



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET ~ SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Wendy Mackstutis, First Selectman

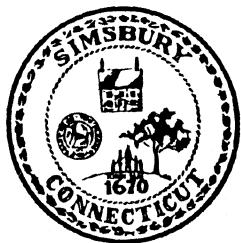
**Hometown Hero Selection Committee
Monday, May 2, 2022
Main Meeting Room, Town Hall
6:00 p.m.**

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Call to Order

1. Housekeeping Items
 - a) Selection of Chair
 - b) 2023 Meeting Date (5/1/23) and Awards Ceremony (5/22/23)
2. Discussion on Hometown Hero Nominations
3. Determine Hometown Hero Award Recipient(s)
4. 2022 Ceremony (5/23/22)
5. Minutes of May 3, 2021

Adjournment



Town of Simsbury

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Maria E. Capriola - Town Manager

To: Trish Munroe, Town Clerk

Cc: Thomas Fitzgerald, Management Specialist
Hometown Hero Selection Committee

From: Maria E. Capriola, Town Manager

Date: May 3, 2022

Re: Hometown Hero Selection Committee - 2023 Regular Meeting Schedule

At their meeting on May 2, 2022 the Hometown Hero Selection Committee agreed by consensus to establish a regular meeting schedule for 2023 as follows:

Monday, May 1, 2023 at 6pm

The meetings will be held virtually or in a location to be determined. Meetings will be properly noticed in accordance with FOIA requirements.



Town of Simsbury

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Guidelines for the Hometown Hero Program

Adopted by Board of Selectmen

November 13, 1996

Amended February 23, 1998

Amended March 26, 2018

1. Background Information

The Program was initiated in 1986 by Governor William O'Neill as part of the 350th Anniversary of the founding of Connecticut. Any municipality could designate residents as "Hometown Heroes" for any deed or service that made the community a better place in which to live. State certificates were presented to the 42 individuals and 4 organizations on May 12, 1986. The following year, First Selectwoman Margaret Shanks continued the program with certificates developed for Simsbury, naming 48 designates. It has been continued since, with Hometown Heroes recognized at a ceremony during the month of May as May 12th is the date of Simsbury's birth.

2. Criteria for Selection

- A. A person(s) who is a resident, or who is active in the Simsbury community, or who lived in Simsbury during the time period that is under consideration.
- B. Person(s) who has demonstrated selfless and altruistic behavior which contributes significantly to the betterment of our Town.
- C. That such deed or action performed inures primarily to the Town of Simsbury, although not necessarily exclusively; and that.
- D. Any individual or group that has been nominated to the Hometown Hero Award Committee (henceforth "Committee") shall be duly considered with the following exceptions:
 - The hero shall not be a member of Town staff, nor a sitting elected or appointed official. Nor shall the hero have benefited economically from his/her endeavors on behalf of the Town.
- E. There will be no quotas or automatic selections by the Committee. Recognizing the premise that an abundance of awards will dilute the significance of the award, the Committee is duly charged to use its discretion in the number to be awarded.

3. The Selection Process

- A. Written nominations will be requested and received during a thirty (30) day period typically occurring in whole or part during the months of March and/or April.
- B. The Selection Committee shall review the names nominated for the Hometown Hero Award. The Committee shall make selection and approve the list of award recipients no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled ceremony.
- C. The Town Manager's Office shall notify all award recipients of the time and place of the award ceremony.
- D. The Town Manager's Office shall complete arrangements for the ceremony such as scheduling, publicity, and refreshments.
- E. The names of award recipients will be engraved on the Hometown Heroes plaque displayed in Town Hall.

4. The Selection Committee

The Selection Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Selectmen on a biennial basis. The Selection Committee shall consist of the First Selectman, a Board of Selectmen member of the opposite party, a member of the Historical Society, a business leader, a previous hometown hero, and a member of a veterans or service organization, with the goal of non-partisanship in mind.

The membership of the Committee shall be recommended by the First Selectman and the Town Manager to the Board of Selectmen. The Board of Selectmen is the appointing authority.

Staff assistance to the Selection Committee shall include reasonable requests deemed necessary by the Committee.

Marcus Joshua

From: Simsbury CT via Simsbury CT <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>
Sent: Monday, April 18, 2022 10:20 PM
To: Marcus Joshua
Subject: Form submission from: Nomination Form for Hometown Hero Program

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Submitted on Monday, April 18, 2022 - 10:20pm

Submitted by anonymous user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

Name of Nominee: Mary Root

[REDACTED]

Description of Nominee: Mary Root is a kind, energetic and inspiring woman. She loves people and makes everyone she meets feel special. Mary is especially good with seniors and has worked as an instructor at the Simsbury Senior Center for over 20 years. Due to the pandemic, Mary could no longer teach her line dancing class at the Senior Center, but she took the initiative to find a place so she could continue to give lessons and fitness classes to keep the seniors she loves healthy. Mary is creative and misses no opportunity to celebrate holidays with her class by dressing up in appropriate costumes and giving out treats. Occasionally Simsbury resident Edna Schreindorfer, who is 100 years of age, will stop by with her caretaker to attend Mary's class. Mary will always go out of her way to make Edna feel welcome and will tailor the class to Edna's abilities. Her passion for life inspires her students to be the best they can be. She has made a difference in the lives of Simsbury seniors. Mary Root would be the perfect choice for the Hometown Hero award.

