

THANK YOU



RecognizeGood® NEWS

Celebrating 50 RecognizeGood Legends

From: *Irma*

... **Lynne**, for starting and keeping the Women Meeting God prayer call every morning!

From: *PET-Austin*

... **Julia, Brian, Maria P. and Cisto** for jumping in first thing this morning to help us as we needed to get 5 PETS out the door as soon as possible! We could not have done it without your help this morning – THANK YOU!

From: *Joyce*

... **Gil Iwanski** for all you do for Minis and Friends. I went through your Minis and Friends Boot Camp and learned so much! I love using what I learned with my minis when we go on outings like you do!

From: *Anonymous*

... to **Gil** for all of the hard work he does to take care of the very first minis in Minis & Friends! He has them spoiled rotten and it is sometimes hard to tell if he is training them...or if they have him trained instead!

From: *Anonymous*

... to **my husband**, for being exactly who and what I need exactly when I need it. I don't know where I'd be without you. I love you.

From: *Dodie*

... **Gil**, for making so many people happy with your special minis.

To post a RecognizeGood Thank You, visit recognizegood.org.



The **RecognizeGood Legends** program started in 2010, almost by necessity. RecognizeGood: The Foundation launched in 2008 with the goal of providing a way for anyone in the world to say a special, public Thank You to someone who had made a positive impact on their life. Before long, public **Thank You** posts were pouring in. But some of these Thank You posts were different – they told of exceptional selfless acts that made readers sit back and exclaim “Wow!” The RecognizeGood Legend award was created to celebrate these incredible stories, inspiring others by telling of the extraordinary GOOD that surrounds us every day.

Since then, 50 Legend awards have been presented, a milestone we at RecognizeGood are tremendously proud of. Each of those 50 Legend awards have also included pay-it-forward donations – over the course of those 50 presentations and five corresponding **Say Thanks, Austin** campaigns more than \$130,000 has been donated to local nonprofits in the names of Legend award winners.

When something is done 50 times, there's a chance that thing might get old or

become stale – but each of our Legend presentations have been distinctive and unique, just as each of our Legends themselves have been truly special. Award recipients have been as young as 16 and as old as 89. Presentations have been held all over Austin, not to mention Round Rock, Georgetown, Lakeway, Dripping Springs, Leander, Fredericksburg, Taylor and Bartlett. They've been hosted by businesses and nonprofit offices large and small, along with churches, municipal buildings, schools, restaurants, nursing homes, YMCAs, Boys & Girls Clubs, country clubs, hospitals, a baseball field, a soccer field, a medical clinic lobby, an elementary school auditorium, and a high-end car dealership. Those pay-it-forward donations have gone to support education, veterans, youth, seniors, healthcare, animals, the homeless, Central Texans with special needs and even more crucial causes. The individual Legends themselves have taught us something new with each presentation, showing us what

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true dedication really looks like – volunteering for 70 years with the Red Cross, donating more than 40 gallons to the local blood bank, single-handedly providing more than 92,000 meals to Austin’s underprivileged, or driving over 30,000 miles to simply deliver smiles.

Looking back and celebrating this wonderful milestone for our RecognizeGood Legends program might leave us overlooking all that 50 Legend awards represents, but let’s not forget – 50 Legend awards means raising awareness for 50 worthy nonprofits around Central Texas who nobly support our community and undoubtedly make it

a better place to live. It means making significant donations to those nonprofits so that their essential work can continue. It means recognizing 50 individuals who spend their time and talents giving back to our community with no desire for acclaim, and it means sharing 50 amazing stories with our community in hopes of inspiring more Central Texans to realize what a difference one person can make.

Discovering these legendary folks 50 times so far, with no shortage of new candidates being submitted each month, should tell us all we need to know about what type of community we’re blessed to share with each other.

