

Rehoboth Beach-Dewey Beach Chamber of Commerce

"The Nation's Summer Capital"

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**REHOBOTH BEACH – DEWEY BEACH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NAMES
2012 MAE HALL MCCABE AWARD WINNER**

The Rehoboth Beach-Dewey Beach Chamber of Commerce presented the 2012 Mae Hall McCabe Award to the Dewey Beach Lions Club, Inc. on Thursday, January 26, 2012 at the annual Volunteer Recognition and Officers' Installation Dinner.

The Mae Hall McCabe Award is a distinguished award given to a citizen or citizens who exemplify community service and is sponsored annually by the Chamber. The award was established in 1977 in memory of the late Mae Hall McCabe by her great-nephew Joseph B. Hill. Ms. McCabe opened her real estate office in 1937 on Rehoboth Avenue and contributed to the needs and causes of the Rehoboth Beach area for more than 50 years. She most notably helped organize the Rehoboth Beach Chamber of Commerce and was later elected its' President, and the first woman to hold that office for any Delaware Chamber.

This award recognizes those individuals whose tireless commitment to community service leads to the betterment of the Rehoboth Beach and Dewey Beach areas. When considering a recipient, the selection committee considers individuals matching a criterion that includes a history of commendable volunteerism, sustained commitment to community service, and meaningful altruistic efforts for the good and welfare of the community while usually receiving little or no remuneration for their sacrifice and dedication.

Below are comments made by RBDBCC Board Member, Mike Meoli during the presentation to Chris Wilson, president of the Dewey Beach Lions Club, Inc.:

The 2012 Mae Hall McCabe award recipient is the Dewey Beach Lions Club. Founded in 1951, the Dewey Beach Lions club has supported hundreds of charitable organizations across our community, our state and our country. They've granted tens of thousands of dollars, donated personal time too numerous to account for and have helped to make a uniquely positive difference in a tremendous number of lives.

Service has been the core of the Dewey Beach Lions Club from the absolute beginning. In the 1950's and 60's, the Lions Club helped a local squatter named John Waples who owned a small plot of land along Head of the Bay Cove in what was then a totally undeveloped Dewey Beach. Members of the Dewey Beach Lions Club aided John when he was in need of food and when he became ill in the later years of his life.

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In appreciation for what the members of the Lions Club had done for him, John Waples bequeathed his 5 acre plot of waterfront property to the Lions Club with the stipulation that it always maintain a playground for children. The playground has been constructed twice, the latest renovation occurring in 1999.

Members of the Lions Club hosted many fundraisers over the years to pay for and maintain the playground and to help support other organizations. Some of the early events included chicken bbq dinners, clambakes, oyster eats, wrestling matches and horse shows on the athletic fields of the Rehoboth Elementary School. Today, the Lions Club's most significant source of revenue comes from the North Beach Restaurant and Bar which leases the most prolific portion of the property.

As current members of the Dewey Beach Lions Club will tell you, the mission has been and always will be to serve the needs of others. From providing the money for the four original Dewey Beach lifeguards in 1957 to Project Santa which wraps and donates dozens of presents to under-privileged families, the Dewey Beach Lions Club has been generously supporting their community for more than 60 years.

Local organizations like Casa San Francisco, Cape Henlopen Senior Center, POP Warner Football, Meals on Wheels, Beebe Medical Center, The Center for the Inland Bays, and the Rehoboth Fire Hall Sub-Station are all regular recipients of funding from the Dewey Beach Lions Club. Some of our area's most successful events were founded by Dewey Beach Lions Club members and are still sponsored by the club today. Among them are the Annual Buddy Walk in Rehoboth Beach which serves families of children who have Downes Syndrome and the Lewes Harbor Flounder Tournament which helps raise funds for local youth fishing events, just to name a few.

Recently, the Lions Club has been hosting the Chimes Program in its new clubhouse. The Chimes Program provides educational and employment services for people with developmental disabilities, mental illness and other specialized needs. Specifically, the Lions Club has been providing the use of their clubhouse kitchen facility, at no charge, for students of the Chimes Program so that they can become more proficient in culinary services. The Dewey program's first graduate will be starting his externship at Harrington Raceway and Casino this month.

Internationally, the Dewey Beach Lions Club makes significant donations to the Leader Dog to the Blind Foundation, raising money for leader dogs or seeing-eye dogs. Each of the dogs funded by this program is named Dewey. On a statewide level, the Lions Club collects and recycles thousands of used eyeglasses for the Delaware Valley Eyebank. They also donate money to the Delaware Association for the Blind, Lions

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Vision Research Foundation, The Lions Delaware Sight Team as well as supporting local individuals in need of eye exams, glasses and other vision aide devices.

Nearly 100 members strong, the men and women who belong to the Dewey Beach Lions Club are proud of their legacy of service over the years and they're excited about the future of their organization. They describe themselves similar to a fraternity and work hard to constantly nurture the spirit of fellowship that exists among the group. Though it took 25 years to become a reality, the Lions Club new clubhouse is an inviting venue with a picturesque bay-front view for members to attend their bi-weekly meetings and plan for the missions of their club. Their state-of-the-art kitchen facility is fully equipped for catering and the plan in the near future is to make the building available to the public for private functions, weddings and community events.

For more information, contact Kate Bell at (302) 227-2233 x11 or events@beach-fun.com