

Grand Casino Mille Lacs Awards One-Day Home Makeover



Grand Casino Mille Lacs Associates with Shari and Scott Grave, this year's Lend a Hand recipients.

Twenty-seven Grand Casino Mille Lacs facilities department Associates recently teamed up for the casino's 2011 Lend a Hand program to provide much-needed home repairs and maintenance to East Gull Lake resident Shari Grave. The program annually awards one-day home makeovers to individuals who meet criteria based on income, physical limitations, medical issues, and other challenges. A committee of facilities Associates interviewed four nominees for the program and selected Grave as the 2011 Lend a Hand recipient, based on her story.

Shari Grave is described as a kind, considerate and compassionate person by her boss, Bob Schricker, the Executive Director of Breath of Life Adult Day Service. Shari was a lead program aide for the nonprofit organization that provides daily enrichment for seniors. "Shari has a real gift," said Bob. "She understands the needs of those who can't express themselves any longer and brings a sense of calmness into their lives." Bob knew that he had to nominate Shari for the Lend a Hand program. "She is far beyond a deserving candidate for this program."

This past winter, Shari had not been feeling well. Several blood tests confirmed her worst fear. Shari had acute leukemia. "It all happened so fast," she said of her diagnosis. She now receives chemo in Brainerd five days a week for 10 weeks in the hope that it will kill off the cancer cells. Unfortunately, the type of cancer she has does not respond to bone marrow transplants, so her only hope for recovery is the extensive chemo treatments. Shari is married to her sweetheart of eight years, Scott.

Because of the time that she has to dedicate to her daily treatments, Shari is unable to work. "When I found out that I was chosen as the Lend a Hand recipient this year, I was so excited. "It is truly an honor, and I am so glad that there is a program out there like this that helps people. This experience has been a blessing to us. Just knowing that people are here to lend a hand is a big part of the recovery."

The Lend a Hand committee knew that Shari was a great choice, too. "We are very excited for the opportunity to provide Shari and her husband with these home repairs," said Mike Nickaboine, Vice President of facilities at Grand Casino Mille Lacs. "After all she has been through, she truly deserves a

helping hand. We are grateful for this chance to give back and for the generous donations from our local community."

The casino also donated \$1,000 in Shari's name to Breath of Life Adult Day Services. "Shari's passion is inspiring," said Ronda Weizenegger, general manager of Grand Casino Mille Lacs. "We wanted to do something more for the organization that she cares so much about."

Volunteers washed Shari's windows, extracted carpet, split firewood, poured concrete in the patio area, weeded the garden, landscaped around her yard, recycled scrap metal, grounded tree stumps, removed a tree fort from her yard, fixed her fire pit, replaced fascia, and put a seal coat on her driveway.

The casino received valuable assistance and donations from local Minnesota companies including Brainerd General Rental, Brainerd; Landsburg Nursery, Brainerd; Anderson Brothers, Brainerd; Hirshfield's, Baxter; Cemstone, Brainerd; Norson, Inc., Baxter; Jim's Mille Lacs Disposal, Milaca; Probuild, Pequot Lakes; and Grand Casino Mille Lacs's own facilities, food and beverage, marketing, and security departments.

Gun Lake Tribe and Gun Lake Casino Donate Police K-9 to Allegan County Sheriff's Department



L-R: Ben Haas, K-9 Handler; Medo; Chairman D.K. Sprague; Sheriff Blaine Koops; Rob McDermott, General Manager, Gun Lake Casino.

The Gun Lake Tribe of Pottawatomi Indians and Gun Lake Casino officials recently announced their donation of \$12,000 to the Allegan County Sheriff's Department to purchase Medo, a German Shepherd K-9 Academy International graduate. Both the tribe and casino equally contributed \$6,000 for the new furry resource to the Allegan County Sheriff's Department.

