

MEDFORD TRANSCRIPT

Monday, June 25, 2007

The City of Medford's Commission for Persons with Disabilities recognized the staff of SCM Community Transportation by awarding them the 2007 Disabilities Awareness Award.

Mayor Michael J. McGlynn presented the award to Executive Director Reed Cochran "in recognition of SCM's commitment and dedication to equality and independence for people with disabilities."

The ceremony, held in the mayor's office, was attended by dozens of SCM staff and Medford patrons of the service.



(photo by: Sam Westover) Rep. Paul J. Donato, left, Mayor Michael J. McGlynn, SCM Executive Director Reed Cochran, City Council Vice President Breanna Lungo and City Council President Robert Maiocco celebrate the 2007 Disabilities Awareness Award presentation to SCM Transportation in recognition for all the program does for residents.

Twenty-four years old, SCM Community Transportation provides 8,000 rides per month to elderly and disabled members of the Somerville, Cambridge, and Medford communities. In Medford, SCM provides trips to doctors' appointments, grocery store runs and transport to the Medford Council on Aging for meals.

For years, these services have been free of charge to riders. This year, however, SCM hopes to begin soliciting voluntary donations from riders in order to keep up with rising gas prices.

Ceremony attendee Rena Walker sported a state-of-the-art walker that she calls her "Harley."

"When people ask me why I stay in Medford," said Walker. "I say it's because of SCM! There are no other communities that have this kind of service. We don't know where we'd be without it."

In his address, Disabilities Commission Chair Steve Honeycutt noted that SCM's staff is "truly hardworking, respectful and highly professional. They should be commended for their hard work and dedication."

The need for SCM's services is increasing considerably. Currently, one in five callers seeking medical transportation is unable to schedule a ride due to lack of funding. Honeycutt urged the citizens of all three founding communities to work hard to build up this vital organization.

In accepting the award, Cochran stated that, "long term, SCM wants to find more ways to promote vibrant lifestyles for those who cannot drive. Imagine being able to go anywhere you want to go instead of being limited to just doctors' appointments. We can't do it now, but that's what our dream is."

Rep. Paul Donato, D-Medford, also attended the ceremony, taking the opportunity to present SCM with a citation from the statehouse acknowledging SCM's efforts to keep seniors and people with disabilities independent and living in their own homes. Two years ago, Donato was instrumental in procuring emergency funding to keep SCM going as it regrouped and began building a new business model.

For information about SCM's services, call the Reservations Department, Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. You may reach them by dialing 617-625-1191 and pressing "0."