Nominee's Status During Period Under Consideration: Active In Simsbury Community

Name of Person Completing Form: Christine Healy

Phone Number (or other contact information) of Person Completing Form: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Town of Simsbury

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SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Nomination Form for Hometown Hero Program – 2022

Please return to the Town Manager's Office, 933 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT 06070 - no later than 6:00 pm on Monday, April 25, 2022. Forms may also be emailed to townmanager@simsbury-ct.gov. To complete a form online, visit <http://www.simsbury-ct.gov/hometownhero>.

Criteria for Selection

(Adopted by the Board of Selectmen, November 13, 1996; Amended February 23, 1998 & March 26, 2018)

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- C. That such deed or action performed inures primarily to the Town of Simsbury, although not necessarily exclusively; and that
- D. Any individual or group that has been nominated to the Hometown Hero Award Committee (henceforth 'Committee') shall be duly considered with the following exceptions: The Hero shall not be a member of Town staff, nor a sitting elected or appointed official. Nor shall the Hero have benefited economically from his/her endeavors on behalf of the Town.

Name of Nominee:

MARY ROOT

Nominee's Address:

[Redacted]

Nominee's Phone Number:

[Redacted]

Nominee's Email Address:

Please describe the Nominee's act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury and attach to this form:

Please see attached.

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee's status during time period under consideration:

Simsbury Resident

Active in Simsbury Community

Lived in Simsbury at time

Name & Phone Number of Person completing form or (Contact Information for Person completing form)

MARY ANN Ippolito

[Redacted]

Telephone (860) 658-3200

Facsimile (860) 658-9467

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8:30 - 7:00 Mondays

8:30 - 4:30 Tuesday through Thursday

8:30 - 1:00 Friday

4/13/22

I nominate Mary Root for Rometown Hero.

There is no one who goes out of their way more to make seniors smile and keep actively and socially engaged.

Mary makes countless videos for those who are unable to leave their homes to attend exercise classes on her own time.

Mary spends her own money providing water bottles for those who might not have brought their own.

Mary takes pictures of our group, then develops them and makes EVERYONE a personal card with the most explicit sayings. I could go on & on.

In my opinion, there is no one who deserves it more.

Mary Ann Appolito - resident of Samsbury
[REDACTED]



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Name of Nominee: MARY ROOT

Nominee's Address: [REDACTED]

Nominee's Phone Number: [REDACTED]

Nominee's Email Address: [REDACTED]

Please describe the Nominee's act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury and attach to this form:

She makes every day a joy to come to exercise class. Definately a huge addition to the Simsbury community

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee's status during time period under consideration:

- Simsbury Resident Active in Simsbury Community Lived in Simsbury at time

Name & Phone Number of Person completing form or (Contact Information for Person completing form)

Amy Hine

Telephone (860) 658-3200
Facsimile (860) 658-9467

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Name of Nominee: MARY ROOT

Nominee's Address: [REDACTED]

Nominee's Phone Number: [REDACTED]

Nominee's Email Address: [REDACTED]

Please describe the Nominee's act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury and attach to this form:

Dynamic! - Fun classes in exercise and line dancing. Definitely an asset to the Simsbury Community

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee's status during time period under consideration:

- Simsbury Resident Active in Simsbury Community Lived in Simsbury at time

Name & Phone Number of Person completing form or (Contact Information for Person completing form)

Camille Meeker [REDACTED]

Telephone (860) 658-3200
Facsimile (860) 658-9467

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8:30 - 7:00 Mondays
8:30 - 4:30 Tuesday through Thursday
8:30 - 1:00 Friday

Marcus Joshua

From: Simsbury CT via Simsbury CT <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2022 4:50 PM
To: Marcus Joshua
Subject: Form submission from: Nomination Form for Hometown Hero Program

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Submitted on Wednesday, April 20, 2022 - 4:49pm

Submitted by anonymous user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

Name of Nominee: Mary Root

[REDACTED]

Description of Nominee:

Dear Home Town Hero Committee,

There is so much that can be said about Mary Root its hard to know where to begin. You could mention her bubbly personality, or her commitment to helping the older population be stronger and independent for as long as possible, or maybe even mention her endless stream of jokes and laughter. (or crazy ensembles!)

In fact Mary is so much more than that. She is caring and devoted, a font of wisdom on many subjects concerning the "aging process" and most importantly an asset to the community (Farmington Valley) that benefits from her presence even tho she does not

reside in the Farmington Valley. She travels daily to Simsbury, Avon, Bloomfield and UConn to teach aerobics, line dancing and

swimming (and possibly more that I am not aware of) to those most at risk for falling, developing physical and mental impairments and in need of overall knowledge to help in assuring that they have the best quality of life possible for as long as possible. Her credentials are very impressive and lengthy.

During co-vid rather than teach on zoom Mary traveled to many businesses in the Farmington Valley til she found one willing to allow her to continue with her exercise and line dancing classes in person, in a secure setting. She found that with the Old Well Tavern and owner Frankie Cardoso.

