



PRESS RELEASE

Four local citizens honored at 2024 Arbor Day programs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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KENOSHA – Four community leaders who died in 2023 will be honored by the City of Kenosha during Arbor Day Commemoration programs on Friday, April 26. Mark S. Modory, Frank Germinaro, Frederick L. Zievers, and O. Fred Nelson will be honored with trees planted in their memory at City parks.

The City Parks Department will open the Arbor Day observations with the planting of an Autumn Blaze Maple tree in honor of Modory at 9 a.m. near the Dream Playground at Petzke Park, 2820 14th Avenue.

Programs will continue with the planting of an Autumn Flame Red Maple tree in a honor of Germinaro at 9:45 a.m. at Pennoyer Park, 3601 Seventh Avenue; the planting of a Royal Raindrops Crabapple tree in honor of Zievers at 10:30 a.m. at Wolfenbuttel Park, 5901 Third Avenue, and finish with the planting of a Sugar Maple tree in honor of Nelson at 11:15 a.m. at the O. Fred Nelson Water Production Plant, 100 51st Place.

The event is open to the public, and all are welcome to attend and pay tribute to these individuals who have made a lasting impact on the community.

Arbor Day honorees

Mark Modory

Mark Modory of Kenosha passed away at age 66 on March 31, 2023. He was born on September 18, 1956, in Kenosha and was educated in the schools of Kenosha.

He worked for K-Mart in loss prevention for 32 years. He was a member of the Kenosha Common Council, the Kenosha County Board of Supervisors, Board member of Kenosha County Health Department, Board member of Kenosha Mental Health/AODA, and Board member of Kenosha City/County Joint Services.

He was on the Board of the Kenosha Dream Playground Project, Co-Chair of the committee and advocate for the Kenosha County Dog Parks. He was also on the Board of Directors of Shalom Center for over 10 years and shelter support staff for an additional five years.

He constantly and consistently gave of himself to insure his community was a better place to live. He has truly had a lifelong commitment to service to better our city, whether it be inclusion for children of all abilities without a voice or for our four legged friends to run and play off of their leashes.

He loved dogs and his hobbies included politics, fishing, cheering for the Green Bay Packers, Milwaukee Brewers, Milwaukee Bucks and the Wisconsin Badgers but most of all he loved spending time with his friends and family.

Frank Germinaro

Frank John Germinaro, aged 74, passed away on January 19, 2023. He was born on July 7, 1948. He graduated from Bradford High School in 1966, from UW-Parkside in 1972 with a degree in music education, and earned his Master of Science in education supervision and administration from UW-Milwaukee in 1985. Germinaro started his career in Racine Unified in 1973 as a music teacher, and transitioned to the role of principal, serving at Windpoint, Fine Arts, and Gifford elementary schools until his retirement in 2003. Just 30 days later, he was hired as the principal at St. Mark's Catholic School and served in that role for six years.

His musical career began with the accordion lessons his mother insisted he take around the age of 11. He picked up other instruments, including clarinet and percussion as he attended UW-Parkside. He was a consummate entertainer, a gift he honed with his wedding band in the early years, and later with the Kenosha Pops Concert Band after joining in 1968. Through the '70s and '80s he was the assistant conductor and later served as the musical director and conductor from 1992 – 2002. In 2018-2021, he again stepped into the assistant conductor role. He shared his musical talents with St. Mark's contemporary choir, and at weddings and funerals. He also performed with friends as the Sunnyside Strummers group, entertaining residents at nursing homes.

Since childhood, Germinaro lived with a variety of kidney issues, resulting in numerous hospital stays and medical treatments. At the age of 19, he started dialysis, and the Kenosha community rallied around him, creating Frankie's Kidney Fund, which brought the first kidney machine for St. Catherine's Hospital leading to the creation of the dialysis unit still serving Kenosha today.

