

# SHELTERED WORKSHOP MANAGERS

## MASWM Efforts Help Bring Governor's Bill Signing For Additional Funding

Handi-Shop in Mexico was the scene of a significant bill signing on June 12.

Missouri Gov. Matt Blunt met with workers, MASWM and community officials at Handi-Shop Incorporated where he signed House Bill 352 increasing funding support over the next four years.

Sponsored by Rep. Steve Hobbs (R-21), HB 352 increases funding for sheltered workshops in two ways. Currently, sheltered workshops receive \$65 per week per worker and \$13 per diem for weekend work. This legislation increases the amount of state aid workshops receive over the next four years to \$95 per week per worker and \$19 per diem for the weekend. There are 93 sheltered workshops in Missouri that employ about 7,400 disabled Missourians.

"This legislation ensures that Missourians with disabilities will have opportunities to continue making vital contributions in their communities and access to jobs that will help them meet  
(please turn to page 2)



*On hand for the HB 352 signing were (standing, from left) Rep. Steve Hobbs from Mexico; Fulvio Franzi, Director of Extended Employment Sheltered Workshops, DESE; Bill Barr, MASWM vice president and manager of Lake Area Industries, Inc., in Camdenton; Bob Engemann, MASWM Secretary, and manager of TEMCO, Inc., in Marthasville; and Bob Wilson, Burruss-Wilson & Assoc. and Legislative Consultant for MASWM. Gov. Matt Blunt had help throughout the ceremony from Kim Mercier, Handi-Shop employee, who introduced Blunt at the ceremony.*

## Missouri Workshops Adapt To Changes Throughout The State

*DESE Report By Fulvio Franzi, Director. Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Extended Employment Sheltered Workshops*

### Creative Contracts

One of the continuing and important issues across the workshop system is the

state of the "contract work" opportunities. In recent visits to various areas of the state, I have noted a general stabilization that is due, in part, to shops seeking and pursuing non-traditional contract opportunities as well as expanding current ones. In addition, we have noted where several workshops that have well developed sales/marketing/production systems are sharing their "fortunes and blessings" with surrounding workshops that have demonstrated to be both willing and capable of handling the work opportunities. This type of cooperation can be beneficial to all involved that make a commitment to process excellence as well as maintaining high ethical business standards.

### Legislation:

The public signing of HB 352 took place at the Workshop in Mexico Missouri on June 12, 2007. Connie Hale, the Workshop staff and employees, are commended for their organization and preparation for the ceremonies and for setting a great example to the public of what sheltered workshops are all about. Representatives of the legislature, local government, community leaders, workshop employees, MASWM and the Department were present to this historic occasion. Congratulations and a job well done to all who had a part in supporting this important legislation.

*(please turn to page 4)*

### Highlights in this Issue:

President's column .....	2
Grant spurs work in Boonville .....	3
Opportunity starts new building .....	4
Workshop fights tornado .....	5
E-mail updates and more .....	5
Recycling program expands .....	6
VSI honors community .....	8

MASWM, P.O. Box 1247  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

## MASWM

### Officers

President	Stan Shurmantine, Independence, (816) 796-7070
Vice President	Bill Barr, Camdenton (573) 346-7934
Secretary	Bob Engemann, Marthasville (636) 433-2335
Treasurer	Dee Fronyberger, St. Louis (314) 631-8300
Past President	Steve Frank, Hazelwood (314) 731-1771

### Board of Directors

Area I	Tom Miller, Stanberry, (660) 783-2093
Area II	Aaron Martin, Grandview (816) 763-7822
Area III	Brent Blackwell, Higginsville 660-584-7232
Area IV	Judd Chestnut, Lamar (417) 682-3506
Area V	Connie Hale, Mexico (573) 581-1191
Area VI	Bruce Young, Columbia (573) 442-6935
Area VII	Bob Koch, Washington (636) 239-2744
Area VIII	Sharon Tyger, Houston (417) 967-3608
Area IX	Rob Libera, Manchester (636) 227-5666
Area X	Harvey Cooper, Sikeston (573) 472-0598

### Mission

Sheltered Workshops in Missouri share a common mission of providing dignified and meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

If you have questions regarding the Missouri Association of Sheltered Workshop Managers, please contact Bob Wilson, consultant, (573) 634-6102, Fax: (573) 634-4197; or President Stan Shurmantine, (816) 796-7070, e-mail stan.shurmantine@ibsindustries.com; or visit MASWM's site on the Internet [www.moworkshops.org](http://www.moworkshops.org).