RecognizeGood® Lighthouses



Junior League of Austin

The Junior League of Austin (JLA) was presented with the RecognizeGood Lighthouse Award on September 8th. JLA is an organization of women committed to promoting volunteerism, developing the potential of women and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Founded in 1934 with 50 charter members, JLA has supported the Austin community for more than 80 years through the volunteer efforts of more than 10,000 volunteers and investment of more than \$35,000,000 directly into both local nonprofits and JLA’s Signature Impact Programs. This year, the league will support 32 nonprofits by providing volunteers and/or funding. JLA’s membership of 2,500 will also demonstrate their commitment to the community by dedicating over 130,000 hours of service.

Round Rock Kiwanis

The Round Rock Kiwanis Club was presented with the RecognizeGood Lighthouse Award on August 19th during their regularly-scheduled meeting at Logan’s Roadhouse in La Frontera. This incredible service club was founded in 1952, and in the 63 years since has supported over 60 different area nonprofits and causes. The club’s most impactful events are the Kiwanis Pancake Day and the Heritage Flag Project. Volunteer efforts include school supply drives, reading projects and neighborhood cleanups. Round Rock Kiwanis also sponsor three student-led Key Clubs at McNeil, Stony Point and Pflugerville high schools. Each year this club donates over 4,000 hours of service and raises more than \$20,000, keeping with the Kiwanis International goal of changing the world one child and one community at a time.




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Recent RecognizeGood® Legends



Africa's Promise Village
Donna Gunn

Donna first visited Tanzania on safari in 2010 and was staggered by the conditions, malnutrition, and utter lack of education she found in the tiny villages of the Maasai tribe. Donna was especially moved by the children she met, and promised to dedicate the rest of her life to helping these children and their communities. Since then, Africa's Promise Village (APV) has provided the Maasai people of Arusha with everything from food and water to prosthetic limbs.

Donna also secured a grant from Rotary International to drill a series of wells that will bring clean water to over 37,000 Maasai people. Now in her 70s, she organizes and leads two trips each year to the most remote parts of Tanzania. "I think a lot of people dream that 'one day' they would like to go to Africa and work in an orphanage," said Karina Duque. "Donna makes that one day TODAY!"

\$1,000 was donated to **Africa's Promise Village** in Donna's name.

WOW!

After witnessing firsthand the disturbing conditions of Maasai children in Tanzania, Donna Gunn launched Africa's Promise Village and is taking it upon herself to turn their lives around.



Rotary Club of Georgetown
George Lourigan

For Georgetown ISD students, the wisdom gained from George Lourigan's years of dedicated service – spanning not only decades, but continents – is making an extraordinary difference in their lives. A retired 30-year lieutenant colonel in the United States Army, George has devoted his life to helping others. He is an active Rotarian overseeing and working on multiple Rotary projects both locally and internationally.

George mentors students at multiple Georgetown ISD campuses, supporting their ambitions and guiding them toward improved conduct, both inside and outside of the classroom. George extends his passion and dedication by not only mentoring on a one-to-one basis, but by volunteering above and beyond as a Mentor Ambassador, inspiring other mentors and providing support, advice and words of wisdom. Lives like George's, led by example, are looked up to not only by students, but by all of us.

Rotary Club of Georgetown received \$1,000 in George's name.

WOW!

After decades of service spanning the military, missionary work in Guatemala and Central Texas groups like Meals on Wheels, Heroes Night Out and Rotary Club of Georgetown, students at Georgetown ISD couldn't ask for a better mentor.



Minis and Friends
Gil Iwanski

At Minis and Friends, the goal is simple – share the love and spirit of miniature horses with those who need specialized, tender care. Gil, resident "horse whisperer," takes on the education and observation of each trained miniature horse ambassador at each visit, and behind his watchful eye and years of dedication, Minis and Friends has not only touched more than 10,000 lives itself but has amazingly spawned 12 new sister organizations to touch lives across the United States and Canada.

