

K of C names Silvestri Granite Award winner

by Steve Eifler

SALEM - In the words of 2000 Granite Award winner Bill Silvestri, "You do the things you like to do and you end up with an award for them."

That's what Silvestri says happened to him last month when he received the award from the New Hampshire Knights of Columbus.

The award is presented each year by the New Hampshire State

Council of the Knights of Columbus to an individual who, by his life, exemplifies and magnifies the virtues of patriotism, leadership and humanitarianism.

Silvestri, a resident of Salem, president of Silvestri Corporation and a member of the knights for 10 years, was chosen as this year's recipient.

The good news came at the

worst of times for Silvestri. He learned that he won the award on the day of his father's funeral.

"It was a piece of good news on an otherwise grim day," Silvestri said. "I was shocked and honored."

Silvestri received the award for his frenetic work within the Salem chapter of the Knights of Columbus, Council 4442. He has served as chairman of the Knights' Tootsie Roll Project for the last several years. Council 4442 has been able to raise more money in each of the past five years, thanks mainly to Silvestri's efforts.

Outside of the council, Silvestri has worked to turn the basement of St. Joseph's Church into a community center and has worked many hours for the Sisters of Mercy on their Warde Health Center.

"We will be forever grateful to Bill for going the extra mile, because we are certain that the quality and scope of the project would not have been realized without his commitment to excellence and his financial contributions," Sr. Patricia Sullivan of the Sisters of Mercy wrote in her letter nominating Silvestri for the award.

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Salem resident Bill Silvestri is the recipient of the 2000 Granite Award from the New Hampshire State Council of the Knights of Columbus.

Observer/Steve Eifler

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Sullivan had more words of praise for Silvestri: "In conversations with Bill, you learn not only of his work ethic but also that he is a strong family man. He radiates devotion, pride and love of his family."

Others who wrote in to support Silvestri echoed similar thoughts.

"To sum it up, Bill's love for his fellow human beings, his dedication to the Knights of Columbus, his support for the church and his never-denying help make him a great human being," said fellow Knight Bill Bamford.

"Unquestioningly, Bill Silvestri has distinguished himself through his work, his community service and his family. He is a hard-working professional with deep loyalties to his family, friends and co-workers. He is a man of integrity and sensitivity," wrote another supporter.

Another called him a "hero."

Silvestri would have none of it, though, remaining humble through it all.

"I don't like to toot my own horn but it was quite an award," Silvestri said.

He plans to just keep doing the things he likes to do, and if awards come along with that, that's fine with him.

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