



## SPOTLIGHT ON JUNIOR WOMAN'S CLUB OF MEQUON-THIENSVILLE: LOVE OF COMMUNITY DRIVES LOCAL WOMEN TO GIVE BACK



The Junior Woman's Club of Mequon-Thiensville is an energetic and enthusiastic group of women who really know how to get things done! The Club found its niche in supporting our communities with philanthropic, leadership and social opportunities. And along the way, they've discovered it feels good to do good.

Evidence of their good work can be seen everywhere in the Mequon-Thiensville area. From the electronic community signboard at the northeast corner of Mequon Road and Cedarburg Road (see photo) to renovations at Thiensville Village Hall to updated entryway markers for the Village.

According to Tina Berkhahn, Club treasurer, "I lived in Mequon for four years before I joined Juniors, and it was a shame that I waited so long. I honestly joined just to meet some ladies, but now it is so much more than that. I have really enjoyed becoming part of the community and being able to give back to it. We are a small group with big impact – it's a wonderful feeling."

The "Juniors" are probably best known for their annual Turkey Trot, an annual 5K race on Thanksgiving morning, now in its 11th year. The race starts and ends at Thiensville's Village Park and as the Club's biggest fundraiser, it has become a popular community tradition. What started out as a small, fun run has evolved into a major event with more than 1,300 participants – and is growing every year as young and old walk and run to benefit a variety of charitable causes.

This year's Turkey Trot will be held on Thursday, November 26, and includes a Gobble Gallop for kids. Berkhahn says the race would not be possible without the help of many others in the community, including Village staff and volunteers from Homestead High School. "The husbands are also indispensable and pitch in from planning, organizing and, most importantly, dressing up as the official "Turkey!" she says.

Fundraising efforts by the Juniors also will benefit the renovation of entryway markers into the Village of Thiensville, creating a welcoming sense of entry and place (see article on pg. 32). These original markers, first constructed in 1985 as part of the Main Street Reconstruction project, will be carefully upgraded with complementary landscaping by Kerry Mattingly and Treetops Landscape Design, Inc.



Photo: Shoot the Moon Photography



Even gifts made decades ago live on because of the Junior's generosity. For example, in 1978, Concerned Ozaukee Parents Exchange (COPE) was initiated by the Juniors with a vision of providing support for

parents. Today, COPE is a United Way agency phone helpline answering 22,000 calls a year.

Juniors' President Colleen Krueger says the Club aims to raise awareness of groups that may otherwise go unnoticed. "We seek to provide charitable giving in those areas of our community we consider to be underfunded core services or community-enhancing amenities," she explains. "Our love of this community and our recognition of those less fortunate are the common threads that tie our group together."

The Junior Woman's Club is open to any woman 21 years and older who is interested in enriching herself and the community through volunteer projects. Membership is diverse, from stay-at-home moms to full-time career women – there is something for everyone! For more information, visit the Junior Woman's Club website at [juniorwomansclubmt.org](http://juniorwomansclubmt.org).



*Junior Woman's Club President Colleen Krueger announces the winners of last year's race as a Homestead volunteer (left) and Club board member Rachael Amundsen (right) look on.*

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Over the years, Club fundraising has benefitted a variety of projects and organizations in the area, including:

- Village Hall renovations
- Family Fun Before the 4th
- Mequon Police K-9 unit
- Mequon Nature Preserve
- Interfaith programs
- Portal, Inc. (advancing opportunities for people with developmental disabilities)
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ozaukee County