"Thanks to our outstanding staff of 900 team members and the popularity of our first-class entertainment facility, we are excited to help the community with the addition of Medo," said Chairman D.K. Sprague. "This donation maintains our commitment to public safety, and our solid partnership with the Allegan County Sheriff's Department."

The donation was announced at a public ceremony held at Gun Lake Casino. Chairman Sprague and Allegan County

Sheriff Blaine Koops shared their thoughts about working together in support of local public safety. They were joined by the Gun Lake Tribe's elected Tribal Council, Gun Lake Tribal Gaming Authority staff, Gun Lake Casino management team, tribal public safety officers and the Allegan County Sheriff's Command Staff and K-9 Unit.

Following comments by the elected officials, Medo was on hand to demonstrate skills he acquired in the police K-9 academy, which included search and rescue tactics, locating a lost child, and identifying illegal substances. Medo was chosen out of 11 puppies based on his solid physique and demeanor for police training at K-9 Academy International in Lowell, Michigan. "Besides our staff, one of the greatest resources this agency has is the K-9 program," said Sheriff Koops. "I cannot thank the Gun Lake Tribe and the Gun Lake Casino enough for their generous gift.

Volunteer Firefighters Get Relief from Osage Casino Donations



L-R: Wesley Harshbarger, maintenance technician, Osage Casino Sand Springs; Prue Volunteer Fire Chief Paul Burris; and Dee Welch, Facilities Manager, Sand Springs Casino.

Many volunteer firefighters needing resources during intense wildfires last month found relief from Osage Casino. Osage Casinos at three locations - Tulsa, Sand Springs and Hominy - donated dozens of cases of water and ice to rural volunteer fire departments in early August when temperatures reached 114 degrees in neighboring areas.

"Volunteers count on donated resources," said Cecilia Burris, an Osage Casino employee whose husband Paul is fire chief at Prue. "They need food and water and need their blood pressure checked. They were in heavy gear and it was 112 degrees outside." Prue Fire Chief Paul Burris said he was grateful for the Osage Casino donation. He picked up cases of water from the Osage Casino, Sand Springs.

Osage Casino also learned about the need for firefighter resources from employee Jayme Holt. Grassfires were prevalent near her residence in Noble County, 45 miles south of Ponca City. Holt knows firefighters who suffered from the heat.

"I learned through our employees about the danger of the fires and the need for resources in their neighborhoods," said

Chief Financial Officer Richard D. Lobdell, Osage Casinos. "I am glad Osage Casino was able to provide some relief to the volunteers fighting fires and assist them in a time of need."

St. Croix Casinos' Third Annual School Supply Drive Benefits Area Schools

Students from sixteen northwestern Wisconsin schools will receive needed school supplies thanks to the generosity of guests of the three St. Croix Casinos. Casino guests donating at least two school supply items at any of the St. Croix Casinos - Danbury,



Danbury, Hertel or Turtle Lake - received \$5 in Turtle Bucks slot play. During the weeklong drive, more than 3,000 guests

Carson Schneider and his dog Prince, Casey Kahl, Toby Kahl and Jonah Kahl show off some of the school supplies received by the Elementary School in Turtle Lake, WI. Also pictured (back row) is St. Croix Casinos deliveryman Russ Merrill.

donated school supply items. Casino personnel also delivered school supplies to 16 school districts in Barron, Burnett, Polk, St. Croix and Washburn counties.

Mdewakanton LIFE Program Saves Lives



Inter Tribal Elder Services of Minneapolis recently received one automated external defibrillator through the Mdewakanton LIFE Program of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community. ITES' Mary Burnison is pictured with Firefighter/EMT Kenneth Deja of Mdewakanton Emergency Services. ITES provides social services and advocacy for Native American elders and persons with disabilities in the Twin Cities so that they might continue to live independently. Through the Mdewakanton LIFE Program, the SMSC has donated more than 690 AEDs to charitable organizations, schools, governments, and emergency service providers. The program has recorded 14 documented saves through the use of these AEDs. ♣