

## **DeVictor, Stewart and Cobb Headline KRPA Award Winners**

Fred DeVictor (Lawrence, Hall of Fame), Jeff Stewart (Gardner, Distinguished Professional) and Bill Cobb (Johnson County, Distinguished Fellow) are among nine association members, elected officials, board members or volunteers who will be honored at the annual KRPA Awards Luncheon on Wednesday (Jan. 23).

Those inducted into the Hall of Fame are selected by the KRPA Executive Committee. All other honorees are determined by the KRPA Awards Committee, chaired by Darla Letts (Blue Valley Recreation Commission).

“This is always a difficult task because we have so many deserving candidates that are nominated each year,” said Letts. “Our committee takes this job seriously. We feel we have another outstanding class of deserving individuals who contribute to enhancing parks and recreation in their communities.”

Other winners are Sharon Fearey (Wichita, Distinguished Elected Official), Jeff and Paul Knox (Salina, Distinguished Public Service), Mary Frances “Hankie” Holefelder (Wellington, Distinguished Board or Commission member), Kayla Manzel (Topeka, Distinguished Service) and Jerold Binkley (Shawnee County, Distinguished Volunteer).

## **Award Winners**

### **Hall of Fame**

Fred DeVictor spent 37 years providing leadership for Lawrence Parks and Recreation before retiring last March. The department increased its number of parks from 12 to 52 and supervised the development of numerous new neighborhood and community facilities, community parks and greenways and 70 miles of hard service and natural trails during his years as director. He was president of KRPA (1979-81) and was on the Board of Directors for three terms. He received the KRPA Distinguished Service Award in 1987.

### **Distinguished Professional**

Jeff Stewart created Gardner’s first Master Plan and has updated it to reflect the expanding boundaries of the community by adding to the Greenway Trail System and targeting new subdivisions for neighborhood parks. He also masterminded a park sales tax initiative for a new aquatics park and a new 80-acre community park with ball fields, shelter houses, walking trails, a playground area and a lake.

### **Distinguished Fellow**

Bill Cobb’s career in parks and recreation has earned the praise and recognition of his peers throughout Kansas. During his 29 years of service, Cobb has made significant contributions to the administration and operations of Johnson County Park and Recreation District and the natural resource

management of over 9,400 acres of parks, open space and trails and recreational facilities, including two public golf courses, two horse stables, four regional parks and three sub-regional parks, two nature parks and one community park.

### **Distinguished Elected Official**

Sharon Fearey serves as vice-Mayor and Wichita City Council District VI Representative, where she serves as a leader to her community as well as the City's midtown and north sectors. She also was a member for 10 years of the Historic Preservation Board and serves on numerous other committees and boards in Wichita.

### **Distinguished Public Service**

Jeff and Paul Knox worked actively for more than four years to help develop, in partnership with the City of Salina, a new five field soccer complex that was completed in the Fall of 2006. They secured grants, anonymous foundation grants, and public fund raising to raise the needed dollars to complete the project.

### **Distinguished Board or Commission member**

Mark Frances (Hankie) Holefelder has served on the board of the Wellington Recreation Commission the past 38 years. She is the current Board President and has contributed to Wellington youth, adults, senior citizens in promoting recreation and building programs based on values of personal growth, fun, health and fitness.

### **Distinguished Service**

Kayla Manzel serves as Director of Operations for the Sunflower State Games and is involved in every aspect of the planning and operation of the largest amateur sports festival in the state of Kansas. She leads and directs 40 sport commissioners, maintains the organization website and registration data base. In addition, she designs and develops a 80-page Entry Booklet and 40 page Souvenir program.

### **Distinguished Volunteer**

Jerold Binkley has been involved with the Shawnee County Park and Recreation Department as a volunteer since 1989. He has been the driving force in the establishment of the 20-acre Garden and Arboretum project and, with his leadership, the agency was the recipient of over \$200,000 to help construct a "Garden by the Lake" and new "Serenity Garden." One of his most impressive tasks has been his countless forage into the Flint Hill pasturelands to procure tons of granite, limestone and sandstone ornamental rock.