### President's Column

## Gas Prices and Other Challenges Face Shops

By Stanley Shurmantine,  
MASWM President

Summer is here, and I know we are all trying to think of ways get away and relax for a while without spending too much money on gas. We are experts at dealing with challenges, so we should all be able to find new opportunities to have some fun.

We have just completed another successful legislative session, which resulted in the governor signing our proposed funding increase at a higher rate than we anticipated. Thanks to our lobbying efforts, and our presence at the capital, MASWM is well recognized and respected in Jefferson City. We need to continue our efforts to maintain that presence and that reputation.

As we all know, our business provides us with the constant challenge of developing new ways to keep our people working.

New opportunities, like state use programs and business franchises are available, and our challenge will be to develop ways for our employees to benefit from them. Next week, Fulvio and I will meet with some legislators to begin discussions about expanding the state use program that you have started with MODOT by adding new jobs with other state departments. Some managers have already begun learning about franchises, and plan to seek funding and technical assistance to proceed with development. There are many other opportunities out there for us to learn about.

MASWM provides us with an excellent forum for sharing our ideas for ways to turn an old challenge into new opportunities for our employees. Our meetings also provide a good opportunity for us to relax and have some fun.

## Governor Signs Bill Increasing Workshop Funding

(continued from page 1)

their full potential," Blunt said. "Sheltered workshops employ some of Missouri's most dedicated workers and play an important part in educating and building skills for the employees."

Several officials as well as Handi-Shop workers such as Kim Mercier accompanied Gov. Blunt. Kim introduced Gov. Blunt and presented him with a thank you signed by all of Handi-Shop's employees. The Governor presented Kim with the very first signed copy of the bill and one of the official pens personalized with his signature. She responded, "Well, thank you, Matt!"

Connie Hale, manager of Handi-Shop, was the emcee for the event. Bill Barr, MASWM vice president, spoke on behalf of MASWM while Fulvio Franzi spoke on behalf of DESE.

The legislation also increases the bonus from five to 10 points in the state bidding

process for qualified nonprofit organizations for the blind and for sheltered workshops. The change will make sheltered workshops more competitive for state contracts.

The impact was clear to other Handi-Shop workers. "Without the workshop, I wouldn't have a job," said Dana Duchesne, Handi-Shop employee. "I appreciate the people at the Capitol that see how important our work is."

The state representative from Mexico agreed. "I am proud to represent Handi-Shop Incorporated and other important sheltered workshops that work tirelessly to find new and dignified opportunities for disabled Missourians," Hobbs said. "The workers here and around the state deserve our appreciation and support. I thank Gov. Blunt for signing this important bill into law and look forward to the new opportunities this will create for Missouri workers."

## Grant Spurs Recycling at Boonslick Industries

Boonslick Industries in Boonville has had a lot of reason for celebration recently.

The workshop commemorated its 30th anniversary in December 2006 and, as it entered its 31st year, Boonslick Industries received approval for a grant of \$50,396 from Mid Missouri Solid Waste District, Region H, for a compactor truck and

additional bins for recycling. The workshop also received a grant from the city of Boonville for \$9,000 to help with the recycling program.

The program's success may be part of the reason for these grants. The program began in January 2005 and recycled over 1,000,000 pounds of paper, cardboard

and textiles in calendar year 2006 alone.

The workshop also received a grant from Mid Missouri Solid Waste District, Region H, in 2006 for \$73,900 to purchase a horizontal baler, shredder and additional collection bins.

In April 2007 they were approved by MMSWD, Region H, for the \$50,396 grant, which will allow expansion of collection in California, Tipton and Central Methodist University in Fayette.



*Senator Bill Stouffer and Representative Kenny Jones presented proclamations recognizing Boonslick Industries 30th anniversary. The presentations were part of the annual banquet. Members of the Boonslick staff accepted the proclamations.*



*Boonslick Industries' clients are working hard at the shops recycling program, which recently received two large grants from the Mid Missouri Solid Waste District.*

## Hope Haven Celebrates 40 Years of Service!

Hope Haven Industries in Chillicothe celebrated its 40th year of operation this spring.

Hope Haven opened their doors on March 1, 1967. The shop originally opened with 15 employees with developmental disabilities and three staff members.

Hope Haven would not have been possible if it weren't for the many donations from the community and the land donated by John and Virgie Irvin.

Now, 40 years later, Hope Haven employs 48 employees with developmental disabilities and has 20 staff members. Their services have expanded into a subcontracting center, recycling center, ware-

house, and pallet shop.

