

UMATILLA

Simmons, Starner share city's top citizen award

Banquet recognizes police, school, business, civic leaders

By SEAN HART
EO Media Group

The Umatilla Chamber of Commerce board couldn't pick just one, so at Saturday night's Distinguished Citizen Award Banquet two people were honored as citizens of the year.

Master of ceremonies and past chamber president Roak TenEyck said both Judy Simmons and Jane Starner deserved recognition for going "above and beyond" for the community.

TenEyck said Simmons "worked tirelessly" on city projects, at the city museum and for Umatilla Landing Days. He said she serves on the city code improvement board and was instrumental in developing the community newsletter.

Starner, a retired Clara Brownell Middle School teacher who taught in Umatilla for 26 years, is a Kiwanis member, helps with a variety of community projects and served on the Umatilla library board for several years, TenEyck said.

Joe Franell, the man who mediated negotiations between the city and port in a zoning dispute this year, was given the George Alan Curtis Creative Spirit Award.

TenEyck said the East-



EO Media Group photo by Sean Hart

The Umatilla Chamber of Commerce, Umatilla Police Department and Umatilla School District recognized the efforts of community members at the Distinguished Citizen Award Banquet Saturday. Back row, from left, George Alan Curtis Creative Spirit Award winner Joe Franell, UPD Employee of the Year Steve Vandever, Business of the Year G&J Dairy Freeze owner Graig Gunsolley; front row, from left, Bridge Builders Award winner Tina Ridings, Volunteer of the Year Elaine Ramos and Bridge Builders Award winner Corinne Funderburk.

ern Oregon Telecom general manager demonstrated "industrious commitment, extraordinary vision, creative skills and tireless effort" to enhance Umatilla's future in that effort.

G&J Dairy Freeze owner Graig Gunsolley was awarded Business of the Year for partnering with the Umatilla Public Library to provide ice cream for children in the summer reading program and teen night.

McNary Heights Elemen-

tary School Vice Principal Rick Cotterell said the Garrett family has "become synonymous with youth sports" in Umatilla, and honored them as the district's Volunteers of the Year.

Corinne Funderburk and Josh Ego won Bridge Builders Awards for creating connections between the school and community.

Umatilla police Chief Darla Huxel said all members of the department vote for the Employee of the

Year. Officer Steve Vandever, a firearms instructor, field training officer, deputy medical investigator and volunteer assistant fire chief, earned the most and this year's honor.

Huxel honored Rich Estes as Reserve Officer of the Year and Elaine Ramos was chosen as the department's Volunteer of the Year. Huxel said the Bordon family, who own Java Junkies, earned the Spirit of Community Award.

Bunney resigns, Jenkins promoted to chief deputy DA

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Umatilla County's former No. 2 prosecutor jumped into private practice and a stalwart in the district attorney's office is his successor.

Richard Bunney started his career as a prosecutor with the office in 2007. Umatilla County District Attorney Dan Primus said Friday was Bunney's last day after deciding to enter private practice. Bunney did not return messages seeking comment.



Bunney

Primus said Bunney started off handling one of the most difficult case loads in the office — sex crimes. In recent years he moved onto handling major cases, including manslaughter and murder. Bunney headed up the case in the murder of Joyce Key of Umapine in 2013. Primus said Bunney's work helped send 21-year-old Matthew Raymond Hermann to prison for 40 years.

Bunney was a dedicated and tough-minded attorney, Primus said, and the two were close friends who grew up together. Primus said Bunney was the person in the office he would toss ideas against. In that sense, he said, Bunney



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Deputy district attorney Jaclyn Jenkins will take over as the number two prosecutor for the Umatilla County District Attorney's Office.

would be difficult to replace. But, Primus said, Jaclyn Jenkins earned the chief deputy spot. Jenkins, who was hired in 2009, took on Primus' Measure 11 cases when he became district attorney, he said, and last year was his co-counsel during the murder trial of George Craigen that ended in a jury verdict of guilty. That was her first murder trial, Primus said, and the verdict came on her fifth anniversary with the office.

