

CONGRATULATIONS!

Community Recognizes Store Owner

THANK YOU MARK!



Dear Mark,
You have been a fixture in the Rio Community for many years. Your contributions have made a difference in the lives of many, from school kids, to the churches & elderly. Thanks for all you do for EVERYONE in the community.

**Enjoy the Rose Bowl!
You deserve it!**

~ All your Rio friends

several “gag gifts” such as pliers and doctors kits to anyone he came in contact with who was planning on attending a retirement party being thrown for our local dentist. He wanted to be sure Doc Nelson received SEVERAL gag gifts.

**All these things he
does day in and day out –
and has for many years.**

In addition to the “gift” given to him this week – we published a THANK YOU in the Rio Shopper – and the Community Club has highlighted his business in this week’s Shopper as well (that had nothing to do with the Christmas Surprise) they highlight ONE business every month or so – and it was his turn.

Mark has long been known for his interest in & contributions to the Rio Community. He has been an avid Rio Vikings supporter – often cooking brats for the different school organizations to “sell” outside (in the front of his store) to earn money. He sends sandwiches to the fire scene where our firemen work to save lives & property, sends food to families homes who are grieving the loss of a family member, and is always available to help organize the funeral luncheon, even changing the location of the lunch if he sees there are more people in attendance than will fit in the originally planned location. He calls elderly residents weekly for grocery orders and then has his staff deliver the food, and he includes an “Around Town” section at the top of his AD (front page) where he highlights upcoming community events, sports good luck / congratulations and even Happy Birthday to someone in town. Recently Mark passed out

SO – because he is such a Badger fan (and they are going to the Rose Bowl) Lester Ray (LR’s Tavern owner - right next door to Mark’s Market) stopped to tell me about his idea for a SURPRISE Christmas Gift to Mark from many people in the community. He wanted to collect donations to send Mark to the Rose Bowl. BUT he couldn’t advertise it in the shopper (Mark would see it), and he couldn’t put donation cans around town (he’d see them too) so Lester asked me if I knew of a way to get the word out quickly. I emailed most of the contacts in my Outlook program, explained the situation, and asked everyone to SPREAD THE WORD and give us some feed-back. It didn’t take long for people to reply OR call and ask where to send \$\$ / how much \$\$ etc...

Lester & bartender/manager Lisa Thompson decided to present him with the surprise gift at school, during half-time of a Basketball game – because there were several teachers & school employees who had donated to his gift also. So on Tuesday night, December 13th, one of Mark’s friends pretended to be taking him out for dinner & instead went to the High School where Lisa Thompson (bartender/manager of

LR's place) made the announcement and presented him with a card containing all the details of the SURPRISE.

The card contained the names of everyone who contributed to the trip - And the trip consisted of:

Airline tickets to/from Vegas, one night in a Vegas Hotel, Rental Car & Rose Bowl Ticket. (over \$1,750 was raised in less than one week)

There was \$\$ left after buying the above - so he also received more than \$800 in cash to help with other expenses out there (other nights in a hotel, food, gas etc.) He will be traveling alone, but will more than likely connect with other Rio area residents who are also driving out to the big game.

I didn't attend the game/half time announcement - but have heard that he didn't know what to say - and was completely surprised!

He DID wonder why Lester asked him for his driver's license (which he handed over) and left with it for a while before returning.

BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

RIO COMMUNITY CLUB

Highlights

Mark's Market

108 Lincoln Ave., Rio - 920-992-5220



It has been said that if you want a job done, give it to a busy person. Mark Watters, proprietor of Mark's Market, is that person. He not only owns and manages the grocery store, but also offers catering in Rio and the surrounding communities.

Mark purchased the store from Dale Strmiska, the former owner, in 1988. He had worked for Dale, from whom he learned much about running a business, including how to cut meat (very important in this business) since 1980. Previously Mark worked at a restaurant/bar in Doylestown where he learned to cook. The speciality of the house at the restaurant was spaghetti for \$1.99. A second plate cost one cent.

The Rio Shopper would be incomplete without a Mark's Market ad on the front page.

The ad is a carryover from Dale. Mark includes what's happening around town, in addition to highlighting groceries and produce, in the ad. Mark's also helps several residents by delivering groceries to them weekly. Calls are made on Monday night to a standing list of customers, and deliveries are made Tuesday morning.

Catering is a large part of Mark's business. For the most part his staff serves at the catered events, except for weddings where Mark goes himself. He feels weddings are so very important to all concerned that he wants to make sure the presentation and serving of the food he prepared, goes off without a hitch.

Mark has been very involved in the community for many years, making contributions (and making a difference) to almost everyone in town from school sports teams, churches, the Fire Dept. & the elderly. He follows the Rio Vikings sports teams closely, but probably not quite as close as the WI Badgers! This year, in appreciation for all he has done for the community over the years, and since his favorite team will be playing in the ROSE BOWL, many community members have donated money to provide him with a SURPRISE Christmas gift - a trip to the big game!

With Christmas fast approaching, be sure to stop at Mark's for your holiday needs. And say hello to that friendly fellow behind the meat counter. He's sure to take the time to chat and will often make you feel better.