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## Mary Sumpter

Posted by Steve Jessmore | The Flint Journal July 10, 2005 23:26PM



Steve Jessmore/ The Flint Journal

Mary Sumpter pauses as she places flags in downtown Durand at sunrise on the Fourth of July. Sumpter lines the streets of Vernon, Bancroft and Durand with flags every year for the holiday. "It's my way of saying thank you to the community," she said.

"I love my community and we're all involved. It's what the people here are.

We all do the same thing. There are so many dedicated people. "I started this through my real estate, but I was so offended that anyone would attach a real estate card with their name on it to the American flag. I said 'I want to do the flags but find that so offensive.' I just couldn't.

"After I did the flags the first year, I was standing in line at the store and this gentleman asked me, 'Are you the flag lady? Did you do the Fourth of July flags? It was so good,' he said. It was so precious. That's what it's all about: just that little reaction, really.

"To come here and fall in love with all this is who I am, I guess. I'm very happy here. I would never want to live anywhere else. It's a neat place to be. We have the neatest things here, and the (Durand Union Station) depot kind of brings us together.

"It's a sense of America. It's where I work every day. I've had other companies say 'Oh, you should leave and come work with us, we sell the big houses.' I say 'good for you.' This is who I am, this is where I am. We've lived here 34 years. I love being in Durand. I love it here. I just love this town."

### Mary Sumpter, 65, of Burns

Township is known as the "Flag Lady" to many in the Durand area. Each Fourth of July for the past dozen years, Sumpter has lined the streets of Durand, Bancroft and Vernon with 3,000 American-made U.S. flags. She has enlisted the help of area groups including the Future Farmers of America, Durand cheerleaders, Girl scouts and soccer club, making donations to the groups in return for their help in placing the flags. Sumpter also donated hundreds of flags to Durand Middle School after Sept. 11, 2001, as well as numerous others, large and small, to the community. She has a background in accounting and finance and was Burns Township clerk and a Township Board member before getting into real estate 13 years ago. She works with Coldwell Banker Diane Rol Realty, Inc., in Morrice. She is also active in the Durand Chamber of Commerce, Railroad Days committee, Kiwanis Club and has been the Beautiful Baby Contest chairwoman for 10 years. She and husband Chuck have two children and three grandchildren.

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