

Mayor's Office

Lou Ann Hazen, Administrative Assistant.

The Mayor's Office represents the entire City; therefore, one of the most important issues in our office is to treat others with respect and courtesy. Transparency and public service are two of the top priorities that govern our office.

In 2016, we continued overseeing and giving support to many City of Mishawaka and community projects: Mayor's Youth Advisory Council, Ribbon Cuttings, Proclamations, Employee Luncheons, Relay for Life, Memorial Day Parade, Mishawaka Police Department Neighborhood National Night Out, and others.

Many of the things we do in our office are in reaction to what is going on in our City and what is needed from us. We give support to other Departments as needed and provide the world-class service our citizens have come to expect from all City Departments.

Following are just a few highlights of significant happenings in 2015.

2016 Mayoral Proclamations

Each year I am asked to honor notable occasions with Proclamations. I am proud to be able to honor and recognize residents, businesses and employees who make selfless contributions to the City of Mishawaka. Following are the 2016 Mayoral Proclamations:

Retirements:

- Colleen Olund Retirement, Mishawaka Housing Authority, 22 years 02/09/2016
- Kenneth Grimes, Mishawaka Fire Department, 35 years 05/14/2016
- George Obren, Mishawaka Police & Code Enforcement, 38 years 06/14/2016
- Dale Freeman, Mishawaka Fire Department, 39 years 06/30/2016
- Steve Ravotto, Mishawaka Police Department, 25 years 07/07/2016
- John Gibson, Mishawaka Water Department, 26 years 08/12/2016
- Linda Doshi, Mishawaka Penn Harris Library Board, 16 years 10/04/2016
- Frank Unruh, Mishawaka Water Department, 42 years 10/21/2016

Other Notable Proclamations:

- Demetrius Jackson Day 02/09/2016
- Month of the Young Child 04/01/2016
- Worker's Memorial Day 04/28/2016
- National Day of Prayer 05/05/2016
- Fairview Cemetery 100th Anniversary 08/20/2016
- Marian High School Boys Soccer Championship 11/11/2016

INDIANA CELEBRATES 200 YEARS OF STATEHOOD

On December 11, 2015, I read a Mayoral Proclamation to announce the beginning of Indiana's Bicentennial Celebration along with the raising of the official Indiana Bicentennial flag. Indiana's Bicentennial Celebration was to honor our state's 200 years of statehood and to lead this celebration, the Indiana 2016 Bicentennial Commission (IBC) was established. Fifteen individuals representing the private sector, non-profit organizations and government were appointed to the commission. First Lady Karen Pence was the official ambassador of the Bicentennial. Throughout the year, communities across Indiana celebrated the Birthday of our state and one of the most notable celebrations was the passing of the torch.

One of the legacy projects identified by the IBC was, The Indiana Bicentennial Torch Relay; a signature event of Indiana's 200th anniversary celebration in 2016. Patterned after the Olympic Torch Relay, Indiana's version passed through the state's 92 counties covering 2,300+ miles over a five-week period averaging approximately 74 miles per day. The torchbearers utilized several means of transportation during the relay; watercraft, farm equipment, a racecar, horse, buggy and other modes unique and symbolic to Indiana. This initiative was designed to inspire and unify the state by connecting its people, communities and regions. It was also designed to symbolically "pass the torch," connecting past and current generations to future ones.

The Torch Relay began on September 9, 2015 in Corydon, Indiana's first state capitol, and ended with a celebration on the grounds of the Indiana Statehouse in Indianapolis on October 15, 2016. The City of Mishawaka was honored to receive the torch on October 8th at 11:00am at the corner of Mill and Front Street. It took approximately 10 minutes for the torch to travel a ¾ mile route mapped out by the St. Joseph County Torch Relay Committee. The torch started on the corner of Front and Mill Street, continued north on Mill Street and traveled west along the Riverwalk. It continued north along Center Street to Lincolnway where the final torchbearer, Anna Rohrer, joined the Torch Relay Caravan escorted by the Indiana State Police, and took the torch to Indiana University at South Bend. The proud Mishawaka torchbearers consisted of: Dot Wiekamp, a Mishawaka philanthropist, Jane Wright, Mishawaka Education Foundation Executive Director, Jeff Rea, Chamber of Commerce President, Mishawaka High School State Wrestling Champions; Brad Harper, Patrick Day, Steve Sandefur, Josh Harper and Tommy Forte, and Mishawaka native National Cross Country Champion, Anna Rohrer. Each torchbearer was nominated and chosen by a panel selected by the St. Joseph County Torch Relay Committee and were provided with an official uniform. These selected torchbearers were the only persons allowed to carry the torch along the official torch route and if they could not attend, a substitution was not allowed in their place.

