



# New River Valley Leading Lights

*Neighbors Helping Neighbors*

*Awards Banquet and Ceremony*

*Thursday, April 11, 2013*

*German Club Manor*

**We ourselves feel that what we are  
doing is just a drop in the ocean.  
But the ocean would be less because  
of that missing drop**

—Mother Theresa

*Leading Lights*

*Neighbors Helping Neighbors*

Master of Ceremonies . . . . . Andy Morikawa

*Emeritus Executive Director  
Community Foundation of the New River Valley*

Welcome/Invocation . . . . . Bill King  
*Pastor for Social Ministry and Outreach  
Luther Memorial Lutheran Church*

Dinner. . . . .Professional Catering Inc.

Speaker. . . . . Analise Adams  
*Graduating Senior, Human Development and Psychology  
Virginia Tech  
2012 Leading Lights Award Recipient*

Leading Lights Award. . . . . Andy Morikawa

Speaker. . . . .Sam Minner, Ph.D.  
*Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs,  
Radford University*

Leading Lights Award. . . . . Andy Morikawa

Speaker. . . . .Don Stowers, Ph.D.  
*Director of Volunteer Services,  
New River Community College*

Leading Lights Award. . . . . Andy Morikawa

Closing Remarks. . . . . Dick Arnold  
*NRV Leading Lights Chairman, German Club Alumni Foundation*

### *2013 Leading Lights Nominees*

Bea Ake	Gary Brumfield
C. Wayne Bishop	Hugh Campbell
Danny Blumberg	Kristian Carden
Ryan Brock	

Paige Crane  
Walther 'Dan' Cook III  
Christine Djordjevic  
Ina Dunford  
Laura Froggatt  
Dean Gall  
Alicia Gerald  
Colonel John H. Getgood  
Karolyn Givens  
Cadet Paulina Gochnour  
Minoka B. Gunsekera  
Conor Hand  
Michael Harvey  
Doris Hendrickson  
Charlie Herbert  
Shannon Lloyd  
Patty Manthe  
Olivia Hodge

Joe Ivers  
Gary Johansen  
Thomas Kozikowski  
Dr. Matthew Marry  
Jo Martin  
Cherry Messer  
Stephanie Myrick  
Mary Sue Newsom-Peters  
Wanda Price  
Kim Radford  
Allison Rizzetta  
Kim Schwenk  
Sharon Scott  
Paul Smeal  
Lauren Sullivan  
Ben Sundell  
Penny Sweet  
Sam Van Curen

*Leading Lights Speakers*

**Analise Adams** is a senior at Virginia Tech. Throughout her academic career she has been an integral part of the SERVE living-learning



community, volunteering with this organization to lead her peers in service projects both locally and abroad. Analise mentored students, led service projects and initiated life-changing conversations within the context of SERVE. Her most significant accomplishment continues to be a work in progress as the many students she has inspired to serve follow their own passions and seek social change within their communities. Separate from her work with SERVE, Analise has dedicated countless ours with the RAFT Crisis Hotline through New River Valley Community Services and the Younglife program in Floyd. Each hour she serves is multiplied as she is always introducing new faces to the idea of living a life of community and commitment. In May Analise will graduate and head to New Orleans for a prestigious Southern Education Foundation internship working in the juvenile justice system before beginning graduate school at UNC Chapel Hill in the fall.

**Dr. Sam Minner** is Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Radford University. Prior to his appointment at RU, Sam was the founding dean of the College of Health Sciences and Education at Truman State University in Kirksville, Missouri. He was the first holder of the James H. Quillen Chair of Excellence in Teaching and Learning at East Tennessee State University and also held faculty and administrative appointments at Northern Arizona University, Murray State University (Murray, Kentucky) and the University of Arizona. He holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Southern Illinois University and a Ph.D. from the University of Arizona where he graduated with high distinctions. In addition to his experience in American universities, Sam has worked abroad, most notably in Belize, Central America where he worked with the government to establish the first institution of higher education; the University College of Belize. Dr. Minner has also worked in Turkey, Indonesia, Chile, the U.K., China, Mexico, and Australia. His research is in several areas including international development, professional development schools, gifted education, and the study of short-term memory. An active grant-writer and principal investigator, Dr. Minner has won millions of dollars from private foundations and federal government agencies. In addition to his appointment as an endowed professor at East Tennessee State, Dr. Minner won research awards from the American Educational Research Association and teaching awards from several universities and professional organizations. He is married to his wife, Joan, and together they have two children, Brook and Sam.

