GARRIGUS: Voice has been part of radio scene since 1974

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22 R.L. Garrigus Day. That same year, he was admitted to the Oregon Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame. His studio is full of professional and volunteer awards and banners, including a Klondike Kate trophy from the Bend Fire Department.

As an expression of thanks for his volunteer efforts, Sisters Rodeo awarded Garrigus a commemorative buckle during the 70th annual Sisters Rodeo Parade.

Garrigus is part of Bend Radio Group, where he serves as News Director and Public Affairs Director at KSJJ, ESPN, KNGX and Power 94. His voice has been part of the Central Oregon radio scene since 1974. It is the most recognized voice in the territory, and one of the most familiar faces. With his trademark mustache, he stands out in many local television commercials. He is even the recorded message for Bend Fire.

The enthusiastic volunteer announces three other rodeo parades, Crooked River Roundup, Deschutes County Fair and Rodeo and Pioneer Frontier Days. He is the voice of the Bend and LaPine Christmas Parades and the Redmond Starlight Parade.

Garrigus has served as master of ceremonies at the annual Bend Rocky Mountain







Elk Foundation dinner for 28 years. Bend RMEF is an organization for which he expresses great respect and love. In John Day, he has been the master of ceremonies for RMEF for 22 years. He calls the Great Drake Park Duck Race and has voluntarily recorded public service information releases for the Ronald McDonald House of Bend.

The fifth-generation Oregonian was raised in Hillsboro. His great-grandfather guided settlers through the plains on the Oregon Trail and homesteaded in Buxton.

R.L. has done so many things for us, especially as our volunteer parade announcer for so many years.

— Tom Crowder

"He kept journals of those years, but they were lost when my grandmother sold the land. All we have left is the conch shell that was blown to call those pioneers in for dinner on the trail," he says wistfully.

With his family, Garrigus fished the Tualatin River and

hunted in Sweet Home and John Day. He and his brother, Tom, became accomplished trap-shooters, the competitive sport that energized him. His brother won a Silver Medal in the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City.

"I competed in international trap shooting for the Air Force and in the Pan Am Games, but I was never as skilled as my brother," Garrigus said. "I did win the Oregon Junior State Championships in 1969 and '70."

Garrigus used his G.I. Bill funds to get a degree in broadcasting, the career he sought since he was 15. After graduating, he worked in Lacey, Washington, for a year.

Ready for a change, friends who had moved to Central Oregon recommended Bend.

"The Bend population was about the same as Hillsboro's was when I left for the Air Force, at around 16,000 residents."

There were five radio stations when he arrived. Now, there are over 20. He has grown with, watched and relished the growth of the Central Oregon community. He still enjoys hunting and fishing.

Garrigus is married to an artist, Kathie.

"She is a great artist," Garrigus exclaimed.

Their daughter, Lacey, her husband, Tim, and

three grandchildren live in Medford.

Lacey grew up hiking the Pacific Northwest with her parents, from the Desolation Unit east of Bend to the Mount Rainier wilderness. When they have free time, this is still the preferred lifestyle of the radio wizard and the artist. Tumalo and Paulina Creeks are favorite local treks.

"When I die, however, my ashes are going to Desolation, where the wildflowers are beyond compare," he said.

Having a conversation with Garrigus is as natural as sitting next to a friend by a creek with a fishing pole. His brilliant blue eyes are offset by a mane of white-gray hair and that burly mustache. He dresses in the relaxed style recognized as signature Northwest casual. His gentle persona and interesting stories draw people into telling tales of their own. He is so good at interviewing that, by the time the interview is finished, his subjects probably don't remember what they said. Conversation flows that easily.

Garrigus is a platinum professional in the world of broadcasting, with the bonus of being a truly soft-spoken humanitarian.

After he finishes leading the parade, Garrigus and his crew are already planning to get him back to the announcer stand to finish the job he began 36 years ago. Then, he'll be at the rodeo grounds, where he is usually interviewing fans as they arrive for rodeo. Except, this time he will be watching the rodeo he has supported for most of his life.

When I die, however, my ashes are going to Desolation, where the wildflowers are beyond compare. — R.L. Garrigus

Sisters Rodeo will begin June 10 with Xtreme Bulls followed by four rodeo performances June 12-14. For tickets and information, call the ticket hotline at 541-549-0121 or 1-800-827-7522, or visit the ticket office at 220 W. Cascade Ave. in Sisters. For information visit www. sistersrodeo.com.

The Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire District is now accepting applications for its April Basic Firefighter Academy

As a Fire/EMS Volunteer with Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire District, you will have the opportunity to respond to a wide variety of emergency incidents including: structural and wildland fires, motor vehicle accidents, medical emergencies and others.

Additional activities throughout the year give members the opportunity to participate in events of a less serious nature. These include standby at events such as: the Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show, rodeos, parades, football games and Muscular Dystrophy Association – Fill the Boot drives. Community events include: Community Christmas dinner and Spirit of Christmas Tree, Easter egg hunt, Halloween haunted house and various fire prevention activities in local schools and social events for department members and their families.

To prepare our personnel to handle these situations, Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire District provides the highest level of training and educational opportunities as well as the latest in apparatus and equipment. The upcoming three-weekend, Basic Firefighting Academy is scheduled to begin on April 11 and will run the following two weekends (April 18-19 and April 24-25) with an initial orientation on the evening of Friday, April 10.

Qualifications required

- Applicant must live within the Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire District boundaries.
- Possess a current and valid driver's license and be insurable by the Fire District.
- Meet with an interview panel.
- Satisfactorily complete a background, DMV record check and drug test.
- Be at least 18 years of age.

To apply please fill out and return the Volunteer Application that is available at the main fire station located at 301 S. Elm Street in Sisters or online at http://sistersfire.com/volunteer-program-2/application/.

For more information on the volunteer program please select the following link http://sistersfire.com/volunteer-program-2/.

If you have questions regarding the volunteer program, please contact the District's Volunteer Coordinator, Captain Jeff Liming at 541-410-7494.



