

The Mayor's Office

David A. Wood, Mayor



Mayor David A. Wood

Mishawaka's government continues to set an example that I believe serves as a model in our region. Our brand of local government remains open, honest, friendly, responsible and accessible to all of our citizens. That is my expectation for how government should operate, and a direct reflection of the citizens that call the Princess City home. We never lose sight of the fact that the Mayor's Office, Council Chambers, City Hall or any City facilities belong to the citizens of Mishawaka. The 550 employees of our city understand that they work for our citizens, not a Mayor or Department Head. Our citizens place a great deal of trust in their public servants and it is that trust that we strive to uphold.

It is our duty to provide essential services to our 50,000 citizens and that is a job we take very seriously. It is my expectation that the services we provide will be the best that they can be and as affordable as possible. We also strive to treat each citizen with a professional, customer-service friendly attitude. This is not only my expectation, it is our mission. Since that is my expectation for the whole of City government, the Mayor's office will lead by example. My assistant, Lou Ann Hazen and office receptionist, Marie Macri set the tone for our office with their friendly, sincere and helpful demeanor. We are here to help by answering questions and concerns honestly and directing citizens to the proper department to make sure that residents get the proper service that they deserve. We are here to serve. We take pride in serving; after all, it is the *Mishawaka way*.

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The success of Mishawaka in providing first-rate services, park improvements, neighborhood revitalization, and state-of-the art infrastructure while working towards a balanced budget did not occur by chance but rather by plan. We will continue to build on this formula for success in the coming years, making Mishawaka stand out among other cities.

It continues to be the highest honor of my life to serve as Mayor of Mishawaka. One of the blessings of the job is that no two days are the same. There were some very notable events that occurred in 2013. Here are a few that my office was involved in:

Mayor's Youth Council

2013 was another successful year of the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council. I have reported many of the activities involving the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council (MYAC) throughout the year because I consider it to be one of my most

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important initiatives. MYAC is made up of 30 students from each of the three local high schools serving Mishawaka. The goals of the MYAC are four-fold; education, community service, leadership and fellowship. Highlights from this year's MYAC were many. The Youth Council planned, sought donations, organized, and distributed 50 Thanksgiving meals to Mishawaka families most in need.

The Youth Council also had the opportunity to learn about how various City departments provide services. We didn't just lecture to the kids, we got them up in bucket trucks with equipment to simulate fixing a power line, we gave them the Jaws of Life to simulate extracting someone from a vehicle after a crash and we demonstrated the effects of a Taser gun on a dummy. We toured businesses such as Better World Books and Whole Foods. I also presented plans to improve Central Park to the Youth Council for their review and input before any other group or the public had a chance to see them. The MYAC is truly interactive and the kids enjoy it while learning a lot and are given the opportunity to have a say in their community.



Marian High School



Mishawaka High School

This year, I decided to add a new element to the Youth Council. I wanted our kids to have input not only into their city government, but also the community that we are trying to build for them in the future. Last December, I assigned Leadership Projects to the Youth Council Members. Their names were put into a basket, randomly drawn and divided into six teams. The following topics were assigned to each team:

- 1) **Public Recreation For Our Youth** – how to engage 12-18 year olds with our park & recreation system. Does the City need more or different facilities? How do we combat the “nothing to do here” syndrome? We asked this team to identify up to five ways to increase and improve recreational opportunities for our youth including an implementation plan and budget.
- 2) **Sidewalk and Trail Systems** – the City would like to increase non-motorized transportation infrastructure, both as an alternate form of transportation and for recreation. We asked this team to make recommendations for the highest priorities and to work with the City Planner on understanding costs, property acquisition, and new concepts.

