

PATTERSON: Association singled out his work on the city’s water storage and distribution system

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Top Ten honorees come from across the country, and recent award winners include public works professionals from Charlotte, N.C., Austin, Tex., and Phoenix.

Despite the surprise of receiving recognition for managing a small-town public works department, Patterson said the association does a good job of recognizing innovative work being done with tight financial constraints regardless of the size of the city.

The association singled out Patterson’s work on the city’s aquifer storage and recovery water distribution system, which uses micro-turbines and regenerative drive technology to power five wells.

Utilizing these micro-turbines and a first-of-its-kind siphon design used for water filtration, the system has significantly reduced aquifer water level declines and has stored billions of gallons of water in a drought-plagued region that averages 12 inches of rain per year.

Thanks to this technology, Patterson said Pendleton has the largest municipal storage program in Oregon and is considered one of the most drought-resistant water systems in the country.

Patterson said Pendleton Water Superintendent Tim Smith was the primary creative force behind the project, Patterson’s main contribution being the idea’s “cheerleader” while staff was in the process of convincing the city council it was a worthwhile investment.

In addition to aquifer storage, the association commended Patterson for developing the city’s geographic information system, leading the \$1.2 million master planning effort for the city’s water, sewer and stormwater systems and his overall leadership.

Interest in infrastructure and resources runs in Patterson’s family. His father a former powerhouse operator at



The membrane train is the central hub of the Pendleton water treatment plant with it’s more than 3,000 miles of micro-porous membrane that filters the water.

The Dalles Dam. Patterson’s first passion was solar power, but as incentives dried up in the 1980s, he decided to major in civil engineering at Oregon State University.

Patterson came to Pendleton in 1988 to work at the Oregon Health Division Water Program as a public health engineer.

He started his career with the city in 1994 as a regulatory specialist.

After a stint as the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation public works director from 1996-1999, Patterson returned to the city in 1999 as a special projects engineer before assuming the department’s top post in 2003.

Within the past few years, Patterson began stockpiling accolades.

Patterson served as president to the Oregon chapter of the association in 2013 and won the William A. Bowes Award, the chapter’s top honor.

With assistance from the University

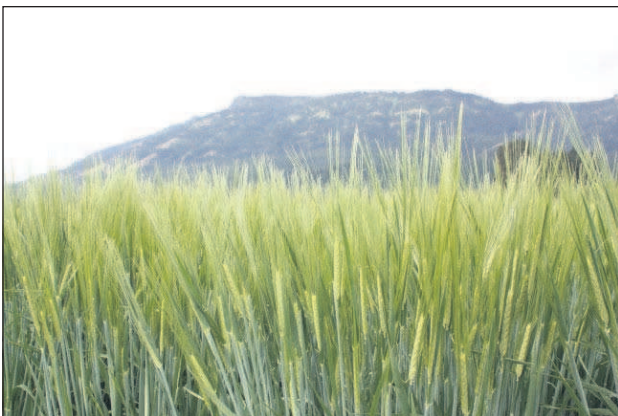
of Oregon School of Journalism, Patterson put together a 14-page summary of his career and accomplishments and sent it to association’s national organization.

Even with top recognition from his peers in the public works profession, Patterson still has much more he wants accomplished in Pendleton, including a funded stormwater utility, fully implementing a preventive maintenance program and instituting system development charges.

Patterson’s Pendleton reception will take place May 15 from 2 p.m.-5 p.m. at Great Pacific. Larry Stevens, past president of the association’s national organizations, will present the award at 2 p.m.

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



This 2015 photo shows Full Pint, a malting barley variety developed by Pat Hayes of OSU.

BARLEY: Oregon has 234 brewing facilities

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malting barley.

“Hopefully, at the end of the day, we can develop some unique characteristics,” Walenta said. “We want the rest of the brewing and malting industry to know that, hey, these Oregon malt barleys are top quality. That’s the direction we’re heading.”

The Oregon Wheat Commission is funding the research, with a \$13,000 grant for 2015 and 2016. The first year of testing was a success, Walenta said, with all three locations demonstrating they were capable of growing malting varieties that meet standards from the American Malting Barley Association. Specifically, malting barley must have a lower protein content of 8-12 percent, with plump kernels that weigh at least 48 pounds per bushel.

