
Belmont presents Community Heritage Awards

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COURTESY

THE WINNERS OF this year's Community Heritage Awards. From left, Tom Garfield, Everett Bailey, and Chet Lewandowski.

BELMONT — The Belmont Board of Selectmen and Heritage Commission teamed up on Monday to present the fourth annual Community Heritage Awards. The recognition ceremony marks N.H. History Week, which runs from Oct. 19-25.

Linda Frawley, Chair of the Heritage Commission, said the awards help to “thank special people and efforts that make a difference for Belmont and the Lakes Region.”

This year’s winners included Tom Garfield, Everett Bailey, and Chet Lewandowski.

Bailey received his citation for Outstanding Contributions to Traditional Crafts and Rural New Hampshire.

Born on a dairy farm in Turner, Maine, Bailey and his wife Joanne have called Belmont and New Hampshire home for more than three decades. For nearly 40 years he served as District Director for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, now Rural Development, formerly known as the Farmer’s Home Administration.

He's had a new calling in the last seven to eight years, and jokingly describes himself as a "straw fiber artist." Bailey is now a heritage craftsman, apprenticing with Jack Frost at Canterbury Shaker Village and is a broom maker.

According to CSV records, in 1860, Canterbury Shakers made 36,096 brooms and brushes in a single year. With his time, care and interest he teaches the story of Shaker innovation and entrepreneurship at the nearby National Historical Landmark, sells his brooms at their store and through the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen, and gives yearly workshops. Shaker brooms have stories and are often passed down through generations.

His work for rural communities never forgot Belmont, and as a volunteer Dad, was active for 14 years in the Belmont Baseball Organization with duties including field mowing and striping.

Thomas E. Garfield was awarded Regional Leadership and Outstanding Service to Town Meeting Tradition.

The Belknap Economic Development Council, Lakes Region General Hospital, Community College System of New Hampshire/Lakes Region Community College Advisory Council, and Lakes Region Rotary Club: if it's a vital community enterprise –Garfield has volunteered to make a difference. His day job for 42 years was in banking and he recently retired as executive vice president of Consumer Services for the Bank of New Hampshire, who promptly re-involved him as an Incorporator.

A board member of the BEDC from 2002-2013 he served as chair, secretary, and as a member of the Loan and Executive Committee. He further distinguished his leadership as a trustee on the LRGHealthcare Board, including service as chairman.

Garfield was first elected Belmont Town Moderator in 2004 and always notable for fairly administering with tact and humor. He served during the transition from traditional Town Meeting through the change to a Deliberative Session, known as SB2.

After helping to oversee elections for many years, he continues to work at election time as a ballot clerk. If anyone thinks Garfield and his wife, Gail, have let retirement slow them down, they haven't been to Juniper Knoll Farm, where they have started their alpaca farm.

Chester A. Lewandowski won Exceptional Commitment to Baseball, Belmont, and Community.

Lewandoski is a classic Belmont volunteer. He attended a gathering of Little League parents, asked if they had uniforms, and left that meeting as the team's first sponsor. 37 years later, his "kids" from Little League baseball teams through the years decorate his walls at work. Who can count the numbers of games he's cheered over at Bryant Field, but we do know he cheers loud & strong for a certain Yankee Farm Team member – his grandson Jordan.

Baseball is only one of his passions. His day lily collection could qualify for a Garden Tour and he is a first class fundraiser for St. Joseph's Church, as Selectmen Mooney might attest, as one of his former co-chairs for the Christmas Fair.

He has supported Old Home Day since Linc Noel sold the first ad and is not ready to relinquish the continuing honor of the back page, yet. But just in case he doesn't live to be 105, is working now on transition and sustainability of those community causes he cares so much about, with the Belmont Rotary.

