

Robert Gartzke
2009 Friend of Education

After 35 years in education, Robert Gartzke continues his contributions to the community and commitment to the education of children. He is an advocate for public schools and the community through his service to local organizations. He is involved in civic organizations directly involved with the welfare and education of children.

Robert's dedication and commitment is evident in his involvement with the Beaver Dam Lion's Club, where he has had perfect attendance for 44 years. For over 40 years, he has chaired the Club's Special Needs Committee, which provides children in need with eyeglasses or other special need services. He also serves as the liaison for the school crossing guard program to ensure children safely cross the streets. Robert communicates regularly with the crossing guards to determine their needs for uniforms and winter apparel and, through his suggestion, they wear blaze orange for better driver visibility. Annually, he hosts a banquet for the crossing guards and an awards ceremony to honor those who are retiring. His dedication to the Lion's Club has been recognized with the highest honors that can be awarded, including the Lion of the Year, the Melvin Jones Award for his humanitarian efforts, and the Distinguished Service Award for his remarkable endeavors for the youth in Beaver Dam and for those in need.

Further evidence of Robert's outstanding contributions can be found in his 39 years of teaching Hunter Safety, for which he was recognized by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. He has also volunteered countless hours for his church by serving in leadership roles and teaching Sunday School. One of his nominators wrote, "He has made rich and lasting relationships in this community through his service, and everywhere he goes, he spreads the message of the importance of education."