

## **SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE**

### **Light the Way – Special Thank You!**

Another wonderful holiday season is behind us, and from the look on the faces of our City's children (both large and small), one can see that a great time was had by one and all.

Our Light the Way event was the best attended and kept the balloon artists and Santa hopping. We would like to thank everyone who attended and all our volunteers, from Santa's elves to the gracious folks from St. Mary of the Angles, who kept the popcorn popping and hot chocolate flowing.

This event would not have been possible without our sponsors, who gave generously to make it a night to remember. Thank you to:

- Regal Boats
- Gold Key Roofing
- Conway Optical
- Oak Ridge Gun Range
- John P. Carr Construction
- Peter Madison and Park, Bark & Fly
- Jessie Durlin with OPAV for the great sound system
- Texas Roadhouse
- Mission Bar-B-Que
- Sunbelt Rentals
- Comfort House Port-O-Pottys
- And all the others donated items to the silent auction.

The Santa Ride through the city was once again two very magical nights. This year, we added the Grinch to our cast of characters, and it is a hard call as to who had more fun: you or the cast of misfits on Santa's sleigh! I am always amazed at how many dogs live here and how quickly their heads turn at the sound of a squeaking toy. We are so glad we added dog toys to our budget, for Belle Isle loves their fur babies! It is such a joy to those of us in the parade to see the excitement and happiness evident at the Santa Stops, and we truly appreciate the homemade cookies. A big shout out to Commissioner Tony Carugno, our sleigh-master, for once again providing the excitement and lights of Santa's sleigh, and we appreciate that every year adds a bit more "bling." His addition of the sleigh a few years back and his continued support by storing, maintaining, and pulling the sleigh has brought this tradition up to a standard that no other city around us can even come close to matching. I know that it is a labor of love for him, but I want to take the time to thank him and let him know how much his labors are appreciated and loved.

Our last event of the season was the Golf Cart and bicycle parade. We extended the route a bit farther so that more residents could enjoy the participants' hard work and decorations. OPAV provided a remarkable LED huge screen for the after-party movie, which kept the kids entertained until Mother Nature intervened. But even with a bit of rain, it was a fun and brightly lit ending for our event season. Stay tuned for next year!

