

Nomination of 2022 Citizen of the Year

A quote from the Dalai Lama reads *“There are only 2 days in the year that nothing can be done about. One is called yesterday and the other is called tomorrow so today is the right day to love, believe and do and mostly live”*. As the 2022 Citizen of the Year Committee read several

submitted nominations for our candidate, this proverb radiates the feelings of the committee –

What a marvelous person who lives to give to so many organizations, church activities, community functions and business leadership and indeed enjoys life and continues for such a long period of time...it was a unanimous choice. Therefore, it is with great pride that the 2022 Citizen of the Year Committee submits to the Darien's City Council the name of:

Lou Mallers

as our choice for the 2022 Citizen of the Year

Due to Covid restrictions, our notification this year was done over the phone (rather than in the Publishing House Sweepstakes fashion!) When asked the question – “will you accept the 2022 Citizen of Year nomination, he said wait – what? Say that again... are you sure?” about 5 times! He was humbled by the nomination. Let's start from the beginning, even before Lou was known to Darien. Lou honorably served in the Army Reserves. He and his wife Carol and their son, Jeff, moved to Darien in 1989. They are proud grandparents of Kendell and Kellen. Jeff and his wife, Carmen, are raising their family in Bolingbrook.

Lou has been watching over all homeowners his entire career working in the financial sector of mortgage and banking. He is a member of the Illinois Mortgage Bankers Association and has proudly served to the elected position of President of this organization. He has previously served on the Advisory Board of the Illinois Housing Development Authority and Roosevelt University's Marshall Bennett Institute of Real Estate. He volunteered from 1999 to 2000 for Chicago's Habitat for Humanity. He is currently the Vice President of Business Development at Compass Mortgage.

Lou was sponsored for Lions Club membership by then Lion, Al Borowiak. He became a member of the club in 1990. In these past 30+ years, he has served on a variety of committees that have positively impacted our community. From the 4th of July Parade, Darien Fest, Children's Halloween Party, Christmas Toy and Meal Delivery and annual Candy Day drive, Lou could be counted on to help plan, show up and share some of his time to bring people together in the spirit of giving. He has also assisted with the Lions Club Foundation Flag program. He has chaired the annual golf outing and the very popular Lions Club Pancake Breakfast making sure no one went hungry! Lou has served on the Lions Board as the Committee Liaison. Most recently, Lou participated in Darien's Remembrance of 9/11 to honor our veterans and service personnel. Whenever Lou is asked, he cheerfully steps up to make sure things happen.

A nominator notes: His smile and style makes you want to be on his service team and do more for your community.

For the past 10 years, Lou has served on the Our Lady of Mount Carmel (OLMC) Parish Council as the Service Commissioner. He is also head usher for the 10 am Sunday mass. Lou is also responsible for the St. Vincent DePaul Clothing Drive, Holiday Food and Toy Collections, Food Pantry and PADS (Public Action to Deliver Shelter). For these events, Lou coordinates volunteers to carry out tasks, however he is especially passionate about the St Vincent DePaul clothing drive. This drive involves a truck stationed in the OLMC parking lot where contributions are dropped off during specified hours. Lou has been known to show up at all hours to check on items left outside the truck

because he doesn't want any donation to be misplaced or damaged by inclement weather. He is also instrumental in setting up the nativity scene in front of the church.

For the past 15 years, Lou has been President of the Pinehurst Homeowners Association helping to develop a sense of community. A recent example of Lou's ongoing spirit of helping other people is what happened on June 20, 2021 when a tornado ripped thru the Pinehurst neighborhood. It resembled a war zone and Lou lost no time in mobilizing the troops and got started on the cleanup of the subdivision. It is typical of Lou's kind nature that he offered much encouragement throughout the relief efforts and spoke so proudly of neighbor helping neighbor during such tough times. *A quote by Shannon A. Alder.. "One of the most important things you can do on this earth is to let people know they are not alone."*

In addition, to these commitments, Lou also volunteers for the City of Darien in two capacities. He was appointed to the Planning and Zoning Commission in 2012 by then Mayor Kathy Weaver and chairs this committee today. When Mayor Joseph Marchese took office, he established Darien's new Economic Development Commission and appointed Lou as a committee member. In 2016 – Lou was appointed to serve on School District 86's Citizen's Referendum Advisory Committee.

Nominator's statement: When I reflect on all the incredible individuals whose portraits grace the Citizen of the Year recognition wall at City Hall, I believe Lou Mallers is another stand out who deserves recognition. His long time and continued dedication to our community is stellar. He is a natural leader that captivates the essence of community service. No matter where you turn, there is Lou rolling up his sleeves working hard to better our community.

In his free time, Lou likes to golf and go on walks with Carol. They enjoy their time at their home in Galena. The best time for both of them though is traveling near and far cheering on their granddaughter, Kendell at her school and club swim meets and grandson, Kellen at his club hockey games. *Quote from Leo Christopher: "There's only one thing more precious than our time and that's who we spend it on."*

A nominator states: A "shining star" is something that we all need in our lives. A star can guide us to the place we need to be. A place where we can discover our gifts and how we can use those gifts to better ourselves and make the world a little better for others. Lou Mallers is that "shining star" in our community. From his Lions Club activities, City Council commitments, Neighborhood Association and Parish Board duties, he has shared his time and talent to make Darien a nice place to live.

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

By city ordinance, our guidelines for selecting the Citizen of the Year are diversity of activities, length of service, degree of involvement in the community and impact to the City. Lou certainly satisfies all these categories and then some.

City Council, we present to you,
Lou Mallers
as our choice for the Darien 2022 Citizen of the Year.

Respectfully Submitted,
2022 Citizen of the Year Committee