

LOCALNEWS

Citizen of the Year nominations open up

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

Know someone who's had a good year? Possibly an award-winning year? Now you can nominate them to be Citizen of the Year.

Nominations for the International Falls Chamber of Commerce's Citizen of the Year are now open, Chamber President Faye Whitbeck reported.

The Citizen of the Year will be honored May 21 at the Chamber's Spring Gala & Awards Dinner at Lenard's, according to Whitbeck.



FILE PHOTO

Cynthia Warren, left, is presented the chamber's 2014 Citizen of the Year award at last year's ceremony. She was introduced by her good friend Stephanie Heinle.

KSDM and Midcontinent Communications.

Nominations for Citizen of the Year should be for an individual deserving recognition for significant contributions to the community and in the lives of others during the past year, according to the chamber.

These individuals should have made a difference through service to others or involvement in the community. This citizen will be selected from the International Falls area and may or may not be a member of the Chamber.

New nominations, or re-nominations of individuals who were previously nominated, but did not win are encouraged, Whitbeck said. A letter campaign may also accompany a joint nomination, she said. Nominees must be informed of the nomination and must agree to be present May 21 and accept the award.

Nomination forms for Citizen of the Year are available at the Chamber office, 301 Second Ave. or by calling 283-9400 to be emailed the form. Forms must be submitted to the Chamber via fax at 283-3572; email at chamber@intlfalls.org; postmarked or delivered by 5 p.m., April 7.

Reservations are required for the gala which includes a program and dinner for \$35 per person. A silent auction and cash bar are part of this networking celebration of excellence, Whitbeck said. Reservations are available for individual seating, or for tables of eight. Call the Chamber for reservations at 283-9400.

Past Citizen of the Year winners include:

- 2014: Cynthia Warren
- 2013: Punky Stadum
- 2012: JoAnn Bokovoy
- 2011: Pat Bjorum
- 2010: Lori Lyman



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Falls area participants in the February BCLP training included, back row, from the left, Mary Jo Wimmer (trainer), Robin Bjorkquist, Darren Olson, Adam Mannausau, Nancy Lee, Jenn Windels, and Vic Klimoski (trainer); center row, Barb Owen-Boerger, Heather McBride, Teresa Rom, Tom Holt, Ariana Daniel, Fr. Ben Hadrich, Jason Sjoblom, Pam Oveson, Jake Piekarski, and Kelly Millerbernd; front row, Jackie Glowack, Sonja Pelland, Alysa Hackenmueller, Perryn Hedlund, Ted Saxton, Molly Franz, Jim Yount, and Tyler Borgen.

23 locals brush up on their leadership skills at a retreat

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

Twenty-three residents of the International Falls area were a part of a five-day leadership retreat, the first segment of an intense eight-day training provided by the Blandin Community Leadership Program.

The Falls team also will participate in follow-up workshops in May and August.

The Blandin Community Leadership Program is a part of the Grand Rapids-based Blandin Foundation. It has provided experiential leadership training for more than 6,000 community leaders from more than 425 rural Minnesota communities since it began in 1985.

This is the sixth time Falls residents have participated in the BCLP leadership program.

Local residents participating in this training were Tyler Borgen, Robin Bjorkquist, Ariana Daniel, Molly Franz, Jackie Glowack, Alysa Hackenmueller, Fr. Ben Hadrich, Perryn Hedlund, Tom Holt, Nancy Lee, Adam Mannausau, Heather McBride, Kelly Millerbernd, Darren Olson, Pam Oveson, Barb Owen-Boerger, Sonja Pelland, Jake Piekarski, Teresa Rom, Ted Saxton, Jason Sjoblom, Jenn Windels and Jim Yount.

The goal of the Blandin Community Leadership Program is to develop and train a broad base of local leaders to build healthy communities. Topics covered during the retreat included: identifying and describing community issues and opportunities, effective interpersonal

communication, building social capital, appreciating personality differences, managing interpersonal conflict, understanding community power, mobilizing community resources, and goal setting.

"A healthy community depends on leadership engagement of community members," said Valerie Shangreaux, director of Blandin leadership programs. "The leadership demonstrated by these participants reflects their commitment to their community, as well as to the region and to rural Minnesota."

BCLP training programs are funded entirely by the Blandin Foundation, whose mission is to strengthen rural Minnesota communities, especially the Grand Rapids area.

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