

NEW BRITAIN PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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News Release

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New Britain Mayor Timothy T. Stewart and Parks and Recreation Commission Chairman Richard Lorch will present the **2009 Benefits Are Endless Awards** at the Common Council Meeting at 7:30pm on Wednesday, December 9th. The four (4) honored recipients this year are 1.) Musco Lighting Systems, 2.) Womans Club of New Britain, 3.) Lighthouse Family Worship Center and 4.) USTA New England.

The Awards are given to individuals, agencies and businesses that enhance the endless benefits of parks and recreation in New Britain. The tribute began in 1984 as the “**Life. Be in it.**” **Awards**, presented for improving the quality of life in New Britain. In 1998, the awards were re-named “**The Benefits Are Endless...**”, modeled after the national public relations marketing strategy of the same name that calls attention to the benefits provided by parks and recreation departments. The benefits to the City of New Britain fall into four major categories of daily life: individual, economic, community, and environmental.

Every year the Parks and Recreation Commission select civic groups and individuals, private and/or non-profit, who have been instrumental in providing a service to this Department. The service may be in a monetary or equipment donation, volunteer hours or a combination of both. The winners for the **2009 Benefits Are Endless...Special Recognition Awards** were selected for this honor for their assistance in providing improved “quality of life” to New Britain residents. The winners for the 2009 **Benefits Are Endless...Special Recognition Awards** each have demonstrated through their contribution that New Britain Parks and Recreation Department is where the benefits are truly endless.

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**Musco Sport Lighting, Inc.**

Musco Sport Lighting's consideration to act as a scholarship sponsor for the City of New Britain began in 2008 when owner Don Rhuda was made aware of the overwhelming number of New Britain families who could not afford summer programs for their children. When Mr. Rhuda learned of the numerous single-parent and multiple-dependents households earning just enough for daily essentials and little else, Musco Sport Lighting stepped up to the plate, donating \$1000 in scholarship assistance to provide New Britain Youth who might never know the joys of a camp experience with a memorable summer adventure: sports, theatre, dance, cheerleading, and Leaders-In-Training Camps!

When the Parks and Recreation Department's participant numbers ran off the chart in 2009, so did the number of youth and families in need. Once again the Department sought financial support from loyal contributors. Musco again found it hard to turn down the requests of youth and donated another \$1000.

Musco's generous \$2000 financial assistance benefits the youngsters it serves as well as the world we all live in. Musco's concern for the welfare of New Britain Youth and commitment to serving the New Britain Community show Musco Sport Lighting to be a true friend of New Britain Parks and Recreation. It is for these reasons that Musco Sport Lighting, Inc. is nominated for a 2009 Benefits Are Endless Award.

**Women's Club of New Britain**

New Britain Parks and Recreation Department's "The Benefits are Endless" campaign promotes the benefits of recreation to the individual, community, economy and the environment. One such benefit is increasing the quality of life for individuals involved in sports and recreation. Last winter, approximately 150 youth, ages 8-15, improved the quality of their lives by participating in New Britain Parks and Recreation Department basketball leagues. Not supported by the general fund, leagues must cover expenses by charging a fee. The Women's Club of New Britain, sensitive to the plight of less privileged children, sponsored not one, but two basketball teams at a cost of \$250 a piece. This fee covered the cost of team shirts for a middle-school, and elementary school team. In addition, Women's Club of New Britain donated \$100 to provide program scholarships for less privileged youth.

In this particularly tough economic time, the magnanimous support of the Women's Club of New Britain is indeed a great boost for city-sponsored youth programs. It is heartwarming to realize that through the generosity of organizations like the Women's Club, New Britain youth can continue to take part in experiences they might not otherwise. Women's Club of New Britain is most certainly a deserving candidate for a 2009 Benefits Are Endless Award.

### **Lighthouse Family Worship Center**

Lighthouse Family Worship Center is nominated for a 2009 Benefits Are Endless Award in recognition of its members' selfless contribution of financial support to the Annual TD Banknorth Children's Fishing Derby. This annual spring ritual, held at Martha Hart Park Pond, delights hundreds of New Britain youth as they experience the joys of an outdoor sporting adventure, many for the first time. When Pastor Rene Couture reminded his congregation of the economic challenges facing New Britain families these days, Lighthouse Family Worship Center Members immediately opened their hearts and pocketbooks. Collecting almost \$600 in cash, members purchased 40 prize fishing rods to donate to the derby as prizes. After awarding all prize-winners, church members continued to hand out rods to every child who needed one until there were none left.

Lighthouse Family Worship Center contribution to the Parks and Recreation Department is not only a positive impact on youngsters today, but the service introduced a skill that children can sustain and improve as it enhances their quality of life. Lighthouse Family Worship Center is truly a deserving candidate for a 2009 Benefits Are Endless Award.

### **USTA New England**

United States Tennis Association (USTA) New England has been essential to the vitality of tennis programming within New Britain. Over the past year, New England Coordinator Deirdre McCormack and USTA have awarded the Parks and Recreation Department programming and facility grants valuing over \$11,000 and have trained New Britain physical education teachers and recreation staff in a new lively brand of tennis called Quickstart.

When New Britain Parks and Recreation Department began a fundraising campaign in January for the resurfacing of the Don Davis tennis courts, Deirdre McCormack advised the Department to apply for a USTA facility grant to help out in the restoration. Thanks to her advice and guidance, the Department was awarded \$7,500 in February that was vital in reaching the

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Department's goal to resurface the tennis courts. Soon after receiving the facility grant, Deirdre recommended that the Department apply for a \$3,500 programming grant that would bring a lively form of tennis called Team Tennis to New Britain. Again, thanks to her advice, the Department received the grant and was able to establish a Team Tennis program that competed against surrounding towns.

USTA has been invaluable to the Parks and Recreation Department with not only the grant monies they have awarded the Department but also the in-service training they provided the New Britain Parks and Recreation staff and physical education teachers that brought Quickstart tennis to gym classes at 13 elementary, middle, and high schools in New Britain.

USTA New England is deserving of a Benefits Are Endless award for the effort and man power they have committed to the New Britain Parks and Recreation Department over the past year. Tennis is flourishing in New Britain and a lot of it would not have been possible if it were not for USTA New England and its staff.

A reception for award winners and their guests will take place prior to the awards ceremony in the Parks and Recreation Office, Room 302. Refreshments will be served and winners will be photographed with the Mayor and Commission Chairman for the Parks and Recreation 'Wall of Fame'.

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