

2024 Citizen of the Year Finalists

BRENDA GRIDER – Brenda Grider is a cornerstone of the Henry County community, known for her boundless compassion and dedication to helping others. She has organized numerous events and initiatives, such as a fire truck parade for a sick child, a bike giveaway for the Kids’ Night Cruise-In, and fundraising efforts for families in crisis, including those affected by fire or car accidents. Brenda also played a key role in revitalizing downtown New Castle by organizing the popular Cruise-In event, boosting local businesses and fostering community pride. Her work extends beyond individual acts of kindness to broader social issues, including feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, and supporting local nonprofits. Brenda is always at the forefront of organizing donations and resources for various causes, such as relief for tornado and hurricane victims. Her tireless efforts make Henry County a stronger, more compassionate community, and she continues to inspire others with her actions. Brenda’s unwavering commitment to the well-being of others truly exemplifies what it means to be Citizen of the Year.

JUDY HUBBARD – Judy Hubbard is a retired teacher who continues to serve the New Castle community through her unwavering dedication. She volunteers on the Hope Initiative board, helping formerly incarcerated women transition back into society by securing housing opportunities. Judy also organized the “Library of the Trees” event, collecting canned food for local pantries, and directs the Raintree Children’s Choir. One of her most impactful contributions is leading the annual “Back to School Festival,” which provides essential school supplies to hundreds of students in need. Despite retiring in 2012, she remains a key figure in the high school show choir program, volunteering as an accompanist for every rehearsal. Judy’s selfless efforts uplift families, support those in need, and strengthen the entire Henry County community.

NANCY LEWIS - Nancy Lewis is a dedicated community leader and volunteer, serving as the President of the Safe at Home board, a vital victim advocacy agency in Henry County. Through her relentless efforts, she helped save the organization from dissolution in 2024, ensuring continued support for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Her leadership has been instrumental in rebuilding the agency, providing resources, guidance, and a safe space for those in need. Beyond Safe at Home, Nancy is deeply involved in the community, serving on the Henry County Community Foundation board and grant committee, as well as the Henry County Cancer Society board. She also delivers diapers for The Pregnancy Care Center, fundraises and mows for the Arts Center, and teaches the "Just Us" class for teen girls through Lifeline Youth and probation services. Her unwavering dedication to improving lives makes her a deserving nominee for Citizen of the Year.

