

April 20, 2012

News Release

For Immediate Release

Choose Environmental Excellence Awards Announced

The Twelfth Annual Springfield-Greene County *Choose Environmental Excellence* awards were presented Friday, April 20, 2012, at a luncheon held at the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce as a part of Springfield's Earth Day festivities. Eleven organizations presented awards this year.

The Watershed Committee of the Ozarks award showcased accomplishments that further the protection of Springfield's drinking water resources. Mike Kromrey, Executive Director presented the award.

The Environmental Section of Greene County's Resource Management Department was chosen by the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks to receive its 2012 Choose Environmental Excellence Award. Greene County has an exceptional staff of hard working professionals who administer the County's Stormwater, sinkhole, erosion and sediment control, floodplain and on-site wastewater system regulations. This Section reviews proposed development plans and plats for compliance with environmental regulations, performs field inspections and provides information to developers, consultants and the general public regarding environmental issues. The staff is known for their innovative and collaborative efforts, and have been instrumental in projects like the Legacy Trails Habitat for Humanity subdivision project, site work for the Watershed Center, and the Onsite Wastewater Training Center located at Valley Water Mill. Staff members include: Kevin R. Barnes, P.E., Stormwater Engineer; Vanessa Brandon, Environmental Planner; Jonathan F. Williams, Assistant Stormwater Engineer; Tim Davis, MS, CFM, Water Quality Field Operations Manager; Michael Bowers, Water Quality Specialist, Soil Scientist; Danny Tavares, Water Quality Specialist; and Karen Elmer, Water Quality Specialist. Chris Coulter, AICP, is the Director of the Resource Management Department. (Contact: Mike Kromrey -0417-866-1127)

Solid Waste Management District "O" Executive Board members recognized efforts toward waste reduction and recycling with their Environmental Service Awards. Waste District "O" covers the counties of Christian, Polk, Dallas, Greene and Webster. Greene County Commissioner Harold Bengsch presented the award.

Mr. Loring Bullard was chosen by the Solid Waste Management District "O" Executive Board to receive their 2012 Environmental Service Award (ESA). Over the past few decades, Loring has often been recognized for his exemplary work in water conservation and water quality; however, District O selected Mr. Bullard as their 2012 ESA recipient due to his dedication to recycling and recycling education, as so visibly demonstrated by the Community Room at the C.W. Titus Education Facility at the Watershed Center at Valley Water Mill Park. Construction of the Community Room was funded in part by a \$50,000 grant from Solid Waste District O,

which they consider "money well spent." During the first five years of operation, they calculate a cost-per-visitor of two cents, based on estimated attendance.

Visitors to the Community Room see a beautiful interior, constructed entirely of recycled materials. Conceived by and designed, in part, by Loring, the Community Room not only used recycled materials for its construction but also serves as an ongoing recycling educational resource for approximately 15,000 visitors per year. Interpretive displays, signs, and brochures describing the materials used are all in place to demonstrate the viability of recycled products. Loring's commitment to recycling is further demonstrated by his innovative use of recycled materials and ongoing efforts to strengthen the demand for recycling materials here in southwest Missouri. (Contact: Robert Hamilton – 417-859-5786)

The Springfield-Greene County Environmental Advisory Board recognized a business, agency, group or individual that has gone beyond normal practices to promote, improve or support sustainable, environmentally conscious activities. Board Vice Chair, Melissa Cox, and Board Member, Wendy Anderson, made the presentation.

Melissa and Adam Millsap were recognized by the Springfield-Greene County Environmental Advisory Board. The Millsaps started their Urban Roots Farm near downtown Springfield in 2010 on a one acre plot. They have grown this project and their mission of educating the community on sound urban gardening into a huge community affair. They were integral in the formation of the Springfield Urban Agriculture Coalition (SUAC) in November of 2011. SUAC and community partners have developed and support the Dig In R-12 (D.I.R.T.) program, Urban Roots Farm, and Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training (C.R.A.F.T.) program. DIRT has awarded 1s a schoolyard garden to ten Springfield schools and has worked with district teachers to develop a garden-based curriculum for K-12. Each schoolyard garden is a terrific educational opportunity for the students of that school. Urban Roots Farm is offering 25 C.S.A. shares for 2012 and has celebrated a full year of growing and marketing produce. The CRAFT project is seeking host farms and is selecting interns and apprenticeships to enter the training program at the additional farms in the community. The Millsaps have demonstrated and offered many green opportunities in Springfield including composting brewery waste, farmers market organic produce, free range eggs, and education to the next generation of urban agriculturists. Board Vice-Chair, Melissa Cox, and Board Member, Wendy Anderson, presented the award. (Contact: Karen McKinnis –417-864-1623)

