

The 2011 Honorees are...



CITIZEN OF THE YEAR
Shirley Eckert

Shirley Eckert was selected as 2011 Citizen of the Year. She volunteers her time with many organizations and groups other than the Affton Chamber.

Shirley is a member of the Affton Historical Society and is Chair of the Kitchen at Oakland House. She helps at many events, including Santa House, Bunny Hutch and member events. At the St. Louis Peregrine Society, Shirley is Chair of the Cancer Dressings.

Shirley attends Seven Holy Founders Church where she belongs to their Ladies Sodality Group. She assists with funeral meals at church and is an Eucharistic Minister. She is also a member of the Servite Secular Order and the 1904 World's Fair Society. Shirley is one of the inaugural Retired Resident members of the Affton Chamber of Commerce.

Shirley is a graduate of the St. Anthony of Padua High School. Shirley and her husband, Arthur (now deceased), have four children—Richard Eckert, Stephen Eckert, Thomas Eckert, and Catherine Consolino. While raising her children, she also volunteered countless hours at their school. She is also a proud grandmother to five grandchildren—Stephanie and Angela Consolino, Joshua, Andrew, and Caroline Eckert.

The Business Person of the Year, Citizen of the Year, and Beautification Awards will be presented at the Annual Awards Dinner on January 21.

BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR

Mike Bamvakais

Dill, Bamvakais & Newsham PC



Michael R. Bamvakais, principal of the law firm Dill, Bamvakais & Newsham, P.C., was selected as the 2011 Business Person of the Year. He has practiced law in the Affton area for over 32 years, currently concentrating his practice in the areas of estate planning, probate law, probate estate administration, trust law & trust administration.

Mike is a graduate of UM-St. Louis & Washington University School of Law. He is rated "AV" by Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory, the highest rating for legal ability & general ethical standards in the practice of law. An AV rating is a testament to the fact that a lawyer's peers rank him or her at the highest level of professional excellence & denotes adherence to professional standards of conduct & ethics, reliability, diligence & other criteria relevant to the discharge of professional responsibilities.

Mike & his wife, Liz, live in the Oakville area & have 3 daughters. Alexis Hagengoff, is married, lives in Indianapolis & is a clinical pharmacist. Sara Bamvakais, a mechanical engineer, lives in Charlotte, NC. Lauren Bamvakais, lives in St. Louis & holds a Masters degree in Criminal Justice.

Mike has served numerous terms on the Board of Directors of the Affton Chamber & as its President in 2004-2005. He is a Community Director for the South County Branch of Citizen's National Bank of Greater St. Louis. Also, he serves on the Affton School District's A+ Advisory Program Committee and has served on the district's Independent Financial Review Panel. Currently, Mike serves as President of the Affton Historical Society Endowment Trust's Board of Trustees, & has served as a trustee for a number of years. While Mike's three daughters were attending Cor Jesu Academy, Mike served on their Golf Tournament Committee & chaired the committee for three years.

Mike has been active with the Boy Scouts, serving as Unit Commissioner with the Gravois Trail District & as Chairperson of the District's Membership Committee. Mike is currently serving on the Advancement Committee of the Greater St. Louis Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America as Vice-Chairperson of Life Saving & Special Awards.

For the past 32 years, Mike has been a member of the Crestwood-Sunset Hills Rotary Club & is a past President. He has served on the Club's Board of Directors, on the Club's Arts & Crafts Fair planning committee, as facilitator for the Club's guest speakers & as Chairman of the Club's Major Gifts Committee. He is a Paul Harris Fellow of the Rotary International Foundation & has 32 years of perfect attendance at the weekly meetings.

Mike & Liz raised their family at St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Catholic Parish in Oakville, where he served in various capacities including as member of the Finance Committee & as Vice-President of Sports on the parish's Athletic Association.

Mike feels his volunteerism has been deeply rewarding & it has been his honor to be a part of so many wonderful organizations.