**Dr. Donald E. Stowers**, a native of Virginia, has spent his entire professional career in service to Virginia citizens through his work in the field of education. Dr. Stowers began a teaching career at Christiansburg High School in 1970 but was drafted into the United States Army soon afterwards. After 18 months of military service, he returned to teach in Montgomery County and then at Bland Correctional Center. He later served as principal of St. Brides Correctional Center in Chesapeake, Virginia. From 1985 to 2001, Dr. Stowers held various leadership positions with Virginia Beach Public Schools, including assistant principal, principal, and assistant superintendent for High Schools. In 2001, Dr. Stowers returned to the New River Valley to serve as Superintendent of Pulaski County Public Schools, the position from which he retired in 2009.

A “go-to” person and avid proponent and driver for student success, Dr. Stowers has worked at New River Community College since 2010 as director of Volunteer Services. In this role, he leads and manages a student success program entitled “Partners for Success,” which includes Academic Assistance, Retention Services, and Volunteer Services. He has also been instrumental in the creation and implementation of the Advanced Learners Program, a special program for intellectually gifted and highly motivated community college students.

Dr. Stowers holds a Bachelor’s in English from Virginia Tech, a Master’s in English from Radford College, and his Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from Virginia Tech. He and his wife, Deena, reside in Pulaski where both are active in the life of First United Methodist Church. Additionally, Dr. Stowers serves as Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of Lewis Gale Hospital, Pulaski; and he is a member of the Pulaski Rotary Club.

### *NRV Leading Lights Steering Committee Members*

**Dick Arnold** – German Club Alumni Foundation

**Coleman Brittle** – German Club Alumni Foundation

**Renee Cloyd** – Pamplin School of Business

**Kymn Davidson-Hamley** – The United Way of Montgomery, Radford and Floyd

**Teresa Dickens** – Career Services & Community Engagement, Radford

University

**Rachael Garrity** – Blacksburg Breakfast Lions Club

**Aliana Havrilla** – The YMCA at Virginia Tech

**Pat Huber** – New River Community College

**Bob Job** – The Christmas Store

**Whitney Johnson** – VT Engage: The Community Learning Collaborative,  
Virginia Tech

**Bill King** – Pastor

**Andy Morikawa** – The Community Foundation of the NRV

**Annette Perkins** – Montgomery County Board of Supervisors

**Lewis Webb** – Giles County Public School Board & New River Community  
College Board

**Jessica Wirgau** – Community Foundation of the NRV

*Leading Lights Selection Committee Members*

Pat Ballard  
Morris Fleischer  
Aliana Havrilla  
Bill King  
Bob Job

*A Special Thank You*

This evening's events are made possible through the generous help and contributions from the following. Please take time to thank them.

*Leading Lights - Major Sponsors*

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### *Flood Lights - Table Sponsors*

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- Wallace & Heather Nelson, Michael & Laura Hewitt
- Earle & Meredith Spruill & T.O. Williams
- VT Engage: The Community Learning Collaborative, Virginia Tech
- The YMCA at Virginia Tech

### *Spotlights – Supporters*

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*Spotlights – Supporters continued*

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### *In-Kind Contributions*

- New River Community College
- Professional Catering, Inc.
- Radford University
- The Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets

### *Jim and Lenna Moore Community Service and Citizenship Award*

Lenna Moore was an active volunteer in the NRV and when she passed away suddenly in 1999, the four organizations that Lenna was most active in as a volunteer decided to dedicate this award in her honor. The YMCA at VT, American Red Cross, AARP, and Voluntary Action Center (VAC) began discussing the award criteria and a time to hold the first volunteer recognition event. The first recipient, Bob Stuart, was chosen in 2000 to receive the award, with nominations coming from the four organizations involved. In 2001, the event was expanded to the entire New River Valley.

The recipient that year was Nelda Pearson, who was chosen among nominees submitted by non-profit organizations that utilize volunteers.

Sadly Jim Moore, the late Lenna Moore's husband, passed away shortly before the 2001 event. Jim Moore was also a very dedicated volunteer in the community. The planning committee voted to name the award in honor of both of them.