Not only did we have our own room, but there wasn't a charge and he turned the heat on for us during then colder months. A grateful

THANK YOU to Frankie and his staff and server extraordinaire Christy. They opened early on Thursdays so that after our class we were

able to order off their menu and all eat together.

I believe with all she does for the community now and has done for countless years that Mary Root truly embodies the definition of

"A HomeTown Hero".

Thank you for taking the time to read this and consider Mary. She is definitely a town gem!

Sincerely

Karen Bushong

Nominee's Status During Period Under Consideration: Active In Simsbury Community

Name of Person Completing Form: Karen Bushong

Phone Number (or other contact information) of Person Completing Form: [REDACTED]



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Name of Nominee:

MARY ROOT

Nominee's Address:

Nominee's Phone Number:

Nominee's Email Address:

Please describe the Nominee's act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury and attach to this form:

MARY ROOT IS A WONDERFUL, ENTHUSIASTIC, MOTIVATING TEACHER. I HAVE SPECIFICALLY PARTICIPATED IN LINE DANCING BOTH AT END HALL- PRECOVID - AND AT NON-TOWN SPONSORED SITE AFTER COVID VACCINE. DANCING IS NOT MY PERSONAL SKILL, BUT MARY HAS ENCOURAGED ME WITHOUT MAKING ME FEEL FOOLISH. MARY IS KIND, POSITIVE, AND GREAT FUN. THANKS, MARY!

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee's status during time period under consideration:

Simsbury Resident

Active in Simsbury Community

Lived in Simsbury at time

Name & Phone Number of Person completing form or (Contact Information for Person completing form)

MAUREEN WILLIAMS

Telephone (860) 658-3200

Facsimile (860) 658-9467

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Name of Nominee: MARY ROOT

Nominee's Address: [Redacted]

Nominee's Phone Number: [Redacted]

Nominee's Email Address: [Redacted]

Please describe the Nominee's act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury and attach to this form:

Mary is a hard working activist for the seniors of Simsbury. She makes sure to be inclusive and provide services for seniors, especially those in need of companionship and socialization.

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee's status during time period under consideration:

- Simsbury Resident
- Active in Simsbury Community
- Lived in Simsbury at time

Name & Phone Number of Person completing form or (Contact Information for Person completing form)
Mary Doyle Clark [Redacted]



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Name of Nominee:

MARY ROOT

Nominee's Address:



Nominee's Phone Number:

Nominee's Email Address:

Please describe the Nominee's act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury and attach to this form:

See attached

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee's status during time period under consideration:

- Simsbury Resident Active in Simsbury Community Lived in Simsbury at time

Name & Phone Number of Person completing form or (Contact Information for Person completing form)

I R E N E B E R G



Telephone (860) 658-3200
Facsimile (860) 658-9467

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8:30 - 4:30 Tuesday through Thursday
8:30 - 1:00 Friday

Attached to Nomination Form for Hometown Hero Program – 2022

Mary Root is a remarkable person managing to do so much for so many.

During the pandemic she found places for us to exercise outside by finding open spaces in Simsbury.

Mary comes to class dressed in wild outfits. Every holiday calls for another celebration.

Mary cares for everyone, giving each one of us personal attention, listening to our problems and celebrating our joys. She keeps us healthy, strong and our spirits up.

Mary Root is a wonderful person making our lives richer. She is unique and deserves to be The Simsbury Hometown Hero.



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Name of Nominee: MARY ROOT

Nominee's Address: [REDACTED]

Nominee's Phone Number: [REDACTED]

Nominee's Email Address: [REDACTED]

Please describe the Nominee's act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury and attach to this form:

Mary Root is a most positive person. I've been in her line dancing class for about 1 1/2 years, in the auditorium at the Senior Center and at the Old Will Tavern. Mary welcomes each and every student in her classes, being supportive and cooperating to help. What a great tribute to all who take her classes of how outgoing, respectful classes in Simsbury can be.

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee's status during time period under consideration:

- Simsbury Resident
- Active in Simsbury Community
- Lived in Simsbury at time

Name & Phone Number of Person completing form or (Contact Information for Person completing form)

Betty Oakes [REDACTED]

Telephone (860) 658-3200
Facsimile (860) 658-9467

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Name of Nominee: Ieke Scully

Nominee’s Address: [REDACTED]

Nominee’s Phone Number: [REDACTED]

Nominee’s Email Address: [REDACTED]

Please describe the Nominee’s act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury and attach to this form:

Ieke Scully is one of those community leaders who practices what she preaches. As advocates for historic preservation as well as sustainable and green energy, she and her husband Mark transformed the historic Ensign house, creating a space that is both eco-friendly, as well as economy-friendly.

She deeply cares for the town of Simsbury, and it shows. Literally. Often you will find her serving at the Simsbury Historic Society, in whatever capacity she might be needed, whether that is blowing leaves in the fall, helping organize the garden tour, or on the board. She sings in

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee’s status during time period under consideration:

- Simsbury Resident Active in Simsbury Community Lived in Simsbury at time

Name & Phone Number of Person completing form or (Contact Information for Person completing form)
Kate Tortland - [REDACTED]

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Marcus Joshua

From: Fitzgerald Tom
Sent: Tuesday, April 12, 2022 8:22 AM
To: Marcus Joshua
Subject: FW: Ieke Scully - Hometown Hero Nomination
Attachments: Hometown Hero Nomination - Ieke Scully.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hi Josh,

This is for the hometown hero tracking.

