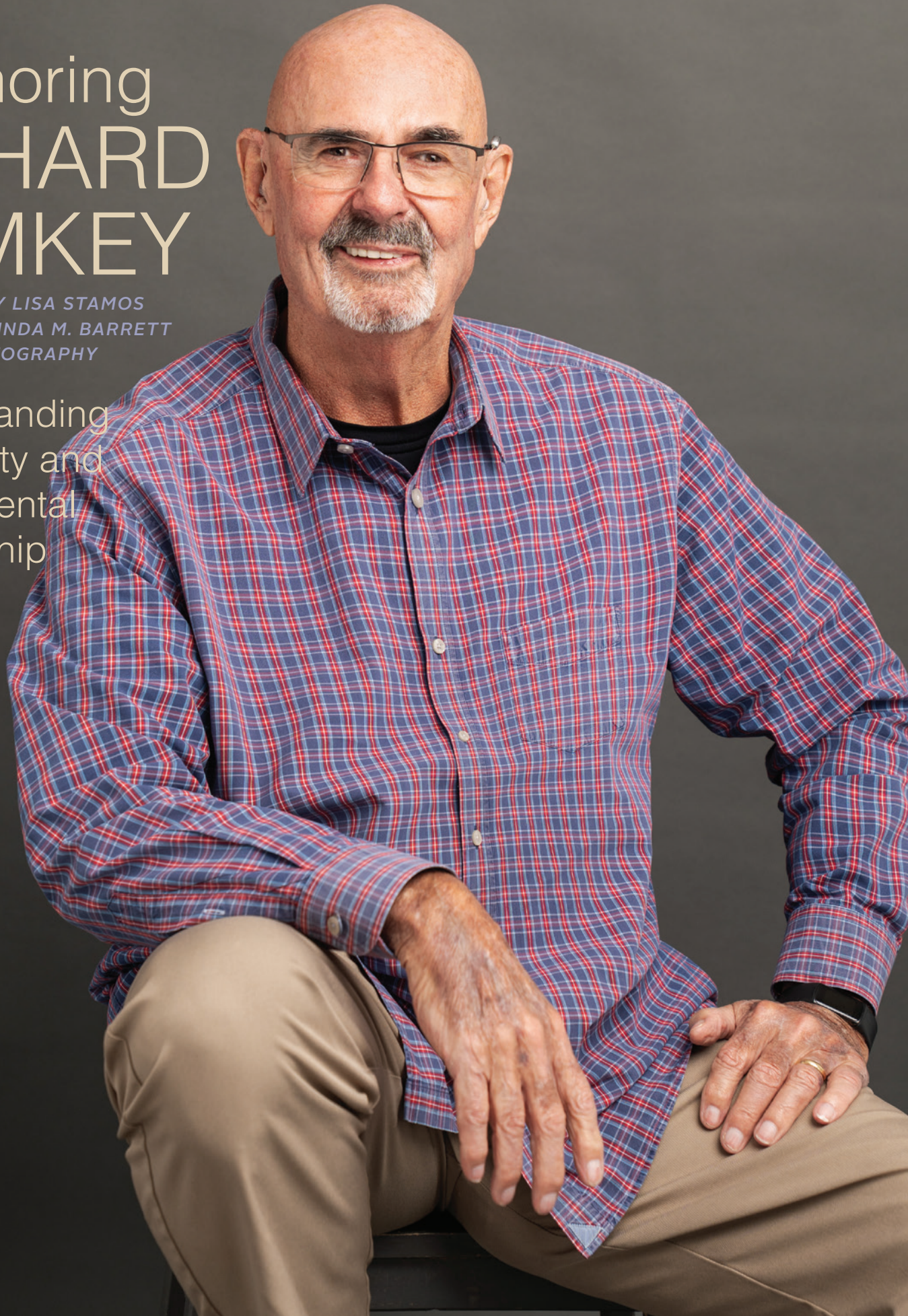


QUINTESSENTIAL PEOPLE®

# Honoring RICHARD LAMKEY

WORDS BY LISA STAMOS  
IMAGES BY LINDA M. BARRETT  
PHOTOGRAPHY

For Outstanding  
Community and  
Environmental  
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OAKLAND, ILLINOIS, is about halfway between the Land of Lincoln and the Crossroads of America—Springfield and Indianapolis. Country music songs often mention dirt back roads and one-stop-light towns. Where Richard Lamkey grew up, there wasn't even one stop light. The population was about 1,500 then. His family worked on their 200-acre farm growing corn, soybeans, hogs, and cattle. The family was active in community and church.

Richard's father, Ernest Lamkey, was a vocational agriculture teacher with two master's degrees. During World War II, Ernest served as a tank commander for George S. Patton. Back home, he ran the farm operation and flew small planes from the local airport. He was the first in his family to have a college education.

Mom Alice grew up in Isabel, Illinois, a town about one-tenth the size of Oakland. She was also the first in her family to go to college. Her family farmed for a living. Alice was a home economics teacher and earned a master's degree from Eastern Illinois University.

Richard's two (late) siblings, Kathryn and Fred, were successful and well-educated. Fred was a graduate of ISU with a master's in business. He had an accomplished 40-year banking career and landed as president of several small farmer-oriented banks. Kathryn graduated from Eastern Illinois with a degree in political science. She taught high school in Elmwood Park before changing careers to become Central Regional Director of the Actors' Equity Association's Chicago office. Kathryn won a gold medal in basketball at age 72 in the Senior Olympics.



## START SOMETHING!

Richard was active in 4-H Club, Future Farmers of America, and Methodist Youth Fellowship. A graduate of the University of Illinois, he earned a degree in Agriculture. In his first job, Richard was a grounds employee at Bob O'Link Golf Club in Highland Park. He also worked for Medinah Country Club and spent nine years at Bryn Mawr Country Club in Lincolnwood. The time came for Richard to start his own landscape business, and partnered with Greg Oltman. "The Christmas trees" in downtown Barrington and hundreds of other village tree installations were generously donated by the two.

