

Vania Apps, Fraser Michigan

A mother of 4 boys, now grown men, I have always had a reason for playing outdoors. Bugs, snakes, climbing trees, you name it. Outdoor play was an everyday adventure in Michigan. I have a 12th grade education and was a cosmetologist for 10 years. I was employed at the Denmark Agency as an assistant to Priscilla Jessup, President, and Founder. In 1999 my neighbors and I became involved in the community when a plan to build 35 homes on land adjacent to McKinley Park was proposed.

Once the land was saved, an interest to create a barrier free park was expressed by Fraser's Parks and Recreation. I founded the non-profit Fraser First Booster Club. Many volunteers and many years of fundraising, we created McKinley Barrier Free Park, a 14-acre park of inclusive play for all ages.

In 2021 McKinley Barrier Free Park was honored and presented with KMB's Presidential Award at their annual Conference and Awards Ceremony. After meeting Pat Deck of KMB, I became very interested in KMB. It was a thrill and honor to be elected to the KMB Board of Directors in 2022.