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Photos by James Eyrich

Winners from Sunday afternoon's Hoopeston Awards ceremony, held at the Lorraine Theatre.

Surprised winners, new awards featured during Hoopeston Community Awards ceremony

Megan Deck came to the Lorraine Theatre Sunday afternoon to support someone she thought would be honored during the annual Hoopeston Community Awards ceremony.

Instead of cheering for another, Deck was cheered when she was called to the podium as The Chronicle's Citizen of the Year.

Grant Township Supervisor, Deck was nominated by her husband, Jeremy, for her work in that role, overseeing the annual Miracle Tree Christmas program for children, Santa Cares Too for older children, and her efforts for Grant Township Food Cupboard. In addition, last year Deck worked to update Red Top Cemetery by having many of the stones refurbished and by getting the ceme-

tery involved with Wreaths Across America.

Cliff Crabtree said he came to the event expecting to "sit in the back and do nothing" but made the trek to the stage to accept this year's Hoopeston Jaycees Odell Crabtree Associate of the Year award.

Named for Crabtree's late father, the award recognizes
See AWARDS on other side



Left, Lauren Linares, crowned Miss Hoopston 2019, and first runner-up Ashley Morgan; bottom left, Taylor Ankenbrand answers a question asked by Jacy Rush, emcee of the Hoopston Awards ceremony; bottom right, Jared Rayls accepts the Fireman of the Year Award from Hoopston Fire Chief Joel Bird.



Awards continued from other side

someone whose dedication to the Jaycees. In presenting the award, Callie Lankford spoke of Crabtree's willingness to volunteer whenever needed.

In accepting the honor, Crabtree said one thing he learned from his father is volunteerism is the rent one pays to the community in which they live.

Huffman presented the winner of one of three new awards given during the event, the Friend of the Jaycees' Award.

Citing declining enrollment in the Jaycees, Huffman said the group decided to initiate the award to pay tribute to an organization outside the Jaycees who supports the group's efforts.

The award was given to Hoopston United Methodist Church, used by the Jaycees for many of its programs. Pastor Cathy Najmon accepted the award.

Another new award this year is sponsored by Hoopston's Barbara Standish Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Presented by Valarie Hinkle, Hoopston Chamber of Commerce president, Save the Lorraine Foundation was the premier recipient for their work in not only revitalizing the historic Lorraine Theatre, but also the Willdon Building, among others.

The People's Choice Award was the final new addition and is part of the Miss Hoopston contest.

Expected to become an annual award, Jacy Rush explained the winner would be chosen by the audience who voted by making donations in the container of their favorite Miss Hoopston candidate. The contestant getting the most donations would be the winner. Funds would be evenly split between the winner and the Save the Lorraine Foundation, she said.

Rush announced Taylor Ankenbrand as the People's Choice winner and that a total \$490 was raised. Ankenbrand then donated half her winnings to the foundation.

She was one of six girls vying to be named this year's Miss Hoopston, including Lauren Linares, who won the title; Ashley Morgan, named first runner-up; Anastasia South, Jaide Lane and Emily Coffey.

It was a banner afternoon for Hoopston journalists, as three reporters were awarded.

Just the Facts, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, was named Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year. Hinkle presented the award to owner Lourdine Florek.

The Chamber's Community Service Award winner was Jordan Crook of The Chronicle, and the President's Award winner was Carol Hicks, historian, author and local reporter for the Commercial News.

The final Chamber award, Downtown Business of the Year, went to Sculpt Fitness.

Jaycee Service Awards and their winners were:

- EMA Volunteer of the Year: retired director Scott Strawser, presented by interim EMA Director Brad Hardcastle
- Firefighter of the Year: Jared Rayls, presented by Fire Chief Joel Bird
- Police Officer of the Year: Clayton Cahoe, presented by Sgt. Jeremy Welsh
- Distinguished Service Award: Callie Lankford, presented by Andrea Glotbach.

"Spirit of 76" was unveiled as the theme of this year's National Sweetcorn Festival and Joe Diffie as the concert artist.

Weather

Mostly sunny, breezy today. High 45. Tonight, partly cloudy, blustery. Low 22. Tomorrow, mostly sunny. High 27, low 16.

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