

Chamber bestows annual honors

'Visioneer' award makes its debut

By **MATT HUTCHINSON**
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The Williamsport-Lycoming Chamber of Commerce bestowed two long-standing awards and a new one at its 118th annual meeting and awards banquet Wednesday.

The Phillips/Plankenhorn Small Business Award and the Ethel Weinhart Volunteer of the Year Award for 2003 were presented, along with the new category of Visioneer Award.

Robert M. Sides Family Music Center received the small business award in honor of its almost 67 years of service in the community.

Founded in 1937 at 45 Washington Blvd. by the business' namesake, it originally sold and tuned pianos. Today, it employs nearly 100 people at its 52,000-square-foot location at 201 Mulberry St.

Alysha Sides accepted the award on behalf of her parents Pete and Carol, who were unable to attend the event.

"We are truly honored for the recognition," she said.

Alysha said the business truly remains a family-run business. Her 94-year-old grandmother Ellin still reports to work every day.

The business also is ranked in the top 100 music stores in the country," Alysha said.

"Like so many businesses, service is what keeps us alive," she added.

Last year's recipient of the small business award was the Knight-Confer Funeral Home.

Ron DeFeo was given the volunteer award for his work in the formulation of a local health insurance program. The chamber has been collaborating with the West Branch Manufacturers Association to offer a new health care plan for local businesses.

DeFeo was not present to accept his award. He did, however, make remarks on video that were shown to those in attendance. He



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Accepting the Phillips-Plankenhorn Small Business Award for Robert M. Sides Music Store are, from left, Peter, Ellin and Alysha Sides.



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Smiling at Wednesday's banquet are Williamsport-Lycoming Chamber of Commerce president Vincent J. Matteo, Visioneer award-winner Judy Orlinsky and Laura Flynn, executive director of Our Towns 2010 and chamber director of Community Development.

thanked his employer, Lonza Inc., for giving him the opportunity to volunteer his time to the chamber.

"It amazes me the time and effort he's put into this," said Vincent J. Matteo, president and chief executive officer of the chamber.

The 2002 winner of the volunteer award was Keith Kuzio.

Judy Orlinsky was presented the Visioneer award, which recognizes a person's ability to commit time and energy to a project that affects the future of the com-

munity.

She is credited with starting the city's Main Street Committee and being a founding member of Our Towns 2010. Orlinsky also is known for creating First Friday and Art Town.

In addition, she has been involved with the Downtown Design and Review Committee and several other organizations.

"Judy's vision for our area was to take and preserve our very unique architecture," said Russ Kimura, who presented her the award.