

## Downtown Garage's car giveaway is a community effort

*By Spinal Column Staff | on November 08, 2022*

By Julie Freer

Karen Wielkopolan has been participating in the Wheels to Prosper program for the past nine years, and each year the process comes together a little differently.



Karen Wielkopolan, owner of Downtown Garage in Milford, is pictured with Mary Jane Scobie, recipient of this year's car giveaway. (Photo by Julie Freer)

Wheels to Prosper is a nationwide program that awards a deserving person in the community a car that has been fully serviced and is in good working condition.

It requires a team of people – from the vehicle donor to the technicians who service and recondition it – but the end result is always rewarding, said Wielkopolan, owner of Downtown Garage in Milford.

“We got involved in the program back in 2014,” said Wielkopolan. “There are shops all over the U.S. that do this. We had gone to a seminar and heard about it, and thought – ‘Why don’t we do that? We can fix cars.’ It really is a team effort, with so many different people in the community helping. It really makes you proud.”

The nomination process begins in the summer. Once nominations have been submitted, Wielkopolan reviews them with Pastor Paul Jenkinson of Oak Pointe Church in Milford. This year the recipient was Mary Jane Scobie, of Milford.

Scobie, who is a veterinary assistant in Walled Lake, said she is tremendously grateful for a reliable vehicle to get back and forth to work and take her 9-year-old daughter to cheer practice.

“My old car kept breaking down, the heat didn’t work, the windows fogged up going to work. So knowing I now have a reliable vehicle is amazing,” said Scobie.

This year’s vehicle was a 2010 Dodge Caravan, found by Father John Rocus at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Brighton and donated by Borek Jennings Funeral Home.

Downtown Garage technicians donated their time, inspecting the vehicle for mechanical integrity and replacing anything in need of repair. Dave Ellis, of Ellis Brothers Collision, donated body work and painted the Caravan. And several local businesses donated toward the project: Milford Oil Change, Milford Glass, Parts Plus Auto of South Lyon, O’Reilly Auto Parts of Milford, and LKQ of Michigan.