



# City Of Burnsville

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## BURNSVILLE CITY COUNCIL RECOGNIZES TWELVE ‘COMMUNITY BUILDERS’

The Burnsville City Council recognized 12 community members/organizations with their 2019 “Community Builder Award” during their Nov. 4 City Council Meeting. This year, awards were presented to:

**Amber Cameron, International Festival of Burnsville Committee:** As chair of the International Festival of Burnsville, Amber puts in countless hours to ensure that the community has a successful day celebrating Burnsville’s cultural diversity. In her role, she has led the committee and event to new heights -- increasing attendance and revenue. Amber also served as a commissioner on the Ames Center Advisory Commission from 2014 to 2019; was appointed to serve on the Dakota County Extension Committee in 2012; and became an inaugural member of the Fairview Ridges’ Parent and Family Advisory Council in 2016.



**Anab Abtow, Sky Oaks Elementary Educational Assistant:** For more than six years, Anab has personally taken on an advocacy and educational role for Burnsville’s students, parents and educators. As an educational assistant at Sky Oaks Elementary, Anab is praised as an invaluable part of the school staff who always has a smile, a hug or kind words for students, parents, and colleagues. In addition, Anab proudly and happily shares her East African culture. From volunteering with the Burnsville International Festival, to creating displays at other local festivals – she opens doors to conversations among friends and strangers alike.



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**Brian Ribnick, Teacher and Chess Coach:** Brian has been working in the Burnsville school system since 1980. While he retired as a math and science teacher in 2017, he has continued to be the school district’s chess coordinator and coach of the Metcalf Middle School chess team. With Brian’s help, the school district now has chess clubs at every school – making District 191 the only district in Minnesota that teaches ALL students how to play chess. Burnsville High School now has more state chess titles than any team in Minnesota and more state titles than any other activity in the history of the school. In addition, Brian has led Burnsville High School to a national title, and Metcalf Middle School to 31 state titles and 20 national titles. Only one school in America has won more.



**Crosstown Liquor and Scott Hilla:** For several years, Crosstown Liquor owner Scott Hilla has supported Burnsville’s public safety departments, (fire and police), by generously donating kegs of 1919 root beer to be served at annual events including the Fire Department Open House and the Police Department Oktoberfest Fundraiser. Not only does Crosstown Liquor donate the kegs, they are delivered and picked up after the events.



**Frontline Church – Sheldon and Crystal Beilke:** Sheldon, Crystal and their church members are constantly offering volunteer help to the city for events large and small – including Party on the Plaza, the Burnsville Fire Muster and more. Pastor Sheldon is also part of Burnsville’s Mobile Volunteer Network. Frontline Church is also recognized for their focus on behavioral and mental health, and the way they open their doors to those in need who may feel all other doors are being closed.



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**Jack Kennelly, Burnsville Historical Society:** Jack is preserving Burnsville's history one document at a time. As a project volunteer for the Burnsville Historical Society, he has personally tracked down and uploaded tens of thousands of photos, news clippings, documents and more to the society's website - burnsvillehistory.org. In addition, he is always thinking about others who might be interested in a historical treasure he digs up - sending a neat old photo or news clipping to the City, County, Chamber, Experience Burnsville and more when he comes across something he thinks is of interest.



**James Galbrecht, Burnsville Community Foundation:** James is a former Burnsville Planning Commissioner, and most recently, a member of the Burnsville Community Foundation's Board of Directors. Over the past five years on the foundation board, James has donated countless hours of design work and labor to complete the landscape and hardscape aspects of the Foundation's projects. He also organized and implemented the Community Foundation's "Adopt a Highway" participation, overseeing the cleanup of County Road 11 for the past four years.



**Jon Seybold, Block Captain:** Jon was nominated by his neighbors on West 156<sup>th</sup> street for organizing their annual Night to Unite Party for several years. Alone, he coordinates a party for 100+ neighbors – and has raised money for and coordinated a "Little Free Library" in his neighborhood park. Jon's neighbors say he is always looking for fun ways to make West Buck Hill a great place to live.



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**Mark & Holly Roth, Kids 'n Kinship Mentors:** For nearly nine years, Mark & Holly have dedicated their time and energy to support youth by mentoring through Kids 'n Kinship. Since 2012, they were paired with an energetic and inquisitive 5 year old. Nearly 7 years later, they are still with the child who is now almost 12. They get together nearly every week with their mentee. In a recent annual survey, their current mentee reported "it's a very trustful and comfortable relationship where we are always trying new things. I have gained people I can trust."



**Nancy Sand, City Hall Volunteer:** Over the past 11 years, Nancy has volunteered with the City Clerk's office every week -- helping implement the City's Laserfiche Electronic Document Content strategy by scanning thousands of documents, editing metadata, reviewing old documents, and even typing in old handwritten City and Township minutes. She also assists with filings, mailings, scheduling, and other office tasks. Nancy has also logged more than 4,500 volunteer hours at the Minnesota Zoo over the last 11 years. She serves as an Interpretive Volunteer – supporting the Zoo's mission of "Connecting People, Animals and the Natural World to Save Wildlife."



**Nate Miller, Sleep in Heavenly Peace:** Nate is the founder of a local non-profit chapter that serves Burnsville and the South Metro area, which provides beds for kids so they are not sleeping on the floor. His non-profit's mission is "No Kid Sleeps On The Floor In Our Town." By leveraging community partnerships, Nate will deliver 300 beds within the south metro area this year – many of which he will deliver himself.



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**Tom Johnson, Community Volunteer:** Tom has been proactively picking up trash from City boulevards and medians since 2008. He provides his own bags and picks up litter on Burnsville Parkway from Vista View Park to Neil Park – as well as in both parks. Tom also picks up litter on County Road 42 from Burnsville Parkway to 138th Street. You can find him out several times a week with his pick-up stick and bags on sunny days cleaning up our City.



*The Community Builder Award began in 1998 and has been presented each year to individuals, groups or businesses that make contributions that build community and a lasting impact on the quality of life in Burnsville. For more information visit [www.burnsvillemn.gov/communitybuilder](http://www.burnsvillemn.gov/communitybuilder).*

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