northville Parks and Recreation**

The Northville Chamber of Commerce and Northville Parks and Recreation Department developed a unique sponsorship collaboration program that has positively benefitted both organizations. The Chamber offers program sponsorship packages to their members for a variety of Chamber events. In order to provide additional exposure and marketing opportunities for Chamber members, the packages were expanded in 2008 to include Parks and Recreation events. For example, a local home builder traditionally sponsored the Chamber Golf Outing and Business Showcase. When Parks and Recreation events like the Children's Concert Series and Baseball Fence Banner program were added into the sponsorship package, the exposure for the home builder increased from a target audience of 600 to over 4000. Sponsorship fees are shared between the Chamber and the Department on a pre-agreed percentage. In the first year, over \$8,900 of revenue was generated for the Parks and Recreation Department using little to no department resources. The willingness of the Northville Chamber of Commerce to reach beyond promotion of their own programs has brought new collaborations for Chamber members, business exposure to Northville residents and needed revenue to the Parks and Recreation Department.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*

### Power Company Kids Club

*Nominated by:*

**Portia Fields-Anderson  
A New Direction**

The Power Company Kids Club is a real gem in Pontiac. This dynamic program provides transportation, sports, and enrichment programs for disadvantaged youth. Many of them do not have enough food to eat or clothes to wear. Those needs are addressed as well. Service to the youth is well rounded. This faith based operation continues to grow as need evolves. Mentoring is a major focus of this program as they continue to impact the quality of life for young folks. They now boast of the success stories of many youngsters they have helped keep straight, drug free, and full of self worth. Many of them come back to serve as bus monitors, junior workers and counselors. The youth are tutored, fed, and provided with whole esteem building recreation activities. They also attend a day camp in the summer. This is just what a community needs when the city can no longer afford its recreation department. The members of this kids' club are truly fortunate. This program is the brain-child of Reverend Gunn who has built a tiny program into a huge one. The youth of Pontiac are very fortunate to have this program in their lives.

## Youth Sports Staff Member of the Year

*Congratulations*

### Dora Anaya

*Nominated by:*

**Tim Richey  
Think Detroit PAL**

As the Director of Programs at Think Detroit PAL I have had the pleasure of working with Dora Anaya during the past seven years. During this time, I have come to know Dora as a relentless worker, a patient, kind woman, and a dedicated advocate for the children of her community. Our soccer program draws more than 1000 children each season, including more than 300 from Clark Park Recreation Center in southwest Detroit. Dora oversees the Clark Park Recreation Center and works especially hard for the soccer program. She does it all – the team administrative work, registering the children, coordinating practices, and even coaching teams when needed. She leverages relationships with the local police department, senior centers, and community groups to promote the soccer program and recruit new players and volunteer coaches. This is especially important for our programming at Think Detroit PAL because not only is southwest Detroit an area that sorely needs after-school programming for its children, but it's also an area that is predominantly Spanish-speaking. Without the dedicated volunteers like Dora, we would have, quite literally, a huge communication barrier in this community. At Think Detroit PAL, all of our coaches are required to complete a coach training program and undergo a complete criminal background check before they are certified to coach. In years past, this presented a problem in southwest Detroit because of the language barrier. Recently, Dora helped spearhead an effort to deliver the coach training class in Spanish to her coaches at Clark Park. As a result, we have more Latino coaches certified this year than any in recent history. This is imperative in bringing positive adult role models to the children of this community.

## Margaret Whitehead - Service

*Congratulations*  
**Celia Sawdon**

*Nominated by:*  
**Tom Colwell**  
**Berkley Parks and Recreation**

Celia moved to the community of Berkley in 1943 from Pontiac, Michigan as a recent high school graduate. She married soon afterwards and has lived in Berkley ever since. Celia was involved in many activities around town including the school district PTA while her kids were in school. She got involved in activities at the Senior Center in 1974 while driving her sister, who had vision problems and was unable to drive herself, to Wednesday afternoon BINGO and the Tuesday evening Friendly Neighbors Club. Eventually she assisted the club by visiting residents who were ailing or just needed a friend. She started attending regular meetings in 1982 and has held the offices of Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President and President. She currently holds the dual role of Secretary and Treasurer and has done so since 2005. Celia's volunteerism goes much deeper than the Friendly Neighbors Club however. She has long since been actively involved in the annual Craft Bazaar, running the White Elephant Sale. She solicits donations from the community and stores them in her shed until it is time to call our maintenance staff to stop by and pick them up. Celia runs our weekly Euchre group and assists with our bi-monthly Pinochle tournament. She is the go-to volunteer for weekly Tax Aide during the tax season as well as our health clinics—she even helped us paint a room at the senior center. Celia is a trip leader for the Center's outings and works in the Ice Arena concession stand. Celia enjoys her 'quiet' time with her friends and making her weekly dinner for her family.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Ben Wettenstein**

*Nominated by:*  
**Roy Vultaggio**  
**Oak Park Recreation**

Oak Park's Senior 50 Up Program is truly enriched by Ben Wettenstein's dedication to service. Ben was a key volunteer who the senior staff relies greatly upon. He was a great leader assisting other senior volunteers by establishing BINGO as one of the most popular, most attended and longest running programs in the history of Oak Park Senior 50 Up Club. Ben was the BINGO caller and led approximately 75 senior citizens. With Ben's leadership the Oak Park Senior Club has built a very successful BINGO program which gives many senior citizens a reason to be active and social in the community. We are grateful for Ben's service over the years and like all senior programs we could not provide the diversified programming that we strive to offer without the dedication and commitment of wonderful volunteers like Ben.



## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Terri Mayfield**

*Nominated by:*  
**Holly Graves**  
Southfield Parks and Recreation

Terri Mayfield is one of the sweetest, most caring people you will ever meet. She puts everyone before herself and holds a special place in her heart for children and adults with special needs. Terri began volunteering with the Southfield Special Forces, the City of Southfield's special needs program, in 1999. In April of 2000, she took the program over and made it her own! Throughout the past decade Terri has expanded the programs offered to include classes in hustle dance, exercise, money management, etiquette and personal hygiene, as well as offering Bingo, summer and school-break camps, movie nights, softball, dances, field trips, and more! In 2009, Terri decided she wanted to coach a Special Olympics team. She quickly began soliciting donations and rounding up athletes. Due to her efforts and hard work she was able to bring 12 athletes to the State Summer Games in Mt. Pleasant, MI. She is also very active with Michigan Area 15 Special Olympics. Terri makes Southfield a better place. She brings smiles and happiness to everyone she meets. She is kind and full of enthusiasm. Everyone who comes into contact with her appreciates her and her great love for individuals with special needs. Thank you Terri, for your hard work and dedication to Southfield Parks and Recreation Special Forces!

## Margaret Whitehead - Leadership

*Congratulations*  
**Maggie Moreton**

*Nominated by:*  
**Tom Colwell**  
Berkley Parks and Recreation

Maggie moved to the community of Berkley in 1954 from Fort Hood, Texas with her four children. She got involved in activities at the Senior Center in 1983 with the Friendly Neighbors Club by visiting residents who were ailing or just needed a visitor. Maggie was an active participant, sharing her humor and smiles around town. The club also completes small fundraisers and assists community organizations with donations. Maggie has been an officer of the club the last ten years, president since 2006. Maggie's volunteer work doesn't stop with the Friendly Neighbors Club, however. She is the Queen Mother of the Berkley Belles Red Hat Society, planning monthly events. She is a leader of the Senior Center's newsletter group which meets monthly to collate, fold and mail out the monthly publication. Maggie also takes on the bake sale at our annual Crafts Bazaar, recruiting volunteers to work the table and bake items for sale. She is a vibrant leader of our Senior Center who always makes time for others. Maggie enjoys traveling and spending time with her friends.

## Margaret Whitehead - Leadership

*Congratulations*  
**Alice Thompson**

*Nominated by:*  
**Portia Fields-Anderson**  
**A New Direction**

Alice Thompson has served as the president of the Golden Opportunity Senior Club for many years. When the City said no to recreation, the seniors, led by Alice, said YES. She and her followers campaigned for a millage that passed very favorably, keeping the two senior centers open and functioning. During a time without city support, she organized a volunteer group that ran the center. They programmed, cleaned, and took turns monitoring the phones and building. None of their major programs were eliminated due to the passion of Alice and her followers. She is a classy little lady that is always in the right place saying the right things. Her wisdom, passion, and spunkiness are just what the seniors and the city needed to get through and over a very rough time. And that is just what they did under her leadership. The millages passed and the seniors are going and growing strong.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Pittsfield Township Historical Society**

*Nominated by:*  
**Dan Cooperrider**  
**Pittsfield Charter Township**

Ten years ago, Pittsfield Township purchased the 1850's Sutherland-Wilson Farm and the Township Historical Society took on the restoration of the historic site. The Society completed a barn renovation, repaired buildings, planted crops, and gave the Greek Revival farm house a face lift inside and out. They created a farm museum site for the community to enjoy its agricultural heritage. The Society's dynamic, grueling rescue effort has seen countless hours of and labor, from fundraising and marketing efforts, to overseeing construction contracts, planting and harvesting crops, and acquiring period farm equipment. The parks & recreation department has become a partner, assisting with grounds maintenance, other chores and recreation programming. In October 2009, the Historical Society and the Parks & Recreation Department co-sponsored the first annual Fall Harvest Festival at the farm site with over 400 people attending. The event celebrated 175 years of Pittsfield Township. The society's vision is one shared by the township administration. Without the dedicated efforts of the Pittsfield Township Historical Society, this farm museum and community gathering place would not be here. Here's a big community thank you.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Claudette Pilon**

*Nominated by:*  
**Maryllynn Balewski**  
**West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation**

Claudette Pilon has been a volunteer with West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation in different capacities since 2000. Always a cheerful presence at any of the events, she is never one say no to helping. Claudette started with West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation in 2000 as one of our volunteers for the West Bloomfield Half Marathon and Kids Fun Run. Always cheerful she is one of our "faces of West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation" as she greets runners and lends a helping hand in whatever capacity she is needed. For seven years she has happily put on the Bunny costume to be Mrs. Bunny and make our egg hunt an extra special place to be. She has served in many capacities at our HalloweenFest for eight years, always with enthusiasm and a desire to make these events special. Her enthusiasm and willingness to help are contagious and welcomed in our community. Our events are an extra special place to be thanks to volunteers like Claudette Pilon.

