



Schwarte relishes in RBGA Ambassador of the Year honor

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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Pat Schwarte is living the dream with his ambassador work for the River Bend Growth Association and professional position with Riverbender.com as an advertising and website salesperson.

Schwarte has been so active with the Growth Association that he captured the prestigious Growth Association Ambassador of the Year honor at the annual banquet.

RBGA President Monica Bristow describes Schwarte as someone who is a regular at all the Growth Association events. He also contributes back to Riverbender.com by taking photographs and writing stories from ribbon cuttings and Small Business of the Month award ceremonies.

“We can count on him for being at meetings, the special events to work and that is why he is Ambassador of the Year. We have a point system for every time they do something. He had the highest score.”

Schwarte expressed thanks to his employers – John and Dawn Hentrich – for allowing him the time to represent Riverbender.com at Growth Association events. He also expressed thanks to his wife, Jennifer, for being patient with him while he attends the functions.

During his acceptance speech, Schwarte said he felt it should be ‘Ambassadors of the Year,’ because he is surrounded by other ambassadors who go the extra mile attending RBGA events, saying “In 2014, events such as ribbon cuttings, small business of the month, business after hours and monthly Ambassador meetings totaled 57. Add special events like the annual golf outing, duck races and the total is closer to 70.”

“Every ambassador’s employer should be acknowledged for giving of their treasure (their employee’s time) to promote and encourage economic growth,” he said. “And every River Bend Growth Association ambassador should be proud of the fact that their employer chose them to represent their company and our region’s Economic Growth Agenda.”

As of March, Schwarte will be at Riverbender.com for three years. He spent years in sales with companies like Hewlett Packard and other computer companies. He was quite successful before taking a position back in his hometown.

“Since I began there have been remarkable changes in Riverbender.com and we have always believed that content will drive visitors to our site,” he said. “John and Dawn have made significant investments to our video departments and invested heavily in technology green screening, camera quality lighting and equipment for broadcast transmission. They have placed an emphasis on our ability to report on our community in a timely basis with news and local sports, scores and information.”

He said he believes the River Bend Growth Association is an organization area business should join and he thinks the number of events they hold bring members together.

Schwarte was born and raised in Alton. He attended Marquette for one year in high school and graduated from Alton High School. He played soccer for three years. He graduated from Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville with a management information systems degree, then entered sales for several years for Hewlett Packard and also represented other computer companies in sales during the boom period.

“I have led the most charmed life in sales,” he said. “I worked right out of college for a company that *wrote* the first program for main frames and my next job was for a network integrator. We couldn’t keep Cisco routers on the shelves when I started.”

Now he lives in Alton four blocks from the Riverbender.com offices. He said two of his most distinct pleasures are representing both Riverbender.com and RBGA.

“I believe that with five employees it is incredible what the Growth Association is able to do in visibility they gain for themselves and their members,” he said.



