



Serving a free hot meal to anyone in need since 1991

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Contact: Clare Simons 503-705-7350 claresimons1@gmail.com

Spirit of Portland “Humanitarian” Award Honors David Utzinger - 20 Year Career- Volunteer

The 2011 Spirit of Portland awardees will be recognized by City commissioners at the 26th annual event on Thursday, October 27. **This year’s “Humanitarian” Award category recognizes DAVID UTZINGER for “Stepping up to help in times of crisis”** Since December 1991, Utzinger has been the logistics manager for an organization that despite numerous obstacles serves a *Free Hot Meal To Anyone in Need - Every Sunday Rain Or Shine* in O’Bryant Square Park. David maintains a near perfect attendance record and is an extraordinary example of what a caring citizen can do.

“The Spirit of Portland awards are a wonderful tribute to the many amazing community and neighborhood leaders who contribute to our thriving civic life” said **City Commissioner Amanda Fritz**.

As director of park services, Utzinger oversees weekly meal service and several annual events; Strawberry Short-Cake Sunday, Birthday BBQ & Resource Faire and a Christmas Dinner for 1000 + guests with gifts and entertainment at the downtown YWCA. Utzinger inspires businesses, civic organizations and thousands of volunteers to donate time, talent and money. He also received KATU’s

“Jefferson Award for Public Service” and the Golden Rose Award from Marvin Windows & Doors. On hearing the news on the Spirit of Portland award, Utzinger said,

“While I feel quite honored, I received this news with considerable unease. Given how many others of you have stepped up in a big way in the last few years to make Potluck what it is today... I will accept this award on behalf of the entire organization.”

Potluck in the Park began in August 1991, when Sharon and Shannon Darcy set out food on a bench in the South Park Blocks and fed 15 guests. Currently, the all-volunteer organization feeds approximately 400-600 people weekly. Guests include: veterans, the disabled, seniors, travelers, low-income families and people experiencing homelessness in and around Multnomah County. In 2010 PiP served 17,073 meals, with a 13.3% increase in 2011 with an estimated year end total of 20,043. Every Sunday rain or shine, volunteers prepare a healthy meal and transform O’Bryant Square Park into a dining room. In bad weather, food service moves under ground to the Smart Park Garage.

Governor Barbara Roberts said, *“David has been a loyal leader of Potluck in the Park for so many years. He is a Hero!”*

Awards were determined by a selection committee of representatives from the Mayor’s and City Commissioners’ offices, the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, the Neighborhood District Coalition offices, Business Associations, diverse non-profit community organizations and past award winners. In addition, the Mayor and each commissioner have recognized individual and organizational leaders.

The awardees will be recognized by City commissioners at the 26th annual event on Thursday, October 27, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the East Portland Community Center, 740 SE 106th Ave, near Mall 205, next to Floyd Light Park. A reception with cake and beverages will follow the awards presentation.

Web www.potluckinthepark.org Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/PotluckinthePark>
Spirit of Portland Awards <http://www.portlandonline.com/oni/index.cfm?c=29024>