



PRESS RELEASE
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Ray Sheehan, Avondale Dairy Bar Named Forrest Mock Person of the Year

Ray Sheehan, Avondale Dairy Bar, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada was named the Forrest Mock Person of the Year at the National Ice Cream Retailers Association Annual meeting held November 7-10, 2007 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in San Antonio, Texas. The award is sponsored by The National Dipper Magazine and Lynda Utterback, publisher was on hand to present the award.

His friend said it best, he is a close friend, but also an example of a person focused in life and in business. He is a NICRA man and lives out the principles of NICRA, sharing ideas, caring for others, working with others to make the association better for everyone. And he was in the right place at the right time for this association.

But let me tell you about him personally first. At twelve years old he began his working career, picking strawberries. Two years later he moved on to work at Avondale Variety store. At 15 he worked for the city of St. Catharines parks board, cutting lawns and doing various maintenance and landscaping jobs in the city parks. By the time he was 16 he was delivering pizzas and driving a taxi. During school he played basketball, football, baseball, hockey and was a jogger.

He went to Brock University in St. Catharines and took some political courses, but quickly realized politics were not for him. So he switched to business and received a business degree, with honors.

In 1974 he took a job at Beatrice Foods, working in the shipping department, loading milk trucks. A year later he was moved to the lab where he tested the ice cream and milk that was made in the plant. And he was also put in charge of quality control for the plant. He became an assistant manager and was in charge of 140 employees. During this time the plant included a dairy bar which was also his responsibility to run.

Beatrice wanted to move him to Salt Saint Marie to manage a dairy there. It did not appeal to him because there was nothing in the town but the dairy and a few thousand

people. So he bought the dairy bar he was managing and that's how it all began. He took the Penn State ice cream short course and started making his own ice cream. He needed a batch freezer so he drove to Dick Warren's shop on Cape Cod and brought home an old machine. He put it together and to this day it is still running. He will not part with it. He says it makes the best ice cream.

He joined NICRA in 1986 and served on the Board of Directors for many years and agreed to "go through the chairs" and become an officer of the association. Lynda said that he was in the right place at the right time for this association. It was during the time that the previous executive director retired and she took over the management of the association that she really got to know this man. He was president of the association that year. And he was there every step of the way to help guide the association through the transition. She learned to respect his thoughtfulness, although there were times when she thought he thought too much. She also learned to respect his judgment and his fairness in dealing with situations. He helped get NICRA on the path that it is on today.

Then one day a call came into the NICRA office from Nels Anderson. There had been an accident. A woman ran a red light and hit his car on the driver's side. The news was not good. He was seriously injured in the accident. We all followed his progress and recovery. It was slow and painstaking but he is still with us today. Lynda remembered the day he first called her after the accident, it was months later. But his voice was unmistakable and she knew immediately that he would be alright. Lynda and his wife cried on the phone many times during this period. She was right there by his side every step of the way. I knew she was going to be OK when she made a business decision and he told her to slow down and discuss it with him. She said, I'm in charge now. That year he was not able to join us for the convention so we had a phone hook up during the awards banquet so he could talk to everyone.

Recently he has been instrumental in working as chairman of the ice cream clinic committee. Under his guidance the committee established a mission statement and testing procedures to help insure accurate results for samples. All samples for the clinic and best flavor contests are now tested.

He is married to his lovely wife and partner Debbie and they have two children, Brittany and Brent. Brittany just graduated from Niagara College with an early childhood education degree. She is student teaching and helps to decorate cakes at the dairy bar. Brent is still in school, Mohawk College in Hamilton, studying computer technology and making ice cream at the dairy bar.

In addition to Avondale Dairy Bar, he manages Anderson's ice cream plant. He also finds time to teach at the Successful Ice Cream Retailing Course. Congratulations, Ray Sheehan.

The National Ice Cream Retailers Association is a trade organization whose members are in the retail ice cream and frozen yogurt business. The members of NICRA are located all across the United States, Canada and several other countries. They operate hundreds of stores and have an estimated annual sales in the millions. They employ thousands of full- and part-time employees. Since 1933, NICRA has helped hundreds of ice cream and frozen dessert entrepreneurs get started and prosper.

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