

## 'Interacting outdoors helps us appreciate each other and Oregon'

'FRIENDS IN THE OUTDOORS'  
by Rosalie Dillon, age 14



With the theme "My Community Makes Me Better," youths from around Oregon submitted photos this winter to the 2015 Oregon Youth Photo Contest, and Rosie Dillon of Hood River is one of the winners.

Rosie, a ninth grader at Hood River Valley High School, is the daughter of Dr. Kristen Dillon and Mayor Paul Blackburn of Hood River. The contest helped mark Oregon Public Health Week in April, and was sponsored by Northwest Health Foundation and the Oregon Public Health Division.

View all the photos at [www.northwesthealth.org](http://www.northwesthealth.org).

Rosie said, "I kind of take pictures whenever I see something I think would be good or for Instagram, so usually when I'm with friends at the water."

"I was honored," she said. "I looked at the other photos and they were pretty good."

Rosie wrote of her contribution, "I took this photo when my friends and I were hiking at Wahtum Lake last summer. When we do things in nature, we create community by spending time together. Interacting while outdoors helps us ap-

preciate each other and Oregon." (While the photo has a certain precipitous quality, Rosie explained that because of cropping, the photo makes it look like she was higher than she was.)



Rosie Dillon

A total of 95 entries were received, according to the foundation. The 20 finalists were picked by a panel of judges with backgrounds in art, health equity and public health. The three winners were picked from among the finalists by a panel of youth judges.

## For her 15th birthday, this teen gives to others

By SUSAN FROST  
Providence Hood River

Most 15-year-old teenage girls have a long list of birthday wishes; maybe the latest cell phone or trendy clothing item. That is not the case for McKenna West. On her 15th birthday this year, West wanted only one thing: to help ease the pain for patients undergoing chemotherapy.

West has been there. Not as a patient, but as the daughter of a mother battling breast cancer. She saw it all. She saw her mother suffer and fight, but ultimately succumb to the disease.

On her birthday this year, West brought four baskets of goodies to the Providence Hood River infusion center.

"I got the idea right before Christmas last year," said West. "I was looking on Pinterest at cool baskets of items that might help people feel more comfortable when they are sitting in an infusion center. I put healthy snacks, personal care items

that you might find in a spa and a little note from me. My hope is the patients will feel some relief."

Most kids want to receive gifts on their birthday, but this bright-eyed teen wanted the gift of what it feels like to share love and hope. "I know my Mom is proud of me," said West. "We used to always do things together that benefitted others, like choosing names off a giving tree at the holidays and buying gifts for families in need."

West had many infusion nurses, pharmacy techs and other caregivers in tears as she told them about why she was bringing in these baskets of hope. "McKenna is such an inspiration," said Mark Stanfield, pharmacist. "Even with her busy life at school, playing three sports and being part of a large family, McKenna wanted to remember her Mom and truly give to others. She provided special inspiration to four patients today and turned much of her own pain into hope for others."



Submitted photo

MCKENNA WEST with one of the care baskets she created for infusion patients at Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital.



Photos by Patrick Mulvihill

### WORKING IT

HRVHS juniors Jonathan Bolanos and Edgar Alvarez shovel grass Wednesday, cleaning up a pathway at the Seven Oaks Bed and Breakfast on Barker Road in Hood River for the HRVHS Summit Career Center's Community Work Day on April 29. HRVHS junior Uvaldo Bolanos weeds the main garden at Seven Oaks. HRVHS students spread out around the county to help at businesses and private homes, with all "salaries" going to local non-profits.

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