The Ozarks Clean Air Alliance, a subcommittee of the Environmental Collaborative of the Community Partnership of the Ozarks, recognized efforts made to benefit the health of citizens in the region through air quality protection and improvement. Michelle Garand, Community Partnership of the Ozarks presented the award.

Rick Hughlett, founder and owner of Rick's Automotive was recognized for his support and voluntary activities that have helped raise the awareness of the local connection between mobile sources (such as cars and trucks) and air quality, particularly ground-level ozone. He has participated in Earth Day activities – offering free emissions testing and is currently including information about the importance of well-maintained vehicles in protecting our air quality.

Rick founded Rick's Automotive in 1980 with only two employees and today employs 35 people with a customer base exceeding 25,000 people. He is uniquely positioned to reach a large population with information that will assist in air quality protection and education efforts for our region. (Contact: Doug Neidigh – 417-873-7641)

The Tree City USA Citizens Advisory Committee recognized efforts toward protecting and enhancing Springfield's community forest. Chair, Jane Earnhart, made the presentations.

Bridget Dierks was recognized by the Tree City, USA, Citizens Advisory Committee. She was the Community Foundation of the Ozarks representative to the Tree City, USA, Citizens Advisory Committee for several years and served as chair for one year. She was instrumental in initiating the Tree Tag Project – whereby large plastic signs are tied to trees showing the tree's dollar value in terms of temperature moderation, stormwater management and other factors. Bridget was involved in the grant process, conducted the research necessary for the value of the trees, developed the tags, and established the website "This Tree Pays". This project was successful primarily due to Bridget's efforts.

Jerry Monterastelli was also recognized by the Tree City, USA, Citizens Advisory Committee. He was a retired forester with the Missouri Department of Conservation, when he courageously came out of retirement to help Springfield/Greene County Parks in the immediate aftermath of the devastating 2007 ice storm. At that time he worked in assessing tree damage and coordination of cleanup work. Then, in 2008, Jerry was called back for a second tour of duty in assisting the City of Springfield Public Works Department with reforestation efforts. Most recently, Jerry has worked as a volunteer in conducting an extensive tree inventory for the Springfield National Cemetery. (Contact: Casey Kellner – 417-864-1135 or Benjamin Kellner – 417-864-1178)

The Greater Ozarks Audubon Society recognized exemplary efforts toward their mission of promoting bird conservation in southwest Missouri. Dr. Ruth Grant, Vice President, presented the award.

Greg Swick received the 2012 Choose Environmental Excellence Award as an active member of the Greater Ozarks Audubon Society for a number of years, and for his service in a variety of capacities – as a Board member, committee chair and volunteer. His pinnacle achievement, however, has been his leadership of the Green Leadership Academy for Diverse Ecosystems or "GLADE". This educational program for high school students interested in conservation, now entering its fourth year, has taught and inspired teens to assume leadership roles in their communities and to generate volunteer projects of their own throughout the Ozarks. He not only served as the Director of GLADE for all four years, but also as its webmaster, public spokesperson, chief fundraiser, meeting host, cheerleader and philosophical compass. (Contact: Dave Catlin – 417-889-9940)

The Environmental Collaborative of the Community Partnership of the Ozarks recognized efforts exemplifying partnering and working together to foster an appreciation of the role of a healthy natural environment in the health and well being of the southwest Missouri region. Michelle Garand, Community Partnership of the Ozarks, presented the award.

