

Go Green Wilmette founder named Distinguished Citizen

D39 Foundation to present annual award on April 17

MEGAN MAGINITY, Assistant Editor

There are many people in the Wilmette community that work hard, but only one gets recognized each year as the Distinguished Citizen of the Year.



Drucker

"I feel uncomfortable being singled out because so many people do great work," said Beth Drucker, this year's recipient of the 2014 District 39 Educational Foundation's Distinguished Citizen Award. "But, I get to do what I think is pretty important so I consider myself very blessed."

Although Drucker may not enjoy basking in the Wilmette spotlight, she said she's thrilled for the opportunity to talk about community service and her contributions, such as the nonprofit organization she founded, Go Green Wilmette, and the teaching gardens at the nine district schools.

"I feel excited that the foundation is recognizing community service," said Drucker, who's lived in the village for 25 years. "I have the amazing opportunity to do this in our community. It's given my life this wonderful focus and variety."

To honor Drucker, there will be a reception from 6:30-9 p.m. April 17 at the Michigan Shores Club, 911 Michigan Ave., Wilmette.

At the reception, attendees can learn about the foundation, and Drucker will give a speech about her passion and the work she does on a daily basis, said Kim Ratkin, the D39 Educational Foundation's chairwoman.

"Beth, she really is an inspiration, based on the commitments she's shown in the district and community," Ratkin said. "I think that the fact that she really gives back to both the larger Wilmette community and the school community is impressive."

"She has so much passion for what she does. She really walks the walk and talks the talk; that's what is really impressive."

Drucker will be the seventh resident to receive the Distinguished Citizen Award, as the foundation began the process years ago with the intent to honor residents.

"I think a lot of times [the recipients] are unsung heroes; they do whatever they do for their own sake," Ratkin said.

When it came time to inform Drucker that she was this year's recipient, Ratkin got a taste of Drucker's passion at Leonidas Cafe in Evanston on Dec. 23.

"We all arrived in our separate cars and it was all snowy out, and all of a sudden I look down and Beth has her bike helmet with her," Ratkin said laughing. "Shes totally pro-bike, pro-environment."

Drucker serves on the Wilmette Active Transportation Group, formerly the Wilmette Bicycle Task Force, which promotes bike and walking safety in the village.

The group, however, is only one of the many things



Beth Drucker, recipient of the D39 Educational Foundation's Distinguished Citizen Award, works with two students in a teaching garden at Highcrest Middle School in Wilmette. PHOTOS SUBMITTED

she does in Wilmette.

Being the founder of Go Green Wilmette, Drucker also serves as president and chairs the organization's annual environmental fair, Going Green Matters. Last year, she also helped establish North Shore Green Women and the Consortium of North Shore Environmental Groups.

With funding from District 39 Education Foundation grants, Drucker also designed and implemented the teaching gardens at all Wilmette schools, of which she truly prides herself.

"The school garden program is very hands-on with connecting kids to nature," Drucker said. "I feel very strongly that it's very important."

Even though her three children — Will, Emma and Nat — have graduated from

District 39, she stills works mostly in the Highcrest Middle School and Wilmette Junior High gardens, which she will speak in depth about at the April 17 reception.

To attend the foundation's reception for Drucker's award, registration is requested at www.d39foundation.org.

Tickets cost \$65 in advance for adults and \$45 for students ages 18 and under. If tickets are still available for purchase, they will also be sold at the door before the April 17 reception.

All proceeds from the event will benefit the D39 Educational Foundation's Gripp Grants promoting educational innovations in the Wilmette schools.

For more information about the award or event, call the foundation's office at (847) 853-3939.

POLICE REPORTS

Resident chases potential burglar

A homeowner came home and saw a man lying outside under one of his front windows in the 900 block of Oxford. The subject fled with the homeowner giving chase. When the suspect reached a vehicle he allegedly attempted to run over the homeowner who was trying to ID the vehicle. The homeowner jumped out of the way and was unharmed.

Police soon located and stopped the vehicle before arresting Alfred Southern, 63, of Chicago, and charging him with aggravated assault.

In other police news: WILMETTE

March 18

• Officers conducting an investigation involving cannabis delivery observed the target of the investigation, Anthony Soballe, 26, of Skokie, leave his residence and enter a vehicle at 5:25 p.m. March 18. The vehicle was stopped and the driver, Jack Namroud, 25, of Northbrook, was arrested for possession of cannabis less than 2.5 grams. A search warrant was served on Soballe's residence and 580 grams of cannabis, manufacturing/distribution equipment, money and a loaded handgun were recovered. Soballe was charged with manufacturing/delivery of cannabis and possession of 500-2,000 grams and FOID violation.

March 16

• Dean Chung, 55, of Los Altos, Calif., was arrested for driving under the influence at 1:20 a.m. at the intersection of Poplar Drive and Linden Avenue. Chung was

reported to be slumped over the steering wheel of a car. An officer detected a strong odor of alcohol and Chung failed field sobriety tests.

March 13

• Overnight between 10 p.m. March 12-11 a.m. March 13, a storage pod was pried open in the parking lot of Westmoreland Country Club, 2601 Old Glenview Road.

March 12

• A Walgreens store manager reported two female subjects stole \$400 in alcohol between 9:26-9:33 a.m. at 3232 Lake Ave. • At 11:20 p.m., employees of Jewel-Osco reported an unknown male subject was attempting to steal a shopping cart of liquor at 411 Green Bay Road.

KENILWORTH

March 13

• A subject unlawfully entered a residence at 9:40 a.m. in the 500 block of Melrose Avenue.

March 12

• Nicholas J. Wheeler, 26, of Chicago, was cited for illegal possession of cannabis at 11:30 p.m. in the 200 block of Sheridan Road.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Wilmette Beacon Police Reports are compiled from official reports found on file at the Wilmette and Kenilworth police headquarters. They are ordered by the date the incident was reported. Individuals named in these reports are considered innocent of all charges until proven guilty in a court of law.