The torch passing through the City of Mishawaka was a historic day, and I would like to thank all of Mishawaka's torchbearers for answering the call to represent their community and making Indiana's 200th birthday a success.

State of Indiana

City of Mishawaka

PROCLAMATION

To All To Whom These Presents May Come, Greetings:

WHEREAS, Friday, December 11 marks the 199th anniversary of the day President James Madison signed the act admitting Indiana as the 19th state of the Union; and

WHEREAS, the history of our state, our county, our community and its people is valuable to our shared experience, and we recognize and celebrate the growth and greatness of our state and the limitless potential inherent in its future; and

WHEREAS, on this occasion of Indiana's 199th birthday, we honor the beginning of the Bicentennial year in Indiana, celebrating our history and igniting the future for coming generations of Indiana citizens; and

WHEREAS, our community plans to honor this singular time in Indiana history by honoring our past, setting the course for our future and preparing a path for our youth, and raises a flag for the Bicentennial year to remind all who visit our fair city of our part in this special year;

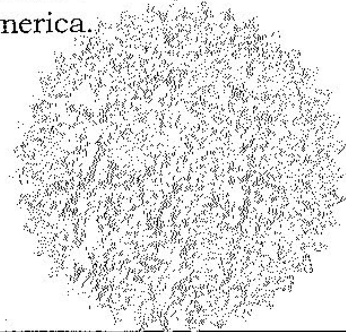
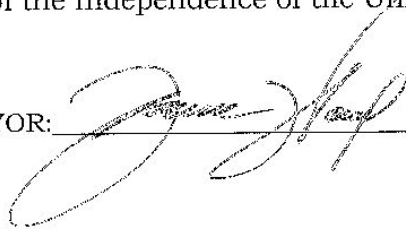
NOW, THEREFORE, I, David A. Wood Mayor of Mishawaka do hereby proclaim December 11, 2015 as

Indiana Statehood Day and the Official Kickoff of the Bicentennial

and invite all citizens to duly note this occasion and celebrate the upcoming year.

In Testimony Whereof, I hereto set my hand and cause to be affixed the official seal of office. Proclaimed at the city of Mishawaka, Indiana this 11th day of December, 2015 on the 199th anniversary of Indiana Statehood and in the 239th year of the Independence of the United States of America.

BY THE MAYOR:



Bison-tennial Public Art Project

My office was contacted by the Indiana Association of United Ways and the Indiana Bicentennial Commission requesting our participation in the Bison-tennial Public Art Project. The project consisted of a 5-ft. tall fiberglass bison that would be decorated and displayed at prominent events in the City of Mishawaka. The fiberglass bison would arrive in the City of Mishawaka primed white, and once painted and sealed with the recommended materials, this fiberglass bison would typically last about 30 years outdoors or even longer if stored inside.

After reaching out to the three area high schools, Mishawaka, Marian and Penn, it was decided that the Mishawaka fine arts students and their art teacher, Ryan Sergeant, would have the honor of designing and painting the bison. The original design was very complex with many City of Mishawaka landmarks, leaves of peppermint and the bison wearing red ball, Ball Band shoes. Unfortunately, because of the texture of the bison, the design had to be simplified, but there are still many Mishawaka landmarks on the bison; a large city seal painted on both sides, the Uniroyal Plant, the cable-stayed bridge over a flowing St. Joseph River with the background of St. Monica Church. Mishawaka High School is painted on one side of the bison, stones similar to those that make up the Battell rock garden and yes, the bison is still wearing his Red Ball Jets!



Mishawaka Bison

The bison was delivered to Mishawaka High School on September 1, 2016 and I wanted to make sure that it would be ready for the Indiana Bicentennial Torch Relay on October 8th. The students had a tough job ahead of them, but I was certain they would get it done. The students prevailed and the bison was painted and delivered back to the City on Friday, October 7th, just in time for the Relay.

The bison has been a display at many City of Mishawaka events but has found a permanent home in the lobby of the newly renovated Battell Center where it can be enjoyed by young and old alike.

Christmas 2016

My favorite time of year is the Christmas Season and the City of Mishawaka is never short on Christmas tradition. The arrival of Santa and the lighting of the Christmas tree took place this year on Friday, December 2nd, in downtown Mishawaka on the northwest lawn of the Mishawaka Police Station.

Santa and the Mayor arrived on a decorated fire truck along with VIP guests, Brendan Williams, Sarah Baker and Mary Jo and Bob Baker. The Christmas tree was graciously donated from the Mishawaka home of Sarah Baker, and Sarah's son, Brendan, was the guest of honor who "flipped the switch" for the lighting of the tree.

