

Law Day Participants Feted by Elks Bar Association Honors CASA

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Participants in the 2011 Law Day activities were hosted by Effingham Elks Lodge #1016 over the noon hour today.

Law Day is where high school seniors take over city and county government offices for a day, learning something about how their government operates and meeting those in leadership. The National Elks organization has sponsored Law Day for 54 years.

Under the current arrangement, Effingham High School and St. Anthony High School students take over City offices for the day while students from the other four high schools in the county take over county offices.

New Effingham Mayor Merv Gillenwater served as guest speaker, sharing some of his background and encouraging students to be active in their local government affairs and to even seek office when the time comes.

(EFFINGHAM MAYOR MERV GILLENWATER AT TODAY'S LAW DAY LUNCHEON)



During the luncheon, the Effingham County Bar Association presented its annual Distinguished Service Award to CASA of Effingham County.

CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) is a nationwide organization that provides Advocates that represent the interests of the child in a family court case. There are 37 Advocates and 41 cases involving children active in Effingham County. The advocates undergo training for their roles, but are not paid for their service. Advocates work on just one case at a time until there is a resolution of the case.

(EFFINGHAM COUNTY RESIDENT CIRCUIT JUDGE KIMBERLY KOESTER, REPRESENTING THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION, MADE THE PRESENTATION OF THE ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD TO CASA OF EFFINGHAM COUNTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JENNIFER JANSEN AND CASA STAFF MEMBER JESSE PATNAUDE)



Here are the students who participated in this year's Law Day:

Effingham High School--Zac Apke, Erin Hille, Jenalee Reardon, Lindsay Schumacher, Taylor Wendt, Jesse Bushue, Emily Westfall, and Kelly Frey

St. Anthony High School--Jessica Doehring, Kara Pickowitz, Chelsey Spruell, Elizabeth Jansen, Patric McGuire, Jay Kowalski, Lexi Kingery and Danny Dust

Dieterich High School--Kate Hartke, Taran Bohnhoff, Miranda Goodman, Brittney Niemerg and Kelly Flach

Teutopolis High School--Gabe Waldhoff, Tiffany Boone, Arco Verhoeven, Jonathan Ruholl and Celeste Deters

Beecher City High School--Brittany Waldhoff, Beau Hutchison, Luke Levitt, Jayce Wright and Andrew Wills

Altamont High School--Laura Denton, Tim Greenhaigh, Akina Heiser, Erica Huddlestun and Blake Hooker

This was the first year for the Elks to host the Law Day event in a luncheon format, and the final year for the event to take place at the Elks current location. Exalted Ruler Jake Thompson and Lodge Secretary Mike Porter said the Lodge is hoping to relocate to its new home in the former Sneaky Pete's building in front of Village Square Mall about mid-August. Asked why the move is being made, Thompson said it's a lack of space; the Lodge membership has grown to 423 members and the maximum capacity of the current location is 185 people.

Midland States Bank approached the Elks about purchasing their current downtown location as part of the bank's expansion plans.

The building has quite a history. Before the Elks took over the building, it was used as the Unit 40 Kindergarten Center and, before that, it served as the Effingham Post Office's location.