### *A Message from the Committees*

The Leading Lights Steering Committee and Leading Lights Selection Committee owe a debt of gratitude to the outstanding volunteers of the New River Valley, to the numerous individuals and organizations who saw a deserving individual and took the time to nominate him or her, and to our respective organizations for granting us leave in order to serve on the committees. The following brief biographies of the nominees are only a glimpse into the volunteer life of each one. A cursory reading of each biography will reveal the caliber and character of each nominee. Although only five awards are being given tonight, all nominees deserve our gratitude, encouragement, and commendation.

Please find tonight's banquet and awards presentation to be a heartfelt "thank you" from Leading Lights to all volunteers across the New River Valley. We hope you will continue in your paths of volunteerism and will encourage others to join you in your efforts to serve.

On the following pages you will find a brief description of the Leading Lights Award nominees in the nominators' own words.

**Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful,  
committed citizens can change the world;  
indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.**

—Margaret Mead



### *NRV Leading Lights Nominees*

#### **Bea Ake**

Bea's service is difficult to measure. She is known to many as the "cookie lady," because of the countless dozens of cookies she bakes and contributes to various events. Beyond that, Bea spends her time with hospice patients most weeks. She is the kind of volunteer that easily goes unnoticed—baking her cookies for individuals in the community and making every person she touches feel important. Bea is a valuable member of our community.

#### **C. Wayne Bishop**

Wayne has served in the Christiansburg Lions Club for over 20 years. He volunteers tirelessly and possesses strong dedication to getting the job done. Wayne was awarded the Lions Melvin Jones Fellowship Award, the highest award from Lions International, for his dedicated service and volunteering. One of his most satisfying accomplishments is the number of people, children and senior citizens that are helped each year with eye exams and glasses as a result of his tireless work as chairperson of the Lions Annual Holiday Craft Show. Wayne is a quiet volunteer, doing things in a matter of fact and quiet way, not seeking to gain any publicity, but needing to get the job done. He is a positive influence to his peers in every organization where he volunteers.

#### **Danny Blumberg**

What makes Danny special is he is selfless and humble. Danny looks for no attention nor publicizes his works. Danny work goes beyond simply volunteering his time- he gives his talents as well. He epitomizes servant leadership by organizing "events" and leading others to execute large impact projects. Some of these include, filling for kids Christmas, leading a team of 25 students to help Valley Interfaith Child Care Center, volunteering monthly with kids monthly at the Cornerstone child day care, and developing Mentoring Program at Radford Recreation Center

**Ryan Brock**

Ryan has done extensive service with the local YMCA through programming with children and homelessness, the Head Start program of Giles County as a weekly volunteer in the classroom, and a digital storytelling project working with at-risk youth in the NRV. Much of Ryan's "volunteer time" is likely impossible to track because it is measured in conversations and relationships that cannot be quantified. Ryan makes others feel deeply valued and "at home." He is not showy or flashy, but rather makes others feel special and important. Ryan's primary motivation comes from his incredible hopes and dreams for his community, and he tirelessly dedicates his days to this vision, one relationship at a time, and by helping individuals reach their potential. Ryan is truly one of the most inspiring and outstanding individuals I have ever worked with.

*NRV Leading Lights Nominees***Gary Brumfield**

Mr. Brumfield, or Mr. Gary as the boys of troop 42 know him, is a Boy Scout leader. His personal interest in helping boys become good men is exceptional. A very large percentage of the boys who work through troop 42 receive their Eagle Scout award and this is due to Mr. Gary's leadership, example and involvement. Mr. Gary continues to be involved with people long after they have left scouting for college and/or jobs. He is making a difference in the lives of everyone he touches.

**Hugh Campbell**

Hugh has made a success of The Smithfield Review, working through many difficulties, including the death of the printer a few years ago, to keep the journal in print. He has located people to produce the index, graphic designers to lay out the publication, authors willing to write historical articles without receiving any pay, volunteers to serve on the editorial board, and people to help review the articles. Hugh's strongest attribute is his ability to work effectively with a wide range of personalities while producing a quality publication.

