

## Obituary

### Dr. Mark Francis

December 18, 1960 – June 11, 2018

Mark was born to Jack and Marilyn Francis in La Jolla, California, where his proximity to the ocean drew him into studying marine biology. He was certified in SCUBA at 14 and began experimenting with underwater photography. Mark studied at the Scripps Institute of Oceanography and went on to collaborate with *National Geographic*, German Television, and Sea World. He studied sharks, humpback whales, penguins, and elephant seals. Neptunic employed him to photograph the testing of prototypes of their chainmail shark suits.

Mark met Laurie, the love of his life, while in high school. They were married August 11, 1984. The birth of their first daughter, Ashlee, prompted the need for a less dangerous career path, so Mark followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather and became a dentist, graduating from Loma Linda University just in time for the birth of his second daughter, Kaylee. Immediately following graduation in 1992, he moved the family to Sisters to open his dental practice.

Mark loved the people of Central Oregon. It was often that he sacrificed time, money, and vacations to ensure all his patients, and the special-needs patients of Central Oregon, were looked after and could afford care. He also invested much of his free time into local churches and charities, as well as caring for firefighters during wildland fires.

Mark never sought out or felt worthy of positions



of leadership, but he had the character qualities — loyalty, humility, focus, gentleness, a desire to learn and teach, a willingness to listen, and a gentle wisdom — that often saw him elected to president or director of organizations he joined. He even was certified by the FBI to train people in forensic dental analysis. Mark's family says they always admired his ability to take the initiative and solve every need he saw, even if he had to learn a new skill to do it.

After Mark retired, he spent his days fly-fishing, teaching at OHSU and home-school co-ops, and making coffees for his family. His first grandchild, Kaenon, was born just before Mark was called home to his Lord and Savior.

He is also survived by his three brothers, a sister, and a multitude of nieces and nephews. He is deeply missed.

His family would like to thank everyone who shared their lives with Mark.

Join the family in honoring Mark on Saturday, June 22, 1 p.m. at Sisters Community Church.

Donations can be made to Sparrow Foundation, or your local Ronald McDonald House.

## Youth rodeo star headed to finals

By Jim Cornelius  
Editor in Chief

Adrienne Steffan will head to Huron, South Dakota, later this month to compete in the National Junior High Finals Rodeo. It is the third year that the Sisters eighth-grader has qualified for nationals, and she will compete in multiple events: Goat-tying; Breakaway Roping; Team Roping; and Ribbon Roping.

She's going as Oregon's reserve all-around champion and as champion in Breakaway Roping.

"I definitely have added events," Steffan told *The Nugget*.

Youth rodeo is an intense round of competitions that tax the logistical capacities and endurance of the families involved, since it requires a lot of travel and hours and hours of practice. But it's all worth it, Steffan says.

"It's just something that keeps you coming back for more," she told *The Nugget*.

The finals, which run June 23-27, up the intensity level.

"It is (intense) but it is so much fun," Steffan said. "You get to know the kids so much better; they get to be like family."

Steffan is taking two of her three horses to finals. Nineteen-year-old quarter horse Fancy used to be her brother's college rodeo horse.

"I kind of stole her off him," Steffan admitted. "I've taken her all three years to nationals."



Adrienne Steffan will compete in multiple events at the National Junior High Finals Rodeo in Huron, South Dakota.

PHOTO BY JIM CORNELIUS

For the past two years, she's also taken Summer, a 17-year-old palomino mare.

"I do two or three events off of her," Steffan said.

This rodeo season posed some challenges for the young rider. The late and intense winter storms that hit at the end of February and beginning of March delayed her training.

"I had maybe a week this year," she said. "I was panicking. After the first rodeo, I felt

much better."

She's got somewhat limited training time to prepare for the national rodeo, too, because Sisters gets out of school so late in the year.

"Everybody I rodeo with is not in school and I've got to wait all the way through June 17!" she said.

But there's no question that Adrienne Steffan will cowgirl up and get the job done in her third trip to the big show.

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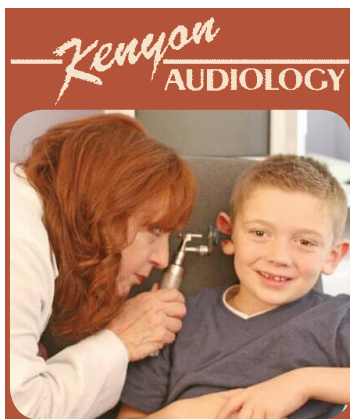
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