Hope Haven has also expanded their physical operations with a second location at 12 Herriman, Chillicothe for the recycling center and a warehouse in Trenton Missouri. Today, Hope Haven Industries continues to be the largest employer for persons with disabilities in the area and

has become one of the largest recycling processing plants in the state.

Hope Haven appreciates the support from loyal employees and donors. Nancy Clinkscales has been employed at Hope Haven since the doors opened in 1967. She is a great employee and Hope Haven is thankful for her dedication.



*Everyone had reason to celebrate at Hope Haven Industries.*

## Opportunity Workshop Gets Boost for New Building

Opportunity Workshop, Inc. is well on its way to a new building, thanks to state tax credits recently announced by Governor Matt Blunt.

Gov. Blunt announced June 5 that the Missouri Department of Economic Development (DED) has approved

\$350,000 in Neighborhood Assistance Program tax credits for Opportunity Workshop, Inc., a sheltered workshop in Stanberry. Workshop Manager Tom Miller said the credits will in effect yield \$500,000 toward the new building which has a target date of December.

The Missouri DED administers the Neighborhood Assistance Program to help not-for-profit organizations raise private-sector funds by providing partial state tax credits to businesses that make contributions to approved community improvement projects.

Businesses can donate cash, materials, supplies or equipment; technical assistance and professional services; labor; real estate; or stocks and bonds. Credits can equal up to 50 percent of the total amount contributed or up to 70 percent for projects located in most rural areas.

Not-for-profit organizations participating in the NAP program conduct capital campaigns or provide services in the areas of crime prevention, education, job training, physical revitalization, or community services. The Neighborhood Assistance Program is utilized by not-for-profit organizations throughout Missouri to make their communities a more desirable place to live and work, as well as pave the way for economic development.

### Poplar Bluff Holds Groundbreaking

Manufacturers Assistance Group held a groundbreaking ceremony on March 29 at the workshop in Poplar Bluff.

The new 40,000 square foot facility is being constructed with a \$1,518,000 loan through USDA Rural Development and a \$300,000 Community Development Block Grant.

The new building is located in the Poplar Bluff Industrial Park and scheduled for completion this fall.



*Among those present for the MAG groundbreaking ceremony were Jeff Arnold, MAG Managing Director; Susan Williams, MAG Board President; and Senator Rob Mayer (R-25).*

### Workshops Ready Budget Reports

(continued from page 1)

Federal Minimum Wage—on May 25, 2007 the President signed the legislation to increase the federal minimum wage from the current \$5.15 per hour to \$7.25 in the next two and a half years in three installments. The first increase of \$0.70 will take affect on July 25, 2007 and the other two similar incremental increases will take place each year thereafter. The US-DOL has been contacted to see what impact and instructions for compliance this may have on the workshops; we were verbally assured that DOL will be sending correspondence to the “commensurate wage certificate” holders prior to July 25, 2007.

#### **FY 07 Budget Report:**

At this writing, all the Workshops are in the process of submitting their final FY-07 requests. According to our projections, there will be no shortfall in funding of the workshops. According to other cur-

rently submitted data, there are 7,433 employees (5,866 FTE) reported working in the 93 workshops across the state. The reported average hourly wage continues to rise and is now calculated at \$2.44 per hour.

#### **FY-08 Budget Report:**

Since the new legislation has redefined the per diem reimbursement rates, we have had to redefine the calculating formulas and reporting parameters. At the least, our staff will have to enter the first month's requests manually until a new program is developed and tested before it goes into use.

The Department has committed to request a “Supplemental Appropriation” in the amount of \$2.88 million in order to meet the commitment made in HB 352 for FY-08 for full funding of the sheltered workshops at the new rate of \$15 per person per day (up to 30 hours per Mon.-Fri. week).



Missouri Representative Sue Schoemehl (D-100) recently visited Canterbury Enterprises in St. Louis County. Rep. Schoemehl talked with Manager Charlie Fischer and workshop employees such as Jean DiSalvo (seated). Fischer reported that Rep. Schoemehl was very interested in pending bills that could affect workshops and expressed support for the workshop industry.

## Monroe City Successfully Battles Tornado's Blast

A never-say-die attitude and strong community spirit have proven to be more than a match for one of Missouri's destructive tornados.

On Sunday, March 12, 2006, a tornado ripped through the town of Monroe City, and in its path took two of the three buildings that housed the production facilities for the Sheltered Workshop.

The tornado destroyed the two-year-old recycling building and the other building used for the Thrift Store and pallet making, while also damaging the office and other production building.