## Margaret Whitehead - Leadership

*Congratulations*  
**James Garrett**

*Nominated by:*  
**Saginaw County Parks and Recreation**

The Saginaw Valley Rail Trail was the brainchild of Saginaw County resident James Garrett, who rode horses on the abandoned railroad in the 1980s. He felt the quiet, scenic, and safe rail bed was a recreational path waiting to happen. Garrett jumped in, studied rails to trails projects, and learned not to take no for an answer. As a rails-to-trails activist, Garrett approached the Saginaw County Parks and Recreation Commission in September of 1992 seeking support for the proposed project. After 15 years of planning and patience, the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail became a reality.

"Jim Garrett's passion for bringing the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail to life and linking trails in the Great Lakes Bay Region has been a true inspiration to us all. Through his trail research, presentation of ideas, persistence and leadership citizens will greatly benefit for many generations to come."  
– Heidi Bolger, Chair, Great Lakes Bay Regional Trail Committee.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Leon Searles**

*Nominated by:*  
**Gerald Jalosyznski**  
**Clinton County Parks & Green Space Commission**

In 2002, the newly created Clinton County Parks and Green Space Commission set out to establish a county-owned and managed park system for the benefit of its residents. The topography of Clinton County can be characterized as mostly flat and featureless with few natural lakes, and is extensively farmed. Creating a vibrant county park system to serve 70,000 residents was a challenge for the new commission. Seeking parkland acquisition options, the commission was fortunate to meet Mr. Leon Searles, owner of Searles Construction and several area gravel pits. Mr. Searles offered to make a 42-acre gravel pit containing a 15-acre lake available to the county for park and recreation purposes. Following the purchase of the land in 2007, Mr. Searles has assisted the county with the development of the property. Donated labor, equipment and materials enabled the installation of a new gravel entrance drive and parking lot, top-dressing of approximately 5 acres of future "day-use" area with high quality top-soil, grading of future construction sites, and contouring the lake bottom along its perimeter shoreline to reduce hazards to swimmers. Because of Mr. Searles' efforts and generosity, the county was able to open the property for public outdoor recreation use soon after its acquisition. A grand opening event is scheduled for June 12, 2010. Mr. Searles is a benefactor to many other programs that benefit Clinton County's families and youth. Without him, the Parks and Green Space Commission would remain a county park and recreation agency in name only. This commission is pleased to know Mr. Leon Searles as a friend and benefactor and is grateful to have this opportunity to thank him for his service to outdoor recreation in Clinton County.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Victoria Palace**

*Nominated by:*  
**Dennis Troshak**  
**West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation**

Victoria is a 70-plus West Bloomfield senior volunteer fitness instructor that conducts a free drop in program twice a week for the seniors in West Bloomfield Township. Starting back in 1998 with a group of 16 regular participants, Victoria's program has grown to the point that they have had to move to larger facilities twice. In 2009, over 3500 participants signed up for the Stretch and Tone fitness program. West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation Commission would like to thank Victoria Palace for her dedication to the seniors of our township.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*

**Kathy Trumbo/Rick Burrough**

*Nominated by:*

**Kae Eidson**

**Grand Blanc Parks and Recreation**

The Grand Blanc View has been a tremendous partner to the Grand Blanc Parks & Recreation Commission. Beginning in 2008, the View approached staff at the GB Senior Center in regard to printing, publishing and delivering the Center's monthly newsletter. Since that time the View has printed and distributed the newsletter as an insert to 26,000+ households in the Grand Blanc community on a monthly basis. In 2009 the View offered a new and additional partnership to the Commission. Beginning in December 2009, the View printed, published and delivered an insert featuring the Winter and Spring program offerings, again to 26,000+ households in the community. In addition to printing and delivering the program insert, the paper ran advertisements announcing a preview of the upcoming publication. The Grand Blanc View has also been an in-kind sponsor of the Grand Blanc Summer Concert Series since 2007. Each year the View has written a front page cover story promoting the Concert Series and then provides a follow up story on the upcoming performing artist(s). In addition, since coming to Grand Blanc in 2005, they have provided many public service advertisements regarding many of the Commission's upcoming programs and special events. The Grand Blanc Parks and Recreation Commission is very grateful to have such a supportive community partner as the Grand Blanc View and its General Manager Kathy Trumbo and Owner Rick Burrough.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*