Christmas carols were led by Marian High School Senior, Taylor Ryan-Sizemore and the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council served hot chocolate and Christmas cookies. It was an exciting

night for many, young and old alike, to see the tree light up with its hundreds of lights. The tree is a wonderful sight throughout the month of December as it can be seen for blocks while traveling either north or south along Main Street.

Closest Contest in Ring-Off History!

The 4th annual Salvation Army Red Kettle Ring-Off between Mishawaka and South Bend was a close one, but after the final coins were counted MISHAWAKA came out on top. The Princess City will take back the coveted traveling trophy from South Bend.

This contest has taken place on Giving Tuesday for the last four years between the city of Mishawaka and South Bend. Giving Tuesday is the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving Day and is celebrated around the world. It is a day when people come together to give back. Giving Tuesday kicks off the charitable season, when many focus on their holiday and end-of-year giving.

For the first time, Mishawaka Schools joined their Mayors, Fire and Police Chiefs in the annual Ring-Off, and we hear that these kids just might have made the difference. Salvation Army's Major Monty said "We visited Hums Elementary and John Young Middle School to thank the students for the collection efforts today, and it was so great to see their faces as they poured their plastic bags of pennies and dimes into a big red tub. It took almost two hours to get all of the change through the counters, and it was so close we weren't sure which city would win."

A grand total of \$3,025.37 was collected in the 12-hour contest and Mishawaka came out the winner. The real winners are, of course, the families that will benefit from this event. All the money collected will stay in St. Joseph County and will help about 1,000 families at Christmas, and will continue to help hundreds in need throughout 2017.

Martin Luther King Drum Major Awards

On January 16, 2017, the Drum Major for Community Service Awards were presented during the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Service Recognition Breakfast. Each year the City of Mishawaka awards three members of our community for their unselfish contributions of time and resources to help improve St. Joseph County. This year three recipients were honored at the breakfast and presented the award by Mayor Dave Wood. Following are this year's well-deserving recipients:

Clara Davis

Clara's interest in serving was first piqued by her parents Mr. and Mrs. John Humphrey whom she watched serve in the community. Clara's vision was to create new opportunities throughout the community and brighten the future of others. Clara has an unwavering commitment to help people in poverty in every aspect; health issues, spiritual issues, financial, you name it and Clara has in some way been involved with it.

Clara has coordinated and participated in several community projects including "If You Love Me, Feed my Sheep" providing assistance to over 300 families to receive a sit down thanksgiving dinner. Clara also coordinated the "HealthLinc Free Thanksgiving Baskets" for Mishawaka served as one of the coordinators for the St. Joseph County "Toys for Tots" for over 16 years.

Clara presently serves on the Basic Needs Committee at St. Joseph County Tobacco Coalition and Reducing Obesity Coalition, American Cancer Society and Healthy Babies Coalition.

Clara is currently employed at HealthLinc as a Community Outreach Representative and Enrollment Specialist. Clara is married to James Davis and they have two sons and three grandchildren. The spirit of the Drum Major award lives in Clara Davis and Martin Luther King Jr. would be happy to see this award go to her.

John Collins

John Collins has devoted his life to the safety and welfare of the St. Joseph County community. Drawing inspiration from his mother who was a community organizer, his desire is to help create a strong, secure community for the benefit of its citizens. John served as a police officer for over 28 years before transitioning to Director of Security at Saint Joseph Health System for the last 6 years. His goal for his work at Saint Joseph is to provide the safest and most secure environment conducive to the best medical care possible. Believing in the wellness across the board, John is also Chair of the Board of Public Safety for South Bend and serves on the Anti-Violence Commission.

Carol Laidig

Carol Laidig has been working for the betterment of St. Joseph County and across the globe for many years. Carol co-founded The Oaks at SouthPaw Farms, a community ministry in Mishawaka dedicated to providing a place where people of all ages can come together and be a part of all activities that would strengthen and encourage them as they go through life. She continues to serve on the Board of Directors of Point of Light Ministry which oversees the facility. Carol has volunteered her abilities in graphic design to assist many organizations including Help with Love, Epic Church and the Gathering Place of Northern Indiana. She spent over 15 years in the remote parts of the Philippines and Indonesia teaching literacy and meeting medical needs. For several years she has also be active with “Heart in Hand”, volunteering to teach English as a second language. In addition, she and her husband have established the Wynn and Carol Laidig Foundation which continues to support ministry activities in the Michiana community and throughout the world.

