

Throughout his life as a Citizen of Bedford Bob Mead has contributed to the Town in many generous and diverse ways. It is likely that his frequent gestures of kindness to individuals will not necessarily be seen by us; however, there are other accomplishments that will be remembered always.

As a business owner in Bedford since 1946 and homeowner in the town since 1949 Bob has been a constant supporter of the community and its people for many years. After growing up in Arlington and working on the family farm, he then served in the Navy in World War II. He began his Mead Brothers Tree Service in Bedford, specializing in tree and landscape work. Bob and his wife Marge moved to Bedford in 1949 and began the family that eventually grew to nine children.

Soon after coming to Bedford, Bob joined the American Legion. Bob was involved in the planning and building of the American Legion Hall which now stands on the Great Road. Bob was Chairman of the Building Committee in 1956, 1957 and 1958.

Bob has been a member of the Bedford Rotary Club since 1956 and was the club's 1962-1963 President. He has received merit awards for "Devoted and Unselfish Service Above Self to the Club and the Community" and has twice been named Rotarian of the Year. He never missed a meeting in 46 years!

Bob became Bedford's Tree Warden in 1957. In this capacity he introduced a bylaw which is still in effect that requires builders to plant trees in their developments. We can thank Bob for a greener Bedford.

Bob Mead and John Bowen were Co-Chairmen of the V.A. Hospital Surplus Land Advisory Committee in the late 1960's. After three years of effort by this committee, Springs Brook Park unofficially opened in the summer of 1970, and it was soon obvious that this would be an important recreation area for Bedford. The budget, unfortunately, was not sufficient to allow completion of the bathhouse. Bob helped organize a volunteer work group of local citizens who donated their time to construct the building. An excerpt from the 1970 Annual Report reads "We wish to acknowledge grateful thanks to the following...Bob Mead for the use of his equipment and family and for the generosity he showed in both time and ability as he worked hard to accomplish what is sure to become the most well-attended recreation site in town."

In October of 1970, Bob again volunteered his time and equipment at Springs Brook Park. He cleared a swampy area of land for a planned skating rink. The 1970 Annual Report notes that through Bob's efforts and the efforts of others, Bedford gained the use of an outdoor rink at no cost to the Town.

Bob was a driver for the Bedford Santa program for 14 years and also served as an umpire for Bedford's young baseball players.

Bob has always done what he could to make a difference in someone's life. For many years, as owner of Mead Brothers Tree Service, he hired men from the Veterans Administration Hospital to learn tree work. Each man came with his own set of problems and challenges, which Bob often

tended to before his own needs. Certainly, his support of these veterans gave them confidence in themselves and a sense of accomplishment at learning a new skill.

Over the years, Bob has been a member of the Massachusetts Arborists Association (President 1984-1987), Massachusetts Tree Wardens and Foresters, and the Massachusetts Horticultural Congress. He's well known and much admired by many in the tree business.

Bob was instrumental in building a memorial at Springs Brook Park to commemorate the victims of the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks. The May 2, 2002 issue of the Bedford Minuteman reads: "The Rotary Club, led by ex-president Bob Mead, conceived the memorial and led the drive to secure the materials." At the dedication, Mead Brothers Tree Service, as well as other organizations and businesses were thanked for their contributions.

Bob continually collects pull-tabs from cans to benefit the Shriners Hospital and has encouraged other Rotary Clubs to become involved in the project. He has built pull-tab collection boxes which are located in several places throughout Bedford. On an extremely hot July 4<sup>th</sup>, he sat in the sun on the Town Common with a large jar of tabs, collecting money for Shriners as people took chances at guessing the number of tabs in the jar. Bob must have been delighted when a group of young Bedford Girl Scouts collected 50,000 tabs, 20 lbs worth. Those tabs and all the others collected are melted down and the money raised is used for the Shriners' many good works.

His story goes on. Last November Bob organized his most recent, successful fundraising event with a large Bedford crowd attending for the benefit of relief for Hurricane Katrina victims. This Fall you are apt to see him as he plants and tends the flowers at Springs Brook Park, or makes the rounds of his pull tabs collections boxes. This distinguishing quality of continual giving back has earned him tributes such as "Dynamo" and "This is the man who doesn't know the meaning of the word quit" and as such, the well deserved honor of 2006 Citizen of the Year.