

DBA honors improvements downtown

By Clint Wolf cwolf@beloitdailynews.com | Posted: Friday, February 28, 2014 4:00 pm

Businesses, volunteers and community members were honored Thursday for making downtown Beloit a brighter and more active area during the Downtown Beloit Association Awards Party.

The event was held at La Casa Grande and a theme of building on a rock solid base kept running through the event.

Shauna El-Amin, executive director of the Downtown Beloit Association welcomed guests. The awards handed out were rocks with lettering on them and balloons filled the room with the words “You Rock” on them.

Jim Packard of Regal Beloit, who was master of ceremonies, said the improvements being honored during the evening illustrate downtown Beloit is making great strides and the improvements are noticeable to people in the community and throughout the area.

“I think the momentum is pushing strong in the right direction,” Packard said.

The Ironworks Hotel and Hendricks Commercial Properties earned the award for Best Facade Rehabilitation over \$7,500. The project transformed the former Beloit Inn, adding a new exterior design that reflected the manufacturing history of the community.

A video was shown after the award was presented to Jayme Braatz of Merrill & Houston Steak Joint and the Ironworks Hotel. The video showed historic images of downtown Beloit along with renovations of the former Beloit Corporation building, which now is part of the Ironworks campus.

Diane Hendricks, founder of Hendricks Commercial Properties, said there is more in store for improvements in downtown Beloit.

“We’ve only just begun,” she said.

The Meals On Wheels Building at 424 College St. earned the award for Best Facade Rehabilitation Under \$7,500. During the United Way - Blackhawk Region Day of Caring event when volunteers take a day to help non-profit agencies, about 45 employees from Regal Beloit turned out to paint the exterior of the building and to do some interior improvements as well.

The award was presented to United Way Executive Director Steve Kincaid, building owner Martin Elliott and Scott Coonrod who coordinated the volunteers from Regal Beloit.

Rivals Sports Bar and Grill won the award for Best Interior Renovation. The interior of the building at the corner of Grand Avenue and Pleasant Street was completely gutted and transformed into downtown Beloit's newest night spots where people can enjoy watching sports on several big screen TVs and enjoy food from the grill.

The award for Best New Building Project went to First National Bank and Trust for its renovation of its services building, located across State Street from the main bank building in downtown Beloit. The building is next to the First National Bank Plaza where the annual Holiday Tree Lighting is held each holiday season. First National Bank CEO Steve Eldred said plans are in the works for improvements to the plaza as well.

The Best Upper Story Development Award went to Corporate Contractors Inc. (CCI) for the Phoenix Building on Grand Avenue in downtown Beloit. The former Wagners office supply building, which had stood vacant for years, was completely razed and in its place now stands a multi-story building that is planned to house new businesses and apartments.

The Best New Business Award went to Northwoods Premium, which is a business specializing in sales of chocolates, popcorn, candies and other items. The business, owned by Teala and Scott Lamoreaux, started as a weekly vendor at the Downtown Beloit Farmers Market and has settled in a storefront at 314 State St.

Stanton Shoes earned the award for Best Curb Appeal. It was noted that owner John Stanton always has a smile on his face and is continually seen sweeping the front sidewalk at his store and making sure the entrance to his store is clean and tidy.

The Volunteer of the Year Award went to Ramiro Vargas who had volunteered his time at many of the Downtown Beloit Association events throughout the year.

Renee Kellogg was the recipient of the Chairman's Award for her assistance to the Downtown Beloit Association through the year.