From: Kate Tortland [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 11, 2022 7:14 PM
To: Manager Town <townmanager@simsbury-ct.gov>
Subject: Ieke Scully - Hometown Hero Nomination

Hi there! I just wanted to submit this nomination. The full paragraph did not show on the PDF, so I'm copying the full reasons for nomination below. The PDF nomination is also attached. Thank you!

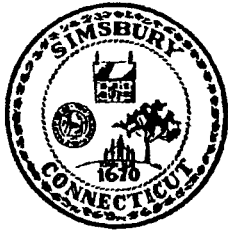
-Kate Tortland

"Ieke Scully is one of those community leaders who practices what she preaches. As advocates for historic preservation as well as sustainable and green energy, she and her husband Mark transformed the historic Ensign house, creating a space that is both eco-friendly, as well as economy-friendly.

She deeply cares for the town of Simsbury, and it shows. Literally. Often you will find her serving at the Simsbury Historic Society, in whatever capacity she might be needed, whether that is blowing leaves in the fall, helping organize the garden tour, or on the board. She sings in the choir at First Church, and is active within her congregation.

Additionally, she is quick to make friends with almost anyone, and will just be just as likely to stop by a friend's house to lend a hand with yard work, or to drop off some fresh eggs from her chickens, as she would to advocate for the things she believes in with the members of town government. She is constantly looking for opportunities to support this town.

I have never met anyone who does more practically, for the town of Simsbury as Ieke, and certainly no one who does it with such energy, joy, selflessness, and sense of purpose."



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Name of Nominee: **Braydon & Jaxson Kelley**

Nominee's Address: [REDACTED]

Nominee's Phone Number: [REDACTED]

Nominee's Email Address: [REDACTED]

Please describe the Nominee's act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury and attach to this form:

Jaxson (Jax) and Braydon (Brady) Kelley ([REDACTED]) have been real assets to the Friends of the Public Library book sale crew. They came all last summer for our sorting days. They helped our patrons bring books in from their cars, move boxes when needed, put price stickers on books and anything else that needed to be done. The remarkable thing about these boys is they always looked for things to do and did the tasks with a smile. The boys also recently helped with the Fire departments fishermen's breakfast with setup, serving and clean up. They are being raised in a multi-generational Simsbury Firefighter family with the values of helping the community. They honestly enjoyed helping. They are splendid examples of fine young men who have learned to help and volunteer!

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee's status during time period under consideration:

- Simsbury Resident Active in Simsbury Community Lived in Simsbury at time

Name & Phone Number of Person completing form or (Contact Information for Person completing form)

Ann Wallack [REDACTED]

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Facsimile (860) 658-9467

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8:30 - 4:30 Tuesday through Thursday
8:30 - 1:00 Friday



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Nomination Form for Hometown Hero Program – 2022

Please return to the Town Manager’s Office, 933 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT 06070 - no later than 6:00 pm on Monday, April 25, 2022. Forms may also be emailed to townmanager@simsbury-ct.gov. To complete a form online, visit <http://www.simsbury-ct.gov/hometownhero>.

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Name of Nominee: Marianne O'Neil

Nominee’s Address: [REDACTED]

Nominee’s Phone Number: [REDACTED]

Nominee’s Email Address: [REDACTED]

Please describe the Nominee’s act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury and attach to this form:

See attached correspondence

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee’s status during time period under consideration:

Simsbury Resident Active in Simsbury Community Lived in Simsbury at time

Name & Phone Number of Person completing form or (Contact Information for Person completing form)

Michael T. Long [REDACTED]

Telephone (860) 658-3200
Facsimile (860) 658-9467

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8:30 - 1:00 Friday

MICHAEL T. LONG



Town Manager's Office
Town of Simsbury
933 Hopmeadow Street
Simsbury, CT 06070

Re: Simsbury Hometown Hero Nomination

I would like to take this opportunity to nominate, Marianne B. O'Neil, for selection as a Simsbury Hometown Hero.

Marianne has been a resident of Simsbury for over fifty (50) years. She has, in that period, as a member of St. Mary's Church, taught Sunday School, and provided meals to the homeless shelter in Hartford through the church outreach program. She has also, while raising her three (3) children been active in the Squadron Line PTA participating in various fund-raising campaigns.

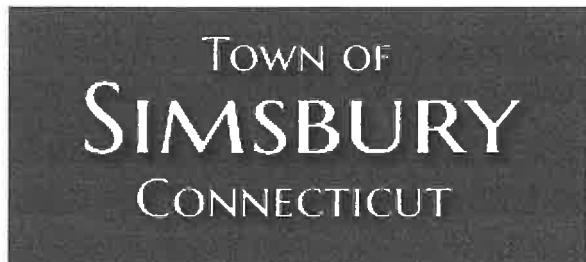
She was elected to the Simsbury Library Board and has served as Chairperson for the past twelve (12) years. During her term, the library has experienced substantial growth in both its physical plant and the services provided to the community. While declining to run for an additional term this past November, she has continued her support of the library as a member of the Friends of the Library. In this capacity, she has actively been involved in the "books to your door" program of the Simsbury Friends. This program provides services to individuals who are physically unable to utilize the library services by delivering books to their door. Marianne biweekly calls the individuals qualified for the program to determine what books they would care to read and these books are delivered to the individual's door by other volunteers.