Richard and wife Wanita have been blessed in marriage for 57 years. They have raised three children in Barrington who all live nearby—Nicole, in Geneva; Nathan, in Glen Ellyn, and Tyler, who

lives in River Forest.

It was a call from the Barrington Park District that kicked off a series of master strokes for Richard. The caller said that 5th-grade daughter Nicole's soccer team did not have a coach. In what would become Richard's trademark, he stepped up and learned the job, going as far as becoming a state-approved soccer coach after studying the sport with library books.

His leadership resume in the Barrington area represents lasting impact through building bridges between park districts, conservation efforts, Barrington schools, local sports, and county forest preserves. He is a commissioner and past president of the Barrington Hills Park District; founding Trustee of the Barrington 220 Educational Foundation, is on the Board of Directors for the Barrington Area Conservation Trust (BACT) and is a founding member of the Barrington Area Soccer Association (BASA).

With small town roots, where does high-impact leadership come from? For Richard, it comes from a family built on education, a strong work ethic, church, and community service. And that one capstone secret to success?

Ralph Richard "Dick" Lamkey remembers a man named Vaclav Zolmun, who escaped the grip of Russian indoctrination, made it to America, and brought his family here. "He ran a soil testing company for golf courses," Richard said. "He taught me the basic secret to life. In his efforts to speak English, he called that secret "bah-lance". In life, he said, family is first, church is second, education is third, and community service is fourth. He said, don't eat too much, or drink too much. Seek balance."

HERE ARE SOME WORDS THAT OTHERS  
SHARED ABOUT RICHARD LAMKEY.

