

JEFF 'JHO' HOYLAND

2019 CITIZEN OF THE YEAR  
RECOGNITION ~ CELEBRATION

BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS  
SEPTEMBER 28, 2019

Ninety-four percent of the people in this room donate their time to the town of Bedford. They are referees, coaches, selectmen, committee members, minutemen, etc. Nice to see Socialism in action. Capitalists have a special name for us - Volunteers. So, I am pleased to be gathered at the official Town of Bedford Volunteer Pep Rally, and I accept the responsibility of being the mascot.

I never thought that I would have a forum to be able to thank everyone who has ever helped me. So, I will take the last of my time thanking everyone who made this possible.

I want to thank the Bedford Minuteman Company. You didn't have to join, and yet you did. You didn't have to buy your kits, and yet you did. You didn't have to be here, and yet you are.

I want to thank all the people who gathered on National Camera Day, who got signatures to get me nominated. This only reinforces my daughter's conspiracy theory that there are shadow organizations controlling the world behind my back. You didn't have to show up, yet you did.

I want to thank all the team parents, who keep activities of this town running smoothly - from bands, to sports, to scouting . . . A special shout out to the parents of the 2016 DCL Champion Volleyball team, who coordinated their efforts to pick me up and drive me to matches. They were one of the first ones to realize that having "Mr. Hoyland on the sidelines" was worth an extra 4 points per set. You didn't have to do that, and yet you did.

I want to thank Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Facebook gave me a "free" way to share photos. When I see that relatives from Iraq, Vietnam, Guam, Italy, etc., are commenting they love the photographs; I knew I had something special going on. I come from a military family, so I know that most of the military families in Bedford have their relatives in other parts of the world.

I want to thank Peter Parker, whose Uncle told him, with great power comes great responsibilities.

When I went through radiation the first time, I didn't get a superpower. When I went through radiation a second time, I didn't realize I had my superpower, until this year. My superpower is the ability to bring people together through kindness. I have a bunch of helpers — all the parents who tag other parents on my Facebook page. I am able to connect one small Bedford group with other groups. Maybe I am like a bumblebee and help cross-pollinate the volunteers in Bedford.

I'm a 9-year survivor. I'm on my third bout with cancer, and I still have a several year life expectancy. The people of Bedford stepped up in a big way to help me and my family when I first got cancer. I want to thank the Neighbor Brigade, who made sure that I was able to get rides to all my appointments. You didn't have to volunteer to drive me, and yet you did.

When I went on medical disability, I needed to fill up my day, also get some fresh air and physical exercise. I want to thank The Bedford Local Transit, who gave me the ability to get to the high school for a buck and then Lyft it home later. Which meant I could photograph whatever activities were happening at BHS and JGMS. . . And there is almost always something going on. Not every parent can make it to school activities, but I can, and I'd want someone to do it for me if they could.

I want to thank the Bedford Free Public library for giving me a dry, warm place to recharge when I run low of energy. Sometimes, I get to take pictures in the historical books room. In the winter, this is a great place to take CAMERA and connect Bedford of the past, with Bedford of the future.

I want to thank all the taxpayers of Bedford, who realize that rehabbing an old building for modern uses is a wise idea. You also realize that new stage lighting and sound systems are important.

You realize a turf field is a good option.

I want to thank all the parents of Bedford youth baseball and softball, who let me wander around the diamonds in the center of town, taking pictures of their children. The best compliment I ever got, was one athlete whispering to another athlete, Hey, that's the guy who takes pictures of the varsity teams.

I want to thank all the parents who engage in group activities like dance, bands, softball, hockey, etc. You are great role models to show the students that life is more than just making money. You have to make time to live. You don't have to play, and yet you do.

I want to thank everyone who contributes to fundraiser raffles. I am a sucker for a great gift basket, although my wife Randy might frown when I bring home a giant basket of candies. Oops, it happens. You didn't have to donate, and yet you did.

I want to thank The Bedford Citizen, who lets me freely tag them on my Twitter posts. Traditional news sources are covering local events less and less. And The Bedford Citizen is bucking that trend.

I want to thank every student/athlete whoever set a personal best time or distance. I go the distance because you go the distance. Especially the athletes on Winter Track. Boston is an ugly place to drive to get to a high school event, so I make the trip for their parents.

I want to thank Bedford for supporting a robust theatrical community. I love attending the dress rehearsals and being able to run from one spot in the audience to another so that I can create terrific pictures of the performances.

I want to thank every person who cried when they viewed my photographs; I plan to do it again in the future.

I want to thank every grandparent who said, "That is so precious." I share on Facebook because it is an easy way for grandparents to see their grandkids.

I want to thank the webmaster at Bedford High School Parent Association. I never tag BHSPA with any of my posts out of respect to not clutter up their social media, and yet every day they pick one or two of my posts to re-tweet.

I want to thank the Founding Fathers of the United States who unanimously agree, "they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." I have chosen to focus on "The pursuit of Happiness."

I know there are still people in the audience, who are trying to figure out who the other 6 percent of people who are not donating time to the town of Bedford. Most of these people were invited by me, so let me single a few out.

Dorothy Hoyland is here from Stoneham. Anytime I post that it's time for another trip into Dana Farber, I receive a text from her, DO YOU NEED ANY HELP? She's got my back. Dorothy was married to my brother, Alan, who died several years ago. Alan was one of my chief mentors in life. He was one of the kindest people I know.

David and Ruth Mylam from Lakeville couldn't be here but I wanted to mention them. David is Rector at Church of Our Saviour Episcopal. Eight years ago, David responded to one of my posts online with the comment; Maybe God isn't done with you yet. At that point in my life, I realized God and I could make a pretty good team together. It's worked out pretty well so far, don't you think?

My sister, Karen Raber, and her daughter Katherine came up from Atlanta. I wouldn't be here without Karen. Karen is one of my favorite examples of a kind role model. She understands that responsibility is just, "given my abilities, how can I respond?" Karen always filters that through love, although I am checking Katherine's face to see if she will roll her eyes . . .

The best memory I have of Karen is from back when I was in elementary school in Florida. I was selected to play a bongo solo for the daytime school Christmas choir performance. No one in my family could make it. Karen was able to get out of middle school to come watch. I saw her in the audience. It made my day. She didn't have to show up, and yet there she was.

Finally, I'd like to thank my wife, who lets me wander around town - unescorted. She lets me post online - unescorted. When Randy isn't at work, you can find her in her beautiful garden doing the gardening. On days when I am not feeling as strong, I love to walk around her garden. It makes me happy. If she is home when I am headed out the door to photograph an event. The last thing I hear from her is. "Have fun, Daddy, U B U."

So, to all the people I have mentioned. Thank you. For everyone in this room, you didn't have to be here, and yet here you are, and for that, I thank you very much.