

PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 28, 2009

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Mayor Pro Tem

Harry LaRosiliere
Deputy Mayor Pro Tem

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Thomas H. Muehlenbeck
City Manager

Plano Names 2009 Employee of the Year Therapeutic Recreation Supervisor Joan Shopoff

The City of Plano proudly announces 27-year veteran Joan Shopoff is the 2009 Employee of the Year! When City Manager Tom Muehlenbeck named this year's recipient her initial thoughts were, *"I was totally surprised and amazed. I did not know that my associate Addy Hjarpe had nominated me. I am very honored to represent the City of Plano in this way."*

Ms. Shopoff is the Therapeutic Recreation Supervisor for the City and receives this recognition after years of 'exemplary' service to some often times underserved members of the community. Through her work, Joan provides a variety of recreational and educational programs to people of varied mental and physical abilities. She is responsible for developing many Therapeutic Recreation events which have gotten attention from other cities throughout the state and the nation.

Addy Hjarpe comments, "Joan is truly 'Employee of the Year' every day of the year. She is an extraordinary woman who works effortlessly meeting every challenge that comes her way. Joan is hands-on attending every dance, special gathering and day trip and meets with staff to assess and enhance her programs."

Plano Very Special Arts Festival is just one of Ms. Shopoff's most visible and successful programs, which this year drew more than 2,500 people from Plano and neighboring communities. She says, "By celebrating individual strengths, and collaborating with others, we are able to leverage human and financial resources to benefit many more people. Working together creates more community, and I like that."

(MORE)

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Amy Fortenberry, Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation, adds “Joan touches many lives through her exceptional programs. She exhibits great teamwork and volunteerism, is patient and has strong management skills. Her programs provide not only fun and unique recreational opportunities for the participants, but also provide much needed respite for families and caregivers. Joan is an excellent choice for “Employee of the Year.”

Ms. Shopoff believes that the success of her programs is due in large to collaboration with many area civic organizations and City departments who all share their special skills with the Therapeutic Recreation participants.

The City of Plano’s Employee of the Year program is supported by The Plano Rotary Club. Joan and her family are invited to attend a regular Thursday meeting of the Plano Rotary Club where she will address this group of local business owners and receive gifts and other tributes.

NOTE: See attached photo of (l to r) Addy Hjarpe, Joan Shopoff and Amy Fortenberry.

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