Dr. Dave Fraley, Director of Environmental Affairs for City Utilities of Springfield was recognized for his long-time efforts to raise awareness of air quality and encourage efforts to protect the air quality of our region. As a founding member of the Ozarks Clean Air Alliance and active member of the CPO Environmental Collaborative, Dave has always been at the forefront of efforts to bring accurate and useful information to the community and to foster cooperation among the many stakeholders who share a determination to help the community understand the air quality challenges facing us. While he is being recognized for his role in air quality protection, Dave is also an avid recycler and is personally committed to many other environmentally responsible practices. A consummate professional, Dave is always one of the first to step forward to be of assistance to one of the many committees and boards that have the good fortune to claim him as one of their members. (Contact: Barbara Lucks – 417-864-2005)

Springfield Plateau Chapter Missouri Master Naturalists program seeks to engage Missourians in the stewardship of our state's natural resources through science-based education and volunteer community service. The 70+ members of the Springfield Plateau Chapter are part of a statewide corps of volunteers dedicated to that purpose. Statewide sponsors are the Missouri Department of Conservation and the University of Missouri Extension. The Master Naturalists recognized the outstanding contributions of an individual toward conservation of the natural environment. President, Jennifer Ailor, presented the award.

Joe Kleiber has been a member of Master Naturalists since 2005. He is an active volunteer, regularly attends advanced training opportunities to increase his knowledge of the natural world. In addition to his activism in Master Naturalists, he is a member of the Christian County Master Gardeners, James River Basin Partnership, Friends of the Garden (board), Christian County Extension Board (elected commissioner) and Nixa Azalea Association, as well as a volunteer for Springfield-Greene County Parks and Recreation. (Contact: Jennifer Ailor – 417-581-4018)

Ozarks Green Building Coalition recognized accomplishments furthering the acceptance and implementation of green building practices. Vice-President Korina Branson made the presentation.

Zach Miller, REALTOR® with Murney & Associates and GSBOR Green Committee Chair, was chosen by the Ozarks Green Building Coalition to receive the Ozarks Green Building Achievement Award for his outstanding service to the community, to sustainability and to the real estate buying and selling population of the Ozarks. Miller spearheaded and coordinated the research and detailed work that resulted in the "Green Multi-list®", an addition to the Greater Springfield Board of REALTORS® Multi-List System (GSBOR-MLS). One of the few Boards in the nation with this service, the website also provides information and education on "green" features and practices and what that means on a practical level in homes and buildings, as well as links to other local "green" sites and immediate assistance to the real estate buying public. (Contact: Korina Branson – 417-766-1441)

Missouri State University Sustainability Advisory Committee recognized efforts demonstrating a sustained commitment to environmental excellence, programming that makes an impact on environmental excellence and outcomes that indicate that the award winner is making

a difference. Co-chair, Ken McClure, Vice President for Administrative and Information Services made the presentation.

The Missouri State University Student Government Association was recognized with the Missouri State University Sustainability Award. The SGA has exhibited a sustained commitment to environmental excellence, programming that makes an impact on environmental excellence and outcomes that indicate that their efforts are making a difference. Examples of their commitment include: supporting and passing the 2009 student vote of a \$3/semester fee to fund Sustainability projects on campus and subsequent use of those funds for the baseline sustainability survey, completed in the Spring of 2011, whereby MSU earned the Bronze STAR rating via the American Association for Sustainability in Higher Education Sustainability Tracking and Assessment Rating System (AASHE STARS). Other projects funded by the fee included enhancing recycling efforts on campus by hiring student workers and purchasing an electric service vehicle. A successful Campus Garden project, water conservation kits for the university residence halls, installation of water fountains to re-fill plastic drinking water bottles and the purchase of additional bike racks are examples of some of their projects. (Contact: Ken McClure, Vice President for Administrative and Information Services at 417-836-5233 or Tamera Jahnke, Dean, College of Natural and Applied Sciences at 417-836-5249)

For more information, contact: Barbara Lucks, Project Coordinator, Springfield-Greene County Choose Environmental Excellence, 417-864-2005 or blucks@springfieldmo.gov

Please note: background information on many of these organizations is found in the Directory Section of www.OzarksEnvironment.com