

Mayor's Office

David A. Wood, Mayor

Lou Ann Hazen, Administrative Assistant

Debra Gregg, Secretary

The Mayor's Office continues to represent the entire City of Mishawaka giving support to all City offices, businesses and citizens alike. Public service is foremost in the mind of this office, and we continue to provide the world-class service that our foundation is based upon.

In an age of automation, we continue to answer our telephone personally serving and helping each and every person who calls our office. We serve the people of Mishawaka honorably, faithfully and diligently and do our best to answer every question, big or small, that comes our way. If we don't know the answer, we will find it.

Following are just a few highlights of significant happenings in 2017.

2017 Mishawaka Drum Major Awards

Gary West

Gary West is as responsible for Mishawaka's growth and development as any other single public servant in City history. Gary is a leader and has been the driving force behind many of the significant projects that have occurred in Mishawaka during his 32 years as the Director of Engineering under four different Mayors. Gary conceived and implemented programs in the City that have improved the quality of life for homeowners, residents, and businesses and provided security and opportunity to untold thousands through his commitment to improving Mishawaka's infrastructure.

Gary served as President and Board Member of the Board of Public Works and Safety for the City of Mishawaka, President of the Osceola Little League, President and Board Member of the Taper Lock Credit Union, Member of the Mishawaka 4-H Club, Mishawaka School PTA, Mishawaka High School Band Boosters, Mishawaka Alumni Club and was coordinator for the Mishawaka 4-H Model Building and Rocketry program for over ten years. Gary has served on many committees for School City of Mishawaka; the most notable during the combining of the two middle schools in our City, Beiger and John Young Middle School.

Gary has worked tirelessly to ensure that he has had a positive influence on his colleagues and every project that he has encountered during his career. Gary is married to Ellen and is the proud father of three and an even prouder grandfather of two. Gary retired from the City of Mishawaka on November 30, 2016 and will be greatly missed.



Gary West - Drum Major Award Recipient

Jimita Potter

A Mishawaka native, Jimita Baldoni Potter, has family heritage of community and political involvement. When she moved back to the area in 1991, she wasted no time getting involved in the community. She joined the Junior League of South Bend, and soon coordinated the Silent Witness initiative with the YWCA that highlighted the plight of battered women. She has been a tireless member of the Junior League over the last 25 years working on numerous community projects, working on the Board and eventually rising to the Presidency of the Junior League. A senior member, she now enjoys mentoring young members like her daughters. Through the Junior League, she became involved with the Dismas House, supporting non-violent offenders as they make the transition back into society. She has supported this organization for many years, sat on its board and is a recent past President.

Jimita has also been involved with her alma mater, Mishawaka High School, supporting and serving on the board of the Mishawaka Education Foundation. She has been active in the community for almost 25 years while working full-time as a teacher for 12 of those years at the Byrkit Alternative High School. Working with at-risk kids and watching them successfully complete their high school education account for many of her most rewarding moments. She continues her volunteer efforts through many initiatives at her current employer, Notre Dame.

Timothy Hacker

Timothy J. Hacker retired from AM General in 1986. Tim was the UAW election chairman for 36 years and for the past 17 years has served as the UAW Retiree Chairman. Tim has always made a strong commitment to community and public service in St. Joseph County. For the past 40 years, he has been involved in helping the Toys for Tots, various food drives and food basket preparations during the holidays, provided rides for vets and senior citizens to the doctor's office, and provided rides to voting places on election day. Tim has used his classic car collection for community parades, weddings and charities.

Tim served as a member of the St. Joseph County Circuit Court Jury Commission for 14 years. He is a recipient of the United Way of St. Joseph County Hero Award and is a member of Landmark Missionary Baptist Church. Tim was married to Sharon for 46 years and they raised three wonderful daughters.

Mishawaka Business Association Annual Dinner and Meeting

The City of Mishawaka has always been proud to call themselves partners with the Mishawaka Business Association and has been supportive of the many events that the MBA hosts each year. Each year the MBA holds their Annual Dinner and Meeting in February to honor citizens who contribute greatly to our community and announce the Mishawaka Business and Person of the year award.

This year the Mishawaka Business Association felt it was important to “honor their own” and gave special recognition to their longest serving members:

- 1st Source Bank
- Mutual Bank
- Christianson Furniture
- Bingham & Loughlin
- Doc Pierce's Restaurant

Special recognition was also given to men’s basketball coach Mike Lightfoot of Bethel College. Mike Lightfoot guided one of the most successful NAIA programs in the country and retired at the end of the 2016–17 season after a 28-year career with the Bethel Pilots. The Pilots have been equally successful in the classroom under Lightfoot where 98% of his players have graduated.

This year’s event was emceed by Gary Sieber and the keynote speaker was award-winning comedian, Brad Tassell. A “homegrown Mishawaka man”, Tassell returned to the City of Mishawaka and entertained MBA members and their guests. He is the bestselling/award-winning author of *Don’t Feed the Bully*, which is read by more than 6000 students in classes each year.

MBA Person of the Year

Considering the recent support given by the Mishawaka Republican Party Chairwoman, Jan Winn and City Clerk, Deborah Ladyga-Block in the passing of the School City of Mishawaka referendum, the MBA felt it was fitting that these two women be named Persons of the Year. They showed how two political parties could come together for the betterment of the Community. They both worked tirelessly to support School City in educating the public about the upcoming referendum; transparency was the key to passing of this referendum and these two women were the “cheerleaders” in this campaign to make sure that all Mishawaka citizens understood the importance and the meaning of this referendum. Jan and Deb were humbled by the award as they have both been in public service their entire lives and are proud to call the City of Mishawaka their home.

