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ANDREWS, DESUTTER NAMED 2023 GRANDMA'S MARATHON VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

Longtime Information Booth Coordinators Honored Together

(DULUTH, MINN.) --- Joan Andrews and Tom DeSutter have been named the 2023 Don Fennessy Volunteers of the Year, it was announced today by Grandma's Marathon.

The pair each has more than two decades of volunteering history with the event, with most of it coming side-by-side as co-coordinators of the race weekend information booth.

Both Andrews and DeSutter claim there are too many highlights to count throughout the years, but the feeling of helping others has been a mainstay in their position since the beginning.

"We've had a chance to meet people from all over the world," Andrews said about her experience at the information booth. "The runners and their families never fail to amaze me. They constantly thank us for our help, so we know we are providing an important service, and we feel so honored to be receiving this award."

"It's a lot of work each year to make the Information Booth a success," DeSutter said, "but the sense of contribution to the overall effort adds a specific meaning for all of us."

The duo works year-round to help recruit and train volunteers for the information booth, which serves as a trusted "go-to voice" of the marathon for runners and the community on race weekend. What started as one booth more than 20 years ago has now turned into two, but the co-coordinators have smiled through the changes.



“Showing off Duluth and the North Shore,” DeSutter said, “and being part of such a great event while having so much fun is something I continue to relish. Joining the elite group of volunteers who have given so much time and effort is truly an honor.”

“To be recognized by the marathon itself is just icing on the cake,” Andrews added. “Some awesome volunteers have preceded us, so it’s an honor to be included among the great history of this race.”

Named after longtime Grandma’s Marathon volunteer and Board member Don Fennessy, this award recognizes individuals or groups who have donated a tremendous amount of time and, in doing so, have assisted in the successful operation of the event.

Andrews and DeSutter will be officially presented with their award on Thursday, June 22 at the 2023 Grandma’s Marathon Volunteer Appreciation Party at Wade Stadium in Duluth.

DON FENNESSY VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD RECIPIENTS

2023 – Joan Andrews & Tom DeSutter
2022 – Shawn Carlson, David Pollard, & Mike Krzewinski
2021 – Darrin & Michelle Keiper
2020 – n/a
2019 – Mike Tipple
2018 – Peggy & Doug Simensen
2017 – Geri Peterson
2016 – Ellen & Wally Johnson
2015 – Cheryl Fosdick
2014 – Marge Swor & Family
2013 – Al & Jan Swanson
2012 – College of St. Scholastica
2011 – Jock Glendenning
2010 – John Herbertz
2009 – Woodland Hills
2008 – Brock Pelzel
2007 – Steve & Joyce Lent
2006 – Lyle Johnson
2005 – Barb & Terry Davis

2004 – Carol Gallinger
2003 – Sue Bussa
2002 – David & Jill Hisdahl
2001 – Buck McDonald
2000 – Chelly Ferguson
1999 – Durbin Keeney
1998 – Proctor Community Band & Mr. Moody’s Marching Band
1997 – Don & Ella Fennessy
1996 – Bruce & Colleen Hasforth
1995 – Jan DeRoche
1994 – Arrowhead Radio Amateurs Club
1993 – Ken & Mona Rae Cich
1992 – Herb Dillon
1991 – Ken Docteur
1990 – Seitz Family
1989 – Eric & Amy Kaiser
1988 – Candy Furo
1987 – Taire Lind
1986 – John Leppi
1985 – Ray Paavola



For interview requests or for more information, please contact Marketing & Public Relations Director Zach Schneider via email at zach@grandmasmarathon.com or via phone at (218) 343-9874.

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ABOUT GRANDMA'S MARATHON

Grandma's Marathon began in 1977 when a group of local runners planned a scenic road race from Two Harbors to Duluth, Minnesota. After seeing just 150 participants that year, the race weekend has now grown into one of the largest in the United States and welcomes more than 20,000 participants for its three-race event each June.

The race got its name from the Duluth-based group of famous Grandma's Restaurants, the first major sponsor of the marathon. In addition to the 26.2-mile race, the organization has now added the Garry Bjorklund Half Marathon and William A. Irvin 5K to its weekend offerings.

As the popularity of Grandma's Marathon has grown, our mission has stayed the same – to organize, promote, and deliver annual events and programs that cultivate running, educational, social, and charitable opportunities to our communities.

Grandma's Marathon-Duluth, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization with a nine-person, full-time staff and a 17-member Board of Directors.



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