



# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

142nd YEAR, No. 139

MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 2015

ONE DOLLAR

## Burkharts embody Ford Award spirit



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

The room stands in applause as Dianne and Carl Burkhart walk up to accept the Richard Ford Distinguished Service Award for Warrenton.

By EDWARD STRATTON  
The Daily Astorian

**WARRENTON** — Within a months after a motorcycle accident over the summer, Carl and Dianne Burkhart still found it in themselves to come back and serve a free Thanksgiving dinner at the Warrenton Community Center, said Warrenton Mayor Mark Kujala.

"It's really difficult to sum up the impact this couple has had on the Warrenton community," said Kujala, who presented the Burkharts with the Richard Ford Distinguished Service Award Saturday night at the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce's annual banquet.

The award is named in honor of the late Ford, who worked for the city of Warrenton as the building inspector, fire chief and as a volunteer for much of his free time. The Burkharts, said Kujala, have been involved in countless organizations and nonprofits, including Thankful Hearts since 2011, each year providing between 225 and 325 free Thanksgiving meals with the help of other volunteers at the community center and delivered

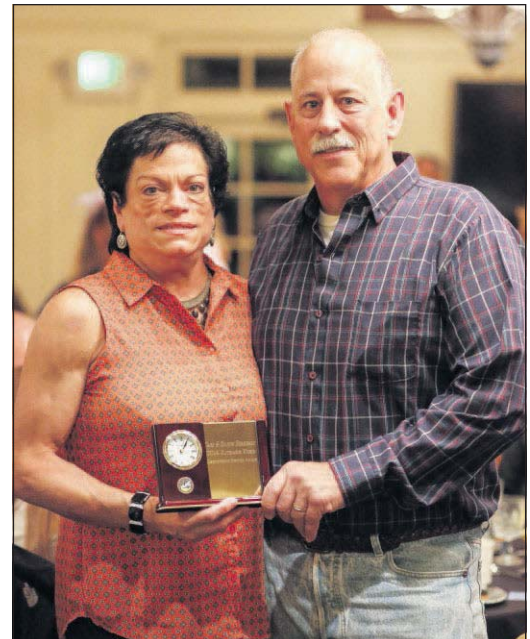
to people's doorsteps.

"We funded it ourselves the first year, and now we take donations," said Dianne Burkhart of Thankful Hearts, which she learned about from a former classmate doing a similar event in Ilwaco, Wash., and organized with Lisa and Vern Lamping and Kellie Clark. "It's funded itself from there on."

After they got in an accident in July during a motorcycle tour, she was in a wheelchair for four months and had just started walking in November, she said.

"My dad, John T. Davis Jr. passed away unexpectedly, Nov. 1 and all I had to do is ask myself 'What would he want us to do,' and we immediately knew he'd want us to continue with it, even under the circumstances," said Burkhart, who with Carl still made it to last year's event.

An employee of TLC Credit Union for the past 35 years before retiring in November, Dianne Burkhart is a native of Warrenton. Kujala said that in her role, she helped secure funding for local businesses and donations on behalf of TLC.



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Dianne and Carl Burkhart hold the Richard Ford Distinguished Service Award for Warrenton.

See BURKHARTS, Page 10A



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

George Award winner David Reid accepts the George Award from Kelsey Balensifer during the banquet and awards ceremony for the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce at the Astoria Golf & County Club.

## Chamber honors its team players

Hauke and Reid win George Awards

By EDWARD STRATTON  
The Daily Astorian

**WARRENTON** — "This group is all about team and all about volunteerism," former Mayor Willis Van Dusen said to the 1980s-bedecked crowd gathered Saturday night at the Astoria Golf & Country Club for the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce's annual banquet.

At the chamber banquet, where it gathers its constituents and honors the

most prolific volunteers each year from Astoria and Warrenton, Van Dusen and local Aflac proprietor David Reid took home the 2014 installment of Astoria's equivalent of citizen of the year.

The George Award is named after the saying "let George do it," shorthand for the reliable, unselfish person who is always ready and willing to help. Van Dusen became just the second person to win the Award — Chamber Executive Skip Hauke is the other — getting his first in 2004.

**Astoria's cheerleader**

"Watching Willis be mayor was extraordinary," said State Sen. Betsy John-

son, presenting Van Dusen the award and at times tearing up.

She touched on the many partnerships and projects that have defined Van Dusen's legacy, including the Astoria Sports Complex; the Astoria Riverwalk and Riverfront Trolley; the Garden of Surging Waves; the relationship with the U.S. Coast Guard; the 17th Street Pier; and collaborations between Columbia Memorial Hospital and Oregon Health and Sciences University, to name a few.

"The common thread has been Willis behind the scenes, not only connecting

See CHAMBER, Page 10A

## Astoria man is 'Thunderstruck'

Portland's fledgling Arena Football League team has superfan

The Seattle Seahawks are on another possible Super Bowl run. The University of Oregon Ducks are in the inaugural college football playoff national championship.

So what did Jim Osborn, an Astoria papermaker who loves football, post on his Facebook page last week? A boast that he had received his season tickets to the Portland Thunder and that there were only 85 days until the start of the Arena Football League season.

"It's like they're playing in your lap," he said of the fast pace and immediacy of watching the Thunder at the Moda Center. "It's right there."

Osborn has been a fan of



arena football since he first watched a game on television during the league's inaugural season back in 1987. He had season tickets to the Portland

Forest Dragons, the league's first incarnation in Portland, which played from 1997 to 1999 before moving to Oklahoma City.

When the Thunder debuted last year, he snapped up season tickets. "I'm as close to the front row as I can get in the end zone," he said.

Last summer, Osborn applied for and was selected by the league for a new fan advisory council, an outreach effort that enables fans to suggest ideas and share opinions with league brass.

Initial discussions, Osborn said, have centered around organizing fan clubs.

See OSBORN, Page 10A



Jim Osborn and his grandson, Christian, are big fans of the Portland Thunder.

Submitted photo

