



GRINDSTONE AWARD



2004

Jack Kafer

Teacher, Principal, Berea Mayor, Berea Rotarian, Campaign Director, Outstanding Promoter of the City of Berea, Civic/Volunteer, good friend, neighbor, husband, father and grandfather... all of these describe the 2004 Grindstone Award Recipient.

As an elementary teacher and principal of Vivian Smith Elementary School, Jack instituted such programs as Camp Mi-Bro-Be and parent conferencing which were ultimately instituted for the entire district. He stood for fair play and good sense and encouraged rules that made sense but were not onerous. He modeled responsibility coupled with a sense of humor and a good dose of common sense for those many young people who came under his influence. He has also worked on school levies and has a deep commitment to quality education for all our children and grandchildren.

He served the City of Berea for 12 years (1972 to 1984) as Mayor representing all that is good and wholesome in our system of local government. During that time Urban Renewal was at the forefront and never once was a decision made which was anything but open and honest as Jack personified integrity.

As a Berea Rotarian Jack as chairman of the Vocational Service Committee developed a Strategic Plan for mentoring at Polaris Career Center and developed the financial planning program as the High School to help students with their understanding of personal economics and credit. He also chairs the Employee courtesy Award

Program which is in tis fourth year. This award is given to a individual for outstanding service in both the public and private sectors of business.

As a Campaign Manager he brought to this effort his considerable organizational abilities, strong belief in the need for progressive approaches to governance, commitment to working with local merchants, strong work ethic and his wonderful sense of humor.

As a Civic Volunteer Jack served as Chairman of the Woodvale Cemetery Board of Trustees, the Mayor's Bicycle Advisory Commission, the Lou Groza Dedication Committee, the Waste Transfer System Committee, The 2001 Charter Review Commission for the City of Berea, and the committee for Good Schools. He listens, he pay attention, and he is respectful.

Jack has been described by his many friends as a "mensch" - a good, kind, decent and honorable person. The most fitting description of a "mensch", the one that best describes Jack Kafer comes from Leo Rosten in the Joys of Yiddish, "The key to being 'a real mensch' is nothing less than - character; rectitude, dignity, a sense of what is right, responsible, decorous."

Berea residents for over forty-five years, Jack and his wife Joan of forty-eight years have two children and four Grandchildren.

Presented April 19, 2005

Sheraton Airport Hotel, Cleveland, Ohio