

Our opinion: Volunteers make better Bloomington

- Editorial staff
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One measure of a strong community is the amount of energy generated by its citizen volunteers.

Bloomington's strength was on full display Tuesday during the Be More Awards event, the annual celebration of those who volunteer their time to make better the lives of others in the community.

Each year, generous people and organizations are honored. This year's award winners represented a wide range of activities that illustrate the volunteer spirit that builds the quality of life in this community; helps it Be More than it might otherwise be.

Our congratulations and thanks go to these individuals and organizations:

- Marge Penrod, who won the Be More Dedicated (Lifetime of Service) Award, for more than four decades of volunteering her time to Opportunity House.
- Reova Meridith, who won the Be More Committed Award, for her efforts in offering women 30 years of excellent and free counseling as founder of the Center for Women's Ministries.
- Dave Wright, the Be More Phenomenal Award, given to a board member. Wright was honored for 16 years of service to Monroe County Court Appointed Special Advocates, or CASA.
- Lindsay Schroeder, who won the Be More Compassionate Award for animal welfare, especially her efforts to raise money for WildCare.
- Mary Goetze, who was awarded the Be More Knowledgeable Award for education and literacy, for her work with New Leaf-New Life.
- Vanessa Elias and Stephanie Huevo, who shared the Be More Involved Award given to college students, for their language work with local children and adults through La Escuelita para Todos, or Little School For All.
- Fred Parker, who received the Be More Creative Award in arts/culture for spreading jazz music with the B'Town Jazz.
- Volunteers in Medicine of Monroe County, winners of the Be More Healthy Award, for providing health care to unserved and underserved adults.
- Interfaith Community Environmentalist Youth, who received the Be More Energized Award, for dedication to educating others about important environmental issues.

- Bloomington Community Orchard Volunteers, winners of the Be More Sustainable Award, for their vision of growing and sharing fruit and what such an effort can mean for the community.

All the winners are very deserving, as are hundreds of other men and women of all ages who donate their time to make Bloomington better.