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Jerry Dorton Inducted into Missouri Bankers Association's 50 Year Club

AUGUST 23RD 2021 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jerry Dorton Inducted into Missouri Bankers Association's 50 Year Club

Dexter, MO - Jerry Dorton, executive vice president of First Midwest Bank of Dexter, was inducted into the Missouri Bankers Association's 50 Year Club on Thursday, July 15, during MBA's 131st Annual Convention at the Chateau on the Lake Resort in Branson, Missouri.

This recognition from MBA honors bankers who have dedicated 50 years of service to the banking community. Dorton is one of seven bankers who were inducted into the 50 Year Club this year.

Dorton accepted his first banking job in 1971 as a loan officer for Security Bank in Paragould, Arkansas. From 1971 to 1980, he held various roles at banks in Arkansas and Tennessee. In May of 1980 Dorton was named chief operating officer for First Midwest Bank of Dexter. Throughout the past 41 years, Dorton has held various roles from chief operating officer to senior vice president to president with First Midwest Bank of Dexter, First Midwest Bank of Poplar Bluff, Midwest Bancshares, and Gideon Bancshares Company. Through his 50-year career, Dorton's philosophy has been to always hold the customers' best interests at heart.

He and his wife, Sandy, have been married for 50 years and have two children and five grandchildren that all reside in Dexter. Jerry is a member of the First Baptist Church in Dexter.

Since he has been with the First Midwest Bank it has grown from a bank with one location and \$30 million in total assets to a bank with five locations including Dexter, Dudley, Sikeston, Jackson, and Cape Girardeau with over \$430 million in total assets. First Midwest Bank of Dexter is affiliated with the First Midwest Bank of Poplar Bluff and the First Midwest Bank of the Ozarks.

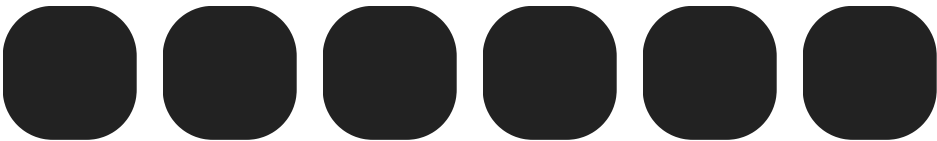
The Missouri Bankers Association is a statewide trade and professional organization in Jefferson City that represents the interests of more than 240 banks and savings and loans in Missouri. MBA serves as the principal advocate for the Missouri banking community and provides educational opportunities, products and services that assist bankers with enhancing their banking operations. For more information, visit mobankers.com.

Pictured: Dexter’s Jerry Dorton (right) receives his 50 Year Club plaque from Max Cook at the MBA Convention.

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Congressman Jason Smith Views Tornado Damage in

Congressman Jason Smith Views Tornado Damage in Dexter

Dexter, MO - Congressman Jason Smith toured the damage left behind in Dexter after an EF2 Tornado swept through the area on Saturday, July 10, 2021. Smith was joined by SoutheastHEALTH of Stoddard County administration, State Representative Herman Morse, MO Senator Jason Bean, Dexter Fire Chief/City EMA Director Don Seymore, City Administrator Trevor Pulley, and Dexter Police Chief Hank Trout.

Smith first took a tour of SoutheastHEALTH of Stoddard County where there was damage to various parts of the building, roof, and outer areas of the hospital grounds.

The hospital has made strides in repairs and was given an "overall good report" after structural engineers inspected the building.

Smith said it's a must to get the hospital back up and running as soon as possible. "This hospital is very, very important because any rural community deserves a hospital to help provided health care that we need, 7,500 people live right here in Dexter," commented Smith.

"This hospital was so important that vice president (Hubert Humphrey) of the United States came here for the ground-breaking back in the late 60's."

"We have to do it as quickly as possible because everyday they're not up and around is that much health care that's not being provided to the people here in Stoddard County. And even surrounding counties for that because if you look just south of here in Dunklin County, they don't have a hospital there either, so we need it," Smith said.

It's also Southeast Health's goal to restore emergency services operations sometime this 53 week.

Smith then took an auto tour of the damaged residential areas of Dexter. It was amazing to see that the community had come together so quickly and a large portion of the fallen trees had already been cut and stacked by the side of the street for city crews to pick up and discard.

