

Bedford residents presented with awards during Michigan Week Awards Ceremony

During the 2010 Monroe Co. Michigan Week Awards Ceremony, held on Thursday, May 27 at LaRoy's in LaSalle, members of the community were honored for the outstanding volunteer work that they do.

"All of these awards go to people who go way over and above other people who volunteer. We think they show extra effort. This is not for something that they do once, they have to be volunteering for awhile," said Meg Smith, awards chairperson for the Monroe Co. Michigan Week Committee.

Smith, who has been involved with the Michigan Week Awards for at least 25 years, explained that Bedford Township has been presenting these awards since the 1940's and that only a couple of other communities in the state still do this. "We like it and we're still going to do it," she said. "Pearl Albert-Green has been so involved all these years," Smith said.

Nominees for these awards are selected by a committee of eight to ten people in the community from non-profit organizations such as RSVP, the Goodfellows and the Lions. "We try to get as broad a base as we can," Smith said. They then go over all the nominees and vote to select those who will receive an award.

Friends or family members of the awardees and dignitaries from the community attended the ceremony. The Honorable Michael A. Weipert, Monroe Co. Circuit Court Judge, was master of ceremonies. Smith said that



Honoring Bedford's Best ... Members of the Bedford community were recently honored for their outstanding volunteer work during the 2010 Monroe Co. Michigan Week Awards Ceremony. L to R: Basil Lowe, Holly Dennison, Patti Peterson, Bedford Township Supervisor Walt Wilburn, Commissioner R. LaMar Frederick, Carole Reinhardt, Ann Myers, Mike Smith, Commissioner Connie Velliquette, Diana Knaggs, Josh Little, Laura Collins and Karen Daggett.

during the ceremony facts about the state were given and this year Flick's had a display of products that are made in Michigan.

Additionally, Flick's made up a gift basket as a door prize that was won by Jan Smith. "We had everyone sign in and then picked a number and that was who won

the prize; the person whose name was on the line of the number we chose," Smith explained. "We chose 39 because that is how old we all would like to be," she laughingly explained.

After a luncheon was served, the supervisors from the townships called out the names of

the award recipients and handed out certificates to those receiving the Michigan Minuteman Awards and plaques to those receiving the Community Achievement, Golden Heart and Volunteer Leadership Awards. Youth Award recipients were presented with medals.

Those receiving the Michigan Minuteman Award are as follows:

Ann Myers was born and raised in Bedford and has been married to her husband Jake for 60 years. The couple has five children.

Myers taught elementary

school for 25 years. She is an active member of the Bedford Beautification Club, Bedford Garden Club, Bedford Senior Citizens Center, St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Bedford Historical Committee, Lambertville Educational Club, Monroe Co. Extension Club and the Monroe

Co. Master Gardener Association. She is currently a Bedford Schools Board member.

The Bedford Beautification Committee was nominated as a whole.

The committee has excelled in making Bedford Township a better place to live through their work; the gardens at the Bedford Township Library and the garden at the Township Hall along with other work they do in the community. Additionally they find individual gardens throughout the community to identify and honor each month beginning in the spring and continuing through the end of summer.

Laura Collins is the current president of the Bedford Business Association as well as owner of Collins & Associates Accounting & Tax Service.

Collins, without hesitation, volunteers for whatever job needs to be done and then recruits assistants and follows through until the job is completed. She has brought new ideas and a sense of fellowship to the BBA.

For over 20 years **Diana Knaggs** has been a main stay of the Goodfellows Association, both in the public eye and behind the scenes. She assists with the distribution of the Goodfellows holiday food baskets as well as checks in all of the families due to receive the baskets. During the Christmas season, Knaggs sorts all the donated toys by age and gender for distribution.

Josh Little is the executive director of the Francis Family YMCA and additionally is very active in the Lions Club, Bedford Public Schools Sinking Fund, the Salvation Army of Monroe and the Knights of Columbus. He also is involved in the Backpacks for Kids Program that provides school supplies

and backpacks for low-income families.

As director of the YMCA he strives to change the lives of families in Bedford Township by helping them receive assistance for membership and programs. Josh lives the mission of the YMCA, "To put Judeo-Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all."

As chairman of the BPS Sinking Fund, he successfully achieved the levy being passed.

Pastor Tom Zimmerman has contributed his time and church, the Lambertville United Methodist Church, with not only his parishioners but with many community organizations. RSVP has been able to host many quilt shows at the church. Pastor Zimmerman opens the church's gym three times a year to the Bedford Goodfellows for their food distribution.

He also serves on the committee providing backpacks for kids. Each year volunteers are welcomed to the church gym to pack over 1,200 backpacks to be distributed to Monroe Co. children.

Patti Peterson is very active in the Habitat for Humanity, the Bedford Relay for Life and the Women in Service for Christ. She is also involved in social ministry at her church and helps with food baskets with the Whiteford Community Association during the Christmas season.

Additionally Peterson has been a VFW Auxiliary member for 30 years. As a part of the Bedford Relay for Life Committee, she is the person you see first in the information tent and stays there for most of the relay. She also helps with the banking before and during the relay.

Jim Alban and the **Salvation Army** received the Community Achievement Award. Alban lives in Monroe and is involved in the Bedford Community.

He took the time to talk to several community leaders and asked what they would like the Salvation Army to do for their community. When it was suggested that the Salvation Army bring a satellite office to Bedford, he took the suggestion and worked to make it happen. They now bring much needed services to the Bedford area.

Alban shares his time and talents with local groups and always represents the Salvation Army in the best light.

Karen Daggett is the recipient of the Golden Heart Award. Daggett started the Bedford Press in January of 1986. At that time, she vowed to bring good and positive news to the area and not exploit sensationalism and has kept her word.

For the past six years, front-page stories have been dedicated to cancer survivors bringing attention to stories of hope and courage from those in the community who have battled cancer and survived. Daggett lost a daughter, Laurel, to cancer in 1982 at the age of 5-1/2 and she herself is a cancer survivor.

Daggett is a past president and a valued leader on the BBA Board. The Trade Fair runs smoothly year after year because of her involvement.

She is always there should a friend need help of any kind. She has been known to drive her friends to the hospital and willingly stay as long as needed and then work all night to catch up on her own work. You will find no kinder heart in all of Bedford Township.

Mike Smith received the Volunteer Leadership Award. Smith became a leader in the community several years ago. He was appointed to the Bedford Public Schools board in 2006 and then elected to the Board in 2007.

Along with the Salvation Army, he has co-chaired the Backpacks for Kids Program bringing backpacks to every child who needs one in Monroe Co. He also works closely with the United Way Board and serves on several committees. His official title is AFL-CIO Community Services Liaison.

Smith has a reputation of working hard on community issues as well as working on community fundraisers and other organizational projects.

Holly Dennison received the Youth Award. She does a lot of volunteer work in Bedford Township and is always ready to help out wherever needed.

Dennison is very active in the Bedford Relay for Life committee and in her own team. Holly and her mother are in charge of the survivor "Happy Birthday" party after the survivor lap.

Relay pictures, awards and other items decorating her bedroom are evidence of her commitment to Relay for Life.

Basil Lowe is also a recipient of the Youth Award. He is President of the Leo's/Leaders Club at the Francis Family YMCA.

Lowe has done over 100 hours of community service in the last nine months. This includes serving dinner at the mission, cleaning at the Beach House, raking leaves at the Humane Society, doing crafts with the elderly, painting the Skate Park and helping pick up trash. He also is very involved with Special Olympics.