Staff members arrived at the scene at 10:30 at night and remained until the early morning, returned at 4:30 a.m. to call consumer employees and tell them there would be no work that day. To say the least, things looked grim for this workshop.

As word spread through the county and state, however, things began to happen. Local, state and federal individuals and officials began to arrive to arrive, asking what they could do.

The first order of business was to simply clean up. There was no electricity or phone service. Through the effort of many people, the employees were able to return to work on Tuesday, with generators running and kerosene heaters.

Through the next few days, it became necessary to secure another building for production of recycling and other jobs. Everyone felt like nomads but buildings were found, moving completed then repeated.

Meanwhile, many legislators and local officials met to determine what might take place. Ultimately, an answer was found through the efforts of Steve Gerrish, who was at the workshop the day after the tornado, and Nathan Chitwood, a former local resident, and both with the USDA Rural Development. On Sept. 27, 2006, many people joined at the workshop to see the reception of a \$99,000 grant from the USDA Rural Development to purchase five acres from the Monroe County

Commission, who had spent many hours looking for a suitable location for the workshop so it could remain in Monroe County and rebuild.

In turn, the Monroe County Commission made a gift of \$7,500 to the workshop through economic development.

The USDA grant money was also used to replace items damaged in the tornado. Another individual who came the day after the tornado was Robin Fitzgerald, with Mark Twain Regional Council of Governments, she said "I'm here to help." Robin worked diligently to help the workshop receive \$100,000 on Feb. 16, 2007, through CDBG. With the estimated cost of construction at \$1,019,694, FEMA reimbursed \$775,271 with the remaining 25% being paid by the state and local governments. The dream of one 35,000 square foot building came a little closer with the ground breaking on November 21, 2006, with each of the 60 employees releasing a balloon and taking a turn at a shovel full of dirt in celebration of the exciting day. Those attending were very happy to add a few words for the occasion. Sen. Wes Shoemyer noted that "When people work together, they can make a real difference in people's lives." Robin Fitzgerald said, "The new building presents the workshop employees an opportunity to have all operations under one roof in a safer, more efficient environment."

Marion County Commissioner Donald Simpson said the commissioners considered it a pure privilege to help the workshop obtain land to rebuild in Monroe County.

Steve Gerrish, USDA, was glad to be able to be a part of the expansion of the workshop. Jim Burns, city administrator, was thankful to the workshop for choosing to rebuild in Monroe City. Janice Schnitzler, Monroe County SB40 Board, and active in the start of the workshop, recalled when there were only five employees. J.C Shoemyer, respected

Monroe City businessman, said he was "proud of the workshop." Congressman Kenny Hulshof and his long time assistant Scott Callicott, sent greetings and commended the board and employees for their long hours of work to keep the workshop operating despite the tornado.



*This aerial photo illustrated the almost complete destruction of the Monroe City Workshop following a 2006 tornado.*



*The entire community was on hand to commence construction of a new Monroe City Sheltered Workshop.*



*Staff members rejoiced with a federal USDA grant to help kickoff the new workshop.*

## Florescent Lamps: A New Revenue Source For Shops?

Last year, 19 sheltered workshops joined a project to recycle fluorescent lamps in a partnership with University of Missouri Extension, the Department of Natural Resources and HTR-Group, a lamp recycler in Lake Ozark. Fluorescent lamps contain mercury and regulations require businesses to recycle. However, it is difficult and expensive to find a recycler to pick up less than the minimum shipment of 1,000 bulbs.

Participating sheltered workshops in the Missouri Statewide Fluorescent Lamp Recycling Project provide businesses with convenient, local recycling sites.

Customers are charged for lamps but by consolidating lamps from several businesses the sheltered workshops are able to accumulate 1,000 lamps (one pallet full) before calling HTR to pick up for recycling. This allows the sheltered workshops to earn a small profit and offer businesses a very good deal.

The program has been slowly but steadily growing. Many businesses change all their bulbs at once in an annual maintenance schedule.

Not all businesses have heard about this program and are still paying premium price to recycle lamps. However, the program is providing a new revenue source

for many sheltered workshops.

Brent Blackwell manages Lafayette County Enterprises and Opportunity Enterprises, and they have collected over 1,500 lamps from businesses and the local utility. The West Central Electric Cooperative already recycled, but found it inconvenient to store lamps until they had the minimum shipment. The co-op now saves time and space by sending lamps to the sheltered workshop. Brent was assisted by the Solid Waste Management Districts, and he personally contacted current and prospective recycling clients.

