



# MINNESOTA RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION

## 2011 Professional Awards Nomination Form

### Nominee's/Agency's Information:

Award Category:	Park & Recreation Board and Commission Award				
Name:	Melody Shryock				
Address:	7550 Sunwood Drive NW	City:	Ramsey	Zip:	55303
Agency:	City of Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission				
Email:	mkshryock@juno.com	Work Phone:	612 423 5492		

### Nominator's Information:

Name:	Mark Riverblood				
Address:	7550 Sunwood Drive NW	City:	Ramsey	Zip:	55303
Agency:	City of Ramsey				
Email:	mriverblood@ci.ramsey.mn.us	Work Phone:	763 238 1733		

Please write a paragraph detailing why you think the person is deserving of the award based on the award background and criteria. Also please be as detailed as possible in your narrative.

Ms. Melody Shryock is deserving of the MRPA Board and Commission Award for her leadership and advocacy for parks and recreation in the city of Ramsey and for the magnitude of capital improvements and new programs delivered in part by her effective, yet gentle persistence and presence.

Melody was appointed to the Commission a decade ago, and immediately her talents and experience in urban planning were apparent as the community began to prepare for, and design the city's master planned pedestrian oriented downtown, entitled 'The COR' (for City Of Ramsey, or Center Of Ramsey). Since then, these plans are coming to fruition, including the 2010 completion of the 7-acre, 3 million dollar park named 'The Draw' which includes a gorgeous lined storm water pond that also supplies the irrigation for the park, adjoining ballfield and amphitheater. Programming kicked off promptly with a diversity of concerts and events including a radio controlled boat show. The most recent event was this fall, with an end of programming Park Patron Picnic, where Chair Shryock organized the Commission to grill food for 350 residents while BOB FM broadcasted live from the amphitheater and announced the drawing of prizes concurrent with the Farmers Market (that is also at this shared location on Thursday evenings, and another new addition to the community).

Since being appointed to the Commission, then ascending to Vice-Chair, then by unanimous support of her colleagues to Chair; she steadfastly and patiently negotiated with developers for prudent park and trail dedications – both land and cash. Often deftly reframing matters; putting controversial topics in the proper perspective, effectively defusing highly-charged emotions – resulting in less confrontational discussions and more fully-considered decisions for the public benefit. A *partial* listing of the last decades' improvements and programs Melody, her Commissioners, and Council delivered to residents includes:

- ~ Ramsey's first all concrete skate park.
- ~ Ramsey's first off-leash park, with pet fountain and 3-acre irrigated fenced yard – paid for by charitable gambling proceeds.

- ~ Ramsey's first natural resource-based 11-acre park on a lake – funded and constructed in the first year of the Great Recession.
- ~ A wildly popular self-serve canoe and kayak system (FREE!) on Sunfish Lake.
- ~ Free public bicycle use for county residents at City Hall.
- ~ A 'net-lawn' irrigated athletic field that serves The COR residents, a charter school, and the youth athletic program, and doubles as overflow parking.
- ~ A quarter mile long boardwalk connecting the central portion of the city to the rest of the 40 + mile trail system.
- ~ Several playground renovations, including interpretive signage.
- ~ The addition of drinking fountains with pet attachments and 'mistlers' for parks with municipal water service.
- ~ An irrigated volunteer-run community garden – that reduces the city's maintenance cost for the city owned land.
- ~ A \$400,000 architecturally grand pavilion at Ramsey's 45- acre premier park, paid for by the Lion's.
- ~ Significant additions to the Trott Brook Greenway through a \$500,000 appropriation from the LCCMR for conservation and trail easements.
- ~ Continued progress on the Mississippi Trail including receiving a Federal grant to extend the trail from Anoka, west to the Regional Park in Ramsey.
- ~ A new boat landing and fishing pier on the Mississippi River in this same Regional Park.

Chair Shryock's contributions and accomplishments of course are many more than listed here, and continue. Melody is deserving of the Board and Commission Award for her unwavering leadership, and as an example of courageous public service. Even during the period when she was battling cancer (successfully), she remained engaged and committed to influencing public policy and the appropriate allocation of funding for park and recreational improvements.

Melody represents the embodiment of citizen public service – whether in the examples above, or for her contributions to larger community planning, the Comp Plan, Ramsey's Environmental Expo and other endeavors, opportunities and processes. During the local political campaign season she can be seen riding her bicycle on the trails and in neighborhoods, as a modern-day Town Crier – cheerfully delivering the message that parks and recreation are an *essential service*, and a critical part of Minnesota's high quality of life. Melody Shryock not only superbly 'talks the talk', she literally 'walks-the-walk'!