

Remembering And Honoring All Fathers



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Christian Business Connections Celebrates First Shining Light Teacher Award

By Amanda Boston

"In this day and age, everyone is so quick to point out when something goes wrong or a negative. We don't take enough time to give thanks when things are good," said Ryan Hughes in the context of teachers. Hughes is the vice president and a founding member of the Brandon Christian Business Connections (CBC), a professional networking group promoting Christian values and fellowship.

Recently, Hughes and the CBC inaugurated the *Shining Light Teacher Award*, an award that provides praise and accolades to the often-overlooked Christian teachers. The award recognizes a Christian teacher in the Brandon area for excellence in Christian education once a semester. The award's theme is based on Titus 2:7-8, "In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us."

The *Shining Light* teacher selection



Lisa Aune (center left) is the first recipient of the *Shining Light Teacher Award*. She is pictured with members from the Christian Business Connections.



process starts with peer nominations. The school administration then forwards the nominees to interview with a board of CBC members. Lastly, the CBC members review and select a teacher.

Walt Shaffner, the headmaster of Bell Shoals Baptist Academy, explained that a peer nomination is one of the highest forms of praise, and the *Shining Light* award is the icing on the cake. He also expounded on the unseen selfless acts teachers perform every day. "For even the

Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve," said Shaffner quoting Mark 10:45. "And I can't think of a better verse that personifies the concept and the attitude of a teacher."

The inaugural recipient was Lisa Aune, a kindergarten teacher at Bell Shoals Baptist Academy. The award presentation took place on Monday, May 15, at Bell Shoals Baptist Church. Along with the distinction of the award, Aune received a \$100 gift certificate. The other nominees were Kimberly Oates, a VPK teacher, and Debbie Moore, a 4th-grade teacher, both also from Bell Shoals Baptist Academy.

Aune is a native of Brandon who has devoted the last 22 years to teaching kindergarten at Bell Shoals Baptist Academy. She said, "I feel so humbled and honored. I love my students. Teaching is so rewarding, and I am blessed."

For information on the CBC's *Shining Light Teacher Award* and how your school can participate, email ShiningLight@christianbusinessconnections.com or visit www.christianbusinessconnections.com.

Meals On Wheels Seeks Partners To Expand Services

By Amanda Boston

"It bothers me to get a call and have to tell a person we don't serve that area," said Jim McNeil, the president of the Greater Brandon Meals on Wheels. On April 20, McNeil's opening remarks at the annual Meals on Wheels volunteer appreciation luncheon were a call to action as he publicized the need to expand into the Riverview area.

For 41 years, the local Meals on Wheels program has delivered hot meals to homebound persons in the Brandon, Seffner and Valrico areas. However, the Riverview area from Boyette Road and further south receives no assistance. McNeil prays that the Riverview area churches will begin participating in the program to meet the escalating needs.

The local chapter operates through the combined efforts of 19 local churches. Volunteers from the participating churches prepare and deliver about 250 hot meals per day from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Monday through Friday. The volunteers are at the



Jim McNeil, president of the local Meals on Wheels awarded husband and wife team, Tony and Jean Ippolito, the Volunteer of the Award.



Ray Fischer, a volunteer with Meals on Wheels, received special recognition for going beyond the typical scope of duty.

core of the program, and President

McNeil expressed sincere appreciation for the many hearts and hands that make a difference in the community.

Dawn Trattner from First Presbyterian Church of Brandon acted as the master of ceremonies and applauded the volunteers for their dedication and efforts to the organization. Referencing 1 Corinthians 12, a passage concerning spiritual gifts from God, Trattner said, "God, Himself is behind it all. Each person has been given something to do that shows who God is.

...The variety is amazing as some of you are bakers, some of you are cooks, some of you are screeners, some of you drive, and some of you organize the lists."

The volunteers were awarded for years of service, which included seven volunteers receiving 40-year service awards. Ray Fischer, a volunteer who performs multiple roles at several churches, was awarded special recognition for his dedication and

diligence. Tony and Jean Ippolito, a husband and wife team, were awarded the Volunteer of the Year Award for their longevity and outstanding commitment to the organization. Tony, a sprightly gentleman in his mid-90s, said, "We are thrilled to do what we do, and we'll continue to do it while we are able to do it."

If your church is interested in volunteering with Meals on Wheels, please contact Jim McNeil at jsmcnelmc@aol.com. Donations of food, supplies and monetary funds are always welcomed. For information, please visit www.brandonmealsonwheels.com.