**Kristian Carden**

Kristian is in APO, a service fraternity here at Radford. She frequently volunteers at the Roanoke Rescue mission where she arrives in the early hours of the morning to make beds, and other times to work at the thrift store. Kristian also volunteers at the Jacksonville Center of the Arts, Project Linus and Elf shelf, gives free toys to needy kids at Christmas. Kristian was recently named the Best Alpha in her fraternity, meaning she showed the most service and leadership qualities. She was also made president of the Alpha class due to her ability to motivate peers, her dedication to service and for going above and beyond the organized activities that go with being in APO.

**Paige Crane**

Paige is a dedicated volunteer to Seek Education Explore and Discover (SEEDS) in Blacksburg. She is leading the effort to build a recycling exhibit with informational materials and a poster at SEEDs in Blacksburg. Paige is dependable, friendly, spirited, and humble in her work. She knows how to delegate her time very well for someone still in high school. She has wonderful initiative. Paige is very community minded. She loves the Blacksburg 4th of July events, the Blacksburg Arbor Day events, and brightens up the room when she enters with her positive energy and devotion to her friends and family. She is truly a special person.

*NRV Leading Lights Nominees***Walter "Daniel" Cook III**

Dan serves as a volunteer leader for Cub Scout Pack 460 in Pembroke Virginia. He assisted in the establishment of Pack 460 and Troop 264 in Pembroke, both growing in membership. District wide, he counsels Scouts who are working toward BSA Eagle Award. He is always there for the boys, for our families and for our leaders. He stresses the importance of the scouting core values with an emphasis on. He is a positive role model for the youth in our area. The question Dan always asks; what can I do to help?

**Christine Djordjevic**

Christie has been volunteering for various events on campus and in the Blacksburg community since arriving at Virginia Tech. Christie's best attribute is her personality. Regardless of the task at hand or the challenges she faces, Christie is always has an optimistic attitude, which naturally draws people to her. She is outgoing and approachable, which has made her a standout individual in many of her volunteer activities. She has truly adopted Virginia Tech's motto Ut Prosim (That I May Serve) as a way of life.

**Ina Dunford**

Ina played a vital role in helping to get To Our House and VICCC organized. Over the years she has dedicated an extensive amount of time to nonprofits in our community including the Christmas Store. Ina is a deeply committed volunteer, giving of her time, energy and expertise. Ina is super organized and clear thinking, which are characteristics that have been a tremendous asset to numerous nonprofits organizations in the NRV.

**Laura Froggatt**

Laura's volunteer service started at the age of 5 when she joined Girl Scouts as a Kindergartener. She is about to turn 17, which means she has been volunteering for over eleven years. Laura is a highly motivated student who dedicates many hours every week to community service while still maintaining a straight-A average at school, where she is ranked in the top 10 of her class. Laura doesn't wait for someone to give her a project. She jumps in,

takes charge, and gets the job done. She approaches every project and every child with kindness and compassion. I imagine she will someday be a School Administrator or non-profit Executive Director.

### *NRV Leading Lights Nominees*

#### **Dean Gall**

Dean has been instrumental in protecting open space in the New River region--by finding our natural connections and affinity for the land. He has gotten school kids access and transportation to the recreational areas of the Izaak Walton League. He has helped get thousands of acres under conservation easement. While Dean is obviously passionate about protecting natural resources, his success in that pursuit comes from his love of people. His genuine interest in people comes through whether with "old-timers" or "new-comers." This allowed him to create a "safe" place where people with very different backgrounds and opinions could share their thoughts openly without fear or rebuke and ultimately find that they had some very important things in common--including concern for water and love of land.

#### **Alicia Gerald**

Alicia is active in the community engagement office at Radford University, Medical Reserve Corps and the Pulaski Animal Shelter. One huge accomplishment for Alicia was being awarded the Most Innovative Volunteer from Medical Reserve Corps of southwest VA in 2011-2012. She is hard working open-minded and really has a desire to help people. She understands the need for active citizenship and has a goal to be a global citizen

#### **Colonel John H. Getgood**

Col. Getgood's volunteer leadership and hands-on service has made the Floyd County Backpack Program possible for over 150 low-income school-age children. He shops for the food, coordinates the effort including volunteer recruitment/ support to fill the backpacks and delivery to the five Floyd schools. His many volunteer efforts have improved the community of Floyd for businesses, natural resources, senior citizens and youth. Col. Getgood does not dwell on problems, challenges or barriers; he identifies and implements solutions. He has a "can do" attitude and his actions inspire others. He leads by example.

