

# Leadership class prepares for 23rd year

By CHARLIE JOHNSON  
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 (McMinnville, Tenn.)*

The McMinnville Leadership class for 2010 has been chosen and was treated to an informative session of learning activity Friday and Saturday during its retreat held at the cabins at Rock Island State Park.

This is the 23rd Chamber of Commerce-sponsored Leadership McMinnville class, according to Chamber president Alicea Weddington. There are 12 students, divided evenly between male and female. They come from a wide range of businesses and careers, from insurance to banking and even emergency services.

Weddington says the class is a great way for those who want to play a leadership role or become volunteers to learn about local opportunities and how to make a difference.

"Leadership is about learning about your community," Weddington said. "And how you can get involved in the community and make it a better place to live."

The program was started by Don Collette of McMinnville Electric System who had heard of a similar class in Murfreesboro and along with his then-administrative assistant, Jane Flatt, made a presen-

tation to the Chamber board. The local program began in 1986 with the first class graduating in 1987.

Although the program used to follow the school calendar, classes now begin with a retreat in January, then meet once a month through November with graduation in December.

While at the retreat, and under the tutelage of class co-chairs Tina Redmon and Phil Mitchell, the 12 students were given a sample of what is to come during the year-long program.

"This morning we had an overview, basically, of the importance of communication," Mitchell said. "Why do we need to communicate in certain ways? What are some blockers and deterrents? How do we work to communicate professionally?"

"In addition we talked with the class president from last year, Tim King, on the total leadership experience," Mitchell added. "What to expect and that everything's not going to be rosy. You're going to bump heads, you're going to have personality conflicts, but how to work through those conflicts for the greater goal of completing our project, the Autumn Street Fair."

The Autumn Street Fair, a perennially popular event that

draws thousands downtown, is both a fundraiser and a learning experience for Leadership students, who say they feel the skills they learn will serve them well in the future.

Class member Jennifer Boyd, a First National Bank employee, says that's one of the main reasons she is participating.

"I want to improve on my leadership skills and become more educated about the community and McMinnville and Warren County," Boyd said.

Jarden Consumer Solutions Oster employee Chris Key echoed that goal.

"I've lived here 35 years, all my life, but this is an opportunity to learn new things about the place I grew up," said Key.

Shelter Insurance agent Heath Griffith said he feels the communication skills Leadership teaches will be a major benefit to him.

"I want to improve my interpersonal and leadership skills," Griffith said. "I want to learn how to communicate more effectively with the people in the community, and to help give back to my community."

Griffith says he feels Leadership is an important program because students gain valuable knowledge and abilities.

"I think it's vital to learn those skills," Griffith added. "People like us need to do this. That way we can continue the tradition and keeps things like this going. Communication is so important amongst the people in our community. That way we can get an understanding of how they feel and what they're thinking about."

Present MES general manag-



Charlie Johnson photo

The 2010 Leadership McMinnville class met at Rock Island State Park for its annual retreat Friday and Saturday that jump starts the year-long program. Pictured are, front row, from left, Michelle Talbert, Doug Calvert, Brian Jennings and Phil Shireman, Jamie Winningham, Rebecca Duncan,

Michelle Lewis and Heath Griffith. Second row, Tina Redmon, Joe O'Neal, Kari Davis Marcum, Chris Key and Jennifer Boyd. Back row, Ronnie Talbert, Doug Calvert, Brian Jennings and Phil Mitchell.

er and CEO Rodney Boyd was on hand to give a presentation at the retreat, and said he was pleased to be involved.

"I going to be speaking on the 21 irrefutable laws of leadership," Boyd said. "I love that. I went through Leadership about seven or eight years ago. My wife Debby has gone through it. I think it's a great opportunity for people to learn about our community and the things that we do and to learn about leadership, how to be a better leader. I would recommend it to anyone."

For more information on the program, contact the Chamber at 473-6611.



## Honor Rolls

Donald Prater, principal of Hickory Creek Elementary, announces the school's honor rolls for the third six weeks:

### HICKORY CREEK

Gumz, Michaela Haycox,  
 Medi H...

**JONATHON BOND  
 DEAD ON 9-24-1991**



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 WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2010  
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