Monett Area EE Workshop has collected nearly 2,500 bulbs to date. Director Mica Plummer attributes this success to repeated advertisements in local newspapers, personal contact, distributing information to current and potential recycling customers, and assistance from the Solid Waste Management District.

Rick Kyle, director of the Rolla Area Sheltered Workshop, formed an effective partnership with the City of Rolla. The city waste collection service won't collect from businesses who dispose of more than a few fluorescent lamps. The business is referred to the sheltered workshop for recycling. Rick works closely with the Solid Waste Management District and

continually promotes the program to the community.

Phillip Lingard, Sr., director of Enterprise Unlimited, has collected nearly 1,000 bulbs. Phillip attributes his success to direct mailings to current and potential clients and advertisements in the local paper.

The recipe for success includes a few basic ingredients:

1) Work with the solid waste management district to identify clients and promote the recycling services.

2) Make personal visits to business and send direct mailings to inform them of the recycling services.

3) Use repeated advertisements (and articles) in the local media to promote the recycling services.

4) Contact the local utility, streets and parks departments, or other entity that maintains and replaces lighting for public facilities and streets. This collaboration often saves communities money and boosts profits for the sheltered workshop.

For more information on the lamp recycling project, contact University Extension Environmental Assistance Center at 573-882-5011, moeac@missouri.edu, or visit [www.htr-group.com/recycle](http://www.htr-group.com/recycle).

## Shop Updates Include New E-mail and Other News

Here are recent news and information updates of note to MASWM Members:

MASWM President and IBS Industries Executive Director Stan Shurmantine changed e-mail. His old address [ibsstan@birch.com](mailto:ibsstan@birch.com) was out of service as of May 31, 2007. Please update your address book to reflect his new e-mail address: [stan.shurmantine@ibsindustries.com](mailto:stan.shurmantine@ibsindustries.com).

MASWM Vice President Bill Barr's workshop, Lake Area Industries, also has new email addresses: [laainc@lakeareaindustries.org](mailto:laainc@lakeareaindustries.org). Bill Barr can be reached

directly at [bill@lakeareaindustries.org](mailto:bill@lakeareaindustries.org).

Past MASWM President Steve Frank retired at the end of February but will remain active with MASWM. His new e-mail address is [franksteve@sbcglobal.net](mailto:franksteve@sbcglobal.net).

Connie Thurman at Monroe City Sheltered Workshop has a new e-mail: [conniemcsw@mywdo.com](mailto:conniemcsw@mywdo.com).

Klaus Tamme, general manager at Crowder Industries Inc., has a new e-mail address: [klausgtamme@sbcglobal.net](mailto:klausgtamme@sbcglobal.net).

Tantone Industries in Branson has a new e-mail address. They dropped their old address [tantone@cox-internet.com](mailto:tantone@cox-internet.com) and changed to [tantone@suddenlinkmail.com](mailto:tantone@suddenlinkmail.com).

Debra Huntsman, executive director at Bates County Industries in Butler, has changed her e-mail address to [bcii@earthlink.net](mailto:bcii@earthlink.net).

Gateway Industries of Eldon has a new manager: David Souders. His e-mail address is [gatind@lakeozark.net](mailto:gatind@lakeozark.net).

# Missouri Association of Sheltered Workshop Managers



Missouri Rep. Jason Holsman (D-45) recently toured the Foundation Workshop in Grandview. He spent nearly two hours visiting the facilities and answering questions from parents. He pledged his support to the workshop program.



Following the January MASWM Legislative Reception Jan. 31, members visited the floor of the Missouri House of Representatives. Among those involved in the session were Stan Shurmantine, Representative Bryan Pratt (R-55), Ron Eiman, Chairman of the Board of IBS Industries, Inc. Rep. Pratt (R-55) introduced the group on the floor of the House.



The awesome Special Olympic Team from Services For Extended Employment successfully participated in several events this year. The SEE workshop is located in Piedmont.



Manager Michael Cambron at Services for Extended Employment in Piedmont said the organization is very proud of its new flagpole.

## 2007-2008 Meetings Set For MASWM

Upcoming MASWM Meetings:

- Summer - July 18, 19, 20 (Wednesday-Friday) 2007 - Holiday Inn Select, Columbia.
- Fall - October 8, 9, 10 (Monday to

Wednesday), 2007 - Radisson Hotel, Branson.

- Winter at the Capitol - January 29 & 30 (Tues-Wed) 2008; Capitol Plaza Hotel, Jefferson City.

