

PENDLETON



Kevin Hale speaks after being presented as the Man of the Year on Friday at the Pendleton First Citizens Banquet and Business Excellence Awards in Mission.

Chamber banquet honors citizens, business leaders

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

The Pendleton Chamber of Commerce First Citizens Banquet is a night where leaders in politics, the community and business celebrate their own.

People from the latter category claimed the top prizes at the banquet Friday night, concluding the 60th year of the event.

Referred to as a "peacemaker," Coldwell Banker Whitney & Associates broker Kevin Hale won the Man of the Year award.

While real estate is his profession, the introductory speech instead focused on civic achievements, which includes serving on the Pendleton School District Budget Committee, Round-Up City Development Corp., Happy Canyon Board of Directors, St. Anthony

Hospital Foundation Board and Pendleton Foundation Trust.

Winning Woman of the Year was Pendleton Sanitary Services owner Susan McHenry, who was choked up as she gave a short acceptance speech.

"This is a remarkable surprise," she said.

Her introductory speech noted her resilience as a woman in male-dominated field and her advocacy for abused children. Earlier in the evening, Wheatland Insurance Center was named the Business of the Year.

Headquartered in Pendleton, the 33-year-old company operates 10 offices across Eastern Oregon and encourages their employees to participate in community organizations like the Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club and Altrusa.

The chamber usually awards a



Susan McHenry laughs while accepting the award for Woman of the Year on Friday at the Pendleton First Citizens Banquet and Business Excellence Awards in Mission.

Boss of the Year award, but there will be no winner this year because of a dearth of nominations.

The master of ceremonies, InterMountain Education Service District Superintendent Mark Mulvihill, mused that either there were no good bosses, no employees liked their bosses or the previous year's winner had set the bar too low. Mulvihill himself is the reigning titleholder.

The rest of the banquet winners are listed below.

- Tourism Excellence Award: Happy Canyon Co.
- Employee of the Year: Stacie Cummings, Capps Broadcast Group
- Customer Service Excellence Award: Virgil's at Cimmiyotti's

Contact Antonio Sierra at asierra@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0836.



Russ Heimark with Wheatland Insurance accepts the award for Business of the Year as some of his staff looks on Friday at the Pendleton First Citizens Banquet and Business Excellence Awards in Mission.

HERMISTON

City moving forward on water system update

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

The Hermiston City Council will consider a contract amendment with C&E Trenching on Monday that would allow for an update to the Regional Water System.

The company is currently under contract with the city for a \$1.1 million project to extend the Regional Water System to the Hermiston Agricultural Research and Extension Center and change the water going to Simplot from potable to non-potable.

The contract amendment

under consideration on Monday would pay C&E Trenching an additional \$664,000 in grant funds to install an additional pump at the Regional Water System's river intake station and create a flush system.

The project falls under the Northeast Oregon Water Association's overall effort to bring more water from the Columbia River into the region's irrigation system and increase crop production. The additional pump and new flushing system will assist the group in certifying the Port of Umatilla's water right that supplies the Regional

Water System.

On Monday the city council will also hold an executive session on a possible real estate transaction. After reconvening into the regular session the council will "consider purchasing property as discussed in Executive Session," according to the agenda.

The council's regular meeting at 7 p.m. will be preceded by a work session at 6 p.m. The topic is "City Budgeting 101."

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

Boardman gets ready for awards banquet

BOARDMAN — Love is in the air as the Boardman Chamber of Commerce is using a French romantic theme for its annual awards banquet.

The event is Friday, Feb. 12 with the social hour beginning at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m. and the awards and a live auction following. The event is at the Port of Morrow Riverfront Center, 2 Marine Drive, Boardman. Tickets are \$35 each. In addition, sponsorships are still available for the event, which provides an opportunity to be included in advertising and marketing. For more information, call 541-481-3014.

Business luncheon includes networking

HERMISTON — Carl Sohn of Northwest Farm Credit Services Business Management Center, will share about management succession planning during the upcoming B2B luncheon.

The event begins with business networking Tuesday at 11:45 a.m. at the Hermiston Conference Center, 415 S. Highway 395. Catered by Pudding on the Ritz, the cost is \$10 for members and \$13 for non-members.

For more information or to RSVP, contact 541-567-6151 or kelly@hermistonchamber.com.

VFW Hall donated to city of Echo

ECHO — Echo civic groups have a new meeting space available to them after the Veterans of Foreign Wars donated its building to the city.

City manager Diane Berry said the Echo chapter of the VFW dissolved over the summer, leaving the building to the Pendleton VFW chapter in the process. The title was missing, Berry said, and the Pendleton VFW said if a civic group was willing to do a title search they could have the building for community use.

In the end, the city decided to do so and purchased the building from the VFW for \$1.

Berry said groups

including the NRA and 4-H have since used the meeting space in the building, which the city has decided to let civic groups use free of charge.

The city is also using the space for its library craft time and story time activities, and to store the books that are part of its program to sell books online on Amazon.com.

Berry said the city also recently finished a renovation of the ground floor of the Masonic Lodge, which

the city leases. The project was paid for by grant funds and the city hopes to get similar grant funds to update the VFW building.

Briefs are compiled from staff and wire reports, and press releases. Email press releases to news@eastoregonian.com



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