

MILTON-FREEWATER

Stanton, York earn top citizens awards

By MARCIA AKES
For the East Oregonian

Tall trees to snowflakes and twinkle lights graced the tables at "A Winter Wonderland," the 69th Milton-Freewater Area Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet on Friday evening at the Community Building.

Keeping the crowd entertained while announcing the awards were 2016 Chamber President Aaron Duff and board member Julie Culjak.

Man of the Year Jim Stanton was introduced by Mike Garton as a "wonderful example of a family man, community leader, volunteer, and all-around good person."

His many areas of service includes being involved in school activities, the Blue Mountain Community College Budget Committee, Milton-Freewater Downtown Alliance (MFDA), and on the boards of Rotary, Horizon and the Frazier Farmstead Museum.

Stanton was the originator of the idea that turned into The Gathering Place in the center of town and drew the plans and coordinated construction on the new concession stand at the track and football field.

It was also noted that Stanton's wife, Barbara, is usually involved in his activities and has mentioned to Garton on several occasions, "Please take my husband fishing so I can rest up."

Cheryl York was honored as Woman of the Year and described as a cheerleader for the community.

Chamber Executive Director Tarika Banks listed York's many hours of supporting young athletes by providing transportation, chaperoning, and being there to cheer for them.

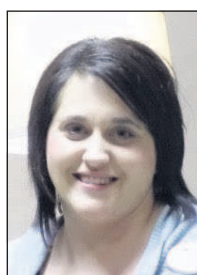
As a member of the local Kiwanis Club, York is involved in the many service projects the organization does in the community and for individuals; along with mentoring the youth through the Key Club at Mac-Hi.



Stanton



York



Copeland



Biggs



Hendricks



Slusarenko



Monnier



Widmer



Hartzheim

She was described as having a "quick smile" and "enthusiasm" for whatever activity she was involved in; including community parades, festivals, Make-A-Difference days, Professional Administrators Day luncheons, Citizens Awards banquets, and many more.

Letters supporting her nomination mentioned York's "can do attitude," that she was committed and dedicated, knows what needs to be done and does it, and is a huge asset to the community.

The Junior Citizen Award went to Samantha Copeland-Vinti, described as "one of Milton-Freewater's most valued volunteers."

Copeland-Vinti is "caring and willing to take the time to help others succeed; donating countless hours to make our town a better place for everyone," stated Jessica Setzer.

As the Milton-Freewater Junior Show Secretary,

a board member, and the awards chairman, she works tirelessly to benefit the youth of the area. As a 4-H leader, she gives her club members word of encouragement and helps them to be focused on goals to achieve.

Words regarding Copeland-Vinti included: highest integrity; patience and tact; goes above and beyond in any task she takes on; works behind the scenes giving others credit and often does not get the credit she deserves.

Golden Pioneer Awards were given to Diane Biggs and Fran Hendricks.

Biggs is known as the community history buff. She has dedicated a large part of her life to the town's history and Frazier Farmstead Museum where she served as the director for 31 years.

Being "the keeper of history's flame," Biggs often speaks at civic, service and social groups. She pioneered the Smithsonian Barn Again

project and is an active board member of the Milton-Freewater Library.

Described as "totally dependable," Hendricks is an avid supporter of the local schools, 4-H and the M-F Junior Show. She is a board member of the Frazier Farmstead Museum and actively involved in the Milton-Freewater Art Club, Elliott Christmas Party, P.E.O., and the St. Francis Catholic Church including work for the Church Women United.

George White received the Educator of the Year for his ability to make sure that even if a student may struggle, if they work hard they can be successful. As a music teacher, White excels in showing students the value of their skills in the classroom and out of the classroom. He has helped students provide countless musical performances to the community and all over the Pacific Northwest.

McLoughlin High School senior Kaitlyn Slusarenko was Youth of the Year. The 4.0 GPA student is a two-sport varsity athlete with a couple of state championships. Very active in FFA, she led her rituals team to a first place finish and was brave enough to fill in at the last moment for the secretary at the FFA Banquet. Slusarenko is noted for her hard work and her compassion for others.

The Agri-Business Award went to Ron Monnier, the manager of J. Frank Schmidt's Milton Farm.