Marianne's contribution to the town are many and varied. Her selection as a Simsbury Hometown Hero would be well deserved.

Very truly yours,



Michael T. Long



Published on *Simsbury CT* (<https://www.simsbury-ct.gov>)

[Home](#) > [Government](#) > [Town Manager's Office & Human Resources](#) > Nomination Form for Hometown Hero Program

Nomination Form for Hometown Hero Program

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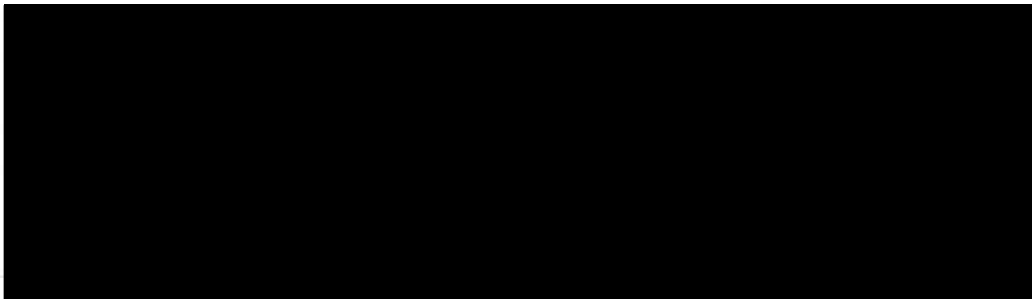
Name of Nominee: *

Marianne O'Neil

Nominee's Address: *

Nominee's Phone Number: *

Nominee's Email Address:



Description of Nominee: *

see attached

Please describe the Nominee's act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury.

Nominee's Status During Period Under Consideration *

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee's status during time period under consideration.

- Simsbury Resident
- Active In Simsbury Community
- Lived in Simsbury at time

Name of Person Completing Form *

Anne Erickson

Phone Number (or other contact information) of Person Completing Form *

[Redacted]



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Source URL: <https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/town-managers-office-human-resources/webforms/nomination-form-for-hometown-hero-program>

April 21, 2022

Hometown Hero Program 2022

Nominee: Marianne O'Neil

Description of Nominee:

The Simsbury Public Library has become the town center for sharing ideas, for learning in a digital age and for connecting people with information. Our town library is a vital and vibrant resource to our community that serves residents of all ages from infants to seniors.

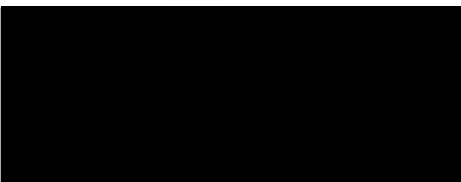
Marianne O'Neil has contributed to this in so many ways, first as a Trustee of the Simsbury Public Library and later as its Chairperson for many, many years, assisting the Trustees and our Director through many budget crises. She helped direct the Trustees and other volunteers and staff through the Library Expansion and Renovation Project, guiding the project successfully through the town's capital budget and town-wide referendum processes. More recently, she was, again, a guiding force in the successful completion of the Library's lower-level renovations. Marianne was a participant in the Trustee Selection Committee charged with appointing our current Library Director and she has been a part of two Five Year Strategic Planning Committees. Additionally, she is an active member of the Friends of the Library's "Books-To-Your-Door" program, delivering books to the homebound in our town. She is an Investor Angel of the Friends and volunteers yearly at the Annual Used Book Sale.

Marianne's vision and dedication has helped make the Library the wonderful and successful community gathering place that it is today. Due to the time, efforts and support that she has given to the Simsbury Public Library, I am pleased and happy to support her nomination to be a 2022 Simsbury Hometown Hero. Now and in the future, Marianne O'Neil will continue to support Simsbury and the Simsbury Public Library.

Submitted by:



Anne Erickson





Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

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Name of Nominee: Marianne O'Neil

Nominee’s Address: _____

Nominee’s Phone Number _____

Nominee’s Email Address _____

Please describe the Nominee’s act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury and attach to this form:

I met Marianne in 2013 when I was elected to the Simsbury Library Board of Trustees. Marianne, as chair of the Trustees, welcomed me to the Board. She was always the professional, always engaged and always kind, fair and friendly. Marianne’s dedication to Simsbury came through in all that she managed for the board (meetings, progress and controversy). After she retired from the Board of Trustees, she continued her service to the library and the town of Simsbury by joining the Board of the Friends of the Simsbury Library.

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee’s status during time period under consideration:

- Simsbury Resident Active in Simsbury Community Lived in Simsbury at time

Name & Phone Number of Person completing form or (Contact Information for Person completing form)

Polly Rice

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Facsimile (860) 658-9467

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Name of Nominee: *

Marianne O'Neil

Nominee's Address: *

[REDACTED]

Nominee's Phone Number: *

[REDACTED]

Nominee's Email Address:

[REDACTED]

Description of Nominee: *

[REDACTED]

Please describe the Nominee's act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury.

