

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:***

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**Contact:** Nancy Lee Gomer, Marketing Coordinator

**Phone:** 636-949-7535 or cell 636-795-1137



*The winner of the Outstanding Senior Award was presented to Craig Morton (right) by St. Charles County Parks Horticulture Specialist Joe Mikecin (left). Morton donated more than 200 hours of his time and talent to the St. Charles County Parks and Recreation Department in 2015.*

## **St. Charles County Parks and Recreation Department Honors Volunteers**

***St. Charles County, Missouri*** –As part of National Volunteer Week, the St. Charles County Parks and Recreation Department recognized volunteers for their extraordinary service and dedication at its annual Volunteer Appreciation Night. The celebration was held at the Lodge at Quail Ridge Park near Wentzville on Thursday, April 14. In 2015, hundreds of volunteers contributed 5,312 hours of donated time to the St. Charles County regional parks system.

St. Charles County Parks Director Bettie Yahn-Kramer began the program by expressing her heartfelt gratitude to all the volunteers and recognized the ways they have assisted the Parks Department over the year. “Our dedicated volunteers are not only individuals who have a passion for outdoor recreation and nature, but many are a part of organizations, businesses and Scout groups. The estimated value of our volunteer hours in 2015 was equivalent to \$116,000 worth of labor donated.”

Among the 80 attendees were several organizations and individuals who were recognized with 2015 Outstanding Volunteer Awards in several categories. Carl Turek of O’Fallon received the Outstanding Individual Volunteer Award; Debbie and Virginia Polkinghorne received the Outstanding Family Volunteer Award; Craig Morton was presented with [the Outstanding Senior Volunteer Award](#); [Willows Way](#) was honored with the Outstanding Group/Organization Volunteer

Award; and Enterprise Holdings received the Outstanding Corporate/Business Volunteer Award.

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Bobb Holden and Patti Hawkins, Tim Wiegard, Diana Gores, Wendy Davis and the St. Charles County Police K-9 Unit were presented with Special Recognition Awards.

“Giving back to the community is what these outstanding volunteers like to do best! Even their hectic schedules don’t discourage them from reaching out and volunteering in our parks as often as possible,” said Yahn-Kramer.

Several St. Charles County officials, staff, and Parks Advisory Board members were in attendance, including Mike Elam, Councilman - District 3; Joann Leykam, Director of Administration; Mary Enger, Director of Communications; Lt. Craig Ostermeyer, Police Department; Val Joyner, Public Affairs Officer; Ruth Mellor, Parks Advisory Board Chair; Nikki Stephenson, Parks Advisory Board member; Larry Henderson, Parks Advisory Board member; Robert Wohler, Parks Advisory Board member; and Robert Osborn, Parks Advisory Board member.

Volunteers of all ages and abilities assist the St. Charles County Parks and Recreation Department with a variety of tasks throughout the year. These dedicated volunteers help to beautify and manage natural resources in the park; maintain and build the regional trails system; assist with educational programs and special events; and assist with demonstrations, re-enactments and interpretations at our Towne Park homestead and the County Heritage Museum.

To become a volunteer for the St. Charles County Parks and Recreation Department, please call 636-949-7535, or visit [www.stccparks.org](http://www.stccparks.org) for more information about these opportunities.

National Volunteer Week, a program established in 1974, is focused on inspiring, recognizing and encouraging people to seek out imaginative ways to engage in their communities. The St. Charles County Parks and Recreation Department is honored to recognize park volunteers during this special time of year.

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