

Citizen of the Year Recipients Announced

City Council

August 26, 2008

Winners were honored at a reception held on August 25, 2008 at the Rock Island High School Library before the regularly scheduled City Council meeting. During the meeting, Carroll “Red” Pearson was named the overall “Citizen of the Year.” He will also serve as Grand Marshal of the Labor Day Parade. “This individual has been giving back to the community for many, many years, and he volunteers in so many different ways,” said Alderwoman Joy Murphy. Mr. Pearson was honored by the award and said, “I enjoy helping everybody, especially the little kids. They’re great.”



Congratulations Carroll “Red” Pearson selected as Overall 2008 Citizen of the Year.

Congratulations to the following individuals and organizations selected as winners in the following Citizen of the Year categories:



Business - KJWW Engineering Consultants showed their long-term commitment to Rock Island when they decided to expand their corporate campus, using “green” technology, and their workforce in the city. Through their Community Involvement Committee, KJWW encourages employees to volunteer throughout the community and KJWW matches donations and fundraising efforts collected on behalf of their employees.



Professional - Ametra Carrol is director of Douglas Park Place, a recovery home designed to help mothers and their families overcome substance abuse. In addition to numerous community and charitable activities, Ms. Carrol also petitioned and worked with City Council, the county board, the school board, and State Representatives to raise the school dropout age from 16 to 17 in Illinois.



Education - Charles Mahaffey has been Professor of Geography at Augustana College since 1977. He serves on the City's Sustainable Design Advisory Team and the Advanced Technology and Sustainability Consortium. Mr. Mahaffey is spearheading an all-volunteer effort of students and faculty to rehab a deteriorated house near the Augustana campus, transforming it into an example of how rehabbed houses can be sustainable and "green."



Organization - Second Baptist Church serves their Rock Island community with a variety of ministries, most notably their music education program and their food pantry program. Their music program provides musical instruction and instruments to members of the community. Second Baptist's food pantry program provides services to over 900 families each year.



Individual - Carroll "Red" Pearson was born and raised in Rock Island and he believes that if you belong to an organization you should be active. He has been very active throughout the community with these organizations: Rock Island Senior Volunteer Police Officer, American Legion Post 200, Legion baseball commissioner, Labor Day parade, poppy sales, Knights of Columbus, president of the St. Pius Church St. Vince DePaul Society, Little League coach, the City's Mechanical Board Code of Appeals, and more.



City Employee - Jeff Ronk is employed by the Rock Island Police Department where he serves as the Elderly Service officer. Officer Ronk was recognized for his dedication to the Rock Island senior citizens he serves, often going above and beyond his normal duties to check on their safety and welfare.



Youth - Matthew Jacobs is an honor student at Rock Island High School and the son of Carl and Carolyn Jacobs. He is active volunteering for Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center at the Annual Halloween Party, Thanksgiving Holiday Dinner, Annual Christmas Party, and Family Fun Day. He helps his elderly neighbors with yard work and small chores and visits nursing homes with his mother. He is a very active member of Second Baptist Church.



Honorary – Marvin Wolber is an 80-year-old retiree and Moline resident who volunteers tirelessly at Rock Island Intermediate Academy to tutor at-risk students on basic math. He shows up every day and spends his time and money to develop worksheets and incentives to keep his 100 students enthused about math. One student wrote, “Mr. Wolber never gave up on me. He kept encouraging me to keep trying. I finally made it. Thanks Mr. Wolber!”



All Citizen of the Year Winners with Mayor Schwiebert.