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DPD'S PETRICH, CLIFTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT. NAMED 2024 RUDY PERPICH PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Awards Will Be Presented on Thursday of 2024 Race Week

(DULUTH, MINN.) --- Father John Petrich and the Clifton Volunteer Fire Department have been named the 2024 Rudy Perpich Public Service Award recipients, it was announced today by Grandma's Marathon.

Petrich, who serves with the Duluth Police Department, has been a familiar face at Grandma's Marathon for over 25 years and has become an integral part of race weekend. His involvement has included everything from helping with traffic control to providing moments of reflection and calm before the races, enhancing the sense of community and safety for participants and spectators alike.

"The best memories for me at my position are those people that watch the race in the same place year after year after year; it's like a small community of people coming together with memories of years past, connecting with their loved ones as they run by," Petrich said. "Receiving this award is a huge honor for me. I know many of the people that have received the award before me and I'm very glad to join them."

Following the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001, Petrich was invited by Grandma's Board of Directors to lead a prayer and moment of silence at the start line. Of all the moments he's been part of at Grandma's Marathon, Petrich says that day will always be one of the most powerful.

The Clifton Volunteer Fire Department, meanwhile, has been sending members to volunteer for the marathon for more than two decades. In the past five years, though, the department has transitioned and now formally staffs two medical tents along the Grandma's Marathon racecourse. The department's swift and professional care has been instrumental in addressing emergencies and providing care, greatly enhancing the safety of 10s of thousands of runners each year.



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“We strive to serve our community in any way possible,” Captain Ken Peterson said, “whether it be responding to fire-related or medical emergencies or helping to support local events like Grandma’s Marathon. Our department is exceedingly proud and honored to join the distinguished list of recipients of the Rudy Perpich Public Service Award.”

The award, named after the late Minnesota Governor Rudy Perpich, is presented annually to elected officials or public employees who have exhibited immense dedication and service to Grandma’s Marathon.

RUDY PERPICH PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

2024

Fr. John Petrich, Clifton Volunteer Fire Department

2023

Pete Goman, Mike Tusken

2022

Carey Johnson, Bob Shene

2020-21

n/a

2019

Phil Olsen, Joe Tarnowski

2018

David Montgomery, William Stovern

2017

Kevin Gray, Erik Rish

2016

Don Ness, Roger Reinert

2015

Kevin Hakala, Shawn McGovern, Brad Wick

2014

Jim Benning, Bob LeDoux, Earl Stewart

2013

Tom Ehle, Brad Miller, John Schlangen

2012

Steve Anderson, Gary Doty, Paul Scanlan

2011

Scott Collver, John Foschi, George Lewis

2010

Al Goodman, Kent Lunda, Ed Moroney

2009

Jim Miles, Sharon Montgomery, Doug Nelson

2008

William Amberg, Bob Troolin, Mark Wick

2007

Helene Abbott, Roberta Dwyer, Jim Gorny

2006

Bob Brandt, Richard Hansen, Lenore Johnson

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

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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.



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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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