

Civitas Award Presentation – Bonnie Ray

A few years ago, some neighbors felt it was about time to recognize one particular person for their contributions to I'On. A special recognition award was created in 2003 called the Civitas Award - **for outstanding Community Service making I'On a better place to live.** And we've now given out three of these. And it's time for another.

Volunteerism is alive and well in I'On. A lot has happened in last 12 months due to efforts of countless volunteers. This one person, however, has given so much time & energy for so long, we thought it time we all formally recognize that.

Bonnie Ray has orchestrated an I'On tradition called "First Fridays" for six years now. That's 64-some odd parties for 50 - 150 people she's made happen here, bringing people together to meet each other and make new friends. That's 60-some homeowners she's cajoled to host it. And for the few times she couldn't muster a host home, she just did it herself again, much to Dwain's chagrin. Thankfully that didn't happen too often, but Bonnie just made sure the tradition lived on. She dutifully posted her mailbox flyers, then made the rounds again to take them down. She coached the host superbly, and arrived first and usually left last after helping clean up a bit. She actively seeks out new people and helps them meet others that may have something in common.

I think we all agree that the best First Fridays are those that have the most new people. It is often a person's first impression of how our community 'works' – and can be life-changing. I'll attest to that. I can't even begin to quantify the impact that monthly gathering has had in our community. It certainly had an impact on us when Dave & I moved here. It made us want to get more involved, and made us feel like other people were genuinely interested to meet us. Well I guess we fooled them! But here's one recent example of how First Friday has touched lives:

Tom Martin example:

Beyond this, Bonnie

Bonnie just keeps a passionate heartbeat going around here.

She's always there, introducing neighbors around.

She sings, she sells tickets, she makes wreaths, she docents, she stuffs envelopes, she's one of the most enthusiastic members of an audience for any event going on. And when you need some help, you know that if you call Bonnie, chances are good that she's willing and enthusiastic to pitch in.

So it is my pleasure to present this special CIVITAS AWARD (hold it up), here on December 6, 2006 to you, Bonnie Ray, "For Outstanding Community Service – Making I'On a Better Place to Live". Thanks for everything you've done, Bonnie!