

WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

Waukegan Park District Recognizes 2014 Volunteers and Patrons

Waukegan, IL (March 4, 2015)...The Waukegan Park District held its annual Volunteer and Patron Reception Thursday, February 26, at Bonnie Brook Clubhouse. Greg Petry thanked the more than 125 volunteers and patrons in attendance and gave an overview of the District's accomplishments during 2014. Waukegan Park District Commissioners recognized 22 volunteers and patrons with community service awards in addition to the Patron and Volunteer of the Year, the Jack Benny Arts and Humanities and Coach of the Year Awards.

NRG Energy, Inc was awarded Patron of the Year for their long standing partnership with the District. Their generous financial contributions support special events, outdoor recreation, green initiatives and gardening programs and NRG employees constructed the Children's Garden. For years, the company has provided sponsorships and sent golfers to the Partners in Parks Golf Outing and the company sponsors a Field House WorkFit Program for their employees.



Pictured from left to right are: Park District Commissioner Bill Sarocka, President Terry Duffy, Vice President Patricia Foley, Mark Nagel and Todd Mundorf, representing NRG, and Commissioners Janet Kilkelly and George Bridges.

The Waukegan Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association was recognized as Volunteer of the Year. Volunteers from the Alumni Association have handled the American Independence Parade route for nearly two decades. They have assisted with traffic and parking control at special events including Eggstravaganza Trail, Ray Bradbury's Dandelion Wine Fine Arts Festival and Christmas in July and helped lead games, present prizes and provide general assistance at Halloweenfest. The group also volunteers annually at the Special Recreation Bowling Tournament; last year NRG volunteers did a massive cleanup of the Washington Park Ravine.

Helen Bond was the recipient of the Jack Benny Award for the Arts and Humanities. She is a dynamic percussionist, teacher and a storyteller who engages her audiences through the joy, energy and power of traditional West African music, hand drumming, and song., For more than fifteen years she has traveled to Guinea, West Africa to study the music traditions and culture of the Malinké people and through the Benkadi Project, that she co-founded, has provided educational opportunities, basic human needs, health and clean water to the Malinké people.

Twenty-two other volunteers and patrons received Community Service Awards for their exceptional efforts and commitment to the Waukegan Park District during 2014.

Included were: AAA Tent Masters, AbbVie Women Leaders in Action, First Midwest Bank, NuToys Leisure Products, Office Plus, Lotus Suites, Donna Sands, Marvin Wagner, Ruth Wachowiak, Shaneena Adams, Cheryl Graham Ptasienski, Ralph McLean, Lake County Sheriff's Office, Nancy Bjerstedt, Dr. John Schwab, Judy Tabachnick, Ela Winnet, Shannon McBride, Waukegan Youth Conservation Corps, PNC Bank, David Motley, and ViriDisk

About the Waukegan Park District

Established on December 26, 1916, the district has 48 sites and more than 735 acres of land, including the 18-hole Bonnie Brook and 9-hole Greenshire Golf Courses. Properties are managed to the highest environmental and conservation standards. Facilities operated by the district include the Field House Sports and Fitness Center, the Jack Benny Center for the Arts, the Waukegan SportsPark, the Waukegan Skate Park, the Waukegan BMX Track, recreational centers, an outdoor swimming pool, disc golf course, dog exercise area, outdoor sports fields, picnic areas, playgrounds, and sports courts including basketball and tennis. A full range of programs and services are offered year round for all ages, from infants to seniors as well as special needs populations. Healthy lifestyles, wellness initiatives, and a connection with the outdoors and nature are

integrated throughout programs, services, and special events. Cultural events are provided by the Waukegan Symphony Orchestra and Concert Chorus, the Bowen Park Theatre Company, and the Waukegan History Museum. There is something for everyone! The award-winning District employs 59 full-time and over 250 part-time, year round, seasonal, and temporary employees. The District is a member of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD), and Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA). The district maintains national accreditation from the NRPA Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), the Illinois Association of Park District (IAPD) Distinguished Agency accreditation and the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) accreditation and sustains a Level A Loss Control Program. The district was a NRPA Gold Medal Finalist in 2012 and 2013, and awarded the NRPA National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in 2013.

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