

Banquet

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Joseph Schmitz, Future First Citizen

The winner of the youth category was also surprised by his award, the announcement of which came at a recent student assembly.

“I never wanted to be recognized for what I do,” he said. “It’s just what I’m meant to do.”

The funny part was that Joseph Schmitz, 18, was already onstage at Silverton High School, emceeding the assembly with his usual panache. As student body president, he’s often behind the microphone, typically in a suit and tie. But this time he couldn’t figure out why his mom was in the crowd.

Principal Wade Lockett gave an excuse to take the mike, and Schmitz soon discovered he wasn’t just announcing the assembly – he was one of its subjects.

“I’ve never heard him be speechless before,” his teacher Heather Bashor quipped, adding later, “Joseph is the most positive person I know. His positivity empowers him with resilience and a can-do attitude towards every task he sets out to accomplish. He also has a level of empathy for others mature beyond his years.”

Throughout high school, Schmitz has accepted the spotlight, whether on stage in school plays or at sporting events as the Foxes’ mascot. He’s also been lead yearbook photographer and a member of choir, cross-country and debate teams.

He arrived at Silverton High four years ago, one of a two-person eighth-grade class from a private school. If he was overwhelmed, it didn’t show, because he found outlets for his abilities right away.

He was appointed ASB secretary and accidentally became the mascot when a teacher overheard him say he wouldn’t mind the job.

“I was volunt-told,” Schmitz said, smiling. Soon, he found he was perfect for the role. Inside the costume, he enjoyed being goofy and generally encouraging school spirit. Once, during Portland’s Starlight Parade with the marching band, he turned somersaults all the way down the road.

“The next day, I had bruises all over my shoulders ... I guess that was a mis-

take,” he said.

As ASB president, he gave up the mascot job, although he did play the crowd at one last football game. He’s turned his attention to bringing back official student council meetings and making ASB more relevant and representative.

Schmitz said he’s never been one “to just hang out with friends.” Outside of school, he works on his grandfather’s and uncle’s farm, planting, as well as harvesting berries and Christmas trees and doing other seasonal jobs.

Last summer, he spent two weeks in the Galapagos Islands, preserving wildlife and helping local communities with a group of other teens from around the world.

These days, his motto is, “Be extraordinary and change the world.”

Sue Roessler, Distinguished Service

Three days a week, local middle school students can attend a free after-school program that offers homework help, dinner and structured activities.

It’s called ASAP, and Sue Roessler is one of the reasons it’s here. She and four other local leaders started the program in 2012, and it has served many school kids who need academic help or just a safe place to be.

For this and other volunteer work, Roessler is this year’s Distinguished Service recipient.

She is a retired educator, married to a retired superintendent, who never lost her passion for serving kids.

In regard to the award, she quickly passed the praise along to ASAP’s other volunteers.

“I am only one of so many who have given to this program to make it what it is today,” she said.

“Our board is strong and continues to grow. We have over 50 volunteers who mentor or cook or volunteer in some way.”

Roessler’s career path prepared her for the role she’s taken with ASAP. Originally an elementary education graduate, she earned her master’s degree in special education and eventually secured her administrator’s license and became the director for special services at Willamette ESD. Her last job was as a grant and program coordinator for the Confederation of School Administrators.

Retirement in 2007 opened the door to more volunteering, which Roessler

first took up with SACA, writing policies and procedures. She also worked in the pantry every week and participated in community cleanups following a variety of events.

“I always knew that, once I was not working, I would look for ways to give back to this wonderful community. I chose two programs that were near and dear to my heart – youth and SACA,” she said.

Her work with ASAP began when several other board members asked her to help.

Everyone else was affiliated with a church, and the group wanted to make sure the program was not seen as faith-based.

Bringing an educator on board to help with mentoring, budgeting and grant writing was important. Roessler was thrilled to help.

“I feel that, in today’s world, it does take the village, and I wanted to be part of that,” she said.

“Silverton schools are great, but I know that some kids need more than their teachers can give them.”