Nominee's Status During Period Under Consideration *

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee's status during time period under consideration.

- Simsbury Resident
- Active In Simsbury Community
- Lived in Simsbury at time

Name of Person^s Completing Form *

Linda Johnson and Gail Ryan

Phone Number (or other contact information) of Person Completing Form *

[Redacted]

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Source URL: <https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/town-managers-office-human-resources/webforms/nomination-form-for-hometown-hero-program>

April 24, 2022

To the Hometown Hero Nominating Committee:

We are pleased to nominate Marianne O'Neil as a Simsbury Hometown Hero for 2022. Marianne and her husband, John, are longtime, active Simsbury residents.

Marianne was an outstanding Library Board Trustee, who deserves to be honored with Simsbury's Hometown Hero recognition. Marianne was first elected to The Library Board of Trustees in 2009 and served as its Chairman from December 2011 - December 2021. That is a noteworthy 12 years of service - two full elected terms!

Board Chairman, Marianne, and Library Director, Lisa Karim developed a very good working relationship early on, which continued throughout Marianne's two terms. This initially enabled a smooth transition with the Town, Library staff and patrons. This mutual respect and sharing of ideas served the Library, The Board of Trustees, and the entire town of Simsbury very well.

Marianne is a born leader, and a welcome addition and contributor to any group of which she is a member. She is humble, inclusive and has a way of bringing out the best in people with quiet confidence, positive attitude and warmth. Marianne is able to get to the heart of a situation, in large part due to her patience, open mind and willingness to listen. She invariably can lead to or add to what becomes the most favorable outcome.

Marianne's academic passions lean towards science, and especially math. However, Marianne has many interests and is a voracious reader and longstanding lover of books. But you won't find her reading off a tablet or iPad, as she prefers to turn the pages. Long before serving on the Library Board of Trustees, Marianne held an active, well-used library card.

Marianne was very involved with the planning and execution of the renovation of the ground floor of the Library, including the addition of a much needed program space while preserving space for the Friends Book Sale activities. This was a very involved, lengthy project, requiring much thought, design, planning and hard work. Marianne was a positive force, integral in seeing this extensive project to completion.

In addition, Marianne has been a tireless volunteer for the Friends of the Library Book Sale. She has worked many hours setting up the actual sale, as well as serving as a cashier during the event. Her enthusiasm for helping the Library in any capacity is part of her fiber and will certainly continue.

As Chairman of The Library Board of Trustees, Marianne was well versed in the workings of the Library. She spent countless hours helping with Library programs and attending meetings. Marianne brought this knowledge to Library Board of Trustees meetings where discussions were informative, organized, inclusive and productive. Long term plans were developed and came to fruition. Everyone looked forward to Marianne's yearly, delicious dinners for the Library Board, which further fostered communication and camaraderie.

Marianne has our highest recommendation for a Simsbury Hometown Hero in 2022.



Town of Simsbury

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Name of Nominee: Jay T Willerup

Nominee’s Address: [REDACTED]

Nominee’s Phone Number: [REDACTED]

Nominee’s Email Address: [REDACTED]

Please describe the Nominee’s act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury and attach to this form:

A talented architect with a background in Historic Architecture, Jay joined the Board of the Friends of Heublein back in 2003. His passion is to restore the local landmark back to it’s day of glory with historic accuracy. In 2010 he became co-president and as of 2015 he has been the President of the board.

He has initiated fundraising efforts to raise the funds for these restoration projects and completed many successful project working with the Board of Directors as well as the DEEP staff and management and many volunteers.

The Fiends of Connecticut State Parks recruited him to join their Board of Directions as well to further support "Friends" groups from around the State of Connecticut.

Additionally, Jay was instrumental in designing and raising funds for the Rev. Dr Martin Luther King Memorial in Simsbury CT.

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee’s status during time period under consideration:

- Simsbury Resident Active in Simsbury Community Lived in Simsbury at time

Name & Phone Number of Person completing form or (Contact Information for Person completing form)

Pamela Simmons [REDACTED]

Telephone (860) 658-3200

Facsimile (860) 658-9467

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Name of Nominee: GERARD "GARRY" VICTORIEN

Nominee's Address: [REDACTED]

Nominee's Phone Number: [REDACTED]

Nominee's Email Address: [REDACTED]

Please describe the Nominee's act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury and attach to this form:

See Attached

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee's status during time period under consideration:

- Simsbury Resident Active in Simsbury Community Lived in Simsbury at time

Name & Phone Number of Person completing form or (Contact Information for Person completing form)

David Bush [REDACTED]

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GERRY WETJEN

Gerry Wetjen moved to Simsbury in 1978. He began his volunteer activities immediately after he unpacked.

He has been a volunteer in a variety of organizations starting with youth sports. He was very active with Simsbury Youth Hockey. He held every leadership position with that organization over his 8 year tenure on the Board of Directors. He also has been a baseball coach with Simsbury Little League coaching at every level from T-ball through American Legion. He coached for the better part of 20 years.