**Huron Valley Board of Education**

*Nominated by:*

**Jeff Muck**

**Huron Valley Recreation and Community Education**

Huron Valley Schools is comprised of approximately 32,000 households, spanning six separate municipalities and 102 square miles. Community pools and recreation centers were non-existent within these municipalities until action was taken by the Board of Education. In 2001, the board addressed the need and desire for facilities to: 1) provide equity in instructional and athletic opportunities, and 2) meet a significant need within the district for recreational opportunities. In 2004, construction of a field house, two pools, a fitness center and supporting space was completed at both Lakeland and Millford High Schools. Through the support of the Huron Valley Schools Board of Education and district administration, these facilities continue to provide enhanced opportunities for school district programs and recreation centers for our community. Additionally, in 2008, the Board of Education initiated the conversion of Apollo Elementary into a multi-use facility that now houses district preschool and child care programs, recreational activities, community sharing, Huron Valley Youth Assistance and the Huron Valley Community Coalition. By consolidating these programs and agencies under one roof, families in Huron Valley gained a unique resource that serves the entire community. This move not only resulted in cost savings for the district, but also provided a stronger preschool program, a new revenue source and additional services for at-risk families in our community. The HVS Board of Education is nominated for the Community Service Award based on their visionary efforts and continued support in providing recreational opportunities to their community.



## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*

### Family Eye Care Associates

*Nominated by:*

**Linda Walter**

**Clinton Township Parks and Recreation**

Family Eye Care Associates is a truly community-minded business that strives to make Clinton Township a better place to live. They have sponsored the Children's Fun Center of our Festival of the Senses Art Fair for the past two years, allowing us to service over 3,000 youngsters during this two-day event. In addition, they have contributed to our Trick or Treat Trail, Easter Egg Hunt and Daddy Daughter Dance. The staff at Family Eye Care are active in our local Kiwanis Club and with Boy Scouts, helping to guide several Eagle candidates through their projects with the Township. When the folks at Family Eye Care sign up as a partner, you can count on them to be present at the event, to bring promotional goodies and to become involved in the presentation. They are a joy to work with and they definitely make the Clinton Township Community a better place for families.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*

### East Lansing Basketball Club

*Nominated by:*

**Tim McCaffrey**

**East Lansing Parks and Recreation**

The East Lansing Basketball Club was formed in 2003 as a community based youth sports organization. Through the dedication of a volunteer board, coaches, sponsors and interested community members, the club has established an impressive list of accomplishments that benefit East Lansing youth and help create community. Besides offering quality opportunities for East Lansing boys and girls, the club has formed a partnership with Dave Thomas, a member of the MSU 2000 NCAA National Basketball Championship Team, to offer the "Dave Thomas" Basketball Camp. The first week of summer vacation, approximately 300 East Lansing boys and girls look forward to participating in this week long event. Because of Dave Thomas' continued connections with the MSU Basketball Program, participants get to spend the week with a number of present and former MSU men's and women's basketball players. East Lansing Basketball Club volunteer board members, coaches and parents invest countless hours in organizing and implementing this unique camp experience for their community. Perhaps the most impressive accomplishment of the East Lansing Basketball Club is their interest in not just the Club's activities, but their interest in supporting other community activities. In the past six years, the club has made over \$62,000 in cash contributions to the East Lansing Educational Foundation, the East Lansing Family Aquatic Center, the East Lansing High School Boys and Girls Basketball Programs and provided scholarships for students to participate in the MacDonald Middle School Interscholastic Basketball Program. Creating community involves creating effective relationships and partnerships at which the leadership of the East Lansing Basketball Club.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Leslie Kuhn**

*Nominated by:*  
**Willis Bennett**  
**Ingham County Parks**

Ms. Kuhn worked to initiate an effort to acquire 120 acres of forest and wetlands adjacent to Ingham County's Lake Lansing Park-North and was instrumental in forming the Preserve Lake Lansing Trails Committee in partnership with the Friends of Ingham County Parks. She effectively communicated the value of preserving this land through extensive outreach to interested citizens, local media, and township, county and state leadership. Ms. Kuhn took an early lead in developing the local match commitments for the MDNRTF grant to support the expansion of Lake Lansing Park-North. Ms. Kuhn played a central role in organizing a successful fundraising campaign that drew over 1,000 donors and raised in excess of \$150,000. She has remained involved as a citizen leader of the Mid-Michigan Stewardship Initiative. Her involvement with this group has provided valuable leadership in building a successful work group that assists and educates area agencies and citizens in the ecological management of our lands and waters. Ingham County Parks has honored Ms. Kuhn with the 2009 Volunteer of the Year award for all of her contributions to our parks and surrounding area.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Pam Fleming**