Now Roessler is taking a temporary break from volunteering to enjoy some of her other pursuits: gardening, reading and traveling. She also hopes to spend more time with friends and family.

Her older sister, who directed nonprofits in 1980s, and her husband, who sat on boards and committees throughout his career, helped fuel her passion for volunteering, and she said she looks forward to returning to service in the future.

Bob Holowati, Lifetime Achievement Award

Bob Holowati hates talking about himself as much as – or maybe even more than – your typical volunteer.

Once he told friends at Silverton’s Kiwanis Club that he hates talking in front of crowds too, but that he would be willing to serve as president if they really, really needed him. They did, so he did, serving two terms that ended last October.

His Kiwanis service and other volunteer work attracted the attention of the First Citizen Committee and earned Holowati this year’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

“I’m humbled and I’m very grateful,” he said. “There are a lot of people who deserve this award ... I am just the next one in line.”

Holowati, 64, came to Silverton in 1989 to operate Silver Creek Deli with his soon-to-be wife, Jan. At the time, he was healing from an accident in which he’d broken both arms, after 12 years of employment with Golden West Manufactured Homes.

Then, after 12 years operating the deli in Silverton, the Holowatis moved on to other things. She took a job with Silverton Together, a local nonprofit, while he became a cook at O’Brien’s Café. In 2008, he landed the job he still holds at Ace Hardware/Hi-School Pharmacy.

Outside of work, Holowati serves food at the community’s free Wednesday night dinners and cleans up garbage after every Home Davenport Festival. For Kiwanis, he helps maintain a 2-mile stretch of Silverton Road, set up the Silverton Fine Arts Festival, and operate the club’s garage sale.

“If you haven’t seen him do any of that, then you must’ve seen him giving countless hours of volunteer support for Silverton Together,” said Kiwanis President Brian Mitchell.

In fact, his wife, Silverton Together’s program consultant, was originally his “No. 1 inspiration for volunteering,” Holowati said.

Last year, he made it his goal to walk 50 miles in Silverton’s Relay for Life. Despite health challenges in the months leading up to the event, he logged 42 miles before his blistered and cramped feet made him quit, raising \$3,300 for cancer research.

“About 30 laps in, my Marine Corps training kicked in,” he recalled.

Next Holowati plans to bike from Astoria to the Oregon/California border, health allowing.

Les Schwab, Business of the Year

“I could make this as simple as saying that it is criminal that Les Schwab has never been recognized for this award,” said Silverton Mayor Kyle Palmer. “They are active in almost every event as a sponsor or donor of supplies. They have long donated money to the SHS athletic fund based on points scored at basketball games.”

They are longtime sponsors of the Homer Davenport Festival and Strawberry Festival. There are countless fundraisers in their parking lot selling burgers that they donate in part. In short, if some event needs help, they will provide it.”

Judy’s Party accepting grant fund requests

Christena Brooks
Special to Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Silverton-area organizations can now ask for grant funds from Judy’s Party 2017.

Interested groups should submit their requests on letterhead, describe their organization, and explain how the desired funds would be spent. Organizers are asking for specific information on would be served by the funds.

The deadline the submit letters is

The deadline for interested groups to submit letters is Jan. 31.

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They can be mailed or dropped off at the Silverton Chamber of Commerce, at 426 S. Water Street.

Judy’s Party honors Judy Schmidt, a city councilor and devoted local volunteer who died suddenly in 2014 of Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease.

Fest

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infrastructure improvements: 159 new festival tables imported from Germany; four new people movers (carriages) built in cooperation with Chemeketa Community College and area businesses; a

new stick-framed storage shed completed; purchase of a new Hyster (forklift) for set-up and tear-down of festival structures and adornments.

The board also elected officers for the 2018 Festival year: President Chris Bischoff; First Vice President Bill Bischoff; Second Vice President Peter Schmidt; Treasurer Kyle Beyer; Secretary Monica Bochsler.

Appeal Tribune

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