

# Seaside firefighters, medical responders earn honors

## Banquet lauds volunteers, staff

By KATHERINE LACAZE  
EO Media Group

SEASIDE — The camaraderie enjoyed by the Seaside Fire and Rescue personnel was on display earlier this month, when staff, volunteers and many of their friends and family members gathered at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center for the department's annual awards banquet and dinner.

The event recognizes the department's firefighters and emergency service providers and the time they devoted to training and responding to calls during 2015.

"We do so much for the city of Seaside, but also the surrounding community," said Lt. Jeramy Houston, chairman of the banquet committee. "We've grown so far beyond just firefighting."

In his remarks, Mayor Don Larson also highlighted the important role played by family and friends, who are committed to supporting and encouraging the volunteers.

"You're all vital to make this system work," he said.

Chief Joey Daniels — who was honored with the fire officer of the year award — agreed with Larson's sentiment.

"Without them, we wouldn't have the volunteer department we have," he added.

The highlight of the event was a number of awards distributed to acknowledge the accomplishments, small and large, achieved by department personnel throughout the year.

Capt. Gordon Houston and Division Chief David Rankin presented special recognition



Division Chief David Rankin and Capt. Gordon Houston distribute special recognition awards at the Seaside Volunteer Fire and Rescue awards banquet and ceremony at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.

awards, a set of humorous, light-hearted recognitions such as "The Tuckered Bear Award," "The Apparatus Destruction Award" and the "Got To Go Award." The awards were presented along with gag gifts and amusing stories illustrating the sense of companionship fostered within the department.

### Top service

The department holds drills for about two to three hours each Wednesday night. Considering all volunteers cannot make it to each drill, Genessee Dennis, 2015 president of the Seaside Fire and Rescue Association, estimated the department's 38 volunteers still contributed nearly 2,000 cumulative



Doug Barker is retiring as a volunteer firefighter for Seaside Volunteer Fire and Rescue after serving 38 years.

training hours. The department also responded to more than 1,000 calls throughout the year; a majority of which for emergency medical services,

followed by false calls, motor vehicle accidents, fires, public assistance incidents and hazardous conditions.

"There is a lot of time

we will invest to serve our community," Dennis said.

Those with the best attendance at drills received service awards. They included Evan Edwards, Matt Keefer, Shane Mergel, Roy Dague and Katie Bulletset, who attended 51 of 52 drills.

The top five call responders also received service awards. With 521 calls, Edwards was the top responder, followed by Mergel, Lisa Talamantez, Colin Houston and Noble Hutchinson.

"There are so many people who offer so much to our agency," Daniels said.

Dennis was recognized as the EMS provider of the year and Bulletset received firefighter of the year. The

officers noted Dennis' growth as an emergency medical technician and his willingness to show up, even for late-night calls. Bulletset not only was a dedicated responder, but she also offers to help others and with tasks around the facility, like painting.

Fire officer of the year, presented by Dennis, went to Daniels. During the selection process, the firefighters made nominations and discussed the options. One of the most important aspects of being a leader, they determined, is the "ability to provide inspiration" and "translate vision into reality," Dennis said.

"Once you adopt this attitude, people will follow suit," he said.

### Keeping the department running

The department, which has three full-time staff members and a part-time paid position, depends on volunteers, like many other departments in Clatsop County.

During the ceremony, Daniels recognized volunteers who are retiring this year, noting the department is losing "a lot of years of experience." Among those retiring are volunteers Lt. David Oxley, Richard Nofield, Susan Oxley and Doug Barker.

Barker, who volunteered for 38 years, said it has been "a privilege and an honor" to serve the community as a volunteer firefighter.

"Really, at the bottom, it's been a whole hell of a lot of fun," he said. "So thank you for 38 years of fun."

An empty table at the banquet, with a single place setting, served as a reminder of Glenn Bard, a former volunteer who died in 2012, as well as others gone since the department was established in 1904.



An empty table at the Seaside Volunteer Fire and Rescue awards banquet served as a reminder of Glenn Bard, a former volunteer who died in 2012, as well as others gone since the department was established in 1904.



Capt. Gordon Houston gives a special recognition award to Mark Burke at the Seaside Volunteer Fire and Rescue awards banquet Jan. 9 at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.



Seaside Volunteer Fire and Rescue held its annual awards banquet at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center. The ceremony recognized the many accomplishments of department personnel throughout 2015.

## Cemetery: Repair could cost \$250,000

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gave way. Tons of earth, turf and pavement collapsed into a small ravine that runs between the cemetery and the neighboring private property.

