

# NEWS FROM THE CHAMBER

FEBRUARY 2010

*Rob Callahan, 2009 Citizen of the Year*



*Rob Callahan with First Midwest Bank was presented with the prestigious 2009 Citizen of the Year Award at the Chamber of Commerce's Annual Banquet.*



## *What's Your Brand?*

## *US Chamber Magazine*

Everyone knows that networking is critical to success in career development, starting a business, and forging relationships. To stand out, take the additional step of creating your own personal brand.

Personal branding is not unlike corporate branding. It is about presenting yourself in the best possible light to your customers, employer, and even friends. It's about determining what you want to represent to others and then living that brand in everything you do and say. Technology is making it easier than ever to market yourself and your small business in the same way large companies have been marketing themselves for years.

Following are some tips for creating your own personal brand:

**Start by creating your brand statement.** Don't think about a job title, but consider what differentiates you from others. What are you known for? Remember in high school when people were labeled "Most Likely to Succeed" or "Class Clown"? How would you be classified today? What value do you bring to your work and to relationships? Put it in writing. This is the most important step in creating your brand.

**Be consistent.** Once you have defined your brand, carry it out in everything you do, whether it's the way you dress, your online presence, or your e-mail signature.

**Utilize every opportunity to express your brand.** Tools and templates are available to create your own materials, such as business cards and stationery, to reflect your brand. Thanks to advances in printing and online tools, anyone can have a polished and professional look with their printed materials, whether it's a business presentation or a thank-you note.

**Use technology wisely.** Your Facebook page, Twitter feed, LinkedIn profile, and other forms of electronic communication make up your online identity. Think of your online identity as an extension of you, not as a separate identity. These tools aren't just about what you post but also what others are saying. Take inventory of your online presence, then set up an aggregator to pool feeds about you or your company from common search engines and social networking tools.

Finally, be true to yourself and your values. Be creative and uniquely you!



### *Caught in the Act of Hospitality!*

The Greater Poplar Bluff Area Chamber of Commerce is looking for exceptional people who give exemplary service to their customers.

So, tell us about someone who has given you exceptionally GOOD treatment. Your server at a local restaurant, the grocery store bag boy, laundry attendant, clothing store clerk, bank teller, etc. Let the Poplar Bluff Chamber make them (and the business they represent) feel special.

As part of our continued community development initiative, we are accepting nominations for the Caught in the Act of Hospitality recognition. This award was established for service personnel in the Greater Poplar Bluff area. These should be individuals who deal with the public ---- it is not

necessary for them to be in the hospitality industry per se.

Caught in the Act of Hospitality recognizes front-line service personnel who go "ABOVE AND BEYOND" the call of duty to provide extraordinary service to their customers-- local clientele and out-of-town visitors. Their friendly, helpful attitude is instrumental in attracting people to our area and convincing them to return.

We need your help to recognize these community ambassadors. If any service personnel have impressed you with their personal attention, take a moment to nominate them for the Caught in the Act of Hospitality award.

NOTE: We want to draw from your personal experience as a customer, SO PLEASE do not nomi-

nate employees from your place of business. However, we will accept correspondence you have received from a customer complimenting your employee on special service.

The Chamber's Ambassador Committee will make selections from those nominated. A delegation from the Poplar Bluff Chamber will pay a visit to the honoree's place of business to present the award, which will include a certificate and an article in our newsletter. DO NOT let the employee know about the campaign. This should be a total surprise to all potential recipients.

SO, TELL US ABOUT  
SOMEONE WHO  
HAS GIVEN YOU  
EXCEPTIONALLY  
GOOD  
TREATMENT!

### *Wal-Mart Foundation funds Grant to help older workers*

With some of Missouri's older workers struggling to find work during the current recession, the Putting Experience to Work program has tailored free training and support workers over 50 years old.

Funded by the Wal-Mart Foundation, the program is run by Experience Works, a national charitable organiza-

tion that helps older workers find employee as well as help businesses take advantage of the talents of "experienced" workers. This is a critical time to help older workers, the percentage of unemployed older workers reached its highest recorded level in Oct. 2009.

Wal-Mart's \$1.5 million grant allows the program to be accessible to workers in six areas around the nation, including mid Missouri.

For more information about the program, visit [www.experienceworks.org](http://www.experienceworks.org)



## *Chairman's Message*

Your Chamber's *movin' and groovin'* may have been delayed, but it could not be denied – you can't stop the *Annual Banquet*, you can only hope to contain it! Despite having to re-schedule the original date, we had a fantastic turnout for the banquet on Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> – it was great to have the opportunity to thank our outgoing board members, recognize participants in the new Gateway to Leadership program, name our Ambassador of the Year, Amie Hays, and present an award to a very deserving Citizen of the Year, Rob Callahan.

We had a very busy week – the new Gateway to Leadership class began on Wednesday (Feb. 17), meeting at the Chamber. We have a great group of participants for the new year and look forward to recognizing them all at next year's banquet!

Our Microsoft 7 Seminar was Thursday (Feb. 18) in the Chamber Community Room – lots of good information was made available along with software discounts at this program that we presented in conjunction with Today's Computers. The event was free to Chamber members.

You should mark your calendars now for what has become an annual hit – our St. Patrick's Day trivia night. Wednesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, you'll have the opportunity to show off all that wonderfully useless knowledge knocking around in that head of yours. The event will be hosted in the ballroom at the Holiday Inn – the cost will be \$50 per team. Get your team signed up today!

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, our quarterly luncheon was a great success – Buffalo Wild Wings provided a great spread and we heard from the Census Bureau's Jeff Mansfield on the importance of participating in the upcoming decennial census and Jared Hicks with the Self Help Housing explaining their exciting new program.

As we look forward to spring, let me express the appreciation, on behalf of the Chamber, for your continued involvement in these events that your staff is working so hard to bring you. We're happy to see that you value these returns on your Chamber investment. Thank you for supporting *your* Chamber.

*Matt Funke*

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*Highlights!*

*Congratulations, Chris Hon, Chamber Vice-President on your new position as Poplar Bluff R1 Superintendent.*

*Thanks Ernie Lawson, for the OUSTANDING job you did as Superintendent!*

*The Chamber would like to express their appreciation to the Poplar Bluff School Board for believing in a LOCAL candidate!*

*Cotrell Funeral Service is now offering a live webcasting of all funerals and other services performed in its Chapel; great service to offer in our community Randy!*

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MAKING  
POPLAR  
BLUFF A  
GREAT PLACE  
TO LIVE AND  
RAISE A  
FAMILY!

*Time Honored Members*

***40-50 years***

Southern Bank  
Commerce Bank

***30-39 years***

Drury Inn  
Duckett Truck Center

***21-29 Years***

Aldi, Inc.  
Casey's General Stores

***10-20 years***

Bluff City Ice  
First United Methodist  
Mingo Job Corps  
Brytte Storage Systems

***5-9 Years***

Altrusa International, Inc.  
First Midwest Investments  
Hobbs Nursery  
KAJACS Contractors, Inc.  
MAG  
Nordyne  
River Radio  
Southern Delivery Services

***1-4 Years***

Citigroup Smith Barney  
Con-way Freight Central  
Gray Bluff Feed & Pet  
JCS Tel-Link  
Kissinger & Kirkman  
Investment Centre  
Rowland Family Dentistry  
Westwood Center

***The Greater  
Poplar Bluff Area  
Chamber of  
Commerce is  
proud to  
recognize our  
TIME-  
HONORED  
MEMBERS.***

***These members  
renewed their  
investment in the  
month of  
February.***