

***Girard Chamber of Commerce Report***  
***Courtesy Chamber Website***

A review of the recent Pumpkin Fest was among agenda for the Wednesday, November 13, 2024 Chamber meeting. President Jeanette Earley opened with Pledge and prayer, with breakfast served at Courtyard Estates, R&R Bindery as this month's sponsor. John Earley, Adrienne Adams, Wayman Meredith, Bill and Peggy Giles, Steve O'Dell, Vicki Walker, Michelle Hoover, Pam Hawkins and Janice Smith were in attendance.

Earley explained the Bingo \$50 fee for licensing allowed for two events, which were scheduled for both Festival Days and Pumpkin Fest, the latter receiving less response. Steve O'Dell of Country Financial provided the Oct. 12 Chamber cookout food and the Earleys sponsored the Petting Zoo. All felt a good crowd attended, with financials and treasurer's report to be reviewed at the next meeting.

A Community Meeting is set for Monday, November 18, 6:30 p.m., at the Community Center, with Casey Claypool as moderator. City-related topics covered at the last meeting included illegal activities taking place, vacant properties in disrepair and the homeless problem, in addition to discussion on the Safety Act. Attending the Chamber meeting, Police Chief Wayman Meredith stated the importance of understanding the laws in place pertaining to the problems at hand, and to which extent police departments may respond.

Miss Girard Adrienne Adams reported on recent activities, including the Trunk or Treat event, taking part in parades and attending the Baptist Church Fall Fest.

Speaking for Fire & Rescue, John Earley updated the group on the fire station addition in progress at the station's new site, the former Kruse Enterprises location. Forms are being set with an estimated 450 yards of concrete to be poured in the build of the 80 X 125 expansion, an estimated year to complete. Earley also announced the acquisition of an Advanced Life Support (ALS) unit for Prairieland Ambulance, now numbering two units for the department with ALS capabilities.

The Police Department's Trunk or Treat was a success, serving an estimated 200 hot dogs along with chili and handing out treats. The Haunted House sponsored by the Fire Department ran three nights, also a success, with sponsors covering some associated expenses.

Representing Courtyard Estates, Michelle Hoover, director of sales and marketing, gave an account of activities and upcoming events: reported on the recent "Halloween", with next year's planning to include a Haunted Hallway; a Lasagna Dinner will be hosted Tuesday, Nov. 26, \$10 tickets on sale through Nov. 22; reported on the Central Illinois Community Networking Resources, discussion on community involvement, taking place each second Tuesday at 10 a.m.; Festival of Doors decorating will take place the day after Thanksgiving, voting to take place during the Dec. 13 Christmas Market; learned that Macoupin County Animal Control has a new director as does the Illinois Valley Economic Association meal program; and in closing reported Courtyard has 39 apartments occupied with 43 residents.

Carlinville Area Hospital representative Vicki Walker announced the drive thru Halloween event played host to an estimated 1000 cars benefitting the Carlinville Food Pantry; Farm to Table is taking place this weekend at the Bates Building in Carlinville, proceeds targeting the Hospital; updated Chamber on the Virden walk-in clinic construction with an estimated completion date scheduled for the spring of 2025. Features will include 10 waiting rooms and basic imaging.

Brief discussion followed on Food Pantry needs, prior to adjournment at 7:35 a.m. The 7 a.m. December 11 meeting will again take place at Courtyard with John and Jeanette Earley as sponsors.