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5 QUESTIONS WITH ... MIKE CARROLL

DJ spins for Detroit Special Olympics games

Volunteer of year likes entertaining

BY ESTHER ALLWEISS INGBER • FREE PRESS SPECIAL WRITER • JUNE 15, 2008

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Professional mobile DJ Mike Carroll of Southfield says he's a "happy camper" who enjoys a life of music and volunteerism. That has not gone unnoticed.



DJ Mike Carroll

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As part of the annual recognition for volunteers during National Volunteer Week (April 27 through May 3), Special Olympics Michigan selected Carroll as outstanding volunteer of the year for Detroit.

"Mike has donated his time, equipment and expertise to be the one and only DJ for Special Olympics Detroit local games," said area director Stephen Czapski. "He enjoys entertaining the athletes, and they look forward to seeing him every year."

Around 6,500 people with intellectual disabilities from the Southeast region -- Oakland, Wayne and Macomb counties -- take part in Special Olympics Michigan's year-round athletic competitions, ranging from snowshoeing to team handball.

QUESTION: Are you a local guy?

ANSWER: Yes. I was born in Detroit but have lived in Southfield off and on since 1963. . . . I graduated from Brother Rice High in Birmingham and attended University of Detroit. I was laid off in 1980 from Pontiac Motor Co.

Q: How did you become a DJ?

A: In 1981, a former bar at Grand River and Telegraph went from having live music to a DJ. It was horrible. I told the owner anyone with a home stereo could do a better job. He asked me to prove it.

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I decided to pick up a few extra bucks as the DJ and found I was good at it.

Q: What's your musical focus now?

A: I DJ mostly for weddings and occasional special events. I wear tuxedos unless requested otherwise; I'm very adaptable. The job is more than popping on tunes, though I have approximately 4,000 CDs. I'm sophisticated when I need to be, but I'm also fun.

Q: Who is "Madman Mike, Your Musical Slave"?

A: That's me, and my Web site (www.madmanmike.com)! Besides promoting my services, I have information on entertainers, festivals, events, recording studios and labels, competitions, stores, karaoke and more. I also recommend charities that need help.

Q: How do you support Special Olympics?

A: I got a solicitation call around 20 years ago and offered to volunteer. They hooked me up with Detroit Special Olympics. On May 16, I supplied a sound-system backup for the local games (track and field events) held at Detroit Renaissance High School. I put on music during lunchtime, when the athletes could dance and party. We had around 2,000 people there, including athletes, coaches and volunteers.

It was a huge thrill when Motown singer Martha Reeves of the Detroit City Council presented the volunteer award to me. People involved with Special Olympics Michigan are such cool people. You just enjoy doing it so much.

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