

## **Nomination of 2025 Citizen of the Year**

The extent of our nominee's activities goes beyond the city making our nominee not only a shining star in Darien but surrounding communities. Do you ever notice how one person's name frequently and most often appears on volunteer lists? And this same person can be counted on for last minute "asks" and without fail, always comes through? There is a definition for this willingness – it's called "johnny on the spot". It is defined by someone who is prompt, reliable, responsible and readily available as needed. Therefore, it is with honor and great pleasure to nominate to the City Council the name of:

### ***John M. Galan***

as our choice for the 2025 Citizen of the Year

John and his wife Helen have been residents of Darien for 40 plus years ... and has been active in Darien for that same amount of time. Their children Robert M. and Antonia Clare were reared in Darien and now with their grandchildren frequent Darien's many activities and festivals. John is a proud veteran of the United States Air Force and served as a city alderman from 2005 to 2009. He and Helen are parishioners of Our Lady of Peace Church in Darien.

John is most active with the Darien Lions Club. Having been a member for 30 years, he has served as President, in the roles as 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President, Tail Twister, Director/Committee Liaison and Past President. He has chaired the committees: Big Raffle, Darenfest Beer Tent, Pancake Breakfast, Brick Patio program, Meeting/Meals committee, Foundation Advisory Committee, Nominations Committee, the Walk for Sight program, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade, Community Halloween Party and for the past 12 years has chaired the Food Basket Program. As a proud veteran he recently became a route captain for the Foundation's Flag program. He also has headed up the hot dog grilling team for city concerts, the DYC parade and the City and Historical Society's tree lighting event. And astonishingly fact, he has had perfect attendance at all Lions meetings for 22 years! This past December, the food basket program distributed 243 baskets of food to deserving families along with 1,600 age-appropriate toys and gifts. John is also a liaison to Westmont, Willowbrook, Woodridge, Hinsdale and Downers Grove to coordinate with their Lion Clubs to span efforts to make sure all families are identified for their needs. He coordinates with the Darien Park District for the use of space in their facilities for set up and distribution. When funds ran low or funding programs were depleted, John found monetary ways and replacements to keep this valued program running. To establish the Brick Patio Program, John worked with the Darien Park District to find a locale. It is now part of the Darien Community Park. It involved advertising and working with other community clubs and organizations for their involvement and its success.

All these programs that John has chaired or been on the driving committee have financially brought thousands of dollars into our community and those less fortunate served by the church, community groups, schools and local government.

John has been recognized by the Darien Lions Club with historic landmark awards: In 2009 John was named Lion of the Year; in 2017 presented the Lifetime Achievement and Melvin Jones Fellows and in 2018 the Lions District 1-J George Lazansky Award. He also was presented with the Lions of Illinois Foundation award. His service to the club is an outgrowth of his dedication to the Darien Community and his belief that one needs to show appreciation for his/her community through service. His list of community involvement spans church, civic and athletic groups and his role has often been that of a leader in each group in which he's been involved. Through all these accolades, John is best identified as the person who is always working in the background in order to get the job done. A quote from one of the nominators noted he was a "bonus citizen" and a "go to kind of guy". And from the 2025 Citizen of the Year Committee, he is Darien's "johnny on the spot".

As much as John enjoys everything he does, his fun times include spending time riding his Harley Davidson motorcycle in the outdoor countryside areas of the surrounding states. He and his cycle always can be seen in

every Darien and surrounding communities' parades. He is an avid golfer, loves brewing beer, going fishing and cooking delicious family meals. As quoted by Bob Marley: *Love the Life you live – Live the life you love.*

John Galan's tireless commitment, efforts and positive influence makes him an exemplary choice for this prestigious recognition.

Indeed, John is and will continue to be one of the many shining stars in Darien making Darien "a Nice Place to Live".