MBA Business of the Year

Locally owned and operated, Zolman’s Tire & Auto Care has serviced the automotive, tire, and wheel needs of customers throughout Michiana for the past 39 years. Bud and Diane Zolman moved to Mishawaka in 1978 and over the years have expanded into seven locations throughout Michiana. A family business in every sense, Bud’s experiences were being taught and soaked up by his son, Nate. Growing up around the business, Nate developed a love and passion for all things automotive. He knew that his goal was to someday earn the right to carry the family name and business into its 2nd generation and after graduating from Ball State in 1992, Nate started as an entry level employee and worked harder, longer, and faster than everyone else to move forward. Zolman continues today to be the best it can be at what it does—taking care of Michiana!

Optimist Club Student Honorees

Each year, members of the Mishawaka Optimist Club honor the achievements of a select few Mishawaka graduating students based not only on their accomplishments in their studies but also in their non-classroom activities. These students take part in bettering our community and our world through their optimistic set of values. Optimists consider the Optimist Creed to be the hallmark of Optimism and these honorees exemplify its message. Mayor Wood was honored to attend the breakfast and present these exemplary students



with the Optimist Award. Congratulations to the 2017 Optimist Club student honorees:

- Marian High School: Mackenzie Hester, Alex Dlugosz
- Mishawaka High School: Erin Czyz, Anthony Rector
- Penn High School: Samantha Miller, Luis Muro

Mayor's Youth Advisory Council



2016-2017 Mayor's Youth Advisory Council

The 2016-2017 Mayor Dave Wood Youth Advisory Council had a tremendous amount of interested students nominated by their peers, school counselors, teachers, community members and parents. The application process was rigorous with over 50 applications sent to interested students. This year we decided to try something different and since there were four adult coordinators, we would allow 40 students; ten per adult coordinator. This would enable more students to take part in the Youth Council this year since there were so many interested. Needless to say, it was a challenge. Not that we couldn't handle 40 students at a time, rather it was the issue of field trips. Our group was large, so it was difficult for the different businesses and city departments to handle the group of 40 at one time. This was a successful year in that we had so many students who wanted and were able to take part in our group.

This year we gave the students many opportunities to learn about their local government and City of Mishawaka Departments. We visited the Mishawaka Police Dept., Mishawaka Fire Dept., Mishawaka Electric Linemen Training Facility, Mishawaka Parks Department, Mishawaka Food Pantry and participated in a mock council meeting with ND law students giving advice and guidance.

The students collected money and food for their largest community service project, the Mayor's Thanksgiving Food Drive, and again were able to provide 60 Mishawaka families with a full Thanksgiving dinner and stock the shelves of the Mishawaka Food Pantry. They volunteered many hours of community service giving their time to



Youth Advisory Council Thanksgiving Food Drive

help at City of Mishawaka functions and volunteered for different non-for-profit Mishawaka organizations. It was another successful year for these students and our community alike. Following are the members of the 2016-2017 Mayor Dave Wood Youth Advisory Council:

Members:

- Marian High School:* Alexia Alvarado, Marielle Corbett, Madeline Dennison, Emma Griesinger, Hannah Majewski, Taylor Ryan-Sizemore (*Secretary*), Gina Tordi, Natalie Winters, Abbey Wood (*President*) and Michael Wuszke
- Mishawaka High School:* Kerri Clark, Luke Kasznia, Austin Laymon, Skylar Madison, Devyn Miller, Abigail Mueller, Parker Norris, Skylar Norris, Jacob Orbin, Lindsey Pelletier, Maxwell Pickenpaugh, Gabrielle Reinoehl, Alexandria Shide, Kaitlyn Vandygriff, Kaitlin Ward and John Zylstra
- Mishawaka High School:* Jack Bender, Kyle Cocquyt, Samantha Grocock, Reis Kennedy (*Treasurer*), Alexis Marks, Logan McGuire (*Vice President*), Collin Pica, Evan Pica, Bo Schuster, Hannah Smith, Celine Wang and Maya Wright

Proclamations

The City of Mishawaka Mayor’s Office issues Proclamations each and every year. I am proud of the events we celebrate in our city and some years are busier than others. This year was celebrated with Proclamations and following are the events that called for a City of Mishawaka Proclamation:

Retirements:

- Linda Dotson, Mishawaka Clerk’s Office, 20 years 01/03/2017
- Ross Portolese, Mishawaka Plan Commission, 30 years 01/10/2017
- Gary West, City Engineer, 32 years 01/25/2017
- Dave Kyle, Mishawaka Water Department, 17 years 03/02/2017
- Michael L. Mezykowski, Mishawaka Wastewater, 23 years 03/08/2017
- Matthew Breden, Mishawaka Fire Department, 27 years 04/19/2017
- Wayne Ryan, Mishawaka Fire Department, 33 years 09/21/2017

Other Notable Proclamations:

- Arbor Day 04/28/2017
- Worker’s Memorial Day 04/28/2017
- National Day of Prayer 05/04/2017
- Wound Care Awareness Month 06/05/2017
- Dr. Bryan Glenn – 21 years of Service to the Community 06/15/2017
- Pete Stebbins – 90th Birthday Celebration 06/25/2017
- Celebration of Michiana Women Leaders 08/26/2017
- Citizens in Alliance w/Police Program – 10-year anniversary 08/27/2017
- Manufacturing Day 10/06/2017
- Mackey & Miles Day – B100 Radio 10/31/2017