

PUTTING 'OTHERS FIRST'

By **MIKE NEUMANN** - The Independent

Bank president Steve Finzel is honored by the Woodstock Chamber with the 2013 Harold Buschkopf Award



Golden Eagle Community Bank president and CEO Steve Finzel is the recipient of the 2013 Harold Buschkopf Award from the Woodstock Chamber of Commerce & Industry.
(Independent photo by Ken Farver)

It's not in Steve Finzel's nature to bring attention to himself. That's why when his name was announced as the 2013 Harold Buschkopf Award recipient, Finzel was quick to heap praise on others.

"I shouldn't be up there standing alone," Finzel said when asked about the award. "It's a group effort."

Each year, the Woodstock Chamber of Commerce & Industry bestows the Buschkopf Award on a chamber member who embodies the community spirit of the late Harold Buschkopf, a former Woodstock business owner who was active in the community.

Finzel is president and chief executive officer of Golden Eagle Community Bank. He serves as chairman for Human Services Advocates, leading their advocacy efforts to keep the economic plight of social service agencies at the forefront of the minds of local legislators.

“Human service agencies are on a tight, strict budget. We want to make sure any cuts aren’t disproportional compared to others,” Finzel said of his work with HSA. “Frequently it goes on deaf ears, but there’s been headway. I’ll put it that way.”

Ultimately, Finzel said the goal is to convince legislators to stand up and fight for social service agencies. He said many times lawmakers are afraid to speak louder about the need if they are challenged by their counterparts. “We don’t want them to just give up,” he said.

Finzel’s involvement with HSA stemmed from his work on the Family Alliance Board. Board members from many social service agencies in McHenry County formed HSA a couple of years ago as a joint effort to advocate for their interests.

“As spokesperson for HSA, he has presented to state legislators and the McHenry County Board and has participated in or helped to arrange communications with Springfield on behalf of all human service agencies in McHenry County,” Finzel’s nomination form stated.

Finzel’s community spirit doesn’t stop with HSA, however. He has participated regularly in chamber events and has established a culture of giving back in the staff at Golden Eagle Bank.

Todd Kinker, the outgoing chamber president and vice president of business development at Golden Eagle, said scholarships and other donations have become a regular part of the business under Finzel’s direction. “He always puts others first,” Kinker said. Tom Landers, the chamber’s treasurer, agreed.

“Personally and professionally, Steve has always shown an interest in community involvement,” he said. “He is usually present at every fundraiser, but, if he can’t make it, he always has someone from the bank present. He seems to lead them by example.”

Finzel said the culture of giving established at the bank has come naturally. “It’s who we are,” he said. “You don’t even think about it when you’re doing it.” That’s why Finzel said the idea of being named the Buschkopf award recipient seems out of place.

“My nature is not to look for recognition or to get this kind of attention,” he said.