

## **Bob Thompson, Arrow Lumber, and Meri Kay Schiller recognized as Community Champions**

The White River Families First Coalition is honored to announce the deserving recipients of the 2013 White River Communities Champion Award: Bob Thompson, Arrow Lumber, and Meri Kay Schiller.

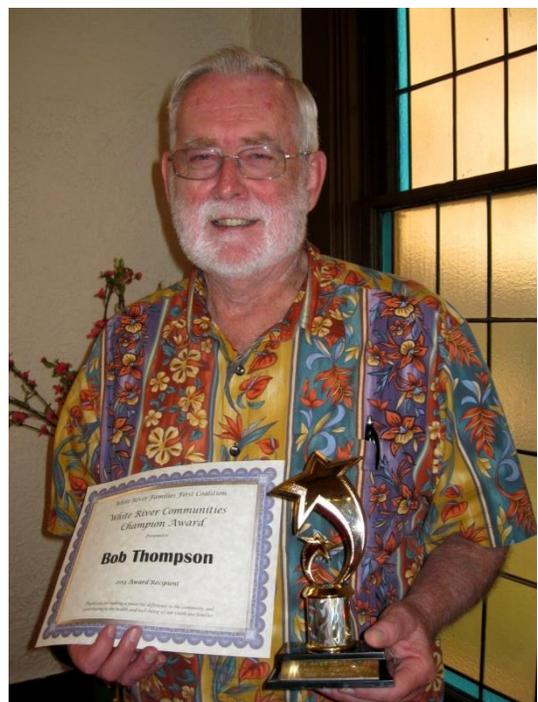
During this past week, the Coalition has been presenting the White River Communities Champion awards to this year's unsuspecting recipients. Award recipients were nominated by members of our community because they have made a powerful difference without necessarily having the benefit of holding an office, title or position.

The Community Champion award was established in 2011 as a way to recognize the service and dedication of those who make our community better by giving of their time and talent to help others within the White River School District. Their contributions to our community do not go unnoticed. We frequently come across these community champions in our lives but they are often behind the scenes, the unsung heroes, and often the extent of how they impact others is not always known. For many, it is their life's work.

The public is invited to a recognition and reception in honor of the Community Champion award recipients that will be held during the regular Families First Coalition meeting on Monday, June 24<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm at the Buckley Fire Station. The Families First Coalition's mission is to promote activities and partnerships that support the health and human service needs of individuals, youth and families in order to strengthen White River area communities.

**Bob Thompson** is described as a quiet, serving person with a passion for teaching and helping children. A math and science teacher in the White River School District for all 30 years of his teaching career, Bob is now retired but has not taken to the easy chair. Bob was a highly requested substitute teacher for an additional 10 years and quickly stepped into a busy community volunteer role and continues to contribute to the well-being of Buckley's youth and families.

A Kiwanis member since 1970, Bob is the most senior member of the Buckley Kiwanis Club and has been involved in community service projects and fundraisers that have benefited the community. He was the faculty advisor for the White River High School Key Club for 25 years, helping guide students to do the same. Bob chaperoned and ran the White River Ski Program for over 25 years, giving teenagers opportunities to ski at Crystal



**Bob Thompson**

Mountain all winter.

A member of the Presbyterian Church for 51 years, he is an active leader and can be counted on to help at community events. Bob played a major role in starting the Weekend Food Backpack Program in the White River School District after reading about this national program. In 2011, the program was launched at Elk Ridge and Wilkeson Elementary Schools and currently provides more than 40 children with weekend meals. Bob does fundraising and food purchases for this program, allowing children to be well fed and ready to learn every Monday.

Bob is a true community champion. Exemplified by his life's work, Bob's contributions within the organizations that he serves, his passion as a teacher and advisor, and the lives that have been altered along the way, he has made a powerful difference in our community.

**Arrow Lumber** opened in Buckley in 1999 and has been well known for their charitable service and dedication to our schools, students, and the entire community.

Some of their community service projects have included donating materials for the Buckley Museum renovation, donating materials and time to install lights on the basketball court, and making significant contributions to the Daffodil float project so White River High School could be



**Mike McGinnes, Shawn Roehr, and Barney Wagner of Arrow Lumber**

represented at the annual Daffodil Festival. They raise

funds each year to provide turkeys and complete meals to families on Thanksgiving and host an annual piano talent contest for youth. Arrow Lumber also supports Relay For Life, provide t-shirts for the White River Community Activities Program, support athletic programs, and host the annual Night With Santa in their store.

Arrow Lumber provided countless hours of community service to the Sheets Field project and their efforts were critical to its ultimate success. A generous donor for community and school fundraisers and auctions, they offer assistance and equipment when working on larger projects, and provide materials for Eagle Scout, Boy Scout, and Cub Scout projects. Arrow Lumber also contributes to the community by providing job opportunities for young people.

Described as a steadfast partner in the White River High School's efforts to serve the young people in this community, Arrow Lumber provides opportunities for young people and their

generosity and service is indeed extraordinary. Arrow Lumber makes our community a better place to live, learn, and grow.

**Meri Kay Schiller** has been described as having an amazing sense of what the meaning of COMMUNITY is and embodies many of the verbs used to describe a good community: she is positive, productive, genuine, and warm.

As a life-long resident of Buckley, Meri Kay takes pride in our town and is very active in local events. A member of the Ida Marge Orthopedic Guild, she is active in raising funds for the Children's Hospital. She volunteers weekly at both the Youth and Senior Centers hosting knitting, cooking, and craft lessons, and assists at special events and themed parties. She cooked lunch at the Senior Center as a volunteer and currently serves at Buckley Soup. She dedicates many hours of volunteer time to the ECEAP Preschool Program and volunteers in a kindergarten classroom weekly.



**Meri Kay Schiller**

As a board member of White River Senior Services, Meri Kay assisted in the development and planning of the senior housing complex in Buckley and is championing the efforts to build additional housing. Meri Kay organizes the Guild's yearly plant sale and is a strong proponent for the Buckley Community Gardens. She is the organizer of the annual Buckley community-wide yard sale day.

In gardening terms, Meri Kay is a cultivator – growing, tending, and developing her community and its children. Known as a “mover and a shaker”, Meri Kay has devoted her life to promoting and giving back to her community. We know that there are many more events, organizations, and charities that have benefitted from her talents and generosity. There are also many children who have been helped through Meri Kay's efforts.

Meri Kay enjoys doing community service and personifies the saying “it takes a village”. She is a commendable community champion for Buckley and has been influential in making Buckley a true “home town” and an awesome place to live every day.