The trick for farmers, Walenta said, is balancing the right amount of nutrients to the crop, especially nitrogen. More nitrogen can help increase overall yields, but too much pushes the amount of protein too high. This year’s tests will focus on measuring exactly how much is too much, Walenta said.

Walenta planted the test plots on Monday, and will provide an update at the 40th annual Union County Crops and Conservation Tour on June 22. Other trials are being held in the Willamette Valley and Klamath Basin. Walenta said he thinks the Grande Ronde Valley is well-situated to grow quality barley for local breweries.

“We know we can grow spring grains here. We do it

very well,” he said. “We’ll collect some baseline data on these varieties and go from there.”

Oregon has 234 brewing facilities operated by 194 brewing companies in 72 cities across the state, according to the Oregon Brewers Guild. OSU says craft malting is also starting to gain a foothold in Oregon, with the newest malt company ramping up to full production in Baker City.

That company, Gold Rush Malt, should be ready to go by later this spring, said owner Tom Hutchison. Hutchison said he wants to process local barley for expanding microbreweries, and has already drawn interest from Eastern Oregon favorites like Prodigal Son in Pendleton, Barley Brown in Baker City and Ordinance Brewing in Boardman.

“We grow excellent malting barley out here in Eastern Oregon,” Hutchison said. “Why can’t the breweries source that locally? That’s the niche we’re trying to fill.”

Hutchison said he’s keeping a close eye on the OSU trials, but admits he’s a small operation. Great Western Malting, in Vancouver, Washington, could be another outlet for Oregon barley growers, Walenta said, though it requires rail transportation to reach the facility.

Walenta said he doesn’t believe malting barley will be as important as wheat among farmers, but could be another viable option if the demand for locally made craft beer continues.

“We hope to see the industry grow,” he said. “There’s opportunity there.”

WINE: Not known exactly what year the elevator was built

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studying the history of the building and has found a lot of people who are appreciative of the lengths the family has gone to both preserve and improve it.

“We’ve been getting a lot of people in with their stories, and it has been really cool,” she said.

One of those people was 90-year-old Joseph Garcia, who stopped by unannounced on Friday morning with his daughter Debra Thorton to present the Bales with a painting of the grain elevator he made more than a decade earlier. He got a tour of the newly renovated building and mentioned the owls that used to live there.

No one seems to know exactly what year the elevator was built, but the date on the concrete building next to it is 1909. And the grain elevator was in operation by the 1940s. The property was used by Pendleton Grain Growers in the 1950s and the co-op sold it to Glenn and Joyce Rohde in 1984.

Kim Bales said she and her husband Jay bought their 89-acre vineyard near Echo in 2010 while living in Seattle, and bought the grain elevator property from the



Initials carved into the walls of the old Echo grain elevator were preserved when the building was turned into a tasting room for Echo Ridge Cellars.

Rhodes in 2012.

“My husband was looking at different vineyards and came over here and fell in love with it, and how beautiful and quiet it is here,” she said.

Last week they opened the tasting room inside the old grain elevator. Within the next year they plan on turning the neighboring 14,400-square-foot storage building into a winery that could hold large events like wedding receptions and office parties. Someday, if all goes well, they would like to add a brewery, too.

“We’ve got high hopes,” Kim said.

She said they don’t plan on operating a restaurant, but they do plan on putting a wood-fired pizza oven in the outside seating area and cooking pizzas some nights when the weather is nice.

H&P Cafe and the Wheat and Barley Pub also have agreed to deliver food to the tasting room if people call and order it. Kim said that is one of several businesses that have welcomed the family to Echo, including Knerr Construction, which did the renovations, and Sno Road

Winery, which Kim said refers people to Echo Ridge Cellars just as they give referrals in return.

“There’s no competition,” she said. “We’re on the same team.”

“We’re all Team Echo,” Berlyn chimed in.

The tasting room at 551 Theilsen St. is open noon to 6 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday, and 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and also by appointment.

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

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