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ARC Of Wabash County holds annual meeting

By ROBERT BRYAN

At its annual meeting earlier this month at the Honeywell Center, ARC of Wabash County elected new officers and recognized a host of individuals and organizations for their services to the agency.

During her annual report to the membership, Executive Director Nancy Hoffman provided information concerning services and successes during the year.

Despite inadequate funding from state and federal sources, according to Hoffman, ARC had a very successful year.

The poor economy, she said, caused a slowdown in the amount of subcontract work for the sheltered workshop, but ARC still billed more than \$215,000 in subcontracts through the year. ARC's commercial paper shredding operation increased by 23 percent over the previous year and their Next Steps retail store has been successful.

At the annual meeting, 147 businesses, industries, organization and individuals were acknowledged for providing subcontract work for ARC, while another seven local not-for-profit organizations were recognized for welcoming ARC clients as volunteers.

Nine businesses were recognized for employing people with disabilities. Hoffman summarized the progress made on agency-wide goals during the past year as part of ARC's Outcome Measurement System, and more than 150 individuals and entities were recognized for their donations to the organization.

Hoffman remembered two dear friends of ARC who passed away during the year. John Hennelly, who served as executive director from 1974 through 1998, and Augie Rauh, who attended ARC's developmental preschool as a child and then ARC's workshop as an adult.

Officers elected to the board for 2009-10 were Lee Davis, president; Jeff Myers, vice president; Donna Wilhelm, treasurer; and Linda Konkle, secretary; Dr. Mary Anne Bain and Brian Howenstine were elected to three-year terms on the board, and other continuing board members are Anne Bechtol, Dave Coble, and Andris Ross. Outgoing board members Casey Sausaman and Dr. Greg Garner were honored for having served the past six years.

Some or ARC's employees were recognized for their years of service. Employees of 5 to 9 years, Connie Ratcliff, George Earl, Leona Grier, Kem Crager, Kathy Bakehorn, Therese Carew, Lisa McCoy, and Eric Sargent and Sandy Rowe.

Staff employed from 10 to 20 years: Becky Baldwin, Sherry Campbell, Tara Wrightman, Julie Harden, Nanette DuBois, Amber Teague, Shirlee Murphy. Five staffers were recognized for more than 20 years: Martha Guthrie, Bruce Wolfe, Judi Sears and Nancy Hoffman.

Hoffman thanked all of the staff, ARC's board of directors and the families for helping to make ARC the success it is today.

President Greg Garner presented the following awards:

\* The Community Employer Award to Modoc's Market for hiring people with disabilities and for their advocacy efforts on behalf of individuals with disabilities. Own Angie Beauchamp was present to accept the award.

\* The 2009 Industry of the year award went to The Ford Meter Box Company for its support of ARC with subcontract work, donations of materials and equipment, helping with equipment repairs and assisting with environmental studies. President and CEO Steve Ford accepted.

\* ARC's 2009 Community Award was presented to Bachelor Creek Church of Christ for its mission work with ARC, which included a staff appreciation reception for ARC employees and a full day of work at one of ARC's residential homes. Aaron McClearly accepted on behalf of the church.

\* The Benefactor Award was given to Dr. and Mrs. Robert Rauh for many years of support and services to ARC and other families with disabilities.

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ARC Program Director Linda Johnson presented the Award for Personal Growth of ARC employees Lisa Richey and Russel Decker for their success at handling everyday challenges. The 2009 Volunteer of the Year Award went to Richard Hundt for his volunteer work at Miller's Merry Manor, his flexibility, attitude and "big heart."

Clarence Dame received the Sheltered Worker of the Year Award for the quality of his work.

Brandon Jacobs was honored as the Community Worker of the year for the quality of his work at Modoc's. The final award for the evening was the Outstanding Merit Award, presented to Diane Bradley for the many accomplishments she made in her personal life and her work life.

Garner ended with words of thank for the board and Hoffman. Having served on the board during Hennelly's tenure and then again more recently with Hoffman, he said he appreciated the seamless transition between the two and the fact that ARC continues to maintain a very strong presence in the community.

Pastor Scott Johnston from New Life Baptist Church closed the evening with a prayer.

ARC of Wabash County, a private, not-for-profit organization located at 595 S. Miami St. has served individuals with developmental disabilities in this community since 1954. ARC is a United Fund Agency.