

Pharmacists honor their best

By MARY LOU CALLAWAY

Howard Dell knows a lot about winning and losing. He's run for public office and lost. He's coached little league baseball teams that won and lost.

But today he's a big winner. Dell was chosen from among more than 300,000 United State pharmacists as the outstanding pharmacist of the year. He'll receive the Daniel B. Smith Award presented by the American Pharmaceutical Association Academy.

Dell, a West Bloomfield resident, didn't even know he had been nominated by his assistant, Forest McDonald.

Service to the community is a large part of the award he will receive in California this spring. Dell, who moved into West Bloomfield from Pontiac more than four years ago, was appointed to the township's planning commission three years ago. On that board, the six-foot-two, deep voiced father of six plugs for planned growth in the community.

Dell's PRESCRIPTION Center on Baldwin Road in Pontiac has been his professional home since 1960. Today he is one of only two independent druggists in Pontiac.

His biggest regret is having to take out the old-fashion soda fountain. Nine-

ty per cent of his business is filling prescriptions.

"Kids used to line up 150 at a time after a little league game for free cokes," Dell remembers.

Kids, and what he has done for them, is a large part of his award. It started with baseball and grew to include football and hockey.

"I'd see 30 kids try out for a team. The coach would pick the best 15 and send the rest home. It broke my heart. I started my own teams so they all could play."

Soon Dell started to win awards and was asked to serve on boards and commissions, always connected with social services.

He ran for public office four times, at the urging of local Republicans, losing narrowly each time. He made two tries to be state representative, then county commissioner and finally for Pontiac City Council.

"That's it," Dell said.

Now he enjoys the local planning commission and has just been appointed to its amendment committee. His relaxed humor can relieve the tension among other commissioners during the often long, stormy sessions.

Usually public buildings are named for people after they die. But in 1975, the Pontiac Parks and Recreation Department named a new structure the Howard Dell Community Center.

FELLOW PHARMACIST McDonald says the medal Dell wins doesn't tell it all. "He combines his profession with a strong sense of humanity."

Recently, while grabbing a snack in a local fast food restaurant, Dell recalled a police officer came up to him and said: "I remember you. You were my little league coach."

That, Dell said, is the biggest kick of all.

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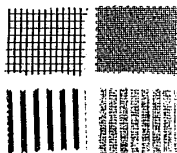
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