He has also been a very active volunteer with the Simsbury Rotary. His involvement spans 20 years. He is particularly proud of the fact that he ran the charity golf tournament for 20 years. He also established the Ed Dodd Scholarship Fund which provides approximately \$20,000 worth of scholarships per year. He was also instrumental with the Rotary's involvement in the Iron Horse Playground, where he oversaw its construction.

Gerry is an avid golfer. He has been a long time member of the Simsbury Farms Golf Men's Club. He has held every leadership position on the Board of Directors for this organization, starting in 2003 through 2010. He only left the Board to be available to engage in other volunteer activities. He was instrumental in developing and implementing the Tee-Sign sponsorship program. This program has resulted in funds being made available at no cost to the taxpayers, to pay for items at the golf course such as green rollers, wood chippers, bunker rakes, flag pins and installation of drinking fountains.

In 2011, Gerry was appointed to the Cultural, Parks & Recreation Commission. He served with the Commission for 10 years. He proved himself to be an invaluable resource to the Commission, especially with his finance background. He helped the Commission meet challenging budget issues. He participated on numerous sub-committees, including the Special Revenue Fund sub-committee in an effort to explore the best possible way to operate the golf course and manage finances.

One of the most significant volunteer activities for Gerry relates to his involvement with the non-profit group, The Friends of Simsbury Farms. In the summer of 2015, he along with two other Simsbury residents began to formulate the concept of the Friends of Simsbury Farms. They wanted to create a non-profit organization that could operate in conjunction with the town to seek donations for improvements at the Simsbury Farms Complex. The Friends of Simsbury Farms were approved by the Town of Simsbury and obtained tax exempt status in May of 2016. Since that time, there has been over \$172,000 in donations. An example of some of the improvements that have been funded by the Friends of Simsbury Farms are the Brian Koscher Pavilion located by the tennis court, a new hockey electronic scoreboard, Simsbury Farms Complex way finding/directional signs and the basketball court constructed next to the tennis court. He has continued his volunteer efforts with the Friends of Simsbury Farms, as the Simsbury Farms Complex turns 50 years old this year.

Gerry exemplifies the altruistic behavior which has contributed significantly to the betterment of the town.



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Name of Nominee: Margaret Kennedy

Nominee’s Address: [REDACTED]

Nominee’s Phone Number: [REDACTED]

Nominee’s Email Address: [REDACTED]

Please describe the Nominee’s act/deed and/or behavior which contributes/contributed to the Town of Simsbury and attach to this form:

Margaret moved to Simsbury, with her husband John, in 1993 from Yonkers NY. They chose to move to Barry Lane because, as senior citizens, they loved the idea of living in a dynamic neighborhood full of young families. Once they moved here they joined every club and organization they could so they could immerse themselves in our community. They were amazingly supportive of all of us in the neighborhood. She has been a consummate member of our book club since its inception 27 years ago. We were one of multiple book clubs she joined. Since 1993 Margaret has been very involved in her Church community at the First Church of Christ Simsbury. There she served on several committees one of which was a group of people who went into Hartford to Tutor at the Maria Sanchez School. She did that for close to 20 years while being in her 80s! She was active on the hospitality committee and through that served at the monthly Men’s Senior Luncheon up until COVID. She volunteered at the Simsbury Public Library Book Sale every year until 2020. She also shared her accounting skills for many years through the Senior Center by helping seniors in town do their taxes. At 102 years old she is an inspiration to all of those who know her. We feel she exceeds all the criteria for this award. Margaret would make a wonderful Hometown hero.

Check one of the following regarding the Nominee’s status during time period under consideration:

- Simsbury Resident Active in Simsbury Community Lived in Simsbury at time

Name & Phone Number of Person completing form or (Contact Information for Person completing form)

Tara & Jay Willerup and Joyce & Tom Benneche

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Submission information

Form: [Nomination Form for Hometown Hero Program](#) [1]

Submitted by Anonymous (not verified)

April 25, 2022 - 3:30pm

Name of Nominee:

Melissa Jean Gonzalez

Nominee's Address:

[REDACTED]

Nominee's Phone Number:

[REDACTED]

Nominee's Email Address:

[REDACTED]

Description of Nominee:

Melissa Jean Gonzalez is the owner of a local dance studio called Terpsichore. She has been a resident of Simsbury for 37 years since 1985. She opened Terpsichore in 1993. She is approaching 30 years of business serving the community. She has over 120 students enrolled ranging from 2 years to adults. Melissa has been a stable and encouraging resource for the children during the last two years of the pandemic. Melissa created a safe and fun environment where the kids could just be kids and didn't have to worry about what was going on in the world. When the world went virtual, Melissa had to quickly learn zoom and turned dance classes into fun virtual dance classes. This wasn't an easy task and something which wasn't her expertise. She hosted dance classes and activities including dance parties, games and trivia on zoom. This was during a time when the kids couldn't see their friends so she provided a fun online environment for the kids to be "together". When classes were able to resume, Melissa set up an outdoor dance camp with cohorts and bought bottles of sanitizer, cleaning supplies and implemented new health policies. She realized the seniors lost a lot in 2020 (e.g. senior prom, activities, and regular graduation) she was determined to make sure they didn't lose their last dance recital. She arranged a socially distanced dance recital outside for the kids to perform and most importantly for the seniors. It was the first time the kids had seen each other in person. It was magical for the kids to be able to see their friends in person.

