

# Press Release

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## Chamber's Lifetime Achievement Award For 2023 Honors Dave Klaassen

**Grand Haven, MI** – Members of the Chamber of Commerce Grand Haven, Spring Lake, Ferrysburg celebrated and honored the lifetime achievements of Dave Klaassen. The award was presented at the Chamber Celebration at Spring Lake County Club by Ken Formsma. The Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes and honors business men and women who strive toward the highest level of professional accomplishments, who excel in their chosen profession and have devoted significant time and energy to improve the community's quality of life.

Dave is a homegrown business and community leader that has given a lifetime of commitment to excellence not only as a successful businessperson, but always providing leadership in community service dedicated to improving Northwest Ottawa County. He has spent a lifetime as an always present force, devoting time, talent, and treasure to improve the quality of life throughout the community. A graduate of Grand Haven High School, where he was part of the undefeated football team of 1957, he continued his education at Muskegon Community College and graduated from Wisconsin Institute of Mortuary Science, returning home in 1965 to begin his life-long commitment to helping local families through the difficult period of grief and pain following the loss of a loved one. Dave retired in 1992 from VBK Funeral Homes. In 2005, in partnership with his sons Scott and Kurt, the Klaassen Family Funeral Home was established on the corner of Beechtree and Robbins Road.

Throughout his career Dave has been engaged as a long time member of the Salvation Army Advisory Board, Charter secretary of the Grand Haven Lions Club, TCM past Vice President, charter member of North Ottawa Hospice Steering Committee, lifetime member of Tri-Cities Historical Museum, Kiwanis Club, Past president of ACI, served on capital campaign committees for International Aid, the United Fund, Love Inc, Grand Haven Boardwalk and the original Imagination Station and this is just a few. He was elected to serve on Grand Haven City Council from 1979 to 1987, with two of those years as Mayor "ProTem".

Dave, along with his wife Sandy, donated to Habitat for Humanity of Grand Haven its first house. As a testimony to his commitment to community, he was the recipient of Jaycees Distinguished Service Award "Man of the Year" in 1976, Grand Haven Eagles "Community Builder Award" in 2015 and inducted into Grand Haven High School's "Hall of Fame" in 2019. A long-time Board Member and volunteer for the Grand Haven Coast Guard Festival he was the recipient of the Coast Guards highest civilian award from the Commandant, the "Medal of Honor". He was a driving force behind the original Grand Haven Boardwalk in all its phases as well as being instrumental in the construction of Lighthouse Connector Park and the original Imagination Station.

Dave's years of business, civic and community service have left an enduring legacy for all who live in or visit our community. His involvement in our community has touched young and old as he has modeled servant leadership as a committed volunteer, a devoted family man, a generous donor, an upstanding businessman and man of faith.

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