2011 Unsung Heroes

Colleen Bennett

Marjorie Cooney

Elaine Dickson

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Over the last decade, Elaine has been and continues to be an avid advocate for senior and disabled individuals in Lake Oswego. She has been the cornerstone volunteer at the Adult Community Center since 2002. Elaine serves as a member of the Lake Oswego Meal Network Advisory Board, Meals-on-Wheels program bringing her expertise as a university nutrition professor, assisting the ACC Chef with nutrition and menu development, providing recommendations for equipment upgrades and replacement. She was also a catalyst in the change from Styrofoam meal containers to molded fiber paper trays allowing for the reheating and freezing of meals for homebound seniors.

What makes Elaine truly extraordinary are three things: One, her heart is bottomless and she never ceases to give. Two, whatever comes in her way; she will find a way to overcome it, to the benefit of the common good and to her community. And three, Elaine has done all of these things while surviving two ovarian cancer surgeries, a hernia, and being a full time primary caretaker of her husband who suffers from advanced staged Parkinson's Disease.

Colleen Bennett
After arriving in Lake Oswego in 1984, Colleen immediately became involved in her community starting the League of Women Voters of Oregon, serving on the School Foundation, Clackamas Women's Services, Keep LO Great, LONAC, LO Reads Steering Committee, along with numerous other volunteer committees. One of her greatest passions was when she was appointed to the Lake Oswego Library Board. As president of Friends of the Library, she established a building fund for a new Library with portions of the money raised from the Friend's bookstore, Booktique. Since its establishment, the Booktique has raised over $1,200,000 for the Lake Oswego Public Library! As cheerleader for causes and our community, many of us have benefited from Colleen's wise guidance and counsel and most important, her actions! She was a force in the community, pulsating with life, vigor and activity. Colleen loved her friends, and she loved her community. She worked diligently and unrelentingly to make this a better place and a better world.

In her passing she leaves a big hole in our community - we will miss her every day, but she is with us in every moment through all she did!

Marjorie Cooney
A resident of Lake Oswego since 1960, she was significant in preserving the natural environment of Lake Oswego. She was fiercely dedicated to the protection, over development and environmental damage that would have harmed the wild trilliums, gaining her the name "Grandmother Trillium. Working with students, scouts and the City of LO, hundreds of wild trilliums were marked with metallic stakes in the woods behind Freeponds Park allowing pathways to be built through the woods with minimum disruption of this fragile native plant.

Marjorie also was instrumental in gaining the signatures of over 100 citizens to prevent the development of a plot used by the neighborhood children and the trilliums.

As a board member of the Friends of Luscher Farm Dog Park, she was able to work with the City to identify space for two dog parks which many of us enjoy today. Marjorie passed away in July after more than 50 years, of volunteering in the community she loved. Remember her by planting a trillium!

On behalf of the Council and the community, we say “thank you” to all of our Unsung Heroes who make the Lake Oswego community a better place to live, work and play.

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