"I can truly say that Minis and Friends would never have gotten off the ground if it hadn't been for Gil," says Sally Iwanski, Gil's wife and co-founder of the organization. "Minis and Friends has changed both our lives – over and over again." The little horses with big hearts pay visits to about a thousand children each year and also share their love with hundreds of special needs adults. "Minis and Friends would be in very sad shape if Gil was not there to help lighten our day," says Sally. "We depend on him greatly!"

\$1,000 was donated to **Minis and Friends** in Gil's name.

WOW!

Gil Iwanski has trained miniature horse ambassadors that have touched more than 10,000 lives through his organization, Minis and Friends.



Board Updates



John Bosch, Jr.

Co-Founder & President
RecognizeGood®

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Karina Duque made a comment in her recognition of Donna Gun's work with Africa's Promised Village - she talked about how many people comment that "one day" they will do something significant. That "one day" for me came in 2008 when, with the support of Bobby Jenkins (ABC Home and Commercial Services) and Nancy Blaich (Samaritan Center), we formed RecognizeGood. Soon thereafter, Earl Maxwell (St. David's Foundation) joined us in our vision to illuminate the GOOD in the world.

It is with amazement and humility that we celebrated the 50th RecognizeGood Legend presentation since 2010. My first acknowledgment is to my RecognizeGood partners for their continuous support of this amazing organization that has expanded into many different facets of illuminating the GOOD in our community. I also want to recognize the two individuals behind the RecognizeGood Legends program, Program Director George Mihalcik and Communications Director Joel Coffman, along with the entire RecognizeGood staff and all of its program volunteers. You are ALL doing a tremendous job and it is very much appreciated!

About Us

We are a local nonprofit that provides a means for individuals, businesses and other nonprofits to illuminate selfless volunteers, charitable acts and community service throughout the greater Austin area. Our mission is to elevate the spirit of community by catalyzing a movement of good deeds and unselfish charity through recognizing, rewarding and promoting good in our businesses and the communities in which they reside. RecognizeGood® has several active programs that work toward this mission from different angles, but the common theme is simple – illuminating GOOD in our community and encouraging others to contribute.

There's plenty of good happening all around us, right here in the Austin area - all you have to do is shine a light! Go out of your way to say thank you to a courteous driver, salute the volunteerism of a co-worker or give kudos to a local business for their corporate citizenship. Opportunities to show both large and small acts of gratitude are endless, but by making your thank you public at recognizegood.org you have the chance to inspire others. To learn more about us and our programs, log on to recognizegood.org, sign up for our e-mail newsletter or connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Pinterest or Instagram.

Recognizing good in your daily life is easy and only costs a few moments of your time – help us illuminate the GOOD in our community by joining our "Community Reporters" and reporting the GOOD you see at recognizegood.org.

I also want to direct your attention to the RecognizeGood Lighthouse Award ceremony held on August 19th to honor the Round Rock Kiwanis Club - an organization that has been in existence for 63 years. For me, the most rewarding aspect of this Lighthouse presentation was seeing three individuals connected to this Kiwanis organization that had each been part of different RecognizeGood programs. Tino Hernandez is the father of RecognizeGood Legend Laura Orona, who founded Just Because Christmas while battling stage 4 cancer. The founder of 2014 Ethics in Business & Community awardee Wag-a-Bag, Nancy Raab, was also in attendance, along with Dawn Steele who is part of the Round Rock Partners in Education Foundation which partnered with the RecognizeGood Ethics in Youth Education program to develop a Student Summit for Round Rock High students seeking summer employment. Having these three individuals present, representing three different RecognizeGood programs, was reassuring in a very significant way and demonstrated an increased community awareness and overall program strength of the RecognizeGood's illumination of GOOD in our community.

I hope you will take the time and read this latest edition of RecognizeGood News in its entirety, and celebrate with me each of these 50 RecognizeGood Legends. Each individual has an incredible story to tell. They are truly our community's unsung heroes and resources in need of recognition and illumination.

Thank you RecognizeGood family for sharing my vision and making my personal "one day" a reality.



RecognizeGood
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