The Business Award was given to the *Valley Herald*, owned by Sherri Widmer.

Gina Hartzheim was recognized with the President's Award. The award is given to someone who has helped the Chamber and specifically the president over the year.

Andrew Brown of Blue Mountain Cider was introduced as the 2017 Chamber president, with Dr. Clive Kaiser of the OSU Extension Service as president-elect.

Fair seeks entries for day camp logo contest

Submissions are due Friday, March 10

East Oregonian

Area schoolchildren are encouraged to get creative for a chance to have their design on a T-shirt and promote the Umatilla County Fair's day camp.

Umatilla County students in first through fifth grades are invited to enter the logo contest for Our Fun at the Fair Day Camp, which is held in conjunction with the fair. Youths that are in online school residing in Umatilla County are also eligible to enter the contest.

Reflecting the 2017 fair theme of "New Faces, New Places & Old Friends," the winning artwork will accompany the theme to brand the day camp, which is Aug. 8-11.

The winner will receive two adult day passes, four children's day passes, one Fun at the Fair Day Camp T-shirt and a one-day carnival wristband for the 2017 Umatilla County Fair. The runner-up youth artist will receive one adult day pass and two children's day passes, and the third place entry will receive a pair of children's day passes.

The artwork needs to

complement the fair theme and include the words "Umatilla County Fair" within the design. The logo must have the ability to be cleanly scanned and reproduced digitally at smaller and larger sizes.

Drawn or sketched logo entries need to be dark and in color on white paper or cardstock that's at least 8.5-by-11 inches and no larger than 11-by-17 inches. Entries on cardboard or canvas won't be accepted. The back of each entry must include the artist's full name, the date, the fair theme, grade, teacher's name and school name.

Historically, logos containing the theme and the year have scored highest in judging. The fair theme and the year will be digitally added to the winning artwork if it was not included by the original artist.

Submissions are due Friday, March 10 by 5 p.m. No late entries will be accepted. Entries may be dropped off at the fair office, 1705 E. Airport Road, Hermiston, mailed to P.O. Box 94, Hermiston OR 97838 or e-mailed to angie.mcnalley@umatillacounty.net.

For more information, call 541-567-6121.

BRIEFLY

EOCI locked down after 16 inmates injured in brawl

PENDLETON — Fighting triggered a lockdown of the Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution after a fight between inmates touched off a brawl on Friday night.

"The lockdown is due to several inmate fights in the west dining room at our facility," said Jackie Peck, EOCI's public information officer.

Combatants were members of different gangs, known as "security threat groups" in prison vernacular, Peck said. Sixteen inmates were placed into the prison's disciplinary segregation housing unit where inmates go if they engage in misconduct or are a threat to themselves or others.

Visitation to the prison was canceled until Sunday. Full operations at the prison resumed Monday morning.

Several inmates suffered minor injuries. No staff members were hurt.

Retired educators to meet Friday at St. Anthony

PENDLETON — Information about local healthcare is the topic during the March meeting of the Retired Educators of Umatilla County.

The featured program is "Hospital Updates: New Services, New Providers." Anyone interested in education is invited to attend. The no-host gathering is Friday at 11:30 a.m. in

the café at St. Anthony Hospital, 2801 St. Anthony Way, Pendleton.

Membership in OREA-Unit 9 is not limited to retired educators. For more information, call Unit 9 president Bill Mayclin at 541-276-4540.

Sen. Merkley to visit Arlington for town hall

ARLINGTON — Oregon Democratic Sen. Jeff Merkley will visit Arlington for a town hall meeting Saturday, March 4 at the North Gilliam County Rural Fire Department Hall, 1500 Railroad Ave. Residents are invited to come ask questions and discuss the latest happenings from Washington, D.C.

The meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m., the last of four town halls Merkley will hold Saturday across the Columbia River Gorge. Other towns halls are scheduled for 9:30 a.m. at Hood River Middle School, noon at The Dalles High School and 3 p.m. at Bob's Texas T-bone & Frosty's Lounge in Rufus.

"I invite all residents of Hood River, Wasco, Sherman and Gilliam counties to come and discuss what we need to do to strengthen our state and our nation," Merkley said.

