

Meet the 2013 Heart of Buffalo Grove Award winners

- Article
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Alex Randell kisses his brother, Max.

BOB CHWEDYK | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

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By Submitted by the Buffalo Grove Area Chamber of Commerce

The Buffalo Grove Area Chamber of Commerce and co-sponsor Buffalo Grove Bank & Trust are pleased to announce the recipients of the Heart of Buffalo Grove Awards. These awards honor individuals and businesses for their dedication and service to the Buffalo Grove community.

Help the chamber honor the finalists and applaud the recipients by attending the Heart of Buffalo Grove Awards Gala, 6:30-10 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 23 at the Arboretum Club, 400 W. Half Day Road, Buffalo Grove.

Tickets are \$30. To register, visit www.buffalogrovechamber.org or call (847) 541-7799.

Above & Beyond Award/Continued Community Involvement: Steve Rusin is a Buffalo Grove firefighter/paramedic and a dedicated volunteer of the Pink Heals Campaign that raises money and awareness of breast cancer research. Steve recently obtained and outfitted a "pink heals" truck for northern Illinois. He is a member of the fire department's Honor Guard and hedesigned and oversaw construction of a memorial patio honoring retired firefighters of Station 26.

Above & Beyond Award/Heroism: Brothers Ken and Daniel Hechtman of Buffalo Grove were on the Edens Expressway, driving home from their Skokie restaurant April 21, when the semitrailer in front of them struck a car that burst into flames. Daniel ran to the truck and pulled the driver and his wife from the truck seconds before the tank exploded. He then stopped traffic so that Ken could help a woman and her daughter from their burning car. The brothers are currently fundraising at their restaurant, Ken's Diner, to help the family from the car pay medical bills.

Business Philanthropy Award: Dave Becker is the owner of Wheeling Auto Center in Arlington Heights. He is a member of the Buffalo Grove Area Chamber of Commerce and services many of the residents of our

community. Each year he raises money for the National MS Society and runs an art contest for seven local schools — giving each participant an Oberweis gift certificate. Dave loans the use of his box truck to organizations and donates tools to other auto shops that have been devastated by disaster. He supports local food banks, the Great Lakes Adaptive Society Association, Clearbrook and Osborne Books. David also runs a program for Boy Scouts to earn their automotive merit badge.

Community Volunteer Award: Mike Brown has been a helpful neighbor, volunteer and organizer for many years in the community. He assists his neighbors by providing companionship to shut-ins and helping with repairs and projects inside and outside their homes. Mike and his wife prepare and ship care packages to Marines in Afghanistan and Iraq. He organizes a group of men to do projects at a halfway use for abused women in Chicago and volunteers for Habitat for Humanity and local food pantries. He has served on the committee for the St. Mary Men's Club Super Bowl Party and St. Vincent de Paul Charity Golf Outing and is an active member of the St. Mary Men's Club. He also brings communion to residents at a local nursing home.

Senior Volunteer Award: Jane Sherlock is an active volunteer in the community and at St. Mary Church. She has been an active member and officer of the St. Mary Women's Club, a member and officer of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women, and chairwoman of the Christmas Giving Tree Program which donates presents to WINGS, House of the Good Shepherd and a Waukegan seniors group. Jane has organized the collection of several thousand cellphones for homeless and domestic abuse victims, winter coats for those in need and has volunteered many hours for PADS at Kingswood Methodist Church. She also serves as a Eucharistic minister and a minister of care, visiting incapacitated members of St. Mary Church who cannot attend services.

Teach & Inspire Award: Andrew Conneen is the AP Government and AP Comparative Government teacher at Stevenson High School. Andrew has inspired his students for 15 years to engage in our republic's highest office — the office of citizen. His students have met with political figures, led voter registration drives and served as election judges. For nine years, Andrew lobbied legislators to get the "Suffrage at 17" law passed, allowing 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections if they will be 18 by the time of the general election. Gov. Pat Quinn signed the bill into law at Stevenson High School on July 3, 2013. It takes effect on Jan. 1, 2014.

Together We Can: The BG Days Committee is a group composed of nearly 60 Buffalo Grove residents and business people who volunteer their time to run the village's biggest event — BG Days. With liaisons from the village, park district, police and fire departments and the chamber of commerce, the committee plans all aspects of the festival from entertainment to food, fireworks to parade, special programs for kids with disabilities and everything in between. This year, the group's disaster plan was put into effect twice during severe storms. Several thousand festival goers were evacuated and no one was injured. Both times the committee worked together to get the festival safely back into operation quickly and efficiently.

Youth Volunteer Award: Alex Randell is a fifth-grader whose older brother has Canavan Disease, a rare neurological disease that degenerates the brain. Most children with this disease die by the age of 10. Alex's brother, Max, is now 15 and Alex has made it his job to protect his brother. At the age of 2½, Alex stuffed envelopes and began making short speeches at fundraising events for Canavan Research Illinois. Last Memorial Day, Alex went to Bethesda, Maryland with his mother to tell Max's story and plead for government funding before scientists from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke and from National Institutes of Health. Alex wants to become a medical researcher when he grows up.

The chamber congratulates the remaining 2013 Heart of Buffalo Grove Award nominees:

Elaine Anclade, Senior volunteer; Karen Danenberg, Above & Beyond; Meredith Duggan, Teach & Inspire; EMMA Group, Together We Can; Paulette Greenberg, Community Volunteer; Kathleen McDaniel, Community Volunteer; Bill Monsen, Community Volunteer; Nino's Pizzeria, Business Philanthropy; Dr.

Jacqueline Rosen, Above & Beyond; St. Mary Men's Club, Together We Can; St. Mary Scouts, Youth Volunteer; Ricardo Sanchez, Above & Beyond; Enid Silverman, Teach & Inspire; St. Vincent de Paul Society, Together We Can and Stan Zoller, Teach & Inspire.