#### **Karolyn Givens**

Dr. Givens was instrumental in the creation of the Palliative Care Partnership in the NRV. She conceptualized the project and put it into action. Since its development Dr. Givens has led the planning and evaluation for annual conferences, a total of six. In addition to supporting

the Palliative Care Partnership Dr. Givens serves on the Nursing Advisory Council for the School of Nursing.

### *NRV Leading Lights Nominees*

#### **Cadet Paulina Gochnour**

Paulina ran 3 blood-drives collecting 627 units, surpassing goal by 42%. Paulina led 30 cadets to an event honoring disabled veterans in Salem, VA. She has organized over 100 volunteers to support men's/women's soccer, football and men's basketball games. Thought she gives of her time so much, Paulina is quiet, humble. She serves for no other reason than to help others. Her secret to success is personal engagement. She goes door to door to encourage cadets that volunteering is fun and rewarding. Her energy and passion for serving others is contagious. Said Major Carrie Cox, " Paulina makes them happen. Her predecessors were good, but she is going above and beyond. She quietly just gets it done without need for my follow-up."

#### **Minoka B. Gunsekera**

Minoka has been very involved in service during her time at Virginia Tech. She has helped to reconstruct homes for flood victims in Nashville, TN, raised money for the Montgomery County Christmas Store, served as a captain for a team for Relay for Life, which raised a substantial amount of money, and worked as an intern at the Community Foundation of New River Valley. On top of all of this she serves as the president of the Wesley Foundation.

#### **Conor Hand**

Conor has a deep desire to help people. Throughout his time at Virginia Tech he has volunteered at Floyd County Baptist Church soup kitchen, helped increase awareness of poverty issues globally with Oxfam Virginia Tech events on campus such as the Hunger Banquet, volunteered at a Chinese Orphanage for two weeks to care for disabled children, registered hundreds of Virginia Tech students to vote, and more recently, organized a community of volunteers to unite around the common goal of turning out their neighbors to vote. Conor has committed himself to politics and policy as a means to do good and create change on both a large and small scale.

#### **Michael Harvey**

Mike has been an avid volunteer in the community since 1970. Since that time he has always been a catalyst for actions to address a wide variety of special community needs. Over the last 10 years, Mike has focused his energy in providing firewood to families that needed assistance heating their homes. Working through Montgomery County, Mike and his team of volunteers, the "Woodies", delivered 15 loads in the first year. Eleven years later they deliver

as much as 150 loads of firewood to community members in need. The enjoyment Mike displays while volunteering encourages others to participate. He leads by example.

### *NRV Leading Lights Nominees*

#### **Doris Hendrickson**

Doris has dedicated many years to Beans and Rice, both as a volunteer and a board member. Before residing in the NRV, Doris was active in the other communities she lived. In the 1960s she worked at Onward Settlement House and organized projects on Chicago's Southside. In the 1980s she obtained an MLA from Vanderbilt. She has used these skills to enhance the ability of non-profits in Radford to function effectively. Doris is quiet, gentle, self-effacing woman. She is firm, clear and strong in her desire to help others.

#### **Charlie Herbert**

Charlie has dedicated his time to service for over 40 years. Among the organizations he supports are Giles Animal Rescue, the Giles Arts Council, and his local Episcopalian parishes. Charlie is selfless. If he sees a need he does whatever he can do to see that it is met. Whether it's helping a family in need, reading to children at after school programs, conducting vision screenings at the local schools, working local blood drives, or stepping in to help a neighbor out, Charlie is always there and giving his all with a smile and with joy in his heart.

#### **Olivia Hodge**

Olivia is a dedicated volunteer with Micah's Backpack an organization that prepares and distributes weekend meals for 240 kids in Blacksburg. Three years ago, Olivia suggested a partnership with Blacksburg Middle School because she realized another student was hungry. Out of her concern for a classmate the middle school partnership began and participation has grown from 12 to 40 kids. As a volunteer, Olivia is a self-starter-- moving from task to task seamlessly according to what needs to be done at the moment. Because of her long-term involvement as a volunteer she knows every aspect of the organization's process. She often takes charge of the donations for students with food allergies, reading labels and substituting other foods when necessary. Her active nature, focus, and lighthearted personality make her a joy to volunteer with.

