

The Pioneers Projects and Programs Periodical

FairPoint Pioneers Edition

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Pioneers gather in Atlanta, GA for the Annual Meeting focused on Centennial Readiness.



The Centennial Readiness Coaching Dream Team.

Pioneers Gather for the 99th Year of Pioneering

More than 500 Pioneers gathered in Atlanta, Georgia, for the Annual Meeting February 26-27, 2010. This years theme was *Sparkign Pioneers for a New Century of Service*. The meeting opened with a welcome session and appreciation breakfast at which Immediate Past Chairman Dave Nichols welcomed new Chairman Jim Schmit. The breakfast also included a special video message from CEO of the Points of Light Institute and Co-Founder of HandsOn Network., Michelle Nunn.

Training on projects leading up to the Centennial was the main focus during the day on Saturday. Jerry Wilson, Global Chief - Customer and Commercial Office, The Coca Cola Company, shared how Coke leveraged its Centennial celebration

to promote its brand. Attendees also received an overview of Pioneer Centennial goals and objectives.

At the service project, Pioneers packed more than 500 comfort kits for military personnel. They learned how to make no-sew lap blankets and folded pocket flags to be placed in the boxes. Pioneers, friends and family were pleased that all the care packages were going to someone that a Pioneer or friend knew.

The weekend culminated with a banquet, dinner, dancing, and a video introduction to the 2011 Centennial Celebration in Boston.

Pioneers Leaders Prepare for 2011 Centennial Year

Since 1911, Pioneers has grown from 734 members to more than 620,000 and have given hundreds of millions of volunteer hours to our communities.

Now we are preparing for an exciting 2011 Centennial Year with 3 Centennial project opportunities. First, *Pioneers Volunteer Community Grant Program - Sparkign Local Partnerships* is an opportunity for units to work with their local government officials and sponsor companies to designate a certain number of volunteer hours for a community in need and request grant funding from International Headquarters for up to \$50,000.

Second, *Projects in a Box* helps units participate in one of three familiar but newly branded projects (1) *Pioneers Environmental Initiative - Sparkign a Clean, Green Planet* (2) *Pioneers Literacy Project - Spark the Love of Reading* and (3) *Pioneers Military Mission - Sparkign Support for Soldiers and their Families*. If a unit chooses either of these two Centennial projects, it will receive special project and collateral materials for minimal or no cost. You may also choose and plan your own project. Reach out to your unit leadership to see how your respective unit might be participating.

Volunteers Recognized for Half Century of Service

2010 marks 50 years of service for the Talking Book Repair program. Through the Library of Congress, The National Library Service uses this program to help people with visual and/or physical impairments. Pioneers have helped by repairing the LP and cassette players used in the program.

F. Kurt Cylke, Director, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped Library of Congress, wrote the following to volunteers, *"I congratulate the Pioneers for fifty years of service to the blind and physically handicapped library community. Across the country, you use expert knowledge to repair thousands of talking-book machines on a volunteer basis, an effort totaling nearly \$20 million dollars worth of labor every year. Without your dedication, it would be all but impossible for NLS to keep enough talking-book machines in service for more than 800,000 eligible readers."*

At the Pioneers Awards Ceremony, the U.S. Pioneers were awarded a congratulatory letter from the President, a certificate and Presidents Volunteer Service Award pin.

Although Canadian Pioneers have switched to digital and no longer work on repairing cassette machines, 2010 would have been Canadas 40 year anniversary of volunteering on the program.



Talking Book Repair representatives accepting the Presidents Volunteer Service Award.

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Pioneers Awarded for "Sparking Excellence"

Pioneers units and individuals that make an extraordinary impact are recognized at the Pioneers Annual Meeting.

In 2009, 53 elegant spark sculptures were presented at the Awards Ceremony. Among them were winners of the Individual Excellence Life Member category - Deborah Foley, Verizon Pioneers, William J Denver Chapter and Allan Bowers, Bell Aliant Pioneers, Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter, Exploits Pioneer Club; winners of the Individual Excellence Regular Member category - Stephanie Washington, AT&T Pioneers, South Texas Chapter, San Antonio Council and Denis Dugas, Bell Aliant Pioneers, New Brunswick Chapter, Acadian Peninsula Council; and winner of the Individual Excellence Partner award, William (Junior) Williams, AT&T Pioneers, Alabama Chapter, Birmingham Life Member Club. Congratulations to all the applicants, finalists and the winners for exemplifying the Pioneers Spirit of Service!

Click here to view and download the 2009 Keepsake booklet. The current awards period runs from 10/1/2009 - 6/30/2011, with awards presented at the Centennial celebration in Boston, November 2011. The 2010-2011 Awards Manual will be available online in April.

upcoming events

To find Pioneers-driven community service projects and events going on in your local area and across the US and Canada, please visit <https://pals.pioneersvolunteer.org/VM>