

***Girard Chamber of Commerce Report  
Courtesy Chamber website***

President Jeanette Earley opened the May 8, 2024 breakfast meeting at Courtyard Estates, with Steve O'Dell, Country Financial, as sponsor. Also in attendance, John Earley, Deb Burnett, Bill Giles, Wayman Meredith, Michelle Hoover, Casey Claypool, Pam Hawkins, Vicki Walker and Janice Smith.

Treasurer's report and previous minutes were filed for audit, with brief discussion concerning the business listings sign located at the four-way stop. The majority of dues for the signage have been remitted, with some deletions and some new additions coming soon.

City Wide Garage Sales are slated for June 8 with addresses posted on Facebook; this year's Pumpkin Fest is set for October 12; the city's Community Center has accepted rentals on a regular basis, more recently for graduation gatherings; Police Chief Wayman Meredith reported officers now have the use of body cams and that the DEA "drug take-back program" collected an estimated 16 pounds of unused prescription drugs, with a container stationed at the Municipal Building and emptied for collection every six months.

Speaking for Girard Fire and Rescue, John Earley reported negotiations ongoing with insurance for recent storm damage to the firehouse. The recent acquisition of the former Kruse Automotive building, located on South Street, has been finalized. Plans for remodeling and a building addition will be in progress for some time, targeting one to two years before an actual move to the new location takes place. The old firehouse will be sold.

Activities for Courtyard Estates were reported by Michelle Hoover: a Mother's Day tea was hosted May 9; two new residents have arrived with three additional soon to be occupants; a blood drive will be hosted at the Estates May 30; June 8 is scheduled for several area businesses to sponsor a "Poker Run", proceeds benefitting the Resident Enrichment Fund.

Carlinville Area Hospital representative Vicki Walker announced ground-breaking ceremonies scheduled for May 31 between 12 noon and 2 p.m., for the walk-in clinic to be built in Virden.

With time closing in for the annual Festival Days, July 26, 27, and 28, discussion focused on planning the event: June 14 will be final date for booklet advertising entries, to be printed at R&R Bindery; several inflatables are scheduled for the Festival; 2023 Miss Girard Addison Earley and family are organizing a parade schedule; the Pageant Tea was recently hosted, there are seven contestants vying for the Miss Girard title and six or seven Little Miss entries; radio station remote has been contracted from 5-8 p.m. Saturday, with various promotions announced during that time (the \$1,500 remote fee to be shared by the Chamber, Fire Department and Doc's); beer garden music will begin at 9 p.m., prior to which bingo will be hosted at the same location; there will be drawing ticket sales with proceeds aiding in the purchase of a new sign at the city's north entrance. This year's Pageant theme is "The Oscars". The next Festival Days committee meeting is set for 12:30 p.m. Thursday, May 30, at Doc's.

Also in the planning for the Festival is a ribbon-cutting event and capsule opening, marking 50 years since the burial of a time capsule.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 a.m., with Burnett Crane Service sponsoring the 7 a.m. June 12 breakfast meeting at the Community Center.