

The Saratogian (saratogian.com), Serving the Saratoga Springs, N.Y. region

News

Reilly donates salary for 4th year

Thursday, February 19, 2009 5:15 AM EST

By GLENN GRIFFITH, For The Saratogian

CLIFTON PARK — Assemblyman Bob Reilly, D-Loudonville, Wednesday donated his 2008 legislative salary to 15 nonprofits, saying the money gives people access to places and experiences they might otherwise miss.

The donations, in amounts of \$4,000 and \$5,000, are the fulfillment of a pledge Reilly made in 2004 when he first ran for the 109th Assembly District seat. He refers to the nonprofits in his district as his neighborhoods. As a candidate, he pledged to donate his salary, visit each neighborhood at least once a year, and be a citizen legislator, independent of political party control.

This year's list of recipients include the Albany Institute of History and Art, Historic St. Agnes Cemetery, the Legal Project, and Parks and Trails New York. Recipients do not have to be based in Reilly's district but must be able to show how the district residents will benefit from the funding.

Saratoga County-based non-profits receiving funding include Saratoga Bridges, \$5,000, CAPTAIN Youth and Family Services, \$5,000, Capital District Senior Softball, \$1,000, and Shelters of Saratoga, \$4,000.

In his remarks prior to handing out the checks, Reilly said as the years go by he gets more emotional about the salary donation because he realizes how much help the money is to the organizations.

He also referenced the constant stream of stories making news that focus on personal greed and the nation's financial crisis.

"Today we have a chance to stop for a moment and reflect on something good," he said. "And this good is demonstrated by the organizations we'll celebrate here today."

He commended all those who volunteer their services to help others by working with the area's nonprofits. He described the volunteers as "people who work quietly, silently but are so important to people in need."

CAPTAIN's director Michael Daugherty said the salary funds will go toward helping the organization's crew of volunteers.

"We have 200 volunteers," he said. "We used to have 300. Some are 65 years old or older and have been with us for 15 years or more. This money is valuable to those people."

Jerry Smith, a commissioner with the Capital District Senior Softball organization said the money will be used to purchase equipment and supplies.

"We use the fields at Veterans Park in Clifton Park and we've been doing our field maintenance by hand," he said. "These guys are mostly 60 to 70 years old. This will help us get some machinery for that work."

Another recipient of Reilly's largess is Parks and Trails New York. Project Director Wally Elton said the money will help to expand a 2008 pilot project that put volunteers out on the Canalway Trail. The volunteers offered aid to those who used the trail.

"These people are our eyes and ears on the trails," he said. "They offer first aid for injuries that happen out there, they fix bike flats and spot areas for needed maintenance. When it's completed, the Canalway Trail will go from Buffalo to Albany and its something that will offer a lot of recreation to people."

Saratoga Bridges will use the \$5,000 it received to create a room in their Clifton Park Center Road facility where sensory stimulation will be offered to people with developmental disabilities.

Erin Crum of the Shelters of Saratoga said Reilly's funding will allow the nonprofit to initiate its Mobile Homeless Outreach Project which will travel the area bringing food and case management to the chronically homeless in the community.

The Assemblyman Robert Reilly Salary Fund is a joint venture between the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region, a committee of local citizens and Reilly. The fund has donated more than \$273,000 to local organizations since 2005.

URL: <http://www.saratogian.com/articles/2009/02/19/news/doc499cba4e8fc92099137632.prt>

© 2009 saratogian.com, a **Journal Register** Property