

# Can-Do Spirit Earns Realtor Girl Scout Outing Honoree

By Phyllis Lader

Village of the Branch resident Marie Zere was never a Girl Scout, but she considers herself "a Girl Scout at heart who is always prepared for every situation." Her can-do spirit and positive outlook - along with her groundbreaking achievements as a successful businesswoman, community leader, mother and grandmother - epitomize the finest qualities to which Girl Scouts can aspire. Those qualities make her an especially fitting choice as honoree at the Suffolk County Girl Scout Council's 9th Annual Golf Classic, July 20 at Island Hills Golf and Country Club in Sayville.

Ms. Zere, who is president and owner of Zere Associates, demonstrated her pioneer spirit in 1980 when she established the only female owned commercial and industrial real estate firm on Long Island. At the time, she was a single mom raising three children, ages 13, 12 and 9. She decided to research and learn all she could about commercial real estate and get into the field, with the goal of helping both her own family and the family of man.

"I wanted to help mankind, and I thought I could do it better with money than without money; she recalled. Besides, she felt the commercial real estate field was an exciting one. "I wanted to keep my pulse on things and also get my shot at the golden ring."

She has forged a successful career as a leader in the industry. Her clients include major insurance companies, financial institutions and some of the large residential, commercial and industrial builders on Long Island. She is an outspoken proponent of doing business on Long Island, and has been very successful in bringing companies from as far away as Japan to establish businesses here.

She serves as the President of the Commercial Industrial Real Estate Society of Long Island. She is on the Board of Governors of the New York State of Realtors and is also a board member of Promote Long Island. She is a co-founder of the Suffolk County Republican Woman and an active member of Long Island Mid-Suffolk Business Action (LIMBA), Long Island Builders Institute, and the Long Island Association. She has been the recipient of the Distinguished Achievement in the Field of Business award from the Town of Islip and has been honored by A Planned Program for Life Enrichment (APPLE). She has been instrumental in fund-raising efforts for the Lake Grove School.

While Ms. Zere lived for many years in a house with a geographically split personality - "I would wake up in the Town of Smithtown and eat breakfast in the Town of Brookhaven" - she now resides in the Village of the Branch with her husband, Fred Russo. She and Mr. Russo, a field engineer for Behring Diagnostic, have been married for a year and a half. Between them, they have seven children and six grandchildren. All three of Ms. Zere's children - Michael Paul Zere, David Wayne Zere and Michele Marie Zere, are real estate brokers. Her sons are partners in her firm while her daughter is the advertising director for Real Estate New York Magazine.

A golfer herself - "I'm not good but I love the game and I'm improving," she said - she is proud to be honored by the Girl Scouts at this event.



**SCOUTS' HONOREE:** Village of the Branch resident Marie Zere, who has been named honoree of the Suffolk County Girl Scout Council 1998 Golf Classic, July 20 at Island Hills Golf and Country Club in Sayville.

"We're having so much fun putting this together," she exclaimed. "I've never seen such enthusiasm and support. These are great human beings and genuinely nice people, I'm very, very impressed with this group."

The Golf Classic benefits the Suffolk County Girl Scout Council's outreach services, dedicated to providing camp scholarships for every child residing in a homeless shelter. The Council is the largest youth agency on Long Island, serving over 32,000 girls, ages 5 to 17, including Ms. Zere's two granddaughters.

The event will feature two shotgun starts, continental breakfast, barbecue lunch, cocktails and a dinner reception with awards presentation. Tickets are \$250 per person; \$550 for a twosome and a tee sign; \$1,000 for a foursome package; \$1200 for a corporate package and \$1400 for a 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary package. Admission included refreshments, green fees, cart and clubhouse facilities. Special sponsorship opportunities are available. Those who cannot attend the full day's events are welcome to come for cocktails and dinner for \$75, beginning at 6:30 p.m. for tickets and information, call Eileen Driscoll at 543-6622, extension 24.

"We'll make it fun," says Ms. Zere.

## Around Town

### Family concerts...

The Family Summer Concert Series of the Smithtown Recreation Department at Hoyt Farm Park in Commack continues Sunday, July 12 with a 6:45 p.m. performance by "Gotta Dance Entertainment" and an 8 p.m. revue by "Playground," featuring impersonations of the Four Seasons. Persons attending the free concerts are advised to bring chairs or blankets and picnic dinners.

### Antique show...

The Smithtown Township Arts Council is holding its Fifth Annual Summer Antiques Show and Sale outdoors Sunday, July 12 on the grounds of the Mills Pond House in St. James. Show hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; admission is \$2.50 for adults, children under 12 free. For information, call 423-5923.

### Community band...

The Smithtown Community Band and the Smithtown Community Chorus will appear in free concerts Thursdays, July 9 and 16 at 8 p.m. at the Mills Pond House in St. James. Persons attending are advised to bring lawn chairs or blankets. For information call 862-6575.

### Nature programs...

A "Lets Discover Nature" hour for tiny tots (pre-k to k) will focus on amazing insects Thursday, July 16 from 10 to 11 a.m. "Fun for Kids" programs Wades one to six) Friday, July 10 will be a craft workshop with an "Incredible Insect" session Wednesday, July 15, both from 1 to 2:30 p.m. All programs are held at Caleb Smith State Park Preserve in Smithtown with fees of \$1 per child. For reservations call 265-1054.

### Adult ed-venture...

The "Natural Side of Caleb Smith" will be explored at an Adult Ed-Venture at the State Park Preserve in Smithtown Sunday, July 12 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Fee is \$1.50 per adult; call 265-1054 for information and to register.

### Sunday concert..:

A free Sunday concert on the Stony Brook Village Green, featuring Caribbean music by INK, will be presented July 12 from 8 to 10 p.m. Sponsoring the event in the Village Center is The Ward Melville Heritage Organization.

### Hatchery fete...

The 115th anniversary celebration of the Cold Spring Harbor Fish Hatchery and Aquarium will be held Saturday, July 11 from 1 to 3 p.m. Admission is \$3 for adults, \$1.50 for children five to 12 and seniors over 65.

### Ragtime revue...

On Sunday, July 12 from 2 to 3 p.m. Banjo Bob (Bob Fuhr of Lynbrook) and Crazy Henry's (Henry Newberger of Coram) Ragtime Revue will perform lively, turn of the century tunes on banjo and piano at The Museums at Stony Brook. This program is free with general museum admission. The Museums at Stony Brook is open from noon to 5 p.m. For information, call 751-0066, extension 212.

### Farm festival...

The Long Island Antique Power Association is holding its annual Summer Farm Festival Saturday and Sunday, July 11 and 12 at the Hallockville Farm Restoration Center, 163 Sound Avenue in Riverhead. The event will start daily at 10 a.m. and will feature hay rides, antique engines, farm equipment, tractor displays and old time antique tractor pulls. For information, call Bruce Young at 369-8271 or John Valentine at 366-0120.