- 3) **Community Events in Support of Historic Downtown** – At many of our recent events downtown, we’ve had hundreds of people attend and then stay downtown to eat and shop. In part, this is why the City has a concert and movie series in Beutter Park or Christmas tree lighting ceremony. We would like to encourage more of these activities and we asked this team to develop two or three additional activities that have a low cost and will produce a high turnout.
- 4) **Public Awareness/Community Promotion** – Mishawaka has great stories to tell about our history, our businesses, and about what is currently happening. We asked this team to research and create a newspaper style article on three Mishawaka businesses, events, activities, or history with the intent of helping promote and bring awareness to the City.
- 5) **Sustainability/Efficiency** - Here in a small City in the Midwest, planting a tree has a CO2 reduction benefit equal to a \$100,000 green-roof in New York City. This team was given an assignment to research and develop initiatives that can be readily applied to Mishawaka to promote efficiencies within and between departments and save energy.
- 6) **Gateways/Branding Mishawaka** – Community identity and image are important marketing tools. Every time someone chooses to live, work, visit or make a business investment, they look at a variety of factors including the livability of a community. Gateways are intended to improve first impressions of the Princess City. People interface with the City in a variety of ways. Gateways can be in the form of road projects, signage markers, the City’s website, social media or mobile apps. We asked this team to make a plan to identify a hierarchy of options (including budget) to create a better sense of place that can be marketed to the region.

On May 28th and May 30th in the Mishawaka City Hall Council Chambers, the Mayor’s Youth Council conducted Leadership Presentations to a panel of judges. The judges were Ken Prince, City Planner; Tim Brill, Wastewater Division Assistant Manager; and Karl Kopec, Wastewater Division Manager. The quality of the presentations was impressive and the deliberation to choose the top three was not an easy task. Karl Kopec commented, “Pride in their community was evident as the six teams from Mayor Wood’s Youth Council gave their leadership presentations. An overarching theme of the presentations was that Mishawaka is a great place to live and has much to offer.” Tim Brill stated, “The students presented well thought out ideas for future improvements in the City. It was evident by the enthusiasm that many will become future leaders, maybe even in Mishawaka.”



Swearing-in Ceremony

After a few hours of deliberation the judges made their decision and the top presentations were:

1st Place: **Team #2, Sidewalk & Trail Systems:**
Grace Gebo, Carol Martin and Nick VanNevel

2nd Place: **Team #6, Gateways to the Community:**
Evan Fras, Trevor Manspeaker, Sam Schrader and Gina Spalding

3rd Place: **Team #1; Public Recreation for our Youth:**
TIE
Hunter Siebert

Team #5, Sustainability/Efficiency:
Sarah Furfaro, Zach Lytle, Maggie Reisdorf, Nick Shide and Haley Wood

The winning team presented their Leadership Presentation to the Mishawaka Common Council on Monday, July 15th, and the 2nd and 3rd Place teams were also introduced and recognized. Many of the citizens of Mishawaka attended and were able to meet some of the “youth and leaders of tomorrow”.

I was so impressed with what these teams presented that I have given my staff the directive that we will implement at least one idea from every group. We have already begun to do this and you will begin to see the great work of our Youth Council in short order. The Mayor’s 2012-2013 Youth Council had a real and measurable impact on the future of the Princess City.

We are now well into the 2013-2014 session and you can look forward to many new ideas and engagement from the new Youth Council Members. This school year we have a total of 23 Youth Council Members and we held our election at the September meeting where the 2013-2014 Officers were elected: President, Haley Wood, Vice-President, Zach Lytle, Secretary, Maria Tordi and Treasurer, Nick Shide.

2013 Optimist Club Honorees

Every year, the City of Mishawaka Optimist Club honors two students from each Mishawaka High School with a Youth Appreciation Award. This year the award breakfast took place on Wednesday, May 1st. These young Mishawaka citizens live by the Optimist Creed:

- To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.
- To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.
- To make all your friends feel that there is something in them.
- To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.
- To think only of the best, to work only for the best and to expect only the best.
- To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.
- To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the

future.

