

**ADDRESS GIVEN BY MAYOR KALMIN SMITH
AT THE CELEBRATION OF FIRST CARING NEIGHBOR DAY
IN GRAND LEDGE MICHIGAN**

The Book of Proverbs tells us that: “He who despises his neighbor sins, but blessed is he who is kind to the needy.” That is the real message of the Caring Neighbor Foundation.

A few years ago, I was privileged to meet Richard Currier at a meeting of the GLEAP Board of Directors. GLEAP is the Grand Ledge Emergency Action Program, formed years ago by local churches, to serve the unique and special needs of our community, that cannot be met by other sources. Mr. Currier made a presentation on the importance of good neighbors, and explained how an abundance of caring neighbors can strengthen any community. He suggested a program for Grand Ledge, to encourage neighbors to get to know, and assist one another, on the grounds that even the smallest act of kindness, can uplift our City.

A few days later, Mr. Currier invited me to his home for lunch, and we discussed his dream of a Caring Neighbor Foundation. It wasn't long before the Caring Neighbor Foundation was organized to encourage caring neighbors, and to promote acts of kindness in our community.

The City of Grand Ledge is proud to be the first city to promote the Caring Neighbor Foundation, by declaring a Caring Neighbor Day in 2008. We are gratified that Governor Jennifer Granholm has proclaimed September 26, 2010, as Caring Neighbor Day in Michigan, and we are happy to celebrate Caring Neighbor Day today, at the Grand Ledge Farmer's Market.

I want to thank Richard Currier for his leadership in creating the Caring Neighbor Foundation, and also Christine Richardson, for her work as coordinator of the Grand Ledge Celebration of Michigan Caring Neighbor Day. Thank you also to all those who have contributed in any way to this event. As Proverbs tells us: “You, are truly Blessed.”