

**One Great Community Salutes
Chamber Champion
Sandy Carpenter**

Nominated by Tim Miller

Sandy Carpenter is the Richmond Evening Optimist League. She has spent over 28 years dedicating her time and love for the kids to this program. She began coaching volleyball in 1981 and joined the Volleyball Committee formed by the late Mel Young in 1988. This committee was instrumental in making that program what it is today. They had to fight for equipment, lights, bleachers and more court space to keep the program from dying out.

Sandy joined the Evening Optimist Club of Richmond in March of 1997. She took over as Head Commissioner of the Volleyball program in 1998 and remains on the committee today.

Sandy was the first female to join the Richmond Evening Optimist Club. She has continued to encourage women to participate and helped to increase participation for young girls too. In 1998 there were 151 girls in the program. Today more than 260 participate.

Tim Miller of Harrington Hoch nominated Sandy for the award. Sandy is President of REO this year. She spends thousands of hours at the fields scheduling umpires, managing concessions and everyday management of a 400 player organization. Sandy always puts the kids first and as Tim said "When we see that kids are responsible for things like bringing the All America City title back to Richmond, it's time we reward those people responsible for teaching them the virtues of team first, individuals second."

Another aspect of the program that sometimes goes unnoticed is the Annual Optimist International Essay Contest. In 2007 no one was participating in the contest from this area. Sandy saw to it that this Contest was brought back for the kids. "There are scholarships available", she said and, "the kids were missing out." Richmond Community Schools and Seton Catholic Schools are currently the only schools participating however, her goal, is to grow this program as well and have kids from all area schools participating in the contest.

Sandy, like most volunteers, is humble about all that she does. As she said, "I couldn't do it without the people you see in this room". Many of her Board Members, Volley Ball Committee Members and family turned out in support of Sandy and her receiving the award! "If it weren't for Sandy, the Optimist League probably would not exist" said one of her Board Members.

All of this and she has a day job too!

Sandy works and volunteers for the Meals on Wheels program for Wayne County. She said, "During the day I help the elderly and at night I help the kids".

Not only does Sandy play an integral role with REO and Meals on Wheels but she has large family of her own; 2 daughters, 3 grandsons, 1 granddaughter, 3 great granddaughters and 1 great grandson!

Sandy pours her heart in to everything she does and it shows.

Congratulations Sandy on being named Chamber Champion for August 2009!