#### **Joe Ivers**

Joe Ivers' community service includes Presbyterian's at Your Service (PRAYS), Micah's Backpack, and the Montgomery County Educational Foundation, among others. Joe started PRAYS at Blacksburg Presbyterian Church with another church member. They provide home repairs for individuals in Montgomery Co. living below the poverty line. Joe has been involved in coordinating the repair and clean up of over 100 houses and this assistance has allowed numerous families to remain in their homes. More importantly, the help that Joe

has coordinated over the years has stopped evictions and has prevented children from being removed from the home. Joe is caring, generous and understanding.

### *NRV Leading Lights Nominees*

#### **Gary Johansen**

Gary has put in many years of service to Special Olympics as a coach, a mentor and a friend to many of special needs athletes and their families. Gary has also coached over 40 recreation league teams in Blacksburg and has helped put together numerous benefit softball tournaments in our area to help those throughout the NRV. He also does it all with a HUGE SMILE!! Gary was just recently named Special Olympics Regional Coach of the year. Gary has the biggest heart of anyone his nominator has ever met. He has never been selfish about giving of his time, money or physical ability.

#### **Thomas Kozikowski**

Thomas has dedicated a great deal of time to supporting the Cub Scouts. Over the years he has helped to establish a Cub Scout Pack in Pembroke as well as troops in in Pembroke and Pearisburg. Thomas believes in the scouting program and is an example of what the program can do for youth. He is an Eagle Scout who continues to give back to the program. His guidance is an asset to our units in delivering a successful program. The mission of the BSA is to train young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values. He leads by example.

#### **Shannon Lloyd**

Shannon has been instrumental organizing activities for Eating Disorders Awareness Week. The planning for this event began in October 2012 and she has taken a leadership role in working with the planning committee and community resources to organize activities. Her efforts have promoted connections between the university and the local community, and have promoted awareness of issues that include students at the elementary and secondary school levels. Shannon brings great creativity, imagination, and engagement to the multidisciplinary planning committee. Her demonstrated ability to participate with more seasoned colleagues at a high level of engagement is a model of courageous leadership, civility, and commitment to personal growth for the benefit of the university and surrounding community.

#### **Patty Manthe**

Patty volunteers with the Blacksburg United Methodist Church (BUM C) ministry known as fun143, offering on-site tutoring to children who live at Blacksburg Estates Mobile Home Park, as well as access to enrichment opportunities in the church and community. Patty has been the driving force behind providing homework club transportation two days per week to the children at Blacksburg Estates. The transportation that Patty provides allows the children to enrich their lives and to participate more fully in the community. Patty is determined to make a difference in the lives of children. When transportation arose as an obstacle to fuller participation at school and church, Patty learned to drive the church bus and began

providing the needed rides. Patty provides all of this transportation in addition to the time that she spends tutoring at fun43 each week.

### *NRV Leading Lights Nominees*

#### **Jo Martin**

Jo has given over sixty years of volunteer service, from teenager to present. Moving to the NRV only seven years ago, she's quickly been recognized as a leader. Something needs to get done? Ask Jo. Her plan always is Do, don't Talk. Jo, being a self-proclaimed "perennial Pollyanna" enhances her special ability to uplift and encourage others. These attributes spread enthusiasm to other volunteers. It's clear that Jo is dedicated to offering her best abilities to whatever she undertakes. The benefit of Jo's volunteerism is 100% commitment.

#### **Dr. Matthew Marry**

Rotary's motto is "Service Above Self", and Dr. Marry lives this motto. He does everything that he can to assist other people. He goes over and above expectations and spends his energy making life better for others. Dr. Marry dedicates his time not only to the Rotary, but also Special Olympics, the Montgomery County Christmas Store and the Women's Resource Center. Dr. Marry is an energetic go-getter, and his positive attitude and willingness to give of his time and his resources is role model behavior for the rest of us.

#### **Cherry Messer**

Cherry is a highly motivated woman. She worked diligently for many years homeschooling her eleven children before returning to pursue an associate's degree at New River Community College (NRCC). The same motivation and diligence that allowed Cherry to successfully prepare her children for college is now providing her a tremendous amount of personal academic success. Cherry is active with NRCC's Honor Society Chapter. She has been instrumental in coordinating activities from the membership campaign, faculty and staff appreciation brunch and induction ceremony.