- To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.
- To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.
- To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

As Mayor of Mishawaka, I am honored to be part of this ceremony and also have the privilege of helping in the presentation of these awards. The 2013 award recipients are as follows:

Marian High School – John Jessup and Maggie Wanecke

Mishawaka High School – Allison Florkowski and Shayla Smith

Penn High School – Katie Johnson and Montana Parker

Martin Luther King Drum Major Award for Community Service

On January 21, 2013, the 27th Annual Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. began with the Community Service Recognition Breakfast at Century Center. Hundreds of people gathered to honor the recipients of the “Drum Major Award” for Community Service which is awarded by the Mayors of Mishawaka and South Bend. There were three awards given by the City of Mishawaka:

Alice Crowley

Alice Crowley has volunteered at St. Joseph’s Regional Medical Center for 25 years. To date, Ms. Crowley has contributed over 28,000 hours of volunteer service and has never missed a day of volunteering in 25 years. In addition to her work at St. Joseph’s she worked for over a dozen years as an aide assisting disabled children at the South Bend Community School Corporation. In her spare time she visits with patients at the Dujarie House, a skilled nursing center at Holy Cross Village which offers residents 24-hour nursing care, with programs designed to enhance the quality of life. Ms. Crowley’s work is distinguished by enhancing the lives of those around her, especially those that are less able to care for themselves or just need extra encouragement.

Brian Linson

Brian Linson retired from the Mishawaka Fire Department after serving the community for 20 years as a firefighter. Mr. Linson’s second career began as a volunteer with Habitat for Humanity. Volunteer work developed into over 20 years of assisting the community through providing quality housing to those in need. Mr. Linson was Habitat for Humanity’s first Construction Director in St. Joseph County. In his work with Habitat, Brian has constructed over 100 homes across the country. He also generously accepted the position of Executive Director during a time of transition and remains a strong source of counsel and support to Habitat. In

2010, he won Habitat's inaugural annual "Spirit of Habitat" award for his long dedication, strong efforts, and continual spirit of partnership with Habitat and the community.

Rick Zeff

Rick Zeff has been an employee of Meijer for 38 years. Encouraged by Meijer to get involved in the community, Mr. Zeff has taken community service to the next level making it his passion to make life better in Michiana. Rick has served on the Board of Directors of the Food Bank of Northern Indiana for 10 years, including four years as chairman, participated in the "Pack a Backpack" program with WNDU, served as a board member at the Family and Children's Center in Mishawaka, been a member of the Sunburst Committee since 1996, served as a board member for the Salvation Army, participated in "22 Ways of Giving" with WSBT and partnered with WSJV in the "Adopt a Family" program for the last 10 years. Mr. Zeff states that "getting involved with the Food Bank of Indiana after moving to the area gave me a better understanding of the needs of those in the community and what great things we could accomplish by pooling our ideas and strengths together for common causes."

The City of Mishawaka Official "Poet Laureate"

On February 6, 2013, Mayor Wood honored lifetime Mishawaka resident, Ray Chamberlin, as the Official City of Mishawaka "Poet Laureate". Ray was honored with an Official Proclamation from the City of Mishawaka at the monthly Mishawaka Alumni Luncheon in front of several hundred Mishawaka High School alumni and was surprised by being honored with special guest, John Thompson of "JT in the Morning". The "Postal Poet" honored JT with a poem of his own in October, 2004.

Ray grew up on Wenger Street in Mishawaka and Ray's father, a poet and artist, was a great role model for his son. Ray followed in his father's footsteps writing poetry and because of his 25 year career as a Mishawaka mail carrier, Ray became fondly known as the "Postal Poet". Ray received many honors over the years and is known as the Poet-in-Residence at the Mishawaka Lions Club where he was also named Lion of the Year. Ray has served on the Mishawaka Penn Public Library Board for 16 years. On the last day of his route, a camera crew followed him and when the Goodyear Blimp (which was actually headed for Notre Dame) passed over, one of his customers, who thought the blimp was following Ray, was in awe stating, "Wow, you must really be famous".