## Vermont Case Illustrates Loss of Workshop Benefits

Legislative Chair Randy Hylton sent this story by e-mail earlier, but for those who missed it, it's worth reading:

We often hear about states that have done a way with Sheltered Workshops and this is the story of one of the latest additions. The current state plan prohibits use of funds for a Sheltered Workshop.

Over six years, regulations in Vermont have gradually restricted and eventually prohibited the use of state funds for sheltered workshops or enclaves.

Concurrent with changing funding regulations, the state has worked with providers to convert remaining sheltered

workshops. The initiative began with Vermont's 1999 System of Care plan stated that DDAS funds could not be used to increase the capacity of sheltered workshops (or congregate residential settings).

The 2002 plan went further: state funds could not be used to increase the capacity of group employment settings such as enclaves or work crews. These initial steps stopped the growth in sheltered workshop placements.

The state office of Developmental Disabilities, vocational rehabilitation, the University of VT, and providers worked together to convert workshops to individ-

ualized supports. The state managed to convert all remaining workshops before actually stating funding could no longer be used for congregate settings, thus avoiding "pulling the rug out" from under providers.

Once all existing sheltered workshops closed in 2005, the System of Care plan stated that DDAS funds could not be used to fund sheltered workshops at all. Go to [www.seln.org/docs/vt1-sscp-final-2005-2007.pdf](http://www.seln.org/docs/vt1-sscp-final-2005-2007.pdf) for the complete Vermont State System of Care Plan for Developmental Services.

## VSI Hosts Record Turnout for 2007 Annual Community Awards Night

Area residents with developmental disabilities, community members and state leaders were honored May 24.

Vocational Services, Inc. (VSI) serving Clay and Platte counties, held its seventh annual Community Awards Night and Silent Auction at Finnigan's in North Kansas City. The evening drew a record attendance of more than 300 people, including community leaders from throughout the area.

Each year, VSI hosts the event as a way to pay tribute to outstanding individuals and organizations who have made a tremendous impact in the lives of people with disabilities and who have supported VSI throughout its 40 years of providing

excellent services to individuals with disabilities.

Recipients of this year's awards include:

- Vendor of the Year, Billings Construction, Liberty, with Jeff Billings accepting.
- Customer of the Year, TNEMEC Company, North Kansas City, with Ron Schimmel accepting.
- Benefactor's Award, the City of North Kansas City.
- Legislator of the Year Award, Missouri Rep. Trent Skaggs (D-31).
- Parent/Guardian of the Year Marge Gram, the mother of seven children noted for her great activism for people with disabilities

- Director's Award presented to Dale Garrison, Liberty.
- Clay County Employer of the Year, Liberty Price Chopper, accepted by Lou DeMarco, store manager.
- Platte County Employer of the Year McDonald's of Platte City, accepted by Kathrine Walden.
- Volunteer of the Year Jerry Davis, honored for his donation of time to Vocational Services, and other non-profit organizations in the metropolitan area.
- VSI Board Member of the Year was awarded to Richard Hubbard whose expertise, especially in financial areas, has been a tremendous asset to VSI.
- VSI Employee of the Year Mary Jo Cantwell, Community Integration Specialist in VSI's Work and Personal Services.

• VSI Consumer of the Year Award was John Hardman, who is well known both at VSI and throughout the community of Liberty. John started working for VSI in 1972 and continues to be an honest, hard working individual.

In addition, Nina Wells and Pam Turner were honored upon their retirement from VSI. Nina began in 1979 and Pam in 1971. VSI also recognized four employees for 40 years of services: Jack Smith, Bruce Gustin, Marion Warren and Pam Lizar.

A number of special guests were also recognized among those in attendance: State representatives Tim Flook and Jerry Nolte; Shawna Pauley from Senator Sam Graves' office; Boyd and Louise Ahrens, volunteers from the Southern Clay County Chapter of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans; Mrs. Mary Stafford; Bob and Cindy Sevier; Janice Tilman of the Platte County Board of Services; Clay County Public Administrator Debbie Gwin; Platte County Public Administrator Terry Edwards; and Ron and Betty Boney of The Arc of Clay and Platte Counties. VSI Board members in attendance included Bill Welliver, Dr. Garry Rokey, Marvin Nuernberger and Paula Torkelson.



*The signing of HB 352 at Handi-Shop was well attended. Workshop employee Kim Mercier introduced Governor Matt Blunt and received the first signed copy of the bill. (see page 1 for complete story.)*