#### **Stephanie Myrick**

Stephanie is a leader within the Honors community as the 2011 Austin Michelle Cloyd Scholar. She has served as a mentor to younger students in pursuit of this scholarship and provides regular insight and encouragement. Stephanie's accomplishments lie in her cultivation of a service-oriented culture at Virginia Tech both within and beyond University Honors. She is devoted to community empowerment through gardens, nutrition education, working with children, and greater awareness of the forces contributing to food insecurity. Stephanie has a vision for equality and food security at the global level but recognizes that change must take place locally. Stephanie is dedicated to empowering citizens to take an active role in the progress of their own communities.



## *NRV Leading Lights Nominees*

### **Wanda Price**

Whether Wanda is serving children, Senior Citizens, peers in the choir, aspiring and new teachers or ministry candidates, she opens the door for the participation of others by offering her attention to detail, her insight into the needs and gifts of others, and her ability to connect with and encourage others. She understands that ministry is "ministry with" not "ministry to." Furthermore, her work is most often behind the scenes, but completely invaluable.

### **Mary Sue Newsom-Peters**

Mary Sue has made significant contributions to the NRV and in a variety of capacities. She has served the Red Cross Blood Mobiles, volunteered with the Girl Scouts and the Boy Scouts. She has been heavily involved in the Pulaski County High School through the Marching Band, Chess Team, and organizing student physicals for the athletics department. In 2012, she helped organize the first free dental clinic for school aged children in Pulaski County. Mary Sue has been involvement in community service for over 50 years. She is a retired registered nurse has spent many years involved in health related activities, sharing her profession through volunteerism.

### **Kim Radford**

Kim is one of the original founders of the Austin Cloyd Memorial Basketball Tournament. She has for years now set up, promoted, worked and organized the tourney. Kim has seen the basketball tournament grow from a small tournament to something that those in our area strive to be a part of. There is a community service aspect of the project, so essentially everyone who participates also does community service. This is a direct reflection of the kind of person Austin was, and is shown through Kim's service to the community. Kim has also overseen the "Home for the Holidays" event at BHS grow and serve hundreds of families throughout the NRV. Kim is one of the most hardworking people I have ever met. She will not stop until something is 100% accomplished and has the outcome she was expecting. She is a dedicated to those around. She is a true leader.

### **Allison Rizzetta**

Allison has volunteered with the YMCA at Virginia Tech for four years. She has seen the Ytoss program grow from a small initiative to a major campus tradition resulting in the diversion of over 10 tons of material from landfills and the accumulation of over \$10,000 in funds to support YMCA afterschool and tutoring programs, alternative service breaks, and senior programs. Allison has an endless supply of positive energy and she loves motivating people to find creative solutions to problems. Allison is very good at recognizing her passions and helping others find their own.

## *NRV Leading Lights Nominees*

**Kim Schwenk**

Kim is the coordinator of for Giving Tree Food Pantry. She recruits, trains and schedules volunteers, recruits groups to sponsor food drives, shops the "best deals" for food with donated funds, and shows up every week to check in and talk with food pantry clients and volunteers. She knows everyone's name and story, and everyone knows hers. Kim embodies the principle of LOVE of her fellow man. She demonstrates this through her actions in many ways: by a genuine acceptance of all people from all walks of life - no one is a stranger to Kim. By giving of herself and her time, even on days when illness would keep most folks in bed. Kim's selfless actions help others to succeed and to enjoy life.

**Dr. Sharon Scott**

Sharon volunteers with numerous organizations throughout the NRV and Virginia. She is a great contributor to the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce. Sharon developed and continues to lead the Leadership course at the Chamber. Through her work there, Sharon has demonstrated a dedication to the improvement of the community. Sharon works to nurture youth to take leadership rolls and help guide the community as a teacher and motivator. She not only personally invests her time in making a difference; she encourages and motivates others which leads to a significant impact in our non-profit community.

