

# ◆ HERO on the HOMEFRONT ◆

## David Averill

By Etta Walsh  
Correspondent

**CHICOPEE** - David Averill has created a successful business through hard work, perseverance and a dedication to befriending customers.

His business, Chicopee Electronics, started in 1975 and has survived both good and bad economies. Today, the electrical-contracting business has a half-dozen employees and a catchy company motto: "If juice flows through it, we do it."

Along the way, he has amassed a reputation as a volunteer that earned him the 2007 Paul Harris Award from Rotary International, the parent organization of the Chicopee Rotary Club.

He is also a co-owner of the New England Blitzin' Bears, a minor-league football team.

Averill, who lives in Aldenville with his wife, Sandra, worked hard for his success, during the day at his business, then at night as a customer service/vacation fill-in worker at U.S. Airways at Bradley International Airport in Connecticut.

"For 25 years, I did two full-time jobs," he said. His last day on the job at U.S. Airways was Sept. 10, 2001, the day before terrorists flew commercial jetliners into the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

Despite his busy schedule, Averill did his best to volunteer his expertise and equipment to local organizations, running public-address systems for a variety of groups' events, including music.

He ran the sound system at the recent Chicopee Fest of All and created a website for the event. He has run the sound systems for the Chicopee Memorial Day parade; Chicopee Kiwanis Club's Kids Safety Day; Chicopee Boys & Girls Club fundraisers; U.S. Marine Capt. John Maloney Memorial Field dedication at Chicopee High School; Springfield's Forest Park Zoo's annual fundraiser; the Vietnam Veterans Moving Wall exhibit; Chicopee National Night Out; Chicopee Chamber of Commerce events; the Westover



Chicopee Register photo by ETTA WALSH

**City resident David Averill celebrates his business success by sharing his expertise and sound equipment with local organizations, helping them raise funds.**

Air Reserve Base and Barnes Air National Guard Base air shows; and the welcoming programs to various military units that were assigned to Westover during the 1991 Desert Storm operation.

That last volunteer work earned Averill a meeting with Colin Powell, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during Desert Storm.

He and his wife also contribute to fundraisers

for the Springfield and West Springfield Boys & Girls clubs, Girls Inc. in Holyoke and the Springfield YMCA.

"Mainly, if it's for the kids, I have no problem," he said. "I'm always there for them, every time."

He serves on the marketing committee and website committee for the Chicopee Chamber of Commerce, lectures at Westover Job Corps and has trained some of its students, and has been a guest speaker at the Chicopee and Springfield Rotary clubs.

Giving back to the community is an expression of his personal philosophy, according to the U.S. Coast Guard veteran.

"The Lord gave me these talents and this is my way -- small way -- of saying 'thank you,' he said. "I get a lot of joy and pleasure out of giving. That's really what it is. Rarely do I ask for anything. I love giving."

Averill, who graduated from Chicopee High School and Springfield Technical Community College, said he started Chicopee Electronics to compensate for what he suspected might be a dead-end job at U.S. Airways.

"I didn't think I'd get promoted unless I was willing to relocate to other U.S. Air operations," he said. "I love Chicopee. I wanted to be around here. I just needed something else for fulfillment."

Starting the electrical contracting business gave him that fulfillment and opened up a way for him to give back to his community, he said.

Averill said he was determined, as a business owner, to make friends of his customers by focusing on service as his top priority.

"You want to go in there to help a person out, even if you have to refer them to someone else," he said. "Make a friend out of that customer. It will all come back to you, later on. I actually help customers over the phone, rather than make a service call."

Averill spreads his business philosophy whenever he can, acting as a willing mentor to other business people.

"The people that I taught that to, they still thank me today," he said. "It works. It really, truthfully works."