*Nominated by:*  
**Bruce Ross**  
**Van Buren Charter Township**

Since the day she arrived at Van Buren Township's Public Safety Department, Ms. Fleming has been dedicated to the less fortunate in Van Buren Township. As the lead coordinator for the township's Goodfellows program she has worked diligently over the years to make sure that no family goes without a Thanksgiving or Christmas. Raising funds to purchase food, toys and clothing, she has never turned a family away. People around Van Buren Township have officially designated her as "Mrs. Santa Claus." If more people had her heart and compassion, maybe there would be peace on earth and good will toward men and women. Yes, Virginia, there is a Mrs. Santa Claus and she resides in Van Buren Township! Thank you to Ms. Pam Fleming who never asks for anything in return but a smile and a hug.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Plymouth Lions Club**

*Nominated by:*  
**Steve Anderson**  
**Plymouth Recreation Department**

The Plymouth Lions Club has been a pillar of the Plymouth community since 1948. Their commitment and service has been unquestioned and they have continually answered the call of those in need. In this economic downturn, families have had to make the unfortunate choice of sacrificing their children's recreational pursuits for the basic necessities of life. At the mere mention of this situation and without hesitation, the Plymouth Lions Club provided a donation to sponsor a Plymouth Youth Scholarship program to help any child in need continue their athletic and recreational pursuits. If this was not enough for recognition, the Plymouth Lions Club has also supported the entire community and our veterans by taking over the sponsorship of the Plymouth Community Memorial Day Parade and has also provided many services for the Plymouth Community Veterans Park.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Janelle Rydberg**

*Nominated by:*  
**Ron Olson**  
**Michigan DNR**

In 2009, Michigan state parks and recreation areas began the "First Time Campers" pilot program, which provided a two-day, hands-on, interactive experience for people who had never camped. Gander Mountain agreed to be the sole sponsor of the First Time Campers program, donating a complete set of gear for 15 campsites at participating parks around the state. Gander Mountain provided tents, camp chairs, fishing poles, camp stoves, flashlights, lanterns, and more for each first time camper --- all for just \$20 per night. This included instructions on setting up camp, starting a campfire, and understanding the recreational opportunities that are available in this great state. Gander Mountain also gave generous discounts on future purchases of outdoor gear, should the participants choose to make camping a family tradition. By the end of the 2009 season, nearly 200 families tried camping for their very first time, and as of November, 2009, fifteen percent of them had already returned to a state park for a second camping trip. This 'pilot' program ended up being a tremendous success and, by popular demand, will be continued again this camping season. Gander Mountain's partnership with the DNR Parks and Recreation Division, and their generous donations, allowed families to learn about and experience the outdoors for the first time. It also helped perpetuate the value and importance of family and instilled the importance of preserving our natural resources for generations to come.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Jerry Sarasin**

*Nominated by:*  
**Dan Stencil**  
**Oakland County Parks**

Not only has Jerry Sarasin of Troy made significant contributions to the disabled community, but he has also had a great impact on the Adaptive Recreation Program at Oakland County Parks and Recreation throughout his 15 years of volunteering. Sarasin has had a strong influence on Oakland County Parks, advocating that Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) rules and regulations be implemented throughout the parks system. He has helped the parks adaptive recreation program grow as well, assisting with recommendations for disabled sports equipment and being actively involved in adaptive adult and child sports programs. As a weekly volunteer, Sarasin took the initiative to coordinate the Adult Recreation Wheelchair Basketball program. He also supports and coaches the junior wheelchair basketball program, as well as assists with BlazeSports programs and United States Paralympic clinics. His efforts reach many as he also teaches a wheelchair basketball class at Michigan State University, allowing him to recruit volunteers and help build the parks adaptive recreation program. Off the court, Sarasin continues his efforts by presenting at Oakland County Parks' summer camp programs, talking to children about disabilities as well as assisting with sports activities for individuals with disabilities. Sarasin has not only helped improve and expand the Oakland County Parks adaptive recreation programs, but has also influenced and inspired many adults and children through his selfless actions and in sharing his knowledge of the disabled community.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Alger Parks and Recreation Partners**  
**AuTrain Township**  
**Grand Island Township**  
**Munising Township**  
**City of Munising**  
**Munising Public Schools**

*Nominated by:*  
**Debra Fulcher**  
**Alger Parks and Recreation Department**

The Alger Parks & Recreation Department is very unique. So no one municipality had to bear the burden, five municipalities stepped up to form a partnership to create one entity - Alger Parks & Recreation (APRD). Each year, even though state revenues are bleak and budgets are tight, they continue to support APRD and more importantly, their residents - the people who live here twelve months out of the year. APRD continues to offer programs and events for the community, for all ages, all income levels "creating a great place to live & recreate." Alger Parks & Recreation cannot continue without the continued support and belief from these great partners.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*