Carol has served on The Salvation Army of St. Joseph County Board for 13 years and in that time has assisted The Salvation Army in securing the Kroc Center grant and helped lead the fundraising initiative to secure the matching community funds bringing the Kroc Center to St. Joseph County. For her service, Carol received “the Others” award from The Salvation Army, the highest award given to an individual for service.

Mayors’ Bike Ride 2016

On March 24th, a press conference was held at Central Park to announce a new initiative that was set forth by Mishawaka Mayor Dave Wood, South Bend Mayor, Pete Buttigieg and St. Joseph County Parks Director Evie Kirkwood; the 2016 Mayors’ Bike Ride. This family-friendly, recreational ride would begin in three locations: Central Park, Mishawaka; Howard Park, South Bend, and St. Patrick’s County Park and would mostly follow trails along the St. Joseph River.

Sponsored by Visit South Bend Mishawaka and Bike Michiana Coalition, a non-profit bicycle advocacy organization, the Mayors' Ride also focused on bicycle safety education for children. A series of workshops held before the event taught children how to ride safely in and near traffic. This biking event was for people of all ages and a perfect opportunity for families to kick-start a healthier lifestyle. It was a family-friendly event that highlighted the wonderful trails and places our community has to enjoy bike riding. With its safe and controlled route, it was the perfect place for families to get out and ride together. The event was free of charge and all riders were required to wear the proper safety equipment during the ride. Due to its success, the Mayors' Bike Ride will be back in 2017!

Mishawaka Business Association Annual Dinner

Each year, the Mishawaka Business Association holds their annual dinner and honors a person and business that have made a significant difference in the City of Mishawaka.

Business Person of the Year

The 2016 Person of the Year honor was awarded to Dean Speicher, ED.D, the current Superintendent of School City of Mishawaka. Dr. Speicher retired from Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation in 1992 after a 21 year career as Superintendent. Dean never met a challenge he didn't like and took on the challenge of leading a St. Joseph County business, education and human services coalition called Connect. Following Connect, his consulting firm, Speicher Fields & Associates, consulted with school districts across the country on a variety of issues including technology audits, feasibility studies, and project based learning.

His consulting company eventually brought him to School City of Mishawaka where he consulted with the Board of School Trustees for 14 months on various issues facing the district. After sharing his views on how he would move the district forward, the Board hired Dr. Speicher beginning August 1, 2015. His new challenge with School City is to lead the district and position it to be a great district in five years. This was a well-deserved honor for Dr. Speicher.

Business of the Year

The 2016 Business of the Year was Burns Rent-Alls, Inc., a 4th generation family owned business which has operated out of the same location for over 100 years.

Burns started as a filling station on the corner of what was then, Joseph and Margaret Streets in Mishawaka, now known as Mishawaka Avenue and Liberty Drive. In the early 1900's the filling station became a paint store and John T. and Etta Burns began renting tools out of the paint store. The Burns' resided at the house next door to the filling station as well as the house behind it. During the Great Depression, Etta Burns began sewing and renting costumes to help out with the family finances. The costumes were used for recitals and plays. The family purchased the stock of another costume shop owner who decided to quit after many years of renting costumes. After the passing of John T. and Etta, the children formed Burns Brothers Inc., and merged the tool rental and the costume shop into Burns Rent-Alls as we currently know it.

In 1978, Don Burns sold the business to Steve and Bernadette Burns. That same year, 12-year-old Brian Rutherford, son of Bernadette began working at Burns. Brian moved up in the company as he grew older. During that same time, Steve began growing the tool rental and

developing Burns Party Shop, which offered the rentals of china, flatware, tables and chairs. Brian eventually took over the daily operations of the company and they began delivering and setting up tents, which led to Burns Rent-Alls becoming a full-service event rental company. In the early 1990's, Brian became the Operation Manager of the company and it grew tremendously. Brian met his future wife, Amanda in 1995 and together they continue to grow the business which now employs up to 50 people during the busy season. They have love and respect for the City of Mishawaka who had a hand in helping build Burns into the business it is today.

Community Recognition Award

Two long-time Mishawaka community members were also recognized for their contribution to the City of Mishawaka and Mishawaka Business Association.

David Eisen began his career with the Mishawaka Public Library in 1975 as the Head of Adult Services. He was promoted to Library Director in 1980 and retired on February 28, 2015 after serving 40 years. During his career, he oversaw the expansion of library services, including the construction of the Library's Bittersweet and Harris Township Branches. During his tenure, the downtown library was expanded two times and now includes the old Mishawaka Post Office building. In addition, David remains active in the City of Mishawaka serving on many community boards and projects.

