



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Outstanding Citizen Award Winners

Bentonville, AR – April 12, 2011... Mayor McCaslin is pleased to announce the first winners of the Outstanding Citizen Award. The Outstanding Citizen Award program was initiated in January 2011 to recognize the exceptional volunteer contributions of Bentonville residents. The Mayor chose three winners, one in each category, i.e., adult, child and community group.

The first quarter winners are: Phyllis Abraham, Abby Terlouw and the Bentonville Garden Club. The winners will be honored at a luncheon on April 13, 2011.

The City received two nominations for Mrs. Phyllis Abraham. Mrs. Abraham is a “phenomenal” teacher, according to Hunter Hook. She is a beloved 4th grade teacher at R.E.Baker Elementary School. Mr. Hook said she “encourages us to be good citizens in our community. Outside the classroom, we have participated in Habitat for Humanity, Litter Free Zone program and the greenhouse.” Kate Hodgson wrote “Mrs. Abraham believes in people and teaches us to believe in ourselves.” R.E. Baker’s Butterfly Garden was her brainchild. It has become an official Migration Station and has been recognized as the best school butterfly garden in the state. Starting in 2005, she and her students have annually celebrated Earth Day on the Downtown Square. In teaching children about the importance of recycling and gardening, she is fostering our youth’s interest in these ideas and techniques. Ms. Abraham said, “It’s about creating strong foundations. These kids are teaching their parents – their families – their friends about our environment and about making better decisions that will affect us all.” Her reach goes far beyond the classroom. She and her students make a difference in this community.

Abby Terlouw is a member of the Bentonville Public Library Teen Volunteer Program. Since 2009, she has volunteered over 250 hours of service. Sue Pekel, the Children’s Librarian, said “Abby is a serious, civic-minded teenager who consistently exceeds expectations in her work as a volunteer. The Children’s library staff members can confidently assign Abby volunteer tasks with the knowledge that Abby’s unique creative abilities, critical thinking and problem solving skills, collaborative spirit, agility and adaptability, and proficient technological skills insure a job well done. “

The Bentonville Garden Club was founded in 1947. The Garden Club has many on-going plantings in the City, including Train Station Park, Bentonville Public Library and Old High Middle School. In 2010, the Club donated \$1,000 to Bentonville Parks and Recreation for plant material at Orchards Park. The dedicated club members are responsible for planting the 1,000+ daffodil and tulip blubs that are currently in bloom throughout the flower beds on the Downtown Square. The Club hosts the annual Arbor Day event and plants a tree in someone’s memory every year. The Club has participated in the City’s Adopt-A-Street program since its inception. These on-going projects require a commitment toward volunteerism from every member of the Garden Club. McCaslin said, “They have helped make our City more beautiful for many years and I am pleased to pay tribute to their green thumbs and generous hearts.

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