

MARLBOROUGH SAMPLER

GMPI recognizes its volunteers with awards

By Mary Wenzel
STAFF WRITER

MARLBOROUGH — Members of the Forrest Memorial Road Race staff were honored with the Distinguished Volunteers Award presented by Greater Marlboro Programs, Inc. at the organization's Annual Meeting held recently at Fidelity Investments.

GMPI has enjoyed a long association with the 5K Walk and Run Jim Forrest Memorial Road Race, which has served as a major source of funding for this program.

"Success is a partnership," said Jim Karami, GMPI social and recreation director. "The skills and commitment of a motivated professional staff, the understanding and support of the community at large and the leadership and energy of dedicated volunteers are the essential building blocks of an effective social service organization."

In acknowledgment of the central role of volunteers in facilitating GMPI efforts, the Distinguished Volunteer Award was established and is to be given each year to the individual or individuals who best exemplify a dedication to the goals and values of the GMPI. "The Jim Forrest Road Race is a major fund-raising effort for the GMPI Special Olympics athletes," said Carol Manne, executive director of GMPI.

According to Manne, the

Special Olympics sports offered by GMPI include: cross country skiing, down hill skiing, figure skating, basketball, track and field, aquatics, golf, bocce, softball and bowling.

2006 is the thirteenth year that the Forrest Race is being held for the benefit of Special Olympics and the effort has raised more than \$115,000 for the program.

Pat Forrest, race director, unable to make the ceremony due to an illness, said in a telephone interview, "This was very nice of GMPI and especially nice to give an award to each member of the staff. They work hard all year."

The thumbnail sketches for each of the race staff listed below, offered by Pat Forrest, are said to just barely depict all of the activities of the staff in preparing for the race.

Ted Kavanagh: Major fundraiser. Responsible for more than 40 percent of contributions to the race.

Tom Forrest: Co-Race Director. Coordinates all race day activities. Responsible for all water and soda drinks on race day.

John Sullivan: Direct liaison with local police, state police, and sheriff's department. Arranges all parking and race permits.

Bill Delaney: Screens all applicants and decides on yearly "Greta Delaney Award" for female runner who best symbol-

izes the sport of running. Also works on all behind the scenes activity on race day weekend.

Darren McLaughlin: Race facilitator. Generously offers use of Wayside Racquet & Swim Club for race day; as well as all club facilities for runners. Responsible for starting race back up again, after race was suspended for one year.

Bill Coeks: Chef extraordinaire. Responsible for ordering, procuring food and feeding more than 700 people on race day.

Dee Heisson: Race photographer. Works tirelessly behind the scenes on race activities.

Brian Waldron: Responsible for several race contributions and behind yearly raffle. Arranged several guest speakers for pasta dinners. Offers many ideas to enhance the image of the race.

Steve Zschau: Indispensable man on race day. Always has tool belt ready to address and fix the myriad of problems that arise on race day.

Linda Clark: Race team administrator. Prepares and sends out all letters for race donations. In general, an invaluable person for all administrative tasks.

Jack Nugent: (Awarded posthumously) Jack worked on many race contributions, as well as soliciting local merchants for race raffle prizes. For many years, he was the official race photographer.



STAFF PHOTO BY MARY WENZEL

State Sen. Pam Resor and state Rep. Steve LeDuc, at left, congratulate members of the Forrest Memorial Road Race staff who were presented with the first Greater Marlboro Programs, Inc. Distinguished Volunteer Awards. They are, from left, Resor, LeDuc, Linda Clark, Brian Waldron, Dee Heisson, Bill Coeks and Ted Kavanagh.

In addition to those mentioned above, Lorraine Spinazola and Mariette Vigeant were recognized by Chuck Stradford, president of the board of directors, as being two of the pioneers of the agency.

"They shared a vision with a handful of others which led to the creation of Greater Marlboro Programs Inc., an organization which is now 33 years old."

The GMPI Annual Meeting was an opportunity for those attending to meet the organization's new executive director, Carol Manne who began in July.

Greater Marlboro Programs, Inc. is dedicated to promoting the personal growth, dignity and acceptance of people with developmental disabilities in the MetroWest area including: Marlborough, Hudson, South-

borough, Northborough and Westborough.

This year, the Forrest Memorial Road Race will be held Sept. 24, beginning and ending at the Wayside Racquet and Swim Club. A pre-race Pasta Dinner is planned for Sept. 22 at The Marlborough Hotel (formerly the Radisson).

For more information about Greater Marlboro Programs, Inc., call 508-485-4227.