Since joining the Senate in 2009, Merkley has held a town hall in each of Oregon's 36 counties every year.

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

IRRIGON

City celebrates 60 years with parade and pride

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

A pack of ambulances and sheriff's cruisers drove down the streets of Irrigon Saturday afternoon — but they weren't headed to an emergency. They were celebrating the city's 60th birthday by kicking off the "Irrigon Proud" celebration with a noise parade.

The vehicles, along with some citizens who decorated their cars or rode on bikes alongside, ended up at city hall. More than 50 people gathered to hear the winners of the Irrigon poster and essay contests announced, and later looked at city memorabilia and gathered for a bonfire at the Irrigon Marina.

Though cityhood has only been official since 1957, it has been called "Irrigon" since 1902 — combining the words "irrigation" and "Oregon." Citizens listened to historical anecdotes and memories from several of the city's long-term residents.

Mick Tolar, the principal of A.C. Houghton Elementary School for 30 years, read



Staff photo by Jayati Ramakrishnan
Mick Tolar, the longtime principal of Irrigon's A.C. Houghton Elementary, recalls some of the history of the town during the Irrigon Proud celebration Saturday.

some notes on the history of education in Morrow County. The old school building was destroyed by a fire in the 1920s, and the Irrigon school district became a part of Morrow County School District in 1959.

"When I joined in 1960, A.C. Houghton had an enrollment of about 150 students," he said.

Janet Park, who grew up

in Irrigon, recalled some of the changes to the town from the one she knew growing up. She grew up in a house near the town's fire station.

"We didn't have electricity in that house until 1947," she said. She remembers the day they got running water and a phone in the house, and some of the things they did for fun — exploring meadows and areas by the river, and sliding

down the fire escape using the waxed paper used to cover bread.

"We didn't have plastic then," she said.

Park said a highlight she recalls is meeting President Harry Truman, who came through Umatilla County on his whistle-stop tour in 1948.

"Irrigon was a good place to grow up," she said. "It was pretty simple."

Marilyn Stewart, a former teacher at A.C. Houghton who still lives in Irrigon, moved there in 1950 when her husband got a job at the Umatilla Army Depot. She remembered all the stores and buildings that were in Irrigon when she moved there — and how many more there are now.

"How far have we come?" she asked. "Stoplights, sewer system, the marina, new buildings, a gas station."

"It's been a very interesting journey," she said. "There've been some ups and downs, like with any town. But if all the people of Irrigon work together, I'm sure it can be not only a great city, but one you can all be proud to call home."

PENDLETON

High school hosts annual dance competition

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

Pendleton High School was packed Saturday as the school hosted its 30th annual "Hearts in Motion" dance competition.

The event featured elementary, middle and high school teams from Grant Union, Hermiston and Pendleton high schools, with junior teams from Pendleton and Hermiston.

"Usually there are about 30 to 40 teams," said Ashleigh Bolling, a senior and one of the Pendleton dance team captains.

The competition includes several categories, including



Staff photo by Jayati Ramakrishnan
All the teams in the Hearts in Motion dance event gather on the floor before the competition starts at Pendleton High School Saturday.

jazz, hip hop and contemporary. The high school teams

typically perform their state routines. The state competi-

tion is March 17.

Bolling said the team puts a lot of effort into planning the event.

"Yesterday after school we set up, and the dance team was here at 5 a.m. this morning to practice," she said. "Throughout the day, we each have a certain team we're in charge of."

The day was also special for Pendleton High's senior dance team members, who were honored at the beginning of the competition. This year's seniors are Bolling, Diana Cisneros, Daysya Denight, Dania Lario, Diana Panduro, Celina Ramirez, Abby Rinehart, Allison Savage and Madison Shay.

UNITED GRAIN CORPORATION

GROWER MEETINGS

March 2nd

Pendleton ~ 8AM Breakfast at the Red Lion Hotel.

LaGrande ~ 12:30 PM Lunch at OSU Extension Room.

March 3rd

Hermiston ~ 8AM Breakfast at EOTEC.

WIN A DRONE!

If you have any questions please call the Grain Department at 541-278-5018

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!