



Zambelli
FIREWORKS

Dave Carter
2007 IFEA/Zambelli Fireworks International
Volunteer of the Year Award
Nominated by Wichita Festivals, Inc.
Wichita, Kansas



Dave Carter's enthusiasm and dedication as a volunteer for Wichita Festivals, Inc. is unparalleled. His 25 years of involvement have spanned everything from coordinating antique bathtub races and organizing corporate challenges, to serving on the board of directors and most recently chairing the Wichita Flight Festival.

Dave has acted as media spokesperson, sponsorship solicitor, local government liaison, marketing strategist, promotional director, problem-solver, cheerleader, mentor and leader, and has also lent his vocational expertise in the field of aviation. There hardly seems to be a skill that Dave doesn't possess, and the organization has benefited tremendously from his willingness to share them all.

Beyond the roles he is willing to assume, Dave's initiative is witnessed through his careful organization. He outlines in advance what needs to be done, assigns responsibilities to other volunteers helping with the project and serves as a cheerleader in completing the tasks. He never asks someone to do something he wouldn't do himself and is careful to explain what needs to be done and when. His frequent Power Point presentations to outline information, demonstrate his commitment to getting things done right, and his leadership in making that happen. He has used this mechanism so often with the organization's operations committee that they tease him every time he addresses the group, asking where the Power Point presentation is!

With a constant smile on his face and an endless willingness to step forward if help is needed in any area, Dave never says something can't be done and is always positive. He believes the group of volunteers involved on the festival's operations committee can make anything work and voices that belief often. Dave is also always thinking of others. Earlier this year he had accepted responsibility for a specific event role and when asked to assume a different role, his first concern was about upsetting the person he had originally agreed to help. Not until he checked with her to make sure it wouldn't damage their relationship would he accept the new position. Not only is he hard working, he's fun to be around and extremely personable. No matter how many details he's tracking at once, he remembers conversations with and the needs of others.

Last year in preparation for the Wichita Flight Festival and the participation of the U.S. Air Force F15E demonstration team, the festival learned that it did not have the equipment in Wichita necessary to do after-flight oil sample tests, a requirement for the F15. Without our being aware, Dave contacted McConnell Air Force Base, located in Wichita, Boeing Aircraft Company and others trying to find the necessary equipment. Through his efforts and those of another volunteer working with him, the festival was able to secure the equipment needed at an Air Force Base in Oklahoma. The base agreed to do the tests required if we could transport the oil sample to them after each flight, and Dave found the volunteers to do so. Without his efforts and determination to find a solution, we would not have been able to enjoy what was the highlight of the air show, the performance of the F15E.

Perhaps the greatest impact that Dave has made at Wichita Festivals, Inc. is as a leader and role model for others. He is a great mentor for new members of the operations committee. He doesn't complain or voice displeasure with decisions, but instead jumps in to help for the greater good. As a result, he is respected by the organization's staff and all of the other volunteers who work with him. His interest in the events Wichita Festivals, Inc. produces, along with the people who make it work and who enjoy the results, is always foremost in his mind.

Without Dave Carter, Wichita Festivals, Inc. would lose valuable expertise, a trusted role model and a friend. He provides continuity from years of experience to both staff and other volunteers and has a true commitment to our mission of community celebration. The festival can count on Dave and has never been disappointed.