**John Ardent, BHS HORTICULTURE & SCIENCE TEACHER,  
FFA ADVISOR**

Richard Lamkey is an inspiring man. Working with him during most of my career at Barrington High School has been an honor. Cooperating with Barrington Area Conservation Trust to grow and plant over 25,000 native plants in the community has been a remarkable experience for my students and me. His expertise and supportive nature have inspired my students and me as well. Even though Richard has raised a family and has run a successful business, he has found the time to give back to his community and the environment. His selfless acts have made the world a better place. I look forward to continuing our collaboration and friendship.

**Mary Dale, EXECUTIVE DIR., BARRINGTON 220  
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION**

The Barrington 220 Educational Foundation was fortunate to have Dick in its corner in 1998 when a group of Barrington residents came together to form a new non-profit whose purpose would be to support the work of the district. Dick served on the original design group led by Dede Wamberg and continued to serve as a founding trustee. For over 25 years the Foundation has been raising money to transform the learning experience through innovative projects and grants in Barrington 220. The Foundation has donated more than \$4.4 million to date.

Fast forward two decades later, Dick volunteered on the board of another local non-profit, Barrington Area Conservation Trust, allowing him to enjoy nature while protecting Barrington's natural beauty. We were thrilled when in 2023 he was able to connect with the horticulture teacher John Ardent at BHS to use the newly renovated Greenhouse (funded by the Foundation) at BHS to grow sedges for a conversation project for BACT bringing his volunteer experiences full circle.

**Karen Darch, FORMER BARRINGTON VILLAGE  
PRESIDENT**

Dick has a wonderful community spirit and his generosity in donating the Village Christmas tree has brightened the holiday season for thousands over the years. People like Dick make Barrington the special place that it is.

**Dave Nelson, BARRINGTON CULTURAL COMMISSION  
CO-CHAIR**

Dick and I share a 40-year friendship. We first met while working on the creation of BASA and I have often referred to him as the "Godfather of BASA." We served on the original board and Dick provided all the soccer equipment in that first season. He continues to support and attend Barrington soccer games.

We later served together on the Barrington Area Conservation Trust Board, preserving open space throughout our area, and he continues to serve on that board today. Dick is also a past president and commissioner for the Barrington Hills Park District and board member of the Barrington 220 Educational Foundation.

Dick owned NILCO, a very successful landscape company, as well as Greenfield Golf Course Consultants. In that capacity, he and his wife, Juanita,

have donated many trees and labor for the school district and the community (think BHS trees along Lake-Cook Road and the Village of Barrington Christmas tree on Cook Street, to name a few). Dick has always been a great supporter of the Barrington area and has shared countless hours of his time and treasure to make it as good as it can be!

**Jean Maddrell, NONPROFIT COLLEAGUE**

Although I first met Dick through our sons' sports, it wasn't until I became a Barrington Hills Park District (BHPD) commissioner that I truly got to know him. We served together for many years as commissioners, with Dick eventually serving as president. He was deeply dedicated to ensuring that BHPD residents were well represented in the decision-making process. While the Riding Center was a primary focus, Dick also made sure the tennis courts were well maintained and, at one point, supported a summer children's program. Dick has always given his time to the betterment of the community and has continued this commitment by serving on the board of the Barrington Area Conservation Trust. Both organizations were fortunate to have Dick as a member of their boards.

**Jan Nestrud, BARRINGTON AREA CONSERVATION TRUST**

I have been privileged to know and work with Dick for at least 35 years. We met through Fox River Valley Pony Club as we both had children that participated in the education of horse care and riding at the then-called the Barrington Countryside Park District Riding Center. Most of the maintenance was done by the volunteer members of the Riding Club of Barrington Hills, the Pony Club, and the Fox River Valley Hunt. Dick was elected to the Park Board and, as president, used skills he developed through his successful landscaping business, managing golf courses, commercial campuses, and upscale residences, to get the Riding Center back in shape. He hired an excellent employee, purchased a used tractor and mower, and transformed the property into a beautiful equestrian center that the community could be proud of.