Ray has been a very special person in the City of Mishawaka touching many lives with his poems and entertaining many people. Ray writes about his adventures in life and makes life a little more enjoyable for those who read his poems. It was an honor for the Mayor's Office to proclaim Ray as the Mishawaka "Poet Laureate".

Shiojiri, Japan Visitors

The Mayor's Office was contacted by Melissa Raffelock, Japanese Language Teacher at Mishawaka High School, who advised us that the City of Mishawaka would soon be graced by the presence of visitors from our sister-city, Shiojiri, Japan. Melissa reached out to the community and was able to arrange home-stay visits with several Mishawaka families for the students and their adult chaperone. This was an exciting time for our City as it had been five years since a group of Shiojiri youth visited Mishawaka. Four students and one adult chaperone, representing Shiojiri's City Hall, visited our City.



Shiojiri Student Visitors

There were many activities scheduled for the visitors and Mayor Wood had the honor of hosting a welcome reception on Monday, October 28th. The visitors, along with their host families and other City of Mishawaka guests who have been involved in this sister-city relationship for many years, attended the reception which was given in the Council Chambers of City Hall. Students from the Mayor's Youth Council attended the reception and presented the Shiojiri students with Youth Council t-shirts. The Mayor's Office presented a "City of Mishawaka" fleece to the Shiojiri City Hall Representative, Akina Mimura. Mayor Wood also had the honor of taking the guests on a tour of the City of Mishawaka on Wednesday, October 30th and spent the day touring the City parks (Riverwalk, Shiojiri Gardens and Battell Rock Garden), the Grape Road shopping area, a two-hour guided tour of the University of Notre

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Dame, and a tour of the new Fire Station #4. The final destination of the tour was Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center. The highlight of the tour for the students was being served a lunch of fried chicken,

mashed potatoes and gravy, candied carrots, and West End Bakery apple squares prepared by the Mishawaka firemen at Fire Station #4.

Walk a Mile with Mike

The Mayor's Office was contacted by Governor Mike Pence's office on September 16th to host an event in our city, "Walk a Mile with Mike". This event was to promote Governor Pence's health initiative of encouraging people of all ages to walk daily. It was a summer-long effort by the Governor to get Hoosiers all over the state active and interested in community recreational resources. "Too many Hoosiers struggle with obesity and the maladies that come with that, be it diabetes or heart disease, so our administration has made a very specific goal of focusing on policies and practices that will encourage and strengthen the health of Hoosiers," explained Pence.

Mayor Wood, along with members of the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council, 140 Saint Monica students, sixth grade students from Twin Branch School, students from The Crossing, the City Clerk and Council, CAPS members and hundreds of Mishawaka citizens met at Robert C. Beutter Park at 8:00am on October 2nd to greet Governor Pence and his wife, Karen and to support this healthy initiative. The crowd gathered in the lawn event area in front of the band stage, and after a short speech and thank-you from the Governor, the approximate two-mile walk kicked off with Governor Pence, Mrs. Pence, Mayor Wood and his Youth Council leading the hundreds of walkers. Whole Foods was on-hand at the end of the walk to provide bottles of water to the participants.



Walking with Governor Pence

The Governor plans to continue walks like these throughout the state, and the City of Mishawaka was proud to be able show their support for this healthy initiative led by the Governor.

Annual Winterfest Coloring Contest

A yearly tradition in the City of Mishawaka is a Winterfest Coloring Contest sponsored by the Mishawaka Business Association. A coloring page was distributed to all Mishawaka Schools, grades K-6 and the students were given the opportunity to color and decorate the page. The completed pieces were turned into Mayor Dave Wood's Office, the Mishawaka Police Station, or brought to the Winterfest event which took place on December 7th in Merrifield Park.

Hundreds of coloring pages were turned in and Mayor Wood had the distinct honor of going through all of the pages and picking the winner for each grade level.