This year she lead the way against members of a Pendleton hate gang, the

United Aryan Empire. Jenkins is a fine legal researcher, Primus said, and he credited her with the novel approach of charging the gang members with racketeering, which could add years to sentences. Pendleton police Chief Stuart Roberts in a rare move recently sent Umatilla County Commissioners a letter praising Jenkins for her help with the case.

Bunney's departure means the district attorney's office has a vacancy. He is third prosecutor to leave since November 2013.

BRIEFLY

Eastern Oregon Forum to continue climate change talk

PENDLETON — Climate change will once again be the topic of discussion at Tuesday's Eastern Oregon Forum, 7 p.m. at Blue Mountain Community College, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., in Pendleton. During the Feb. 10 forum, a panel of experts examined how recent climate trends might impact farms and forests throughout the mid-Columbia Basin. On Tuesday, panelists will expand upon those impacts as they relate to water resources, fish, wildlife and public health.

Jeff Blackwood, member of the Umatilla County Climate Change Focus Group, will facilitate the presentations and Q-and-A session. Speakers will include Kate Day, hydrologist with the U.S. Forest Service; Mark Kirsch, district wildlife biologist for the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife; Bill Duke, district fish biologist for ODFW; and Brendon

Haggerty, epidemiologist for the Oregon Health Authority Climate and Health Program.

The forum will be held in the BMCC Science & Technology Building, room ST-200. Tickets are \$6 at the door, and students are admitted for free.

The Eastern Oregon Forum is a collaborative effort among leaders from Blue Mountain Community College, InterMountain Education Service District, the *East Oregonian*, American Association of University Women and Harriet Isom, former United States ambassador.

For more information, call Karen Parker at 541-966-3177.

State police catch two following reports of gunshots

HERMISTON — Reports of gunfire Friday night outside Hermiston led Oregon State Police to arrest two men, including one connected to a 2011 case of manslaughter. Umatilla County jail and circuit court records show

Oregon State Police out of Hermiston arrested Kevin Ricardo Melendez, 20, of Hermiston, and Geovanni Sanchez, 21, of Umatilla, for interfering with a peace officer. They each pleaded not guilty to the charge Monday in circuit court and are in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, in lieu of \$5,000 bail. Sanchez has his next hearing March 23 and Melendez on March 30.

State police did not immediately return a phone call Monday. Other agencies reported assisting state police after a woman at 10:05 p.m. Friday told 9-1-1 someone shot at her boyfriend at Sagebrush Road Baggett Lane, Hermiston. There were no additional reports of anyone getting shot.

Melendez faced the charge of manslaughter in connection to the beating death of Mario Calvillo Ramirez, 27, of Irrigon.

Ramirez died of blunt force trauma to the head the night of Oct. 18, 2011, outside the Crossroads Truck Stop, 2020 Highway 730, Umatilla. The state dismissed the charge and sent the case to juvenile court.

Adams Day seeks crafters, vendors

ADAMS — Crafters and vendors are needed for Adams Day.

The all-day event, which is Saturday, April 18, celebrates the opening of the Triangle Little League. It includes a pancake breakfast, parade, yard sales throughout the town and vendors in the park. Spaces cost \$5 each. They are available along the walkway in the park. Limited indoor space is available by request.

For more information or to reserve a space, call Lisa at 541-310-0134.