The 15 acres of the Riding Center is surrounded by 4,000 acres of the Forest Preserve of Cook County land. The Riding Club maintains the riding trails and the Pony Club cares for the competition cross-country jump courses in the Forest Preserve. Despite permits and insurance, there were occasional conflicts. Dick had a brilliant idea to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement between the Barrington Countryside Park District and the Forest Preserve District of Cook County.

Dick spent five years going weekly to the offices of our local Cook County Commissioner to develop what came to be a 20-year agreement that perpetuated the equestrian nature of the property and created a productive, cooperative relationship between the Park District and the Forest Preserve. Dick is a hero to the community and is commemorated by naming the Trail Head in his name.

I am fortunate to work with Dick again through the Barrington Area Conservation Trust, where we both serve on the Board of Directors. He is tireless in his restoration efforts, removing invasive species, and planting native ones. Dick is working with Barrington High School to grow native plants in the school's green house, inspiring the students to help plant them in the Pederson and Rieke Preserves across from BHS. From there, the students and the community can watch the ever-changing panorama of blossoms through the growing season. Our community is so grateful for the love and dedication Dick has shared with the equestrians and environmentalists. Thank you, Dick.



**Scott Steib, BHS HEAD COACH BOYS SOCCER, ASST. COACH GIRLS SOCCER**

Our community is incredibly fortunate to have a man who not only cares deeply about Barrington, but who has also been so willing to take action to make it an even better place. When I first met Dick Lamkey back in 1999, he was out laying sod on the soccer fields at our Fields of Dreams complex, covering spots that were so barren and worn that our players would have had to jump over them to avoid twisting an ankle or tumbling. In the 25+ years since then, Dick has continued to support the athletic programs here at BHS, with a little extra connection between him and our soccer program.

Dick is a friend of the program, watching and cheering for our teams, taking time to encourage and congratulate our coaches and players for their excellent efforts and their talents. In October, at the end of one of our practices, we took a few minutes with our varsity team to hear him tell the boys about when soccer was just getting started in our community. It was eye-opening for our players to hear how there was a time not so long ago when soccer wasn't much of an option in the Barrington area.


I cannot express how thankful I am to Dick (as well as Joanne Snyder, Mark Breckan and others) who started the Barrington Area Soccer Association back in 1992. The success that our high school soccer teams have enjoyed is a direct result of the program. Without community members like Dick Lamkey, we would have been playing catch-up with other communities, instead of being a shining example of how a community can emerge as a great place for soccer to thrive. He is so deserving of this recognition!

**Chuck Thyfault, BARRINGTON LIONS CLUB**

Lion Dick Lamkey has been a steadfast and valued presence in the Barrington Lions Club. He is always willing to step up and support our initiatives, whether it's participating in highway cleanups or leading the Leo Club in celebrating Earth Day. Within our club, Lion Dick has played an essential role in fundraising efforts. Through his long-standing relationships in the golf course maintenance community, developed over many years in the landscaping business, he has generously provided numerous prizes for our silent auctions, most notably complimentary foursomes at various golf courses.

Lion Dick consistently puts forth the effort to make a positive difference. His welcoming smile and upbeat attitude lift the spirit of every project he's involved in. The Barrington Lions Club is truly honored to have him as a member and deeply appreciates his continued dedication and meaningful presence at our events.

**Matt Vondra, PRESIDENT, BARRINGTON AREA CONSERVATION TRUST**

Richard Lamkey has been an invaluable member of the BACT Board, working directly with D220 and Barrington High School on an open-air laboratory project at Pederson and Rieke Preserves, and to inspire our future generation of conservationists. Currently, Dick is a member of a group of concerned citizens advocating for the renewal of the Intergovernmental Agreement with the Cook County Forest Preserve's new Superintendent, Adam Bianchi, who is working with Barrington Hills Park District's current leadership to renew and amend the IGA to ensure future generations of Cook County and Barrington Hills residents are able to enjoy Spring Creek Preserve in its natural condition. The Board of the BACT is inspired by Dick's energy and tenacity. 

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