

## **AWC Celebrates 30th Year in the Community**

Written by Administrator

Wednesday, 11 December 2013 00:00 -

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Awareness Washington County is celebrating its 30th year in the community. It is a nationally recognized leadership program that is dedicated to strengthening Washington County by developing servant leaders.

The AWC class begins each year with a 2-day retreat and then meets one day per month October through May. Each session promotes servant leadership skills and highlights community issues that affect each of us, such as economic growth, social services, local history, education and the arts.

Each class chooses a servant leadership project so class members can serve our area and use their newfound skills. Many of the previous projects are still going strong today and help benefit the community.

Many organizations in this area have started out as projects of Awareness Washington County classes.

Here is a sample of some of those projects:

Washington County Artisans and Farmers (Class of 2011) was started to provide fresh seasonal produce & unique artisan crafts to the people of Washington and surrounding areas.

CenterPeace Project Development (Class of 2010) worked with the City of Salem & Washington County to transform the former Cheese Factory site in downtown Salem into a community gathering place for all of Washington County. Heather Hardin reported that the AWC 2010 CenterPeace brick fundraising sold bricks, granite tiles & granite benches adding approximately \$2800 in improvements to CenterPeace. The AWC Class of 2010 is also represented with an engraved granite bench and the stage canopy that is put up when the stage is used.

Repair the Bell (Class of 2013) is a joint project between the adult and We The Youth classes.

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They researched issues with the bell in the Washington County Courthouse, and they are working with professionals to restore the bell and its housing.

Friends of Beck's Mill was formed to rehabilitate the old mill and restore it to its former glory. The class established a non-profit organization, which received the deed to the mill. The Bill Cook Foundation took over and financed the physical restoration of the mill. Friends of Beck's Mill is open to the public and encourages new members interested in history.