

A night of distinction

Chamber banquet honors community standouts

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"It's easier to build strong children than to repair broken adults."

Michael Galligan used that quote from Frederick Douglass when presenting Lisa Harvey the Distinguished Citizen Award during the Chamber of Commerce's annual banquet Monday night at the Civic Center.

As director of Hamilton Street Activity Center, Harvey is on the front line when it comes to making a difference in the lives of children. She holds regular after-school activities and organizes many special events.

"She gives them money for good grades and has a Christmas party with gifts for all of them," said Galligan. "Afterwards, she makes them write thank-you notes."

Harvey has served as Activity Center director for over nine years. She estimates she sees about 30 kids a day who come for homework help and an evening meal.

"I'm shocked, really overwhelmed," said Harvey when asked about winning the award. "I had no idea this was coming."

Harvey said a big part of her job is to be there for the little things.

"I do stuff with them that you'd do with your own kids," she said. "I ask them how their day has been and try to make sure they have a good birthday. I'll take them to Red Cross swimming lessons in the summer and take them to auditions if they want to be in a play. I have six who are in the upcoming 'Beauty and the Beast.'"

Regular activities include a ballet class every Monday and Bible study with prayer requests every Friday. Harvey has helped many of the students prepare applications for college or the military.

The Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to Holly McBride, who started McMinnville Special Games in 2013.

"On this special day, everyone is a winner," said award presenter Anne Vance. She went on to say how McBride has expanded offerings to include other events like an annual fishing rodeo, horseback riding excursion, and Christmas party.

A tearful McBride took the stage and said, "The Special Games is so much more than one person. I do not do it by myself. We have so many wonderful volunteers and I couldn't do it without them."

The Edwin Partin Retailer of the Year Award was presented to Tiger Lily Boutique owners Katelyn Wortman and Kathryn Burnett.

Award presenter Joe O'Neal noted how the two sisters have greatly expanded their business since moving to New Smithville Highway in September, 2013. He said they first started as a florist, then became a boutique, then partnered with Sissy Ray to open McMinnville Florist on Court Square.

"They held their first Give Back Fashion Show last year," said O'Neal. "The proceeds went to the FUEL program, which gives kids in need food to take home in their backpacks."

The Free Enterprise Award was presented to Litewire, a high-end data center located in the old A.O. Smith building. The business is owned by Marcus Hill, who has specialized in computer operations for 25 years.

"Marcus saw the need for a fully secure, fault-tolerant data center," said award presenter Mickey Heath, who noted the facility has several redundancies so if one source fails another will take over to ensure operation 100 percent of the time.

Outgoing Chamber of Commerce chairman of the board Scott McCord gave a speech where he said, "Your employees are what makes your business successful."

McCord then drew an analogy to the popular film "Jerry Maguire" where he talked about the relationship between sports agent Tom Cruise and his client Cuba Gooding Jr. The movie is known for its popular phrase, "Show me the money."

"It never was about the money," said McCord. "It's about trust."



James Clark photos
Michael Galligan presents the Chamber's Distinguished Citizen Award to Lisa Harvey.



A tearful Holly McBride, right, receives the Chamber's Volunteer of the Year Award at the Civic Center. Anne Vance presents the honor.



Litewire was presented with the Chamber of Commerce Free Enterprise Award at the organization's annual banquet Monday night. Pictured are business owner Marcus Hill, left, and award presenter Mickey Heath.

Tiger Lily Boutique won the Edwin Partin Retailer of the Year Award. Pictured, from left, are award presenter Joe O'Neal and Tiger Lily owners Kathryn Burnett and Katelyn Wortman.



Scott McCord, the Chamber's outgoing chairman of the board, gives a speech where he says the community should pull together as a team, much like the movie "Jerry Maguire."