### Troy 50+ Computer Learning Center

*Nominated by:*

**Carla Vaughan  
Troy Parks and Recreation**

In early 2003, the Troy Parks and Recreation Department sought volunteers to enable the opening of a SeniorNet computer lab at the Troy Community Center. Several volunteers stepped forward to form a steering committee, and the computer lab opened that summer, offering a variety of computer classes for seniors. In 2009, due to budget constraints, the lab was in danger of closing. Tech support was too expensive and SeniorNet had more than doubled the fees for software and lesson plans. The steering committee took the challenge of reducing costs, and took over the technical support, previously performed by Troy's IT department. They also separated from SeniorNet and formed a non-profit organization so software could be purchased at a discount. Lesson plans were developed from scratch, the most time consuming task of all. In addition, they reached out across the country to form partnerships with other senior computer labs so resources can be shared. Since 2003, over 400 classes have been offered. Over 1600 students have taken these classes. The learning center has over three dozen volunteers, and has expanded its activities beyond classes. Private consultations, disk erasure, and mentoring at drop-in lab are also offered. Student evaluations indicate 99 percent are highly satisfied. Comments include: Great instructor, patient, enthusiastic and helpful, material explained so we would understand, instructor encouraged us, there were no stupid questions, and I thoroughly enjoyed the class! The Troy 50+ Computer Learning Center is a wonderful asset to the community.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*

### Marisa Reeves

*Nominated by:*

**Ron Olson  
Michigan DNR**

In 2009, Macy's continued their "Turn a New Leaf" campaign, a fundraising initiative to generate financial support and awareness for the National Park Foundation and Michigan state parks and recreation areas. The "Turn a New Leaf" program was simple --- shoppers could purchase a \$5 "leaf" throughout the months of March and April, 2009. This leaf entitled the shopper to a 10-20% discount off purchases made during Earth Week in April, 2009, as well as the option to save \$10 off a \$50 or more purchase. All proceeds from the leaf sales were donated in a 60/40 split between the national parks and state parks, respectively. In the first year of including Michigan state parks and recreation areas, the campaign generated nearly \$36,000. Macy's generous donation helped to support the DNR Parks and Recreation Division's Urban Outreach initiatives, and funded the PRD "Park and Read" program, which allowed more than 30,000 Michigan residents the opportunity to enter and explore a Michigan state park or recreation area for one day, free of charge, after checking out a book at participating libraries around the state.



## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**John McKinney**

*Nominated by:*  
**Ron Olson**  
**Michigan DNR**

The Fox Island Lighthouse Association (FILA) has proven to be an immense benefit to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Parks and Recreation Division (PRD), and for many weary boaters traveling on Lake Michigan. FILA was created because of a shared passion to save the most historically intact and most remote lighthouse complex in Lake Michigan—the South Fox Island Lighthouse. The South Fox Island Lighthouse, circa 1867, has seven original structures within the complex. Based on the remote nature of the island, the PRD has had difficulty finding affordable transportation to the island to make necessary repairs. In 2004, FILA initiated a partnership with the PRD's Grawn Field Unit, the state facility that manages the lighthouse. FILA has steadily increased their membership, held several fundraisers, and received donations to make improvements to this facility. In doing so, FILA has helped countless boaters find a welcoming location to stop for recreation, lunch or shelter during unexpected or treacherous storms on Lake Michigan. The ability of the group to volunteer time, provide funding and a boat are resources the PRD could not provide to take care of this historical complex.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**McDonald's of Sterling Heights**

*Nominated by:*  
**Kyle Langlois**  
**Sterling Heights Parks and Recreation**

McDonald's of Sterling Heights has been an integral part of the city's program offerings for the past four years. Their role has taken on many forms including monetary sponsorships, in-kind donations, and new program development. Since the inception of the partnership, the Sterling Heights Parks and Recreation Department has been able to offer enhanced services to the city's residents, and for that we thank McDonald's of Sterling Heights!

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Rob Redman**

*Nominated by:*  
**Pete Aerts**  
City of Kalamazoo

Rob Redman of Redman Insurance Agency/MEEMIC Insurance Agency has been a steadfast supporter of our youth coed intramural leagues since 2005. As a former employer and colleague at Starr Commonwealth Schools for Troubled Youth, Rob provides countless hours of activities as well as being a positive role model for youth. He understands the importance of providing structured, safe activities for youth with role models youth can look up to. In looking for after school activities for elementary students, positive role models, time for exercise and play, and the opportunity to build school spirit, I approached Rob and Redman Insurance with my fifth and sixth grade coed flag football and soccer intramural league proposal. Over our five year partnership he has donated over \$1,400 to support these two programs and provide services for over 750 fifth and sixth graders in Kalamazoo Public Schools. Without Redman Insurance's annual donations, these opportunities would not exist. Redman Insurance's assistance allows us to have a minimal registration fee, purchase the flag football belts, leather footballs, referee shirts, penalty flags, soccer nets, soccer balls, provide shin guards for those that can't afford them, and paint to line the soccer and football fields. Most importantly with his contributions, we were able to create the Redman Insurance Good Sportsmanship Trophy for flag football and soccer. This is a traveling trophy that goes to the team that best exemplifies fair play, good sportsmanship, and positive attitudes towards teams, coaches, and officials.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Faye Alexander Nelson**

