

Oregon Teacher of the Year to be celebrated

BEND (AP) — A fourth-grade teacher in Central Oregon recently named the state's teacher of the year will be celebrated at a community event in Bend next week.

Heather Anderson, who teaches at a Bend elementary school, was named Oregon's 2016 Teacher of the Year.

KTVZ reports that Bend-La Pine Schools Superintendent Shay Mikalson will recognize Anderson at the Jan. 12

gathering.

Thanks to Anderson and her colleagues, Juniper Elementary ranks in the top 5 percent of high-poverty schools in Oregon when it comes to student achievement.

Anderson is a native Oregonian who began her career as a student-teacher in Mexico. As teacher of the year, she gets \$5,000 and will meet President Obama next spring in Washington D.C.

Debut novel set in Central Oregon

Writing is not as popular a New Year's resolution as exercising, but you can find would-be authors in all sorts of unexpected places. For them, the most important step is to practice, practice, practice.

"I think all aspiring writers cherish the tales of authors who burst into fame from obscurity, like JK Rowling. But a more common story is one of a long, slow journey," says Portland-based author Jim Stewart. Stewart spent decades building experience in writing jobs before his crime novel was picked up by Word Hermit Press.

In Stewart's debut novel, "Ochoco Reach," the action follows a Portland-based private eye from the moment he is approached by a lovely new client. She asks him to get to the bottom of suspicious happenings on her cattle ranch. The land is not far from Prineville, in the Ochoco mountains, where the smell of juniper and sage wrap the characters in place. The case

is intriguing, and Willimina even more so. Six days in, the case has turned up three dead bodies, an alphabet soup of secretive federal investigators, and Mike is thinking that Willy just might be The One.

When she is kidnapped by a corrupt DEA agent, the story heats up.

"Ochoco Reach" betrays the author's obvious affection for the forested mountains and high prairies of Central Oregon, and for the people who live there. The second installment of the Mike Underwood series is already underway, and the third is taking shape in Stewart's imagination.

A professional writer for over 25 years, Stewart has published dozens of stories and essays, technical manuals, and poetry. He lives in Portland with his wife, Laura. "Ochoco Reach" will be released in January by Word Hermit Press, available in paperback and on Kindle from Amazon.

New Oregon laws in effect for 2016

By Jonathan J. Cooper
Associated Press

PORTLAND (AP) — Oregon lawmakers enacted more than 600 bills in the 2015 legislation session. About half of them took effect January 1.

Here are a few of the most consequential new laws that will greet Oregonians in 2016:

Paid sick leave:

Workers will be entitled to at least a week of sick leave each year. If their employer has at least 10 workers, the leave must be paid. Smaller employers must provide unpaid leave. The bill was backed exclusively by Democrats, who said people shouldn't feel forced to choose between caring for their health and maintaining their paycheck. The bill's critics said it would make it harder for businesses to succeed and hire more workers.

"Ban the box":

Employers can no longer ask about criminal records on job applications. They can still ask during a job interview, but the bill's proponents hope people with convictions will get a chance to build a fuller picture of themselves

for a potential employer. They say it's extremely difficult for people with a criminal record to find work because they're automatically excluded at an early stage. Critics worry the measure will put businesses at risk of lawsuits.

Birth control:

Oregon becomes the easiest place in the nation to get birth control under two new laws that vastly expanded access to contraception. One measure allows pharmacists to write women a prescription for birth control after they complete a risk-screening assessment, eliminating the need to see a doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. Another new law requires insurance companies to cover up to 12 months of birth control at a time.

Gas pumps:

Oregon and New Jersey are the only states that don't let drivers fill up their tanks by themselves, but Oregon is easing up on its prohibition. Self-service pumping will now be allowed between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., but only in small counties — those will be less than 40,000 people. That covers a wide swatch of the state including almost all of eastern Oregon. The bill's


proponents say gas stations in sparsely populated areas can't afford to stay open all night, making it difficult for motorists to fuel up.

Voter registration:

Oregon becomes the first state to use driver's license records to automatically register people to vote. Starting Monday, the DMV will send records of eligible Oregonians who sign up for a new driver's license to state election officials. Registered voters who move will also have their voter information updated when they change their address on their driver's license.

Marijuana taxes:

Beginning January 4, the state will collect a 25-percent sales tax on marijuana products sold to people without medical cards. That means pot will become one of just three products with a tax applied at the point of sale. The others are hotel rooms and prepaid mobile phone credits. Oregon marijuana stores have been selling tax-free pot in limited quantities since October 1 due to a quirk in the voter-approved initiative that allowed adults to buy the drug from licensed stores.



GREAT SELECTION OF HATS!
Felt and Wool by Stetson
Pendleton Wool Crushables
Tin Cloth by Filson

DIXIE'S 541-549-6451
100 E. Cascade Ave.
Sisters, Oregon

AMERICA'S FAVORITE PAST-TIME

Sisters

LITTLE LEAGUE

BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL



Early Registration at SPRD • Free skills camp, a \$60 value!

JAN 2nd - FEB 29th

Register after Feb 29th, add \$10 - Final Deadline Mar 16

Community Support needed: Umpires, Coaches & Volunteers

Donations, Buy a Field Banner, Sponsor a Team & Scholarship Fund

Donation questions call: **Chris Grissom**

Sisters Little League
PO Box 951
Sisters, OR 97759

509-531-6427

General questions call: President Kyle Fischer 503-816-7576

★ WWW.SISTERSLITTLELEAGUE.ORG ★

Everyone Plays! Non-profit and completely volunteer.