"It is amazing how Dexter has bounced back so quickly with the community help. Everyone jumped to action," said Smith after the tour. "You saw something that happened

Saturday evening and this is Tuesday. They (residents) are back to business where they open up. I've seen a lot of natural disasters in our congressional district and friends helping friends and neighbors. Dexter has been a great example here. I am so thankful no one was killed and from what we have been told no one was injured."

After the tour Don Seymore, Dexter Fire Chief/City EMA Director about the city's response to the tornado disaster.

"When the incident started we activated the emergency management plan and once the emergency management plan was activated we made rapid progress. We worked all the way to 2:30 a.m. Sunday morning to get the main streets opened up and made real progress. I felt the street and water department and the police and fire all worked well together along with Missouri AmerenUE. They walked the streets with us to tell us which trees had power in them. I felt it really went real well and by Sunday night we had every street and alley opened up."

Seymore said there are 32 blocks worth of damage to property in Dexter, and about 750 assessments so far conducted by Dexter City Fire Department and other crews.

AmerenUE had more than 1,100 crew members on the ground by Sunday into Monday restore power.

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Sparklight had numerous trucks out to help with restoring lost internet and cable. They have set up two numbers to call 573-614-7825 or 573-614-7829. These numbers are used for those who have been affected by the EF2 Tornado only and are temporary. Roughly 1,000 customers experienced some type of disruption

There is also temporary Wifi hotspot service set up at Pavilion #2 in West Park. No password is required.

The Dexter Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, Alisha Trammell, has set up an account to accept monetary donations to help provide relief to those impacted by last Saturday's EF2 tornado. Any financial donation amount will make a big impact.

Donations can be made at the Dexter Chamber of Commerce located at 515 W. Market Street or at First Midwest Bank with two Dexter locations; 819 W. Business 60 or 20 W. Stoddard.

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EF2 Tornado Confirmed in Dexter, Stoddard County EMA News Briefing

JULY 11TH 2021 BY DEE LOFLIN

EF2 Tornado Confirmed in Dexter, Stoddard County EMA News Briefing

Press Briefing 7/11/21 3:00PM

Dexter Tornado – Published by the Stoddard County Emergency Management Agency

The National Weather Service arrived here in town at noon today, and have relayed preliminary information that this is a potential EF-2 tornado with approximate 120 mph wind gusts. Their survey is ongoing.

If any impacted families need housing assistance or have unmet needs such as food or water, please call the Stoddard County Emergency Management Agency at (573) 614-5155.

For residences and businesses that are requesting volunteer assistance with clearing debris, or are needing supplies such as tarps, gloves, and hand tools, please call the Dexter Fire Department at (573) 624-3425. This is for any residents in the impacted area, not just those in Dexter city limits.

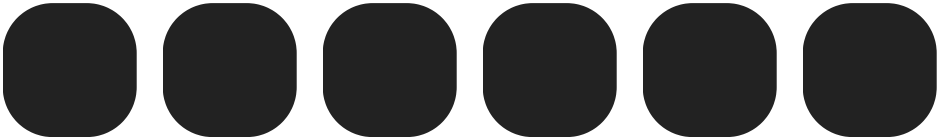
We kindly request that all non-essential travelers remain off of the roadways in the impacted areas. The crews need space to work, the more cars that are in the way, the longer the clean-up process and the time to restore power will take.

The City of Dexter is requesting that all homeowners in city limits place their debris on the edge of the street, and NOT in the street. They will send crews to pick-up debris as soon as they can.

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18 FORE Life Banquet and Golf Tournament Celebrate 20 Years of Giving

JULY 07TH 2021 BY DEE LOFLIN

18 FORE Life Banquet and Golf Tournament Celebrate 20 Years of Giving

Dexter, MO - "We are going to give out our 3 millionth dollar soon," stated Scott Kruse, Founder of 18 FORE Life.

How can such a small community raise that much money in a short 20 years? It takes many hands, lots of love for our friends and family, and the ability to come together whenever someone is fighting the big "C". Ben Kruse would be amazed how a small golf tournament turned into such a big part of our everyday lives.

Last year due to Covid-19 people couldn't come together in person, but that didn't stop the Kruse family. They went virtual!! There was an online auction and still many of the wonderful fundraisers were able to take place throughout the year. There's not a day that goes by that Scott and his family aren't doing something for someone with cancer. It amazes this reporter that so many people have cancer in our area and how much these LOVE Offerings help! It's truly an inspiration.

