

The Good Neighbor Award - *Ordinary People Doing Extraordinary Things*

Quality of Life Committee

University Ridge Homeowners Association

May 5, 2017

The good neighbor award was inspired by the “National Good Neighbor Day” and created in the early 1970s by Becky Mattson of Lakeside, Montana. In 1978, United States President Jimmy Carter issued this Proclamation:

“As our Nation struggles to build friendship among the peoples of this world, we are mindful that the noblest human concern is concern for others. Understanding, love and respect build cohesive families and communities. The same bonds cement our Nation and the nations of the world. For most of us, this sense of community is nurtured and expressed in our neighborhoods where we give each other an opportunity to share and feel part of a larger family... I call upon the people of the United States and interested groups and organizations to observe such day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.”

Since then National Good Neighbor Day has been celebrated annually in the United States, and has even spread to other nations in the world. Hence came the concept for the second activity this year of the Quality of Life Committee: to honor those exemplary people in our own neighborhood who give their neighbors a feeling of being part of a larger family.

We received many nominations for the Good Neighbor Award – for people who shoveled a neighbor’s driveway, helped with yard work, kept an eye out for a neighbor’s home when they were out of town, etc. But one nomination stood head and shoulders above all the others, making the choice for this year’s Good Neighbor Award very easy indeed.

When we met with Bill Long, the winner of this year’s good neighbor award, he was genuinely surprised that he had been selected. He and his wife talked it over, and finally decided that he must have been nominated because they were always retrieving their neighbor’s escaped dogs. Or he had also helped some other neighbors with their yard work situations. Or there were the times when he hadthe list went on and on and on.

Actually, it was none of those things. One neighbor never forgot what Bill had done over five years ago, and continued to do ever since. It was more than just trimming a tree; more than just figuring out where the gas and water cutoffs were; and more than just addressing a frozen water valve.

During their darkest hours, with teenagers at home and one spouse at times literally living at the hospital while the other spouse lay gravely ill, Bill was there for them, checking on their teenagers, relaying information to the teenagers about the condition of their parent, and getting them all to the hospital the day their loved one died. Since then, the nominator said, “Bill has always been there in time of need.”