

SAYING THANK YOU WITH A WE AWARD NOMINATION

By Shelly Kaiser, Volunteer Connection Director

Thank you. These two little words roll off my tongue many times in the course of a day. "Thank you," I say in my heart when I awake to face a new day. "Thank you," I call out to my husband for shoveling a clear path to my car. "Thank you," I mouth with a wave to the driver who allowed me to merge. "Thank you," I tell a co-worker who holds the door for me. And so the day goes, liberally sprinkled with thank yous, casually given and quickly forgotten.

But sometimes those two little words, as spoken, aren't quite enough to express our appreciation. We wish to say "thank you" in such a way that our words are remembered beyond a day. It is then that we often put pen to paper to say "thank you," so the recipient can pull out and read our expression of thanks over and again.

Think of those that especially make our lives better without expectation of recognition or reward. Mothers fall into this category. And so each May we make special efforts to send cards of thanks to our moms on Mother's Day. But best friends, grandparents, and . . . VOLUNTEERS also fall into this category.

National Volunteer Appreciation Week is celebrated the third week of April. Now is the time to put your "thank you" to paper and nominate a special volunteer for a WE Award to be honored April 18-24, 2010. Know an individual or group who has tirelessly supported a community organization, worked for change, or donated time freely for the betterment of all? United Way Volunteer Connection is seeking those who put **WE** before **ME** to make life better in Marathon County.

Nominations will be accepted through April 1 in the following categories: youth, adult, senior, group, family and business. Nominations must simply have served within Marathon County during 2009-2010; no United Way affiliation is required.

All nominations receive personal recognition with one winner selected from each category. Nominations can be completed online or handwritten. Find forms at www.unitedwaymc.org or call the United Way office at 848-2927 to request a form be mailed.

Often it is only through the steadfast work of volunteers that important projects can be undertaken and successfully completed. Your many spoken "thank yous" are appreciated, but I encourage you to go one step further. Nominate your volunteer's special efforts for a WE Award.