PUBLIC SAFETY LOG

FRIDAY

- A Pendleton resident at 7:10 a.m. reported a neighbor hacked into his phone and stole account information and hacked into a PayPal account and stole money.
- A Pendleton renter asked for police at 9:15 a.m. because a tree trimmer was on the roof of her residence. She reported the landlord did not order the service, but the trimmer said a neighbor did. She asked for an officer to respond.
- A woman at 9:52 a.m. told Pendleton police she received strange texts and pictures of guns from an unknown source and asked an officer to contact her at her job.
- An elderly woman at about 11 a.m. drove a car into the brick facade of the Rivoli Theatre, 355 S. Main St., Pendleton. A caller said she seemed confused. Pendleton police and ambulance responded. She refused a trip to the hospital.
- A Pendleton man upset with a satellite TV bill threatened to kill himself. An employee of the company called Pendleton police at 11:11 a.m. and reported the incident so police could conduct a welfare check. The customer planned to kill himself and have his family sue the company, the employee said, and then the customer stated "Let the games begin," a line from the popular "The Hunger Games" books and movies, and disconnected the call.
- An employee of Pendleton Wal-mart, 2203 S.W. Court Ave., at 1 p.m. asked Pendleton police if he should hand over or throw away several credit cards and identification cards have been found at the store over the last several months.
- A Milton-Freewater man at 1:06 p.m. reported the theft of 125 treated wooden posts from his property at Yellow Jacket and Winesap roads. The posts are worth about \$5 each, he said.
- A 79-year-old Milton-Freewater man came to a Walla Walla hospital at about 2 p.m. after suffering a dog bite. Hospital staff told the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office the man's dog bit him when he tried to break up a fight between the dog and a coyote.
- A Pendleton man at 5:59 p.m. told Oregon State Police he shipped a gun from the Pendleton Post Office on Feb. 6 to Canada, but the gun never arrived to the destination. He said the post office did not place a tracking number on the gun and he reported it stolen.
- A Pendleton caller at 9:08 p.m. reported someone threw eggs on the top of their car on Southwest 15th Street and Frazer Avenue and there were eggs all over the roadway.

SATURDAY

- Four juveniles — two males and two females — caused a ruckus at about 12:30 a.m. at the Hampton Inn, 101 S.W. Nye Ave., Pendleton. A hotel employee told police she asked the four to stop running inside the building. She said the teens and their parents claimed they were 18, so she could not tell them what to do.
- Pendleton police Chief Stuart Roberts said officers responded and talked to the teens, "and there were no further issues with noise."
- A citizen at 1:13 a.m. flagged down a Pendleton officer to report an assault at Crabby's Underground Saloon & Dance Hall, 220 S.W. First St., Pendleton.
- A caller at 2:10 a.m. reported hearing a male hit and yell at a female in a room at the Travelers Inn, 310 S.E. Dorion Ave., Pendleton.
- A male and two females at about 3:20 a.m. fought in the parking lot of Motel 6, 325 S.E. Nye Ave., Pendleton. Police took a report.
- A Pendleton man at 7:29 a.m. reported someone at about 3 a.m. threw eggs at his son's pickup on Northwest 10th Street.
- Umatilla police a little after 2 p.m. took a report of someone possibly stealing medical prescription papers to write prescriptions. The case is under investigation.
- A woman at 5:45 p.m. reported she told teenagers to not walk in the middle of West Eighth Road, Irrigon, and they yelled at her and threw items at her car.
- A male shortly before 7 p.m. called Quiznos, 204 S.W. 20th St., Pendleton, and claimed someone kidnapped his child two days ago, his wife has leukemia and police will not take him seriously. The strange report prompted a restaurant employee to call police and ask for extra patrol until the restaurant closed.
- An Irrigon resident at 11:42 p.m. asked for a Morrow County sheriff's deputy to quiet down neighbors on Depot Lane who for the last three nights played loud music and revved a vehicle's engine.

