



Delta Waverly Rotary Club

Red Rose Award for 2019

Red Rose Award: In 1998 the Delta Waverly Rotary Club inaugurated the Red Rose Award dedicated to Frank Traviglia who was an inspiring leader, member and worker in the Delta Waverly Rotary Club. He was the club's president and a district governor. Frank was the Director of St. Vincent Children Services, lay leader at St. Gerard's and a major supporter of Marriage Encounter in Michigan. His focus was always helping others. His vision for a loving and supportive community was inspiring to all who knew him or whom were touched by him. He embodied the meaning of our club's Four Way Test and Rotary International's commitment to make a positive difference in the world, in our country and in our community.

This award praises outstanding achievement, giving recognition **while the recipient is yet providing service**, in hopes of inspiring us all to make the community a better place in which to live. Gloria Kovnot is the 22nd recipient of this award. Her name will be listed with past winners that include our current club members Mike Curley and Lynn Fuller. The list includes community heroes like Joe Drolett and Bob Hubbell who have passed on. In 2015 Mary Clark, Delta Township Clerk, received the award for her work as a victim advocate.

2019 Recipient: Gloria Kovnot

For many years Gloria Kovnot has had a vision of enhanced services and programs designed specifically for senior residents in Delta Township. She was persistent and determined to make this vision a reality. Over a few years she convinced elected officials and township leaders that quality programs and services for seniors would not only enhance the quality of life in Delta Township but would attract and retain seniors. Because of her actions, Delta Township now has a Senior Council and more organized opportunities for community engagement.

Through her efforts the Senior Council succeeded in winning a grant to install exercise equipment in Sharp Park. Along with the Delta Township Garden Club they created a neighborhood Summer garden walk event to showcase several unique gardens in various neighborhoods in Delta. By partnering with the Delta Township Library, a spring and fall noon time lecture series was inaugurated and an evening town hall series is being designed to highlight services available to Delta residents. The Senior Council meets monthly to seek ideas for new activities, services and programs that will enrich the lives of seniors in Delta Township.

But her achievements do not end here. Gloria now serves on the AARP Age-Friendly Task Force whose goal is to make the state Age-Friendly. Already the city of Lansing, East Lansing, Southfield, MSU, and Grand Rapids are actively working to make their communities Age-Friendly. In order for a municipality to be designated as age-friendly, they need to be committed to designing a **livable community** where **people of all ages** can go for a walk, shop, find their needed services, live safely, be comfortable, socialize, be entertained, and make their town and neighborhood their **life long home**.

Gloria also serves on the new MSU AgeAlive Board whose mission is to connect MSU academic, programs and initiatives that share a common goal of increasing wellbeing and quality of life for all ages. They are currently working on developing a neighborhood on campus for retired people.

Our community leaders must ask these questions. What do seniors require in order to continue living in their homes? What could the community do to encourage graduating high school seniors to decide to make their homes in Delta Township after graduating from college? What will it take to stop our retirees from moving away to more welcoming and supportive communities? If we do not discover what improvements and amenities are needed to make our community friendly to our youth and seniors, we risk losing young and older residents. What would our community be like without young people, without young families and without seniors? The answer is dreadful to consider - dull, boring, poor and dying.

This is what Gloria Kovnot is trying to prevent. Therefore her efforts need to be recognized and encouraged with the 2019 Red Rose Award.

Gloria Kovnot's remarks in accepting the award:

I want to thank you for this honor. I am truly overwhelmed with gratitude. Community Service is in my DNA.

Grandmother: It has been over 100 hundred years since my grandparents came to this country. They had great hopes and dreams for their new adopted land. Leaving family and friends knowing that they would probably never see them again, they set out on this journey to give their children and generations to come opportunities that they would never have had in their home country. My grandmother instilled on all the kids that much should be given back. Freedom has responsibilities. She helped her fellow country men and women get jobs, housing, learn English, anything to help them get acclimated to their new homeland. Community service is very much a part of our family heritage.

Delta Township Senior Council: When I worked at the University of Maryland, Center on Aging, I helped develop volunteer service training programs for newly retired people. After coming to Michigan, I served on the boards at Tri-County Office on Aging (TCOA) and Michigan Seniors Advocate Council (MSAC) where I learned that our Seniors are very special people. They want to give back to their communities; they want to live purposeful lives. After serving on these boards, I was encouraged to help seniors in Delta Township where I live. At the time I felt that they were underserved, so with the support of our township leaders, I formed Delta Township Senior Council. This Council enriches the lives of seniors in Delta and surrounding area. We create and promote programs that inform and educate our senior residents. We encourage involvement in our community. Every voice needs to be heard to meet the needs of this fast-growing senior population. The Senior Council is responsible for the following initiatives:

- Our Grant Committee wrote a grant application that gave us our Outdoor Exercise Gym at Sharp Park. Next week Sparrow Hospital thru their Lifetime Fitness Opportunities will hold their first Outdoor Fitness Circuit Class at our Outdoor Gym.
- Tours of Lansing Community College Delta Campus
- Garden Tours - Four of our Senior Council members hosted a public garden tour to highlight their beautiful gardens
- This Fall, we will be hosting the Secretary of State at the Library. Her office will be discussing the new driver's license regulations that will come into effect in the Fall of 2020.
- Lunchtime Lecture Series in October will be held at our Library every Tuesday between 12:30 - 2:30 to celebrate Arts and Humanities Month.
- Last week, we hosted at the Library a Forum on "Safety in our Community" which our new Fire chief and Eaton County law enforcement gave presentations. Over 50 people came, learned and enjoyed meeting these wonderful people that keep us safe.

We also had success in forming partnership:

- We promoted evidence-based programs from TCOA that are held at the Delta Township Enrichment Center and at the Library including Matter of Balance and PATH (Positive Active towards Health)
- Working with AARP, we will be promoting in October a 4-week workshop on Diabetes.
- We assist AARP in scheduling programs that are presented at the Delta Township Library once a month. The Senior Council promotes attendance thru our Facebook page and e-mail newsletter.

This is just to give you a little flavor of what Senior Council accomplishes. We are always looking for people to serve on our Leadership Team. We are only limited by our imagination.

Thank you again for wonderful and prestigious award. It is very much appreciated.