Though the damage looks dramatic, as of Tuesday, the landslide had only unearthed one casket, and left one other partially exposed. Both of the affected caskets were interred in the 1960s. Cemetery caretakers do not believe that either person still has close relatives in the area.

### Protecting vulnerable graves

Hylton said the casket that was uprooted by the slide will be reinterred at a different site in the cemetery, and board members are making arrangements to store vulnerable headstones until the ground is stabilized.

There are also about five more gravesites very near the

edge of the slide that could potentially be affected if the ground moves again. The board members are seeking recommendations from a geologist and other experts about how to proceed. They planned to meet to discuss their options on Jan. 26, Hylton said.

"(The geologist) may tell us it's gonna get worse. If it's gonna get worse, we may have to be proactive," Hylton said.

### A "proactive" response

Hylton said board members began working to address the situation as soon as they found out about the landslide Friday.

"Within an hour, we met up here and saw what was going on. We realized we had a problem and right off the bat, we said, 'Well, we better be proactive,'" Hylton said. "We took it from there."

Hylton and two others quickly called a tow-truck driver, then slogged into the

knee-deep mud at the foot of the slide to help the driver lift the unearthed casket back to solid ground. That casket is now "under lock and key," Hylton said. Between Friday and Monday, the board members also fielded numerous calls from concerned residents, tried to track down the decedents' family members, alerted state and local authorities, closed off the most unstable section of the graveyard, consulted with a state geologist, and dealt with TV news crews.

### Planning for a costly repair

Now comes the truly hard part — the caretakers must figure out how to pay for a potentially very expensive stabilization project with a strictly regulated budget that isn't even big enough to cover the basic costs of running the cemetery.

"This could be a quarter million dollars. What are we

gonna do? We're not gonna just fill it with jetty rock," Hylton said, explaining that it could take advanced feats of engineering to keep the whole slope from sliding again.

"How are you gonna get down there and do it? You're not gonna just come up here and dump a bunch of dirt and fill the hole."

Hylton said he has contacted the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in hopes that there is some type of emergency funding available for a project like this. He and the other board members are also seeking guidance from the state Funeral and Cemetery Board.

Hylton said he wanted to assure family members of the Ilwaco Cemetery decedents that "everything is being done properly," and that work will commence as soon as they know how to proceed.

"We do care," Hylton said. "We care very deeply."

## Learn Excel, business development, marketing

The Daily Astorian

Clatsop Economic Development Resources has several workshops for small business owners coming in February at Clatsop Community College.

Microsoft Excel: Level 1 is 8:30 a.m. at the college's South County Campus, 1455 N. Roosevelt Drive in Seaside, and Excel: Level 2 is 5:30 p.m. in Towler Hall Room 105 on the college's main campus, 1651 Lexington Ave. in Astoria. There will be two more Excel: Level 2 classes Feb. 23.

From noon to 3 p.m. Feb. 3, CEDR's Lunch and Learn workshop series, in Columbia Hall Room 219 on the main campus, covers how business owners can automate portions of their online marketing.

Ready, Set, Start Your Business teaches budding entrepreneurs how to get started from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Feb. 10 at the South County Campus.

At Transitions in Life and Business, several presenters will provide advice on how to create a smooth business succession plan. Both sessions are Feb. 22. The first is from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. in Columbia Hall Room 219 on the main campus. The second is from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce Community Room, 207 N. Spruce St.

All classes have preregistration. For more information or to register for class online, visit [www.clatsopcc.edu](http://www.clatsopcc.edu). For questions or help in registering, call 503-338-2402 or email [sbdc@clatsopcc.edu](mailto:sbdc@clatsopcc.edu)

## Jessie's: 'Most of us haven't had money coming in for five months or more'

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Alber told Cutting he would receive the rest of the money Alber owed him by today.

Malchow and other fishermen said they were told they would eventually receive the full amount they were owed, but that it will come days after it was due.

That was the same thing the owners of Jessie's told fishermen last year. However, Malchow said, in that case, the money took weeks to materialize.

The delay in payment comes as a particularly hard blow after domoic acid levels delayed the crabbing season well past its normal Dec. 1

start date. The commercial crab fishing season launched more than a month after that date on Jan. 4. State health and fisheries agencies also cut short the 2015 season last spring.

"Most of us haven't had money coming in for five months or more," Malchow said.

Cutting echoed Malchow's sentiments, adding that she and her husband employ 11 people, all of whom rely on the now further-delayed income.

It hit the Cuttings particularly hard as well.

"We built a new boat, and we have no savings," Kim said.

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