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Chili's Fodge Named Outstanding Citizen of Year

by Mike Murphy
Gates-Chili News

Armed with a typewriter, a tractor and not much else, Ron Fodge took the job as Chili's recreation director in 1972.

Former Councilman Ed Merante was one of the first to greet him on his first day in what Fodge calls his "little cubicle."

"In comes Ed Merante, and the first thing out of his mouth is "Hi, this is the home of Little Guy Soccer and will you go take care of that field," he said. "I didn't even know where the tractor was. Obviously, I've been on that tractor a few times since."

Fodge has more tools to help with his job now, and he can mount an Outstanding Citizen of the Year award on the wall of his slightly larger office.

Fodge was honored as the Gates-Chili Council of the Greater Rochester Metro Area Chamber of Commerce as its 1993 Outstanding Citizen of the Year. A dinner presenting the local chamber's awards was held last Thursday at Logan's Party House.

"The bottom-line is I love my job," he said. "You don't get an award like this by yourself. Over the course of the years, I've met a lot of good people and I've had a lot of good people under me. All of these people who are volunteering make me look good. You can't tip your hat enough for those kind of people.

"All the people we have at the town hall - they're great people who don't get enough respect," he continued. "Without the friendship that goes on there every day, every week, I wouldn't be up here right now."

In addition to his many duties as recreation and parks



Ron Fodge

charitable organizations.

Fodge and others from his Churchville-Chili High graduating class were instrumental in establishing a memorial scholarship, in the memory of Steven Burke, given to two graduating seniors at the high school. The group also raised funds which went towards the purchase

Merante said Fodge was deserving of the award.

"It has been a pleasure to watch his progress," he said. Fodge thanked his wife, Linda, and their two children for their patience.

"I don't know how many times I've busted out of dinner or shot off to a tournament on the weekend" he