**Paul Smeal**

Paul started volunteering in 1961. His first experience was as a church committee member. In 1962 it was the Margaret Beeks PTA. He has never slowed down since that time. Paul was instrumental in the New River Senior Olympics and he has served on the Town Parks and Recreation Committee for 20 years. Paul also initiated the Swim for Fitness Program and started the Fun and Fitness Program for Seniors. Paul served as a Scoutmaster for the Boy Scouts and member of the Virginia Skyline Girl Scout Council. Paul still puts in many hours on behalf of civic improvement. As a younger man he participated as a runner in several marathons; today as a senior, he is a member of the AARP United race team and is still the fastest walker in the Summer Solstice SK. Nothing slows Paul down.

**Lauren Sullivan**

Lauren serves as the executive director of Greeks Giving Back at Virginia Tech. Additionally; she is an executive board member for Virginia Tech Relay for Life, a member of Alpha Phi Omega and also serves as a student athlete tutor for Virginia Tech Athletes. Both of the years Lauren has been the director of Greeks Giving Back have been record-breaking years in terms of volunteers and jobs completed. Lauren is incredibly persistent in accomplishing a task to the absolute best of her abilities. She drives to succeed and pushes others to succeed. She is an incredible leader and has amazing potential for changing the world.

*NRV Leading Lights Nominees*

**Penny Sweet**

Penny Sweet is the NRV Project Linus Coordinator, which is a partner agency of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Montgomery County and Radford. She has also

been enrolled as an RSVP member for 6 years and has logged in 8,183 hours of volunteer service not only with Project Linus, but also with other community agencies.

Penny's generous spirit and genuine care for others define her. In addition to supplying blankets to organizations for distribution, whenever she hears of a child that has suffered a loss, injury, devastation of some sort, Penny finds a way to get a blanket in that child's hands. In many cases, the blankets are as comforting to the parents as they are to the children, because someone cared enough to blanket their child and provide comfort.

### **Ben Sundell**

Ben works with Big Brothers Big Sisters. Ben has helped his Little Brother manage many different obstacles and has taken the initiative to make sure his Little Brother improves his reading skills so they often spend time reading books together. Due to Ben's dedication, his Little Brother has had smooth adjustments with every move and he has improved his grades. Ben is one of the most kind and caring individuals his nominator has had the pleasure of knowing. He has genuine concern for others and wants to make sure everyone is well cared for. He goes out of his way to accomplish a goal. Ben has persevered through the challenges associated with being a volunteer mentor and his Little Brother has greatly benefited because Ben has stuck with him. Above all else, Ben's selflessness is his most distinguishing and honorable attribute.

### **Sam Van Curen**

Sam has dedicated much of his volunteerism to Animal Hope Alliance (AHA). He is always working to keep animals (specifically cats) safe and healthy, whether it be through helping to get stray cats homes, fundraising for proper vaccinations for families who can't afford to medicate their cats, or even fostering cats until they can find a loving family. Sam also serves as secretary to the Campus Police Support Group at Tech and is a fundraising "whiz". He works Virginia Tech football and basketball concessions, special events and even partners with fraternities and sororities to raise money. Sam's dedication distinguishes him. He truly is willing to do whatever it takes to help any animal in need. Sam is such a caring person and serves his community in a humble way.

## *Leading Lights Neighbors Helping Neighbors*

The events of April 16, 2007 made the members of our community acutely aware of the fragile nature of life, of how precious our loved

ones are to us, and of the importance of volunteers in maintaining and protecting our society.

Seeing the seemingly endless procession of first responders, spiritual counselors, caring students, and sleep-deprived ordinary citizens performing extraordinary service inspired the German Club Alumni Foundation to enable the creation of a means to recognize and promote volunteerism. A committee was formed that included leaders from NRV schools, student organizations, churches, service organizations, universities, governments, and other non-profit organizations to develop the processes for identifying and recognizing those special people who have exhibited a passion for volunteerism.

Leading Lights is the result of these efforts, and seeks to recognize volunteers from all sectors in the New River Valley who are making a community-changing impact and serving as a model to inspire others. It is this spirit of volunteerism that we celebrate this evening.

To each of the nominees, and especially to the five award winners that the selection committee members have chosen, we offer our sincere gratitude.

We dedicate this program to the victims, all those impacted, and the countless volunteers of the tragedy of April 16, 2007. May this be a living memorial to them and a commitment to service as inspired by the volunteers on that day.