

MUSKEGON



West Michigan's Shoreline City
www.shorelinecity.com

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PRESS RELEASE Outstanding Citizenship of the Year

Three citizens have been chosen as recipients of the 2013 Outstanding Citizenship of the Year Award. They are Shirley Green, Greg Borgman, and Debra Griffin.

Shirley Green is described as dedicated, trustworthy, ambitious, and a leader.

Shirley resides in her home which is located approximately 200 feet from her childhood residence. Her deep love to this city and area is the deep motivation for all the planning and beautification she so aptly does for Lakeside and the City of Muskegon.

A ride through Lakeside will prove what a wonderful job Shirley has done trying to revitalize our area. The overgrown, greatly neglected empty pocket park next to Booker Institute on Lakeshore Drive, was an eyesore to all. Shirley's dream was to provide a place where people could sit and enjoy the beauty of Lakeside and Muskegon Lake. With many hours of hard labor by Shirley and others, it is a place of beauty. The watering, planting of shrubs and flowers is done by Shirley and her family.

Shirley has been involved in many events including: spearheading the holiday basket drive for the shut-ins in her neighborhood, assisting several school functions, involvement in the Lakeside Neighborhood Association, the Lakeside District Association, and Muskegon Medical Associates, as well as organizing the Lakeside Easter Egg Hunt, and volunteering for the Memorial Day Parade in Lakeside. Each year she hosts a pumpkin roll down the hill of her dead-end street.

As one friend states, "Shirley is a strong minded person. If she is unable to do it herself, she will find the necessary people to help her accomplish her goal. I admire her for her strong will and willingness to keep fighting for her community."

Shirley has a deep devotion to our city and community. Her hard work and dedication to her community makes her an exemplary citizen.

Greg Borgman is described as caring, trustworthy, and respectful.

Greg is a lifelong resident of the City of Muskegon, a member of the Episcopal Church, and a proud Big Red.

Greg has served on many boards to promote and better our community. His leadership and dedication serving on the Housing Board of Appeals has helped to fight blight and bring beauty to our city. His passion for making Muskegon a better place has led to his current position as chairman of both the Nelson Neighborhood Improvement Association and the Neighborhood Associations of Muskegon. In addition he's been a block captain, participated in the Citizen's Police Academy, organized several car shows, and volunteered for many events as well as fundraising efforts.

Greg is a great promoter of the downtown. He is employed by Kandu – an organization that helps individuals overcome barriers that may prevent them from joining the workforce. Greg convinced his employer, to invest in the downtown by opening an office in the Terrace Plaza where his office currently resides. He was also part of the Muskegon Retail Incubator and was instrumental in seeing the restoration and adaptive reuse of the Russell Block Market.

Greg's friends describe him as a kind person who is willing to help anyone, loved by many, non-judgmental, has a belief in people and their potential, an ability to connect with individuals from all walks of life, and has a strong faith and commitment.

Greg is a caring individual with a love for Muskegon. This love shows not only through his words but through his actions. Muskegon is honored to call him one of its own.

Debra Griffin is described as dedicated, caring, and intuitive.

Debra has used her many skill sets to help improve the community by listening and helping those in the community who feel they are not being heard. One way she achieved her objective was to found a group called "Parents Have Power", a Muskegon parent involvement group working to unite the community in support of public schools.

Debra founded the parent's advocacy group to give parents of students in Muskegon Public Schools a voice in the many changes proposed in the school system. With Debra's computer training, she was able to create a website and also started a Facebook page so parents may share ideas. The website has also created a mechanism for sharing information on how to empower our children through education.

Debra also founded the political advocacy group, "Spark!" Sparks! is a grassroots coalition whose goal is to begin an honest dialogue between community members about issues that currently affect the county, primarily in Muskegon and Muskegon Heights including feelings of isolation, race relations, poverty, high unemployment, neighborhood blight and violence, etc.

In addition, Debra is also the co-founder of "Big Girls Do Workout", an advocacy group that promotes exercise and healthy eating habits and an overall healthy lifestyle targeted at full-size women in the community. The website she created showcases different exercising techniques, healthy recipes, and other ways of releasing stress and ways to build self-esteem.

As her nominator states, "Citizens like Debra are the ones that make and keep our communities strong. The work she is doing is not easy, but she does not let that stop her. She continues to engage fellow citizens in the effort to improve our community."

