

Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed guests, and everyone who heard there would be cake!

Today, we gather to celebrate those rare individuals who can spot a community need from a mile away and still not pretend they didn't see it. Yes, I'm talking about our exceptional community service award recipients!

Now, some people spend their weekends binge-watching the latest series. But our awardees? They spend theirs saving the planet, one recycled bottle and heartfelt smile at a time. They're the kind of people who would return a shopping cart to its proper place, even if the wind seems to be against them!

This year's nominees have volunteered in rain, snow, and what felt like snow mixed with pudding. They're committed, dedicated, and, frankly, superhuman. Rumor has it they've even got all their holiday shopping done. In May.

Let's be honest--volunteering takes a special kind of person. Someone who finds joy in helping neighbors repaint a hideous fence by saying, "Sure, I'd love to!" with only a hint of sarcasm. And, of course, these folks have shown us that care and kindness can be contagious--you know, the good kind of contagious!

Let's hear it for all the organizers, the movers and shakers, and, notably, the bringers of snacks. Because behind every great volunteer effort, there's probably someone in the background making sure no one runs out of cookies!

So, to our award winners, thank you for re-writing what it means to be a community hero and for making "it takes a village" sound a lot less like work. Enjoy the night that's all about you--though we're not sure what you're going to do with it, seeing as you're always so busy!

Congratulations, and may your spirits stay as lifted as our energy post-dessert tonight. Cheers!