*Nominated by:*  
**Ron Olson**  
Michigan DNR

Early in the new millennium, a group of individuals dedicated to seeing the downtown Detroit riverfront become an inviting public green space joined to develop a vision. In December of 2002, the group presented their vision of transforming Detroit's international riverfront into a beautiful, safe and accessible gathering place, which included nearly 3 miles of public riverwalk. In 2003, the Detroit RiverFront Conservancy (DRFC), a 501(c)(3) organization, was born from this study group. The DRFC involved local community groups, neighborhoods and stakeholders in development of the vision and in determining implementation. Even before breaking ground on the proposed development, the DRFC vision expanded the plans to 5 1/2 miles along the river. When completed, this riverwalk will provide outdoor recreation and green space from the Ambassador Bridge to the Belle Isle Bridge. The DRFC founded their efforts on their mission of being responsible for the establishment, improvement, and operation of the Detroit RiverWalk. Through the DRFC's partnerships, it will support the development of the riverfront district and facilitate community access to the waterfront. The DRFC has also been a leader in developing a collective sense of ownership, enhancing Detroit's image to emphasize its iconic, international riverfront, and in creating an inviting destination for all.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Maria Delgado**

*Nominated by:*  
**Portia Fields-Anderson**  
**A New Direction**

Maria Delgado is a remarkable person who continues to give to the leisure needs of the Pontiac community, even after her department was eliminated. She was a Recreation Specialist for over 20 years and also served as a community organizer for the Latin Affairs Division which was a part of the Recreation Department. Whether it's flipping pancakes on Saturday mornings, translating Spanish, teaching ceramics, or being Mrs. Claus for special needs children, Maria is always willing to give a very supportive hand. When the band girls at the high school needed uniforms, she answered the call with a marathon fundraiser. When the courts need translators, she translates. When youth needed a softball coach, she coached. When the Creative Arts Center needed a sponsor for the Hispanic-American exhibit, she sponsored it and brought along the Hispanic Outreach to help make it happen. When the members of the Visually Impaired Persons needed a sighted individual to help sell beverages at Detroit River Days and Arts, Beats, & Eats she was there selling beverages. She has worked at every festival, the Dream Cruise and other recreation events. Just recently her house caught fire, so one would think that would slow her down. But No, not Maria. She is still working with seniors, organizing Mardi Gras and pancake breakfasts, teaching English as a second language and much more.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Ingham County MSU Extension 4-H**

*Nominated by:*  
**Emily Stevens**  
**Lansing Parks and Recreation**

Lansing Parks and Recreation is a better department because of Ingham County MSU Extension 4-H. The number of new programs they have brought to our department and improved with 4-H programming has been astounding. Below is a sample of the programs Ingham County MSU Extension 4-H has brought to Lansing Parks and Recreation: addition of craft programs, supplies and training to our 18 drop in summer camp programs; additional training to our 60 plus summer staff; addition of a traveling 4-H program to eight of our summer camps; creation of the Greater Lansing Youth Festival, a special event that celebrates the projects youth work on throughout the summer; addition of the Food and Fitness Program to Lansing's after school programs; addition of the 4-H Mentoring Program, Steppin' Up, to Lansing's after school programs; and increased partnerships on several after school grants with area schools and centers. Ingham County MSU Extension 4-H is truly a valuable asset to the City of Lansing and we are grateful to have them as a partner serving Lansing area youth.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*

### Lahn Hall and Schand PLLC

*Nominated by:*

**Lindsey Stewart**  
Saline Parks and Recreation

Lahn, Hall and Schand PLLC, a local law firm, has been a great supporter of Saline Parks and Recreation and the Saline community for over five years. Each Halloween, Geoff Lahn and his office sponsor our Saline Halloween Hullabaloo. This is an event that provides families of our community the chance to dress up in their festive Halloween costumes and join us for games, dancing, dinner, costume contest and much more. Lahn, Hall and Schand's involvement in this event includes sponsoring the dinner for the 300 plus participants who attend the event, lending a helpful hand during the event, and providing the wonderful prizes that are associated with the famous costume contest. Each year, Lahn, Hall and Schand workers continue to push the creative envelope with the prizes that they select for the contest winners, encouraging creativity. The success throughout the years of the Halloween Hullabaloo can be directly attributed to the generosity and continued support from Lahn, Hall and Schand, PLLC.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*

### Environmental Science and Services

*Nominated by:*

**Dan Stencil**  
Oakland County Parks

An energy audit conducted in March 2009 through the Retired Engineer Technical Assistance Program (RETAP) helped Oakland County Parks go "green" and save green. The State of Michigan Department of Environmental Quality established RETAP to help Michigan businesses and institutions prevent pollution, reduce waste and conserve energy. The group, which consists of retired engineers, identifies specific opportunities to reduce waste. The energy audit was conducted at the Waterford Oaks County Park's Maintenance, Facilities and Operations building. RETAP auditors provided a complete summary and recommendations on different ways to improve sustainability efforts. "RETAP was extremely helpful in showing us where we currently are in regards to sustainability and what steps we need to take to reach our goals." said Tom Gibbs, Oakland County Parks Facilities, Maintenance and Development supervisor. "The audit was beneficial in guiding and motivating us to start making changes and to create a more 'green' efficient parks system." In response to the audit, staff immediately instigated light-saving strategies, as electric costs were found to be the biggest concern with the easiest solution. Motion-sensor lighting and energy-efficient lighting is currently being installed at various locations. With those small changes, and by also using an alternative electrical supplier, the parks system will save more than \$16,000 in electrical costs annually. Due to the success of the RETAP audit, Oakland County Parks plans to complete energy audits in each park facility so continuous green efforts can be made.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Lincoln High School**