In June 2020, she was told her lease was not being renewed and she had to move by July 2020.

It's not easy moving a dance studio. She had to pull up the dance floors, remove the ballet bars, remove the dance mirrors and move all of the costumes. She moved into a building in Mill Pond Lane. She had to paint each room, put the dance floor in, add the ballet bars, decorate the rooms and make it into her studio. In the fall of 2020, she continued her dance classes continuing the focus on socially distancing, health checks and extra cleaning protocols. She held an outdoor Halloween dance show for the kids to be able to perform. When she found out the high school wasn't doing an in person musical she added a musical class so the kids would have an opportunity to perform. They performed the musical 13 outside. She built a stage so she could have the shows outside, bought a mat for tap so it could be used outside and other equipment. She had the two dance recitals outside and one at Iron Horse.

In early Dec 2021, she found out that she had to move AGAIN from her dance studio. Luckily she found a place close in Mill Pond but she had to move within 3 weeks during the Holiday season. She had to do the same work as the last studio – paint each room, move the dance floor, add the ballet bars, decorate the rooms, move all of the costumes and furniture, etc. Plus, on top of moving she had a Disney trip for the dancers during the Dec – Jan break. Everyone was so excited and couldn't wait for the trip. They practiced all summer and fall to be able to dance at City walk in Universal. Approximately 50 people went on the dance trip to Disney/Universal with going to 6 parks in 7 days. It was an amazing time with lots of great memories for the kids. It was probably one of the first vacations many of them had in the last two years. It was exactly what the kids needed for their mental health.

In addition to running her studio, she did the dance choreograph the middle school production of Frozen Jr.

Melissa's tuition is very reasonable and family friendly. She has a family plan where kids and adults from the same family can take as many classes for one price. She runs her studio as very inclusive and as a family atmosphere. She has Halloween and Holiday parties for the kids. She is very inclusive and several students with special needs attend several classes. Not only is Melissa a dance teacher but she is a role model for her students, the parents and the community. She is warm and welcoming and exactly what the kids needed during such a difficult time for their mental health.

I understand she is a business owner but I guarantee she doesn't make much money because of everything she does for these kids. She has helped over 200 kids not only get through the pandemic emotionally but thrive through it. They were able to be safe, with their friends and do what they love to do - perform.

I hope you will consider her as a hometown hero after she has done so much to impact the Simsbury families for almost 30 years in the community.

Nominee's Status During Period Under Consideration

Active In Simsbury Community

Name of Person Completing Form

Kerry Kelley and all of the dance parents at Terpsichore Dance

Phone Number (or other contact information) of Person Completing Form

██████████

Source URL: <https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/node/91963/submission/26016>



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Hometown Hero Selection Committee Regular Meeting Monday, May 3, 2021

MINUTES - DRAFT

Members Present: TJ Donahue, Elaine Lang, Mike Paine, Eric Wellman, Leonard Lanza,

Staff Present: Maria Capriola, Thomas Fitzgerald

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM.

1) Housekeeping Items

- a) Selection of Chair: Mr. Paine nominated Mr. Wellman as Chair of the Hometown Hero Selection Committee. Mr. Donahue seconded the motion, all were in favor.
- b) Mr. Wellman asked the Committee about establishing May 2, 2022 as their regularly scheduled meeting date for 2022, hearing no concerns the 2022 Hometown Hero Selection Committee's regular meeting was set for May 2, 2022 with a tentative date for the awards ceremony of May 23, 2022.

2) Discussion on Hometown Hero Nominations

The Committee discussed all of the nominations in detail.

3) Determine Hometown Hero Award Recipient(s)

Mr. Lanza moved to recognize the volunteers of the Farmington Valley Visiting Nurses Association and the Farmington Valley Health District as Hometown Hero Recipients, Ms. Lang seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Donahue moved to recognize Lori George and Carolyn Clement as Hometown Hero Recipients, Ms. Lang seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Ms. Lang moved to recognize Kevin Kurian as a Hometown Hero Recipient, Mr. Donahue seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Lanza moved to recognize Jan Lintner, Dorothy Mackay and Sharene Wassell as Hometown Hero Recipients, Mr. Donahue seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Paine moved to have First Selectman Wellman send a thank you for your service to the community letter on behalf of the committee to Mr. Orenstein, Mr. Donahue seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Lanza moved to have First Selectman Wellman send a thank you for your service to the community letter on behalf of the committee to Ms. Starr, Mr. Paine seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Donahue moved to recognize Bob Kane as a Hometown Hero Recipient, Ms. Lang seconded. All were in favor.

4) 2021 Ceremony and Pandemic Impact on Event

Mr. Wellman asked the group about their thoughts moving the ceremony back from the original date of May 26th to later in June to try and allow for a small in person gathering. Ms. Lang mentioned inviting the 2020 recipients as well since they did not get an in person ceremony due to COVID-19. The current target date for the ceremony is June 28, 2021 at 5:00 PM out on the Town Hall Lawn. Staff will begin preparing for a small in-person ceremony.

5) Minutes

The minutes of May 7, 2020 were approved as presented by consensus.

Mr. Lanza moved, Ms. Lang seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:34 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Thomas Fitzgerald
Management Specialist
Town of Simsbury