After many hours of review, and with help from his family, the following students were chosen as creating the “best picture in their grade level for 2013” and received a \$50.00 gift certificate to Build-A-Bear:

Kindergarten

Anderson Cannon
Twin Branch School

1st Grade

Jillian Hensel
Hums School

2nd Grade

Hannah Norvell
Emmons School

3rd Grade

Daphne Boulac
Liberty School

4th Grade

Skylar Kempf
Hums School

5th Grade

Rachel Vollman
Beiger School

6th Grade

Hannah Kitkowski
Hums School

Congratulations to the winners, and thank you to all who participated in the annual event.

Mishawaka Business Association Honors Mishawaka

On Thursday, February 21, 2013, the annual Mishawaka Business Association meeting and dinner took place featuring guest speakers, former Governor Joe Kernan and former Mayor Bob Beutter.

Each year, the Association honors the “Business of the Year” and in 2103, the honor went to IP Solutions. Drew Johnson, President of IP Solutions, is a diehard Mishawaka Business Association member and believes, wholeheartedly, that you should give back to your community in direct proportion, if not more, to what has been given to you. Drew’s business philosophy is founded on three basic principles; taking care of the customer by hand-holding them through the frustrating issues of owning today’s technology; having great vendors who deliver great products on-time, and taking care of the employee by making it a fun place to work, keeping knowledge fresh and making it family friendly.

The Mishawaka Business Association’s “Person of the Year” honor was given to Steven R. Cramer, PhD, President of Bethel College.

Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony

The arrival of Santa Claus and the annual Tree Lighting Ceremony took place on Friday, December 6th in downtown on the northeast lawn of the Mishawaka Police Station. Hundreds of Mishawaka citizens braved the extreme cold weather anticipating the arrival of Santa, Mayor Wood and VIP’s: Tommy Forte, MHS 2012-2013 State Wrestling Champ, and the Robert Dunnuck family who donated the Christmas tree from the yard of their Stanley Street home in Mishawaka.



The Treble Clef Singers of Mishawaka led carols around the Christmas tree while the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council served hot chocolate and cookies. Donations of hats, scarves and mittens were collected for the local HealthLinc of Mishawaka Organization. Tommy and Mr. Dunnuck along with his grandchildren, Hunter, 7 and Harper, 4 were given the honor of "flipping the switch" to light the City's largest tree yet.



The Mayor and Santa

2013 Mayoral Proclamations

A list of the 2013 Mayor Proclamations from our office:

- **Mishawaka Moose Lodge #1262 Day – 1/20/13**
In honor of the 100th Anniversary of the Mishawaka Moose Lodge #1262 and their commitment to the children and elderly in the Mishawaka community
- **Mishawaka Cavemen Wrestling Day – 2/19/13**
Honoring the 2012-2013 MHS Wrestling Team for their third place finish in the State
- **Dr. Dennis Engbrecht Day – 4/12/13**
Honoring the retirement of Bethel College's Senior Vice President after 27 years of service to Bethel College and the Mishawaka community
- **Better World Books Day – 5/3/13**
In honor of the 10 year Anniversary of Better World Books
- **Academic Super Bowl Studies – 5/16/13**
Honoring the Penn High School Social Studies Team for their State Championship
- **Yvonne Milligan Day – 5/31/13**
Honoring the retirement of City of Mishawaka Controller, Yvonne Milligan, after 33 years of public service
- **MHS Class of 1953 Reunion Day – 8/10/13**
Honoring the MHS Class of 1953 on their 60th High School Reunion
- **National Health Center Week – 8/11 to 8/17/13**
Celebrating 45 years of Community Health Centers
- **Drive 4 Pledges Day – 9/19/13**
Proclaiming a pledge drive sponsored by AT&T to stop texting and driving
- **Medical-Surgical Nurse Week – 11/1/13**
Honoring the professional specialty nursing organization of medical surgical nurses
- **Tommy Forte Day – 12/12/13**
In honor of the 2012-2013 State Wrestling Champ, MHS Junior, Tommy Forte in the 145 wrestling weight class