



Zambelli
FIREWORKS

John Altadonna
2002 IFEA/Zambelli Fireworks International
Volunteer of the Year Award
Nominated by the Autumn Leaf Festival
Clarion, Pennsylvania



organization.

Unselfish and dedicated service makes a significant difference in a community. This sounds like a dream to most festival organizers, however it is a reality for the Autumn Leaf Festival in Clarion, Pennsylvania where John Altadonna spends more than 500 hours per year volunteering his time to the Autumn Leaf Festival and the Clarion Area Chamber of Business & Industry. John has been involved for 9 years, giving a total of 4500 hours of his time to the

During John's time volunteering, he has been a driving force behind the Autumn Leaf Festival's "FoodStock" program since it began. This 24 hour food drive to help fill food pantries in rural communities, where incomes are low and work is limited, has collected a total of 37,540 counted and verified food items, setting a Guinness Record for most non-perishable food collected in a 24-hour period. Each item was distributed within 48 hours to eleven local food banks. What makes this accomplishment unbelievably impressive, however, is that the Autumn Leaf Festival and the "FoodStock" efforts are products of the Clarion Area Chamber of Business & Industry, a group that represents a total county population of only 41,765 residents.

Throughout the event, from conception to the delivery of the last food item, John works tirelessly to make a significant difference in the lives of the needy members of the community. Each year, John organizes, gets volunteers and injects new enthusiasm to the "Foodstock" program. He easily spends ten to twelve hours per week on this project alone, which adds to hundreds of hours spent toward the success of "FoodStock."

Because of John's efforts, the Pennsylvania Governor's Commission has adopted the "FoodStock" program for Community Service, in collaboration with Keystone SMILES Community Learning Center, and will actually bring "FoodStock" across the entire state of Pennsylvania on November 23, 2002 – a day the Governor has declared "Family Service Day." This is only the first part of John's dream. The next step for "FoodStock" is to be a nationwide food drive. John is working directly for this goal. His motto is "FoodStock, a great goal for a great cause."

In addition to organizing and directing "FoodStock", John has also co-chaired the Autumn Leaf Festival, served as a Board Member for the Clarion Area Chamber of Business & Industry, supports the local school districts with job shadow opportunities,

employment for disadvantaged youth, and serves on the Board of Directors of Keystone SMILES. Through John's efforts and his volunteers, Keystone SMILES has generated over \$29,000 in youth scholarships for community service in Clarion and Venango counties.

John Altodonna is a true volunteer in every sense of the word. His commitment of volunteer service, above self, is a true testament to his being considered for this award. He is always there when you need him. His enthusiasm, interest and personal satisfaction in helping those most in need is one of his many attributes. "NO" is not in his vocabulary when it comes to lending a helping hand. John is that person who works quietly behind the scenes and does not expect any public thanks for his contributions. John continuously demonstrates a high quality of excellence in everything he does. His example of strength, dedication to volunteering, and humor has served as an excellent example to all who have had the privilege to know and volunteer along with him.