Germinaro lived a life of service, as he felt that helping others was probably one of the greatest things we can do as human beings. This began with his work with the National Kidney Foundation to promote and educate the public about the benefits of organ donation which included his work on the Patient and Family Service Committee. He was a tireless advocate for organ donation, a mentor for dialysis and transplant patients and a support for families who have donated the gift of life. He was appointed to the Board of Directors of Society's Assets, a five county home healthcare Foundation in 1996 and served eight terms, including a stint as the chairperson of the Board from 1993-2020. He was instrumental in creating a scholarship fund for college students with disabilities.

In retirement, Germinaro enjoyed fishing, family, friends and was never far from his favorite TV remote. He also joined his wife, Janet, as a volunteer for Hospice Alliance in 2018, after seeing the care they provided for family members.

Fred Zievers

Fred Zievers, 72, of Pleasant Prairie, passed away on Sunday, September 17, 2023. He was born July 3, 1951 in Pomona, CA, and moved with his family to the Kenosha area in 1957. Zievers attended St. James School, St. Joseph High School for one year, and Bradford High School, graduating in 1969. He earned his Bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside in 1973 and his Juris Doctor from Marquette University Law School in 1976.

He then embarked upon an esteemed, decades-long legal career in the Kenosha area. After serving as an Assistant District Attorney in Brown and Kenosha counties, he entered private practice, retiring with the firm of Zievers & Dowse.

Zievers was a brilliant, highly respected attorney and was proud to have argued before the Wisconsin Supreme Court. He was a former member of the State Bar of Wisconsin and the U.S. Supreme Court Bar. He was an astute observer of American politics and a student of history. Zievers was an avid reader, and also enjoyed spending time at his home in Naples, FL, golfing, rooting for the Chicago Bears and Cincinnati Reds alongside his beloved dogs, cooking, baking and grilling, and tending to his yard.

Most of all, he loved spending time with his wife, Melissa, family and his many friends in Kenosha and Naples. He was a true Renaissance man.

O. Fred Nelson

O. Fred Nelson, age 94, of Kenosha, died Monday, November 13, 2023, at Brookside Care Center in Kenosha. He was born on July 6, 1929, in St. Louis, MO. After graduating from Fairview High School in 1947, he served in the U.S. Army from July 1947 to June 1949. He was assigned to the U.S. Army Air Corps in Alaska and served as a Chief Party Surveyor in building the longest runway in the world (15,000 feet) at Eielson Field Air Force Base which is 26 miles south of Fairbanks, AK.

After his Army service, Nelson attended and graduated from Washington University in St. Louis. He worked for the St. Louis Water Department as a Professional Engineer from 1952 to 1960. He then attained the position as General Manager of the Kenosha Water Utility (KWU) where he served 42 years until he retired in 2002. He will always be known for his vital work and accomplishments in the water industry, and his leadership has remained throughout the facility and operations.

In 1999 the largest operating microfiltration water plant in North America was completed. The building and operation was named the O. Fred Nelson Water Production Plant. One of the most valuable comments from Nelson during his 50 year career in the water industry is: "Providing and Protecting Kenosha's Greatest Natural Resource."

Nelson was a life member of the American Society of Civil Engineers, American Water Works Association and Water Environment Federation. He served as Chairman of the Wisconsin Section, American Water Works Association, President of the Central States Water Pollution Control Association. He served on various committees of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. He was a past member of the Kenosha Rotary Club and a former member of the First United Methodist Church.

He leaves behind a legacy with the KWU and was known and respected by many people in the City of Kenosha and his KWU friends and colleagues, but he will be remembered and forever loved by his family. He was most proud of his wonderful family and his dedication and devotion to them throughout his life. He always had a positive attitude and provided a lifetime of love and happiness to his entire family and was a huge influence on each of them.

While in his assisted living facility he decided to pen his autobiography. The title was "Life, Family and Water Works of O. Fred Nelson". At the end of the book he wrote "I have had a great life and family."

Arbor Day has been celebrated in the United States since 1872. In Wisconsin it is celebrated on the last Friday in April. This marks the 42nd consecutive year that Kenosha has been recognized as a member of Tree City USA, through its progressive forestry policies and

programs. The National Arbor Day Foundation sponsors the Tree City USA program.