Montgomery County Council

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NEWS RELEASE

For Neighborly Assistance During Winter's Storms...

Sixteen County Residents Help Shovel Out County, Land "Golden Shovel" Awards

Sixteen County residents who rolled up their sleeves and helped their neighbors deal with this winter's snow and ice were honored today by the Montgomery County Council with the second annual "Sidewalks Are For Everyone (SAFE)/ Golden Shovel" Awards.

The winners, chosen from over 50 nominations sent in by County residents, range in age from six and 13 years old to 74 years and includes "teams" and whole families.

"This award is intended to recognize those individuals who have gone 'above and beyond the call of duty' in helping their neighbors to clear ice and snow from County sidewalks," said Councilmember Nancy Floreen, the originator of the idea and chair of the Council's Transportation and Environment Committee.

"We all have a civic duty to pitch in and help. Our seniors, our schoolchildren, our disabled community, and those who walk to work or use mass transit depend on cleared sidewalks. It's a matter of convenience and public safety – and a critical piece for improving transportation in the County.

"It's often said that 'everyone talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it.' Well, these folks did something about it. They represent the thousands of Montgomery Countians who took on Mother Nature in big ways and small -- and made a difference for their communities.

"These boys and girls, men and women – from all over the County – are the 'Golden Rule' in action. They went out, did the work, and didn't ask for anyone to pat them on the back. Well, we are doing that anyway."

Each of the winners was presented with a certificate and a "Golden Shovel" lapel pin.

In 2001, the County Council passed into law legislation to require County residents to clear ice and snow from sidewalks within 24 hours of a snowfall, with strong support from seniors, families with schoolchildren, and the disability community. Similar regulations have already been in effect for many years in Rockville, Gaithersburg, and Takoma Park, as well as in Prince George's and Howard counties and in the District of Columbia.

The complete list of "Golden Shovel" awardees are:

- Henry Beecroft of Gaithersburg
- The "Hobson Street Fab Five" of Kensington – Mike Hurdle, Norma Thompson, Brittie Wise, Milton Michaels, and Phil Sheridan
- The Kallas family of Bethesda (Lou, Pat, Melissa, and Chris)
- Rick Lutz of Silver Spring
- Marc Mathieu of Silver Spring
- Michael McCallum of Brookeville
- Paul Runci of Kensington
- Robert Plotkins of Kensington
- Rick Wright of Rockville

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