

Two of the city's well-known volunteers were awarded the Exchange Club's highest honor earlier this week. Darrell Russel and Bill Dixon became the 34th inductees into the Book of Golden Deeds for their dedication to community service.

It was a rare case to have two winners, said Olin Mefford, chairman of the Book of Golden Deeds nomination committee.



Darrell Russel (left) and Bill Dixon hold their Book of Golden Deeds Awards in the Florence Library. The Books of Golden Deeds are between them. KELLI BEVIS/TimesDaily

"We're just looking for people who have gone beyond service," said Mefford. "This year, we had two outstanding nominees."

When Mefford announced there were two winners, Dixon and Russel thought the other would be one of the winners.

"I figured there were more people who have been around much longer who have done a lot more than I had done," Dixon said.

"When Olin said there were two men, I turned to my wife and said, 'Darrell.' "

Darrell Russel began volunteering at the library's genealogy room soon after he successfully traced his own family history. He wanted others to have the same advantage he did.

"That's one of the highlights, to bring people together," he said.

Russel said he practically grew up in the library. At the age of six, he decided to read every book on the shelf.