



Kathy Aney
Employee of the Year



Toby Carlson
Customer Service Excellence



Doug Corey
President's Award



