

Historical society 'stalwart' named volunteer of the year

Putman chosen among field of 28 at 15th annual luncheon

By Dorella Hoffman
MANAGING EDITOR

Carole R. Putman has attended her share of "Woman Volunteer of the Year" luncheons, co-sponsored by the Junior League of Boca Raton and Wachovia Bank.

In fact, Putman served as chairwoman of the event 12 years ago as a member of the Junior League, one of South County's most prominent charity and volunteer-service organizations.

But Thursday's luncheon will likely be her most memorable.

Out of 28 nominees representing charity and social-service groups, Putman was named 2002's top volunteer for her long-time work with the Boca Raton Historical Society.

"I am one of the hundreds of volunteers that the Junior League of Boca Raton has trained and turned out into the community over the past 31 years," Putman said as she accepted the award during the 15th annual event at the Boca Raton Resort and Club. "All I can say is that they do it the best."

A Boca Raton resident since 1979, Putman has served nine years on the historical society's board of trustees, helping direct the organization's efforts to document and preserve buildings and artifacts related to South County history. Two years ago, she served as co-president of the society with Susan Saxton,



Carole Putman, center, is overwhelmed as she is announced as the "2002 Woman Volunteer of the Year" Thursday during the 15th annual awards luncheon, sponsored by the Junior League of Boca Raton and Wachovia Bank. At left is Cynthia Krebsback, Junior League president. Harry Weede Jr., executive vice president and Palm Beach County regional president of Wachovia Bank, is visible at right.

Founded in 1988 by Wachovia's predecessor, First United Bank, the award recognizes exemplary service by a woman volunteer working at a nonprofit organiza-

tion within the Junior League's service boundaries, roughly from North Broward County to Lake Worth.

Two years after the award was

established, Putman chaired the first luncheon produced in coop-

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Luncheon was expected to raise \$50,000 for the league's charity and social-service projects

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eration with the Junior League.

Wachovia, which will merge next month with First Union bank, handles the nomination and winner-selection process to avoid any conflict of interest with the league.

About 900 people, mostly women, attended the luncheon, which was emceed by Kristin Hoke of Channel 25.

The event featured an elaborate fashion show coordinated by Town Center at Boca Raton mall.

The luncheon was expected to raise more than \$50,000 for the Junior League's charity and social-service projects, said Wanda Harrold, event chairwoman.

Harry W. Weede Jr., Wachovia's Palm Beach County regional

president, presented the award to Putnam and praised all of the nominees.

"Each and every one of them deserves recognition for the service and dedication that they give to our community," Weede said.

Putnam echoed those sentiments.

"I am in awe of all the achievements of the volunteers who are here, and I'm just proud to be part of that group," said Putnam, who with her husband, Charles, raised two children in Boca Raton - Jonathan, now 25, and Lauren, 21.

Boca Raton magazine Publisher Margaret Mary Shuff, who served as the honorary chairwoman of the luncheon, is a longtime member of the historical society.

She called Putnam "one of the stalwarts" of the organization.

"She just gets in there and does whatever needs to be done," said

Shuff, whose magazine is cosponsoring the society's train-car restoration project underway at the historic Boca Raton depot.

This year's judging panel included Sarah S. Pollak of Boca Raton Community Hospital; Patti Carpenter, who won the volunteer award last year; Laura Cunningham of the Palm Beach Post; Palm Beach County

Commissioner Mary McCarty; former Boca Raton City Councilwoman Wanda Thayer; and Sara Visomirski of WPBF-TV Channel 25.

The luncheon marked the second major South County event this month honoring women for community service.

On Oct. 9, Soroptimist International of Boca Raton/Deerfield

Beach awarded its "Women of Distinction 2002" honors to volunteers Janice D. DiLorenzo, the Rev. Elizabeth Pankey-Warren, Carla Shulman and Michele M. Poole. In addition, Gloria Drummond, who pioneered the organization that founded Boca Raton Community Hospital, received the Soroptimists' lifetime achievement award.



The 28 nominees for the 2002 award stand on stage Thursday during the 15th annual "Woman Volunteer of the Year" luncheon and fashion show.