SUNDAY

- A Hermiston-area woman at 3:52 p.m. reported her boyfriend assaulted her and pushed her down while her children were present. She said he fled the residences on Bensen Road.
- A man at 1:50 p.m. told the Morrow County Sheriff's Office his wife was in Utah and she called and said her parents assaulted her. The sheriff's office referred the call to an outside agency.
- A shirtless boy at about 3 p.m. used two permanent markers to draw on city park equipment at Pioneer Park, 400 N.W. Despain Ave., Pendleton. A caller reported the child wore jeans and a backwards hat and cursed and said "very inappropriate things to the other children." The caller also said she took the pens from the boy, but there was a lot of graffiti.
- A caller at 3:52 p.m. reported what looked like a cougar drinking from the Umatilla River near the Pendleton Elk's Lodge, 288 S.E. Third St.
- A driver of a white Lexus with Washington plates at about 4:40 p.m. stepped out of the car and took a few snorts of whiskey while parked at a fuel pump at the Shell station at 4412 Westgate Drive, Pendleton. A caller reported the incident and said there was a child in the back seat of the car.

ARRESTS, CITATIONS

Friday

- Reports of an armed man led Pendleton police to make an arrest. A caller at 12:32 p.m. told emergency dispatchers a male pulled a gun on him at Southwest 27th Street and Hailey Avenue, Pendleton. Then the armed male walked off with a female. A moment later a female called and reported a male and female walked on Hailey Avenue by the Burger King restaurant and pointed a gun at passing cars.
- Pendleton police Chief Stuart Roberts reported Dylan Howell, 22, of Pendleton, pointed an airsoft gun at vehicles and then tried to hide it in bushes near the burger restaurant. Officers arrested Howell for menacing.
- An Oregon State Police trooper arrested two Pendleton residents following a traffic stop.
- Trooper Mario Arroyo stopped a blue four-door Nissan at 2:22 p.m. for a traffic violation near Echo on the westbound side of Interstate 84 at about milepost 195. The trooper contacted the driver and smelled marijuana coming from the inside of the car.
- A search revealed the driver, Jasmine Brooke VanEtta, 20, of Pendleton, was in possession of methamphetamine, according to state police. Arroyo arrested VanEtta for possession and delivery of meth.
- The trooper also arrested a passenger Cody Roy Hatley, 25, of Pendleton, for a parole violation, providing false information to police and felon in possession of a weapon.
- VanEtta and Hatley are in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton.
- Umatilla tribal police arrested Morris Roy Sam, 52, of Pendleton, for disorderly conduct, public intoxication and criminal activity in drugs.

Saturday

- Oregon State Police arrested Sylvia Schaeffer, 50, of Touchet, Washington, for driving under the influence of intoxicants. OSP also cited her for refusing to take an intoxication level test.
- Milton-Freewater police arrested Joshua John Anderson, 30, of Milton-Freewater, on a city warrant and new charges of identify theft, second-degree forgery and third-degree theft.
- Stanfield police arrested Patrick Scott Mingura, 21, no address provided, for military desertion.
- Sunday
- Umatilla police arrested Michael Jay Martinez, 34, no address provided, for DUI.

AIR QUALITY

Air quality and burn day information: www.pendleton.or.us/public-works/environmental. Air Quality Index: www.deq.state.or.us/aqi. Burn Line: 541-966-0327.

When they say "Here Comes The Sun!!" and you hear "You've Gained A Ton!"

Sound Advantage Hearing Aid Center
541-567-4063
405 N. 1st St., Suite #107, Hermiston
541-215-1888
246 SW Dorion, Pendleton

Ric Jones, BC-HIS Verna Taylor, HAS

BABYSITTING BASICS 101
For babysitters ages 10-15. Learn childcare techniques, children's developmental ages and what to expect, basic first aid and infant and child CPR. Next class:
Saturday, March 14 9:00am-3:00pm
GSMC Conference Room \$30, includes lunch & all class materials. Must pre-register & pre-pay.

HEALTHY SATURDAYS
An excellent opportunity to improve your health! Free health information, screenings, and wellness coaching.
March 14 or April 11 10am-12pm
GSMC Wellness Center (behind hospital)

For information or to register for a class, call (541) 667-3509 or email healthinfo@gshepherd.org
Working every day to promote a healthy community

GOOD SHEPHERD HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
Education and Wellness Services 667-3509