

Palmyra Chamber of Commerce

Chamber News

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PALMYRA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ANNUAL MEETING AND AWARDS BANQUET THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 2014

The Palmyra Chamber of Commerce kicked off 2014 with the traditional Annual Meeting and awards banquet held this year on Thursday, January 10th at Farischon Hall. As always, the award presentations were the highlight of the evening, taking some of the honorees by surprise and giving the presenters real satisfaction to be able to recognize such deserving individuals.

Recognized as Citizen of the Year for enhancing the lives of many by preparing Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve meals for the needy in our community was Karl McElwee. For the past nine years, Karl and his crew have taken over the Palmyra Nutrition Center kitchen, closed on these holidays, to prepare enough to feed 100 or more. Pick-up meals and deliveries are available! The last few years, Karl's employer, Farmers Mutual Insurance of Marion County in Palmyra, has funded the Thanksgiving meal while the Palmyra Young Farmers Association, of which Karl is a member, has paid for the Christmas Eve supplies.

Karl McElwee helps others as he was once helped. He has always remembered the community's generosity to his family when his mother lost her battle with cancer. "The community came together and helped us when mom died. You don't forget something like that." Ever humble, in accepting recognition as Citizen of the Year, Karl thanked those who have assisted in preparing the meals and the contributions of supplies.

The 2013 Educator of the Year, Regina Boyer, currently teaches second grade at Palmyra Elementary School. She has been with the district twenty-two years but taught in Columbia, Missouri, prior to coming to Palmyra. It was almost like coming home, considering the fact that Mrs. Boyer graduated from Monroe City High School. She has taught kindergarten and third grade as well as her present level. Several parents and former students emphasized how positive an influence Mrs. Boyer had been on their child's or their own reading.

Lora Hillman, Palmyra Elementary Principal, also noted that Regina Boyer is viewed as a leader by her peers and stated that "As the face of education continues to evolve to meet the needs of our children, Regina has always demonstrated a willingness to learn new things, implement those changes, and support her peers in that process as well." Caught totally by surprise, Boyer graciously accepted stating, "This has been a wonderful journey, and I have enjoyed all of the kids."



*Citizen of the Year, Karl McElwee with
Miss Marion County Sierra Burch*



*2013 Educator of the Year:
Regina Boyer*

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2013 Volunteer of the Year: Norm Hare

Volunteer: a person who of his own free will offers himself for service or duty. Synonym and 2013 Volunteer of the Year: Norm Hare. Norm was active on the Palmyra Bicentennial Library Board for about 6 years and was instrumental in helping with the passage of the bond referendum for the library, now known as Marion County Library Subdistrict #1, enabling it to receive taxpayer dollars. He has helped the library with his engineering background and his talents and as a handyman, reinforcing shelving, making minor repairs and assessing future building needs. Norm was also the driving force behind the Speaker's Series held at the Sesqui Building highlighting a plethora of interesting topics.

Jeff Funkenbusch, Maple Lawn Administrator, recalls that in September 2005, Norm Hare became a registered Maple Lawn Nursing Home Volunteer. However, Jeff remembered that his dedication to the residents preceded that date as Norm's mother was a resident, and Norm was a daily visitor "who was eager to help and contribute more of his time." He assisted with group activities including the annual regional Senior Games in Hannibal. Norm's passion, however, is the Monday Morning Gospel Singers. The group has been coming to Maple Lawn for many years. Mission Hill Baptist Church students and Norm's wife are now a vital part of the group, and Hare has raised funds for sashes for singers to wear. Hare, a Hannibal resident, is impressed by Palmyra's volunteer spirit. "The more I came here, the more I saw it."



Winners of the Paintbrush Award: Jim and Harla Frieze of Mark Twain Title.

The Paintbrush Award, recognizing individuals who have made commitments and investments of both time and money to improving their building, was presented by outgoing Board Member Ed Dent. "George H. Bush created the Thousand Points of Light and our current President's campaign is YOU can make a difference by volunteering for any number of civic activities. Both are referring to individual acts or contributions and pointing to the many things that we can do that will truly make a difference," said Ed.

Recently, the Chamber, Palmyra Area Community Betterment, the City of Palmyra and two businesses paid for and engaged in a study to come up with a plan to aesthetically, architecturally and hopefully functionally create changes to our downtown. The recipient of the 2013 Chamber of Commerce Paintbrush Award goes the owners of the building now housing Marion County Abstract and Mark Twain Title, Jim and Harla Frieze. Their improvements give a lift to their corner of the downtown area. On accepting the award, Harla Frieze expressed gratitude to her husband for the hours of painting and repairing over the past year.