Carol Brademas Abernethy started Interiors Etc. in a small rented house on South Race Street in 1975. When the small house was no longer large enough to hold all the gift lines that Interiors Etc. carried, Carol purchase the old Woolworth building at 111 Lincolnway West. After 4 ½ years at this location, Carol needed larger quarters and purchased and remodeled the old Hibschman Pontiac building at 301 Lincolnway East which included 15,000 sq. ft. and off street parking. She maintained Interiors Etc. there for the next 30 years and in July of 2016, after over 40 years, Carol closed her store and retired to spend time with family. Carol loved having her business in safe, friendly, charming downtown Mishawaka, and never considered moving to any other location. His heart will always be in downtown Mishawaka!

Mayor Dave Wood's Youth Advisory Council

One initiative, as the Mayor of Mishawaka, is to educate our Youth about our City and show them the value of their "hometown". I want them to see what is available for their future in our City and hope that they will return after college and continue to make Mishawaka their home. The Mayor's Youth Advisory Council is a way that my wife, Jaimi, and I give back to our City; by empowering the youth of Mishawaka to have a voice and to address issues and concerns that affect them directly, not only today, but for tomorrow also. We get them involved with the local government officials and departments through participation and community involvement. They are required to participate in their largest Community Service Project of the year, the Thanksgiving Food Drive, and in the spring, they are required to participate in another project; either a Mock Common Council Meeting or a Leadership Project. We take field trips to different local businesses, city departments, and are called upon by many to volunteer at various functions. Following is a brief recap of our year.

Yearly, we reach out to area teachers, coaches and school counselors for nominations of students to the Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council. This year’s group consisted of 31 students; 12 from Marian High School, 14 from Mishawaka High School, and 5 from Penn High School. The year was started with the annual “Fiesta in the Park” where students and their families were invited to meet the Mayor and the Youth Council Adult Coordinators and talk about what the new year of Youth Council would bring. This year’s Swearing in Ceremony was held during the Common Council meeting on September 21st and during their first business meeting, later that evening, Youth Council Officers were selected:



Youth Advisory Council

President	Michael Portolese	Marian High School
Vice-President	Mallory Spiess	Marian High School
Treasurer	Jenny Alwine	Marian High School
Secretary	Taylor Ryan-Sizemore	Marian High School

During the application process, one of the questions that we ask the students is: What are the three (3) most important issues to you, your friends and family in your neighborhood? Here are the results of that question:

Safety	6
Helping the less fortunate	5
Education	5
Cleanliness of our City	4
Code Violations in our City	4
Drug Use & Alcohol Abuse	3
Neighborhood Safety	3
Residential Speed Limits	3
Construction Concerns—too much Construction--Reasons	2
Family Support/Involvement	2
Healthy & Safe Activities for Teens in our City	2
Park Safety/Comfort Levels for Families	2
Railroad Horns & Safety of Crossings (recent deaths)	2
Respect for Others Property	2
Sidewalk Conditions in our City	2
Violence in our City	2

We visited many City of Mishawaka Departments, including Water Department, Police Department, Fire Department, Central Services and visited a local packaging business, Jamil Packaging. They volunteered at many events but most notably this year was the Mishawaka Business Association Annual Dinner and Awards where they were able to meet and mingle with local businesses and business persons. Habitat for Humanity came and showed the Youth Council members how their program works, and in April we were proud to go to the Construction Offices of Habitat and build the walls that would later be used in the Gonzales-Armenta Family build at 131 W. 7th Street. It was an honor to say that we helped build the walls for this home in our city.

The Year ended with student teams, randomly drawn, being divided into five groups to work on Leadership Projects. The Leadership Topics were assigned as follows: Cleaner/A Greener Community in our Neighborhoods, Marketing Downtown Mishawaka, New Uses for the Battell Center Renovation, Public Recreation for our Youth, and Create a Master Plan of Bendix Park. The students worked diligently for months until making presentations on June 15th in the Common Council Chambers of City Hall to a panel of three judges; City Planner, Ken Prince; Utilities Manager, Jim Shrader; and Wastewater Assistant Manager, Tim Brill. After much discussion, the winning team was decided: Team 4 consisting of Abbey Wood, Marian High School Junior; Jennifer Alwine, Marian High School Senior; John Zylstra, Mishawaka High School Sophomore and Kyle Cocquyt, Penn High School Junior.

Their topic, Public Recreation for our Youth, was well thought out and planned. They suggested innovative ways to combat the “nothing to do here” syndrome in our City which included a budget for their plans. They also appeared before the Mishawaka Common Council with their presentation and all were impressed by their ideas. The City of Mishawaka is in good hands, indeed, if these students are any indication of what our future generations bring.