

# MONDOVI HERALD-NEWS

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## Randy Marten named VFW Citizen of the Year

**By Cindy Gibson**  
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MONDOVI -- Approximately 150 people attended the annual VFW Citizen of the Year banquet held Saturday evening at The Valley Country Club to honor the 2004 recipient - Randy Marten.

After several introductions, Conni Ottinger took over the duties of emcee for her husband, Steve, congratulated Marten, and presented several other speakers. A string of employees and friends beginning with Don Hinson, Vice President of Operations at Marten Transport, Ltd., and ending with Dan Ellifson, all expressed their appreciation for what Marten and the company have done for Mondovi.

When the emcee asked for other speakers, two of Marten's former Mondovi teachers - Jerry Kjentvet and Virginia Everson - came up to the podium.

Kjentvet said that when she was teaching a course on careers at Anthony school on Hwy. 37, she thought it would be nice to have Roger Marten (Randy's father) tell the students about trucking. Instead, Randy came and brought with him a brand new truck, which he allowed the students to explore from front to back. He then invited the entire Anthony school to tour the Marten business facility.

Everson said that the two best teachers that Randy ever had were his parents - Roger and Florence Marten. One of the lessons Randy learned was responsibility, and she illustrated it with an incident that Randy had told her about damaging a door to the shop with a truck one day. When Roger found out, he told his son, "If an employee had done that, he would have to fix it. You did it; you fix it."

Everson also expressed amazement at the vastness and complexity of the Marten Transport operation that exists right here in Mondovi.

### Looking Back — History of Marten Transport

Roger Marten founded Marten Transport in 1946 at the age of 17, delivering milk and other dairy products. His routes at that time were primarily in the Modena area where Roger was born and raised. Driving for the Modena Co-op Creamery, Roger purchased his first truck route with a \$400 loan from his mother. In the 1950's, he expanded his milk delivery routes, purchased and drove school buses and hauled petroleum products with his first tractor-trailer.

In 1956, the first tractor-trailer combination was purchased, and Marten began hauling petroleum for Bauer Built of Durand. Marten's volume doubled after the acquisition of Mondovi Trucking Co. in 1959. A year later, Marten added its first tandem axle tractor to its fleet.

In 1962, the Land O' Lakes drying operation in Mondovi closed, creating the need for milk hauled to other Land O' Lakes powdered milk facilities. As a result, Marten secured the trucking contract, purchased two tractor-trailer units and began what would become a long-term, profitable relationship with this dairy cooperative.

In 1965, a one-bay garage became Marten Transport's first terminal in Mondovi. Randy joined the company, initially assisting with equipment maintenance and dispatch. In 1965, dry vans were added to the fleet to expand Marten's service to include dry milk products.

Marten Transport opened the Ontario, California terminal in 1985 to better serve customers on the West Coast. The following year, Marten began trading on the NASDAQ National Market at \$13 per share. During the same year, Randy became president, and the company exceeded \$50 million in revenue and built a major expansion to its Mondovi headquarters.

Upon the death of his father in 1993, Randy became the CEO of Marten Transport, in addition to being president. He continues to lead Marten Transport successfully and profitably as president and Chairman of the Board. A fitting tribute for the community was in 1996 when the Roger Marten Community Center opened in downtown Mondovi.

Marten Transport, Ltd. has grown from a small, regional carrier to one of today's leading national protective service transportation companies. With terminals in Wisconsin, Georgia, California and Oregon, Marten now serves a number of Fortune 500 companies, employs more than 2,000 people and has a fleet of about 2,200 tractors and 2,800 trailers. Its average length of haul is 968 miles.

Finally to conclude the banquet, Marten very graciously thanked the community for the honor given him. He said that it was indeed satisfying to be given the Lifetime of Excellence Award by UW-Eau Claire Alumni Association. But, he expressed, even more gratifying was the honor given to him by his own community.