



2011  
VOLUNTEER  
OF THE  
YEAR

BARBARA BANKS

## CIVICS LESSON

His tenacious work to improve South County makes Bruce Dillon our Volunteer of the Year.

“I HAVE A TENDENCY TO STICK WITH THINGS,” says Bruce Dillon. That’s an understatement. The retired utility worker has spent eight years in full-time—but unofficial and unpaid—service to south Sarasota County. “[County commissioner] Jon Thaxton calls me the mayor,” he jokes.

Dillon, 59, whose family moved to Venice in 1956, serves dozens of local organizations, often acting as a vital link between nonprofits and the local government. He’s played a major role in everything from bike paths on busy roads to Legacy Trail kiosks to landscaping along U.S. 41. Most recently, he’s been “whittling away” at the 30-something projects comprising the Nokomis Revitalization Plan—just one of the many committees he chairs.

His duties are not glamorous. A former vice president of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 824, Dillon talks passionately about ordinances, the petition process and how to navigate county bureaucracy. He equates his experiences as a volunteer to “Civics 101.” But despite his detailed approach, Dillon’s volunteerism obviously stems from enormous affection for the town he grew up in.

Yet he’s reluctant to glorify his service. He simply admits, “I like to see positive change.”—HANNAH WALLACE

In the last eight years, Dillon has worked with dozens of organizations and agencies.