

Media Release

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Two Pine Bluff Residents join Senior Arkansans Hall of Fame

Pine Bluff residents, Barbara E. Rhinehart and Bob Abbott, were inducted into the Senior Arkansans Hall of Fame for 2015 in a ceremony at the Capitol on Thursday. The program is sponsored by the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) Division of Aging and Adult Services. Also inducted was Kay Greenway from Paragould.

Rhinehart contributes to the well-being of senior Arkansans as a leader and active member of a variety of civic, community and faith based organizations. She has served in various capacities on the Salvation Army Advisory Board and is a past President of the American Legion Auxiliary. She has performed many volunteer activities through the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, including coordinating transportation and food distribution for low income senior Arkansans. She also is a past President and District Lieutenant Governor for the Kiwanis Club of Pine Bluff and volunteers regularly with the Boys and Girls Club of Jefferson County to provide services and mentorship for youths. Additional organizational involvement and volunteer work include serving with the Jefferson County Genealogical Association, Three Rivers Audubon Society, Pine Bluff Toastmasters, Pine Bluff Alumni Board, and her local church to provide services and support for local senior Arkansans.

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Bob Abbot is a founding and current member of the Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission. He has helped pass crucial legislation for kidney patients in Arkansas along with being a major leader in making life-saving dialysis financially possible for low-income Arkansas families. In 1995, he received Volunteer Service Award from the National Kidney Foundation for his countless hours volunteered for the improvement of care for individuals and their families battling kidney disease. He is a recipient of the 2004 Community Service Award presented by KARK Channel 4, St. Vincent Health Care System, Arkansas Division of Volunteerism, and the Office of the Governor of the State of Arkansas, for volunteer work performed in and for Pine Bluff and the State of Arkansas. In 2004, he received the first Arkansas Rehabilitation Commission Ability Award for work and effort done to help improve the lives and to bring attention to the needs of the disability community in Arkansas. He was recognized in 2009 with the Community Achievement Award by the American Association of Kidney Patients for his efforts in educating the public and Congress about kidney disease and its effect on families. He was instrumental in bringing Arkansas's first Kidney Beginning Life Program designed to educate the public about kidney disease. In 2010, he was awarded the Volunteer of the Year from the American Association of Kidney Patients for his work and in 2011 he was presented the Samuel Orenstein Award for extraordinary service and contributions to the achievement of kidney patient goals from the American Association of Kidney Patients. He has volunteered hundreds of hours in nursing homes as an Arkansas Certified Volunteer Ombudsman since 2011.

“We are delighted to recognize these seniors who are not only staying active as they age, but using their experience, knowledge and enthusiasm to make life better for people all over Arkansas,” said Craig Cloud, director of the DHS Division of Aging and Adult Services. “They are a reminder that we can still have a fulfilling life as we get older or retire. These seniors have a valuable place in our communities and we honor their spirit and volunteer service.”

To be considered for selection to the Senior Arkansans Hall of Fame, nominees must be a citizen of the State of Arkansas; at least 60 years of age or older at the time of nomination; and have performed outstanding volunteer contributions or services, which have promoted, enhanced, and enriched the quality of life for citizens of Arkansas, especially Senior Arkansans. The Senior Arkansans Hall of Fame began in 1993 and with this year's honorees, it includes 70 inductees.

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Photo Cutline: From left, Pine Bluff residents Barbara E. Rhinehart and Bob Abbott, are joined by Paragould resident Kay Greenway. All three were inducted into the Senior Arkansans Hall of Fame during ceremonies at the State Capitol in Little Rock.