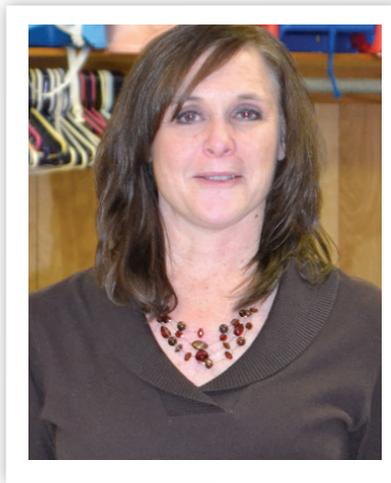
Eddie Schaeffer of Schaeffer Blacksmithing was inducted into the Business Hall of Fame.

Eddie Schaeffer, of Schaeffer Blacksmithing, was inducted into the Business Hall of Fame. Larry Stuhlman and Steve Lewis shared in presenting this award as both individuals own businesses that have been part of the Palmyra Business Community since the early 1900's. Well...Schaeffer Blacksmithing dates back to 1885 when J.F. W. Schaeffer moved to Palmyra five years after emigrating from Germany. Although it is reported there were 6 or 7 blacksmiths in business here at the time, J.F. W. opened another blacksmith shop in a rented building. In 1893 he purchased property at the corner of Spring and Waters Streets, had a two story building erected, and moved his business about one block west to where it has continued to this day. The original business was blacksmithing including forge work, horseshoeing and wagon building.

The business passed from J.F.W. to his son, Ed, and later to his son, Eddie in May of 1977. In March of 1985, the original shop was completely destroyed by fire. Eddie temporarily operated out of a storage building but rebuilt on the foundation of the original site. He also worked as a rural mail carrier but retired early from the Post Office in order to keep the shop open full time. Over the years, Eddie has concentrated more on machinery repair, metal fabrication and welding. Schaeffer shared the secret for being inducted into the Business Hall of Fame: "outlive everyone else."

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The final award of the evening, the President's Award, went to Michele Hopson. President Merkel praised Hopson for her dedication and committee participation for an array of Chamber events including Business Expo, Flag Day, the Taste of Palmyra and Christmas in Palmyra. Her leadership for the Fall Bowling Fundraiser and the Marion County Fair, the latter in conjunction with her husband, Randy, were such an asset to the Chamber and the community. President Merkel expressed a personal thank you for Michele's "outstanding contributions as a member of the Chamber" which went "above and beyond."



Michele Hopson, recipient of the President's Award

In closing, Merkel recognized the three Board Members whose terms have expired and thanked them for their contributions: Ed Dent, Rich Donelson, and Jeff Funkenbusch. She also welcomed two new members and the new Vice-President to the Board: Brian Caldwell, Heather McChristian and Vice-President, Rodney Kuntemeyer. The current board also includes Leanna Delaney, Raj Kshirsagar, Betsy Rush, Diane Smith and Susan Berti, Secretary/Treasurer.



Jeff Funkenbusch & Ed Dent were honored as outgoing board members along with Rich Donelson who was unable to attend.

Our thanks to the Knights of Columbus for a delicious meal and the Middle School and High School FCCLA and Key Club youth for helping serve. Thanks also to Flower City Florist, Golden Eagle, HATS Restaurant, Raj Kshirsagar, Tammy Neil, and RMark for their contributions. Leanna Delaney generously took on the task of organizing the event. Miss Marion County, Sierra Burch, was on hand to honor the awardees. Lastly, thanks to all who attended; you made it memorable for the award recipients!



*The 2014 Palmyra Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors:
(front from left) Heather McChristian; Michelle Merkel, President; Betsy Rush; Diane Smith;
(back) Brian Caldwell; Raj Kshirsagar; Rodney Kuntemeyer, Vice-President; Leanna Delaney;
not pictured - Susan Berti, Secretary/Treasurer*

upcoming events
CALENDAR

Saturday, February 8
Annual Fireman's Dance
American Legion Hall 8 pm - midnight

Friday, February 14
Pink Out the Gym
Fundraiser for Relay for Life Teams

Sunday, March 9
Evan Mencer Fundraiser

Saturday, May 10
City Wide Garage Sale

UPCOMING MEETING DATES & PROGRAM
REMINDERS

YOUR NEXT CHAMBER MEETING IS NOON
Tues., Feb. 11, 2014 • VFW Hall
Guest Speaker: Eric Thomas, ETC Computerland
President with an overview of services offered.

Tues., March 11, 2014 • VFW Hall
Guest Speaker: Rich Donelson with information
about the Cooperative Action Network and your
voice regarding EPA's greenhouse gas regulations.

Tues., April 8, 2014 • VFW Hall
Guest Speaker: Irene Meyers on the
Palmyra Community Endowment Fund.

Tues., May 13, 2014 • VFW Hall
Guest Speaker: Todd Ahrens, President and CEO
Hannibal Regional Healthcare System.

Chamber Email Address:
palmyrachamber@gmail.com

**Renew Your Chamber
Membership for 2014 NOW!**

A membership form can be
downloaded from the
Chamber of Commerce Website at
www.showmepalmyra.com/chamber.html
We will be updating the Business
Directory on the Chamber website and
only current members will be listed after
March 14, 2014.