

Polk City chamber hands out honors

Rene Locker is named Business Person of the Year and Tim Cox is recognized as Citizen of the Year.

By **SANDY SANDERSON**
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A banker and a historian have been recognized as outstanding residents by the Polk City Chamber of Commerce.

Rene Locker, assistant vice president and location manager for the Polk County Bank in Polk City, was named Business Person of the Year.

Tim Cox, president of the Big Creek Historical Society, was named Citizen of the Year.

Both were named at the chamber's annual banquet recently at the Tournament Club of Iowa. Dr. JoAnn Brunsvold was formally installed as the 2009 chamber president at the banquet.

Locker is a native of Huxley and a 1979 graduate of Ballard High School.

"I started working at the South Story Bank in Slater when I was 16," Locker says. "I learned the banking business through experience, joining the Legacy Bank branch in Polk City in 1996. I've been with Polk County Bank since 2000."

As location manager, she's often seen behind the counter working as a teller. She's also a loan consultant in real estate and re-financing loans.

Locker is a long-time member of the Polk City chamber board of directors. She's active in several organizations, including Polk City Kiwanis, Polk City American Legion, Little League and several North Polk school activities, including president of the North Polk post prom committee.



SANDY SANDERSON/ANKENY REGISTER & PRESS CITIZEN

Rene Locker has been named Business Person of the Year by the Polk City Chamber of Commerce. Locker is assistant vice president and location manager for Polk County Bank in Polk City.



Cox

Brunsvold

Her husband, Scott, is a Polk County deputy sheriff. They have two children: a married daughter, Mallory of Polk City, and Eric, a senior at North Polk High School.

"We also have a 6-month-old granddaughter, Elise," she proudly adds.

"I love the size of Polk City and am thrilled when I can be involved in activities that fill the town square. People are full of enthusiasm."

Cox has dedicated his retirement life to Polk City's Big Creek Historical Society and toward the beautification of Polk City.

A native of Bagley, he

graduated from high school in 1958 and spent three years in the U.S. Army. In 1961, he joined Dial Finance in Des Moines as a shipping clerk. He retired 35 years later as vice president of information services for Northwest Financial, the transition company from Dial Finance.

"I met a fellow in Polk City — Jim Huennellens, now deceased — who got me interested in the historical society. That evolved into an interest in getting trees planted throughout town," Cox says.

He was fascinated by the number of Polk City men who volunteered to serve in the Civil War, some 70 soldiers and by the preserved letters they sent home.

"They were tough pioneer men and boys who fought in some very difficult conditions. I was struck that in their letters they never

complained," he says.

Through his efforts, Polk City is now designated as an Arbor City and the Big Creek Historical Society building — built as a schoolhouse in 1863 — is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

He's spent countless hours restoring the schoolhouse, creating fundraising projects for the historical society and establishing a museum.

"It's been a labor of love," Cox says. "I've never felt like it was work."

He's written four plays that have been performed by the Big Creek Players.

He is active in the Polk City American Legion Post 232, Polk City Development Corp. and he's a charter member of the Polk City Community Foundation and the Polk City Arbor League.

Cox and his wife, Phyllis, have two adult sons.