*Nominated by:*  
**Angela Verges**  
**Ypsilanti Township Recreation Department**

The Ypsilanti Township Recreation Department and the Lincoln High School Honor Society have always had a good working relationship. Under the direction of John Porter, Honor Society Advisor, this relationship has grown over the years. The honor society diligently supports our special events by providing an abundance of volunteers throughout the year. There are no less than six volunteers at each of our special events. Most recently our department created a science experiment class for youth, titled "Dr. Frankenstein's Lab." Under the direction of our staff, three honor society volunteers created weekly lessons and conducted experiments. Dressed in white lab coats, the volunteers were professional, personable and youth in the class could easily relate to them. By utilizing the assistance of the honor society volunteers our department has saved hundreds of dollars on each special event. This is a win / win opportunity because we save money and the volunteers receive an experience that may benefit them in future endeavors. The Ypsilanti Township Recreation Department is proud to recognize the Lincoln High School National Honor Society for their contribution to the Ypsilanti community.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Lloyd A. Stage Nature Center Volunteers**

*Nominated by:*  
**Lisa Ferdubinski**  
**Lloyd A. Stage Nature Center, City of Troy**

The Lloyd A. Stage Nature Center (SNC) Volunteers consist of over 100 remarkable, service-oriented individuals. Their support of public recreation and park programs in their community is evident through more than 2,600 hours of service to the SNC in 2009. They are always eager to help with a variety of tasks. These include monitoring bluebirds and helping with special event programs such as Maple Syrup Time, Trick or Treat Among the Trees, and Eggcitement at the Farm. Other tasks include craft preparation, folding brochures, trail work, and more. The SNC volunteers are an enthusiastic group, each one with valuable skills and expertise that contribute to the success of the Lloyd A. Stage Nature Center. Recently, when it appeared that the SNC could possibly close, the volunteers showed tremendous support with their letters, emails, and comments to city council members. These volunteers played a major role in keeping the SNC open and operating full-time. During trying times such as these, it is a delight to work with such a passionate and dedicated group of people. Their commitment to the SNC and its community programs is invaluable.



## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Jim & Jean Klein**

*Nominated by:*  
**Mary Scheurer**  
**Portland Parks and Recreation**

Jim and Jean Klein have owned and operated S & K Trophies and Plaques in Portland for the last 19 years. The business started out as a small part-time business operating out of their basement and has grown into a full time operation. Having a business in the Community where we can purchase top quality products at a reasonable price has been a great asset to our Parks and Recreation Department and the entire Community. Jim and Jean's involvement with the Portland Parks and Recreation Department has included numerous Parks and Recreation activities over the years. Their involvement might be providing last minute orders, delivering the trophies to the site or volunteering to help install the fencing around the tent for our Portland River Festival. They have also volunteered their services to install the memorial plaques on our 125 benches that have been donated and placed along our 8 miles of hiking and biking trail. During their nearly daily travels of walking or roller blading on the trail they have also kept a watchful eye on those memorial plaques. If they see a memorial plaque that was vandalized or needed to be replaced they would punch out a new plaque and install it the next time they utilized the trail. They have always provided excellent service and commitment to the Portland Parks & Recreation Department and the entire Portland Community.

## Community Service Award

*Congratulations*  
**Telecom Credit Union**

*Nominated by:*  
**Tom Colwell**  
**Berkley Parks and Recreation**

I first met Paula Ciszewski of Telcom Credit Union at a Berkley Chamber of Commerce event where we discussed the needs of the community, especially Parks & Recreation. Telcom was a new branch in the city and wanted to get involved. We met with branch manager, David Terry, to discuss "Community Partner" sponsorship, as well as Parks & Recreation events. Paula and David understand what the word community means and show it by getting involved as active participants. Our partnership with Telcom Credit Union has allowed us to make necessary improvements at parks, purchase sports equipment, picnic benches and offer summer camp scholarships to children in need. Telcom has donated items for many special events; Telcom is also an Ice Arena sponsor. This sponsorship has allowed us to make necessary repairs to our infrastructure as well as lighting and the purchase of equipment. Telcom sponsors many events in our community outside of those that Parks & Recreation puts on. They sponsor the Berkley Public Library's Children's Summer Reading Program, Berkley Public Safety Department's Fire House Open House, and Berkley Chamber of Commerce events. Telcom Credit Union supports the efforts of Paula and David as they make a difference in our community. Businesses such as this should be commended for their foresight and effort.