



## NEWS RELEASE

March 2014

### TAMARA L COX AWARDED AMERICAN HOMETOWN SERVICE AWARD

Alliance Bank salutes Tamara L Cox as a shining light in our small community for her dedication and hard work as a community volunteer. Tamara is an active member of the Otterbein United Methodist Church. She is a volunteer on the landscape committee; the building committee; and has taught Bible School for several years. She is the chairman of the Otterbein United Methodist Church Fish Fry which is held annually on the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday in June. This event was organized to raise funds for their annual carnival. The carnival is open to the public and is absolutely free for all to those who attend. As a Carnival Volunteer, she is in charge



of publicity, food and games. Tamara has also been an active member of Prairie Crossing PTO and has held the positions of President and Treasurer. She has been a Junior Achievement Volunteer for the past six years. Tamara has a passion for Benton County Relay for Life. For the past 10 years, she has volunteered to be the financial manager for Benton County. She counts and tallies all the contributions for Bank Night and is in charge of compiling all of the totals for the entire event; and makes sure they are appropriated to the Benton County Fund.

Tamara is originally from Hendricks County having graduated from Plainfield High School. She continued her education and graduated from Purdue University with a degree in Business. Upon her graduation from Purdue, she returned to the Indianapolis area and worked as operations manager for a construction tool business. She soon discovered that in order for her voice to be heard concerning the sale of construction tools, sales experience would be a great asset. She worked hard to get into sales and gained employment with an industrial sales firm in Lafayette where she met her husband, Mike. Mike and Tamara were married in 1998 on Mike's family farm which was settled by his ancestors who were registered as the first white settlers in Benton County. Upon settling down in Benton County, one of the first priorities was finding the right church. One of

her passions is children; they have two sons, Mitchel age 13 and AJ age 12. They chose Otterbein United Methodist Church because they offered so many activities for kids.

Being close to family and carrying on family traditions are important to Tamara. She enjoys living close to her in-laws and having the grandparents nearby for her children. Building their own family traditions, Tamara has organized a Fall Festival that has been held at their home every year for the past 10 years. She invites family, friends and neighbors to a family night of fun. The events include old fashioned games such as bean bag races, hayrides and a haunted house. The event has grown from a small get together to 150-200 in attendance. From the young children to the parents and grandparents, good old fashioned fun is had by all. There is a lot of preparation for this event but the tradition and the memories that everyone leave with are more than worth it.

"Benton County is special; I immediately felt at home here." It is easy to get involved; everyone is friendly and works well together. Her advice to individuals who would like to become involved is to go to a meeting to see what the organization is about or talk with a neighbor or friend. She has met lots of great Benton County people this way. She became involved with Relay for Life when cancer had affected her family and she wanted to give back in some small way, so she attended a meeting. She ended up volunteering to help with the financial aspect of the Relay and partnered with George Benner for a couple of weeks to "learn the ropes". After his tragic death, she was willing to jump in and take over filling his shoes and has been doing so for the past 10 years. "My time involved is so miniscule compared to what cancer patients have to endure."

When asked why do you volunteer? The reasons varied but all pointed back to giving back and doing something that she felt would make a change for the better in her community. As a PTO volunteer, she feels it is very important to support the teachers and students as much as possible. She became involved with a program called KidzArt when it was introduced at Prairie Crossing. KidzArt is a confidence building and enrichment program that is offered one hour each week. Confidence and self-esteem are enriched through art. When she noticed how the program was changing her son's life, she became even more involved and bought the business. Through KidsArt she currently offers: free in-school field trips; a family fun night; and free 4-H programs. She also travels to the local libraries for programs and offers several free scholarships to give other children the opportunity that her son had.

The best advice Tamara would like to share about volunteering is to "do it from the heart; don't volunteer to be seen in the community." "Find what you're good at and be passionate about it!" She does caution that you can "overload" and spread yourself too thin. "Find that happy medium, to fulfill and still have time for your family."

Alliance Bank salutes Tamara Cox with The American Hometown Service Award. Her willingness to give of her time, talents and energy is duly recognized and truly appreciated.

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