

Chamber holds annual dinner



M. Elizabeth Neal

Bruce and Vicki Lovin (foreground), parents of the late Craig Lovin, thank the community for support in connection with the House Full of Lovin project. A special presentation at the Chamber's annual dinner Thursday night recognized project leaders Michelle Usry, Billy Joe Hayes, John Hadden and Beth Lyons. Hadden, owner of J. Hadley Homes, provided plans for construction of the home, and Billy Joe Hayes of Hayes Construction was onsite project manager.

By M. Elizabeth Neal
Lake Oconee News

GREENSBORO - More than 300 people attended the Greene County Chamber of Commerce's annual dinner and awards celebration at the Ritz-Carlton, Reynolds Plantation last week, an event recognizing the community's top businesses and civic volunteers.

The coveted Citizen of the Year award was presented by Rabun Neal of Reynolds Plantation to Maggie Dunn, a Lake Oconee resident who has devoted hundreds of hours to assisting community residents of all ages.

"She is always willing to come to the aid of others, and has volunteered hundreds of hours during 2005 for various organizations and events such as Southland Jubilee, Relay for

Life, Friends of the Library and the Oconee Regional Humane Society," Neal added. Eschewing recognition, Dunn is typically found behind the scenes, assisting seniors at Willow Run Assisted Living facility, and reading to children up to four years of age who attend storytime at the Greene County Library, he added.

Interim Superintendent Bonnie Morrison presented the Education Excellence Award to Georgia Power, for its business partnership with the Greene County School System.

The Agri-Business of the Year award went to Zippy Duvall, who retired as the owner and

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operator of a Greshamville dairy some months ago.

"I spent a lifetime (in dairy farming) as a child, and 30 years in the business as an 'adult,'" Duvall said this week. "I miss my cows, but I sure don't miss getting up between 2:30-4 a.m. every day."

Duvall's 310 dairy cows now populate a West Texas dairy. He continues to operate broiler houses, grows hay and now concentrates on raising Black Angus cattle.

Mark Blanton of Greensboro Jewelers presented the Small Business of the Year award to Mike and Donna Malone of Southern Style Gifts and Home Accents in downtown Greensboro. The couple is active in Greensboro's Better Hometown program, and Mike Malone chairs the downtown business council.

The Large Business of the Year Award went to Robert Cowles, M.D., of the Cowles Clinic. The award was presented by his brother, David.

The chamber also made a special presentation to community businesses and volunteers

who helped design and build "The House Full of Lovin," originally intended for teenager Craig Lovin, who died of cancer in 2005.

The project was born when Lovin's parents, teachers Bruce and Vicki Lovin, learned that Craig would require a germ-free environment following treatment for the cancer. Community volunteers undertook the construction of a new house on the Lovin's property in Greene County, with John Hadden, owner of J. Hadley Homes, and Billy Joe Hayes of Hayes Construction shouldering design and project management responsibilities. Dozens of others raised funds and contributed labor to the effort. Craig Lovin died before the home was completed, but the project continued with plans for the new house to be incorporated in the Lovin's work with teenagers and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes program.

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