

— Business of the Year —

Thriving even in toughest of economic times

Claypool Electric follows founder's foresight to remain a successful family business

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LANCASTER — The recession has led many businesses to lay off workers or declare bankruptcy, but one local business has succeeded while others are failing.

Claypool Electric, Inc., was chosen as "Business of the Year for 2008" by the Lancaster Fairfield Chamber of Commerce due in part to its ability to double its employees in the past year.

CEO Chris Claypool attributes the success during the tough economy to the longevity of the company, founded in 1954.

"We've seen (several) economic downturns and we have been able to weather those and come out stronger and more financially stable," said Claypool.

He said he was surprised and honored by the recognition from the Chamber.

"It's an acknowledgment of what our business has accomplished in the last few years," Claypool said.

The company which provides residential, commercial and industrial electric services, as well as teledata work, was founded by Claypool's father, Bob Claypool, who is now retired.

Claypool credited his father with the innovation and foresight that led to the success of the family business.

Chris Claypool's daughter Christina Claypool-Deem also is an officer at the company.

Tim Hall, vice president of Fairfield National Bank, nominated the business because of its value to



Chris Claypool, of Claypool Electric, Inc., in Lancaster looks through plans in his office. Claypool's company has been awarded Business of the Year by the Lancaster Fairfield County Chamber of Commerce. E-G photo by Abigail S. Fisher

the community.

"They are very ethical and run a strong business despite economic uncertainties," said Hall.

Travis Markwood, president of the Lancaster Fairfield Chamber of Commerce, said Claypool Electric, Inc. falls right into line with the past winners of the business award.

"I think it's important to recognize in front of the community and other Chamber (of Commerce) members a company that has really decided to dedicate itself to our community," said Markwood.

Markwood said any Chamber of Commerce member can nominate a business for the award and the board of directors will have a majority vote to decide the winner.

Ron Burris, chairman of the board of directors for the Lancaster Fairfield Chamber of Commerce, said the longevity of the business was a factor in selecting it as the winner.

Burris also has been a customer of Claypool and personally knows the family.

"Knowing it's a friend (doing your business) that you can trust and will be

fair; it means a lot," he said.

Hall said his bank often contracts work out to Claypool and always has been pleased with their service.

"They are a good example of what our community does. They quietly have built themselves into a reputable, nice, good company," said Hall.

Claypool said if companies are trying to be successful, they need to persevere.

"You can't get discouraged by minor set backs and you need to look for opportunities that other people might consider road blocks," he said.

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