‘Community Action champions’
Annual Meeting offers successes and a fond farewell

Amid another year of progress, the NECAC Board of Directors’ Annual Meeting and Installation of Officers and Directors Dinner also featured a heartfelt goodbye.

The event was held Oct. 22 at the Church of the Nazarene Fellowship Hall in Bowling Green. In his annual report, NECAC President and Chief Executive Officer Don Patrick gave a thorough account of the past year’s activities and offered praise to board members, staff and volunteers.

“I think we can all agree it’s been another very productive, successful and winning year for the entire NECAC team,” Patrick said. “NECAC has proven itself a true championship team. We are Community Action champions.”

Patrick completed his 34th year as the agency’s chief executive officer, and said in that time the agency has “built up, expanded and added” contracted social service, community health and public housing programs and services. Its budget has grown to 10 times what it was when Patrick took the job in 1985.

Former Warren County Commissioner Fred Vahle of Warrenton was installed to his first term as Chairman of the Board, taking over from Lyndon Bode of Marion County. Bode retired from the board after 24 years, including 19 as chairman. Vahle previously served as vice-chairman.

“We’d like to thank the staff for all the work they do and thank the board members for all the time they give,” Vahle said.

State Rep. Jim Hansen honored Bode with a House of Representatives resolution for his 24 years of volunteer service to the agency.

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In his farewell remarks, Bode talked about what he considered “good memories” of working with board members and staff, and offered thanks for allowing him to be part of “something I really believe in.”

“I really appreciate the time here at NECAC,” Bode added. “In leaving, I’m turning it over to good hands. Fred Vahle has been a good friend of mine over the years.”

Charles McCann of St. Joseph, former director of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) with the Missouri Department of Social Services and a Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP) with the National Community Action Partnership, performed the installation ceremony.

Along with Vahle as Chairman of the Board, following are the other officers McCann installed for 2019-2020: Vice-Chairman: Mike Bridgins, of St. Peters, St. Charles County; Secretary: D. Randall Cone of Louisiana, Pike County; Trustees: Troy Dawkins of Shelbina, Shelby County; Jane Dorlac of Montgomery City, Montgomery County; and Glenn Eagan of Shelbyville, Shelby County. The six make up the board’s Executive Committee.

Also sworn in were the following Directors:

LEWIS COUNTY: Travis Fleer of Lewistown and Kim Darnell and Paul Kinney of Canton.
LINCOLN COUNTY: Matt Bass and Jere Burkemper of Troy and Curtissa Kerr-Hunter of Elsberry.
MACON COUNTY: Clarence Walker, Jean Jones and Mickey Shipp of Macon.
MARION COUNTY: Larry Welch of Hannibal, Josh Wilson of Palmyra and Roy Hark of Hannibal.
MONROE COUNTY: Mike Whelan of rural Stoutsville, Peggy Hultz of Madison and Maxine Jones of Holliday.
MONTGOMERY COUNTY: Rich Daniels of Wellsville and Dean Larkin of Montgomery City.
PIKE COUNTY: Justin Sheppard of Louisiana and Curt Mitchell of Clarksville.
RALLS COUNTY: John Lake and Lowell Jackson of Center, with one vacant position.
RANDOLPH COUNTY: John Truesdell of Huntsville, Lorna Miles of Moberly and Will Barger of Clifton Hill.
ST. CHARLES COUNTY: Mary Hutchison of St. Charles and Diane Hileman of St. Peters.
SHELBY COUNTY: Mary Kraichely of Bethel.
WARREN COUNTY: Richard Veinot of Warrenton and Cheryl Wisdom of Wright City.

Bode keeps promise that he made almost 20 years ago

At his first NECAC Annual Meeting as chairman, Lyndon Bode said he looked forward to working with the agency to enhance existing programs and develop new ones.

He kept the promise, missing fewer than five board meetings during his 19 years overseeing the board and participating in many agency activities. Lyndon is pictured at the Nov. 28, 2000, Annual Meeting with CEO Don Patrick and Joe Maxwell, Missouri’s Lieutenant Governor at the time.
Board Members are recognized at Annual Meeting

NECAC President and CEO Don Patrick and new Chairman of the Board Fred Vahle recognized the following Board Members with certificates for their years of service.

**Lewis County**
Paul Kinney. Not pictured are Kim Darnell of Canton and Travis Fleer of Lewistown.

**Lincoln County**
Curtissa Kerr-Hunter of Elsberry and Jere Burkemper of Troy. Not pictured is Matt Bass of Troy.

**Macon County**
Mickey Shipp, Jean Jones and Clarence Walker, all of Macon.

**Marion County**
Larry Welch and outgoing member Lyndon Bode. Not pictured are Roy Hark of Hannibal and Josh Wilson of Palmyra.

**Monroe County**
Peggy Hultz of Madison, Mike Whelan of Stoutsville and Maxine Jones of Holliday.

**Montgomery County**
Jane Dorlac of Montgomery City. Not pictured are Rich Daniels of Wellsville and Dean Larkin of Montgomery City.

**Pike County**
D. Randall Cone of Louisiana and Curt Mitchell of Clarksville. Not pictured is Justin Sheppard of Louisiana.

**Ralls County**
John Lake and Lowell Jackson, both of Center, with one seat vacant.

**Randolph County**
John Truesdell of Huntsville. Not pictured are Lorna Miles of Moberly and Will Barger of Clifton Hill.

**Shelby County**
Mary Kraichley of Bethel, Troy Dawkins of Shelbina and Glenn Eagan of Shelbyville.

**St. Charles County**
Mike Bridgins and Diane Hileman, both of St. Peters, and Mary Hutchison of St. Charles.

**Warren County**
Cheryl Wisdom of Wright City. Not pictured is Richard Veinot of Warrenton.
Monroe County woman is among beneficiaries of SkillUp

LaWonda Hart has a bachelor’s degree in human resources, but circumstances left her on food stamps.

Thanks to NECAC’s new SkillUp program, the Monroe County mother of two is getting back on track. Hart works as an assistant store manager, and is taking classes to earn a master’s degree.

“It has helped me to actually push myself to get to those goals that I have,” she said.

SkillUp is aimed at providing Food Stamp recipients a chance to gain skills, training or experience that can improve their ability to find a job or decrease dependency on public assistance.

The voluntary program is for people ages 16 and older. SkillUP can help participants get jobs that lead to self-sufficiency. NECAC offers job search, training education, and supportive services to participants. Also through the program, the agency can offer assistance with transportation, rent, utilities, mortgage and work-related expenses such as required clothing and tools.

As of Oct. 28, there are 164 recipients enrolled and 77 have gotten a job.