"This year we were able to send out over \$50,000 in love offerings," stated Kruse.

"Clearing the wait list and pushing within a few thousand of hitting \$3 million....which should be sent out before the end of this summer."

The Ben Kruse 18 FORE Life Banquet is held each year in June at the Dexter Elks Lodge. Kerri Kruse opened the event and welcomed everyone. Her husband, Scott, paid tribute to the late John Barge. Barge welcomed the 18 FORE Life Golf Tournament at Hidden Trails Country Club during his time as the club pro. Kruse said that most club pros would not allow a one day tournament of nearly 90 teams on their course out of concern for the wear and tear. Barge loved having them there. He wasn't sure how that many teams would work, but he never let it stress him.

One of the funniest local love-offering recipients spoke about his ordeal and recovery from cancer. Darryl Orr and his wife Diana have both successfully battled cancer. He told his story of his cancer journey with a great amount of humor.

It all began with a trip to the emergency room in June of 2019 when Orr thought he was having a heart attack. "The good news was it was not a heart attack, but the bad news was I had a mass in my chest and the ER doctor suspected cancer."

After an appointment with Dr. Andrew Moore in Cape Girardeau, then came the roller coaster ride of tests and more tests. If you have ever had cancer or known anyone who has dealt with cancer it's one test after another and then repeat. "And the amount of blood they draw for tests, you would think they were vampires!" He stated his cancer treatments involved six week stays in the hospital and he finally completed his treatments in January of 2021. He lost his hair. He lost his voice and he lost about 30 pounds.

"The hair did grow back, but I can't seem to do a thing with it," joked Orr. "Unfortunately for me the 30 pounds also came back too. And unfortunately for you, my voice came back."

"The community has always given generously for this cause and I am appreciative for my wife, Diana, for you who donate and for the Kruse family who give and give and give! Thank you."

Once Orr concluded his speech, former St. Louis Rams Coach Dick Vermeil addressed the audience.

He spoke on his seven common sense principles of leadership.

Those principles are:

1. Make sure people know you care,
2. Be a good example,
3. Create an atmosphere in which people enjoy working,
4. Define, delegate then lead,
5. Bring energy to the workplace,
- 6 Build relationships as you implement your vision, values and process, and
7. Be sincere.

Vermeil spoke of each principle and how each one was applied to rebuilding the Rams into a Super Bowl winning football team.

At the conclusion of both speakers, a video was played along with music of previous banquets and golf tournaments and of course photos of Ben Kruse. It's always a touching tribute to those who have embraced this deadly disease and beat cancer and those who lost their lives. "We wait for a day when cancer is gone from this earth, but until that day comes, 18 FORE Life will be there for you and your family."

On Saturday, the morning after the banquet, a record 88 teams of 4 descended on the greens at Hidden Trails Country Club Golf Course to compete in the annual Ben Kruse 18 FORE Life Golf Tournament.

The team of Chad Wooldridge, Shawn Wooldridge, Chris Cohen and Cody McCain won the 2021 tournament.

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Annual Grille It Up Set for July 9th and 10th

JULY 07TH 2021 BY DEE LOFLIN

Annual Grille It Up Set for July 9th and 10th

Dexter, MO - The annual Grille It Up will take place on Friday, July 9th from 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. and on Saturday, July 10th from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. at East Park.

This two-day event was created for the whole family with a car show, cornhole tournaments, co-ed mud volleyball and a cook-off contest.

There will be plenty of food vendors and various snack trucks as well. Throughout the day, there will be a range of event vendors set up as well including bounce houses, local crafts and so much more. Come out and grab a meal, snack or drink and most importantly have a great time!!

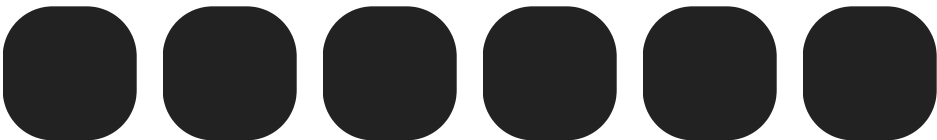
"We hope that everyone will come out to support the event and that it will continue to grow each year," commented Jamie Rowe, Park and Rec Director.

For more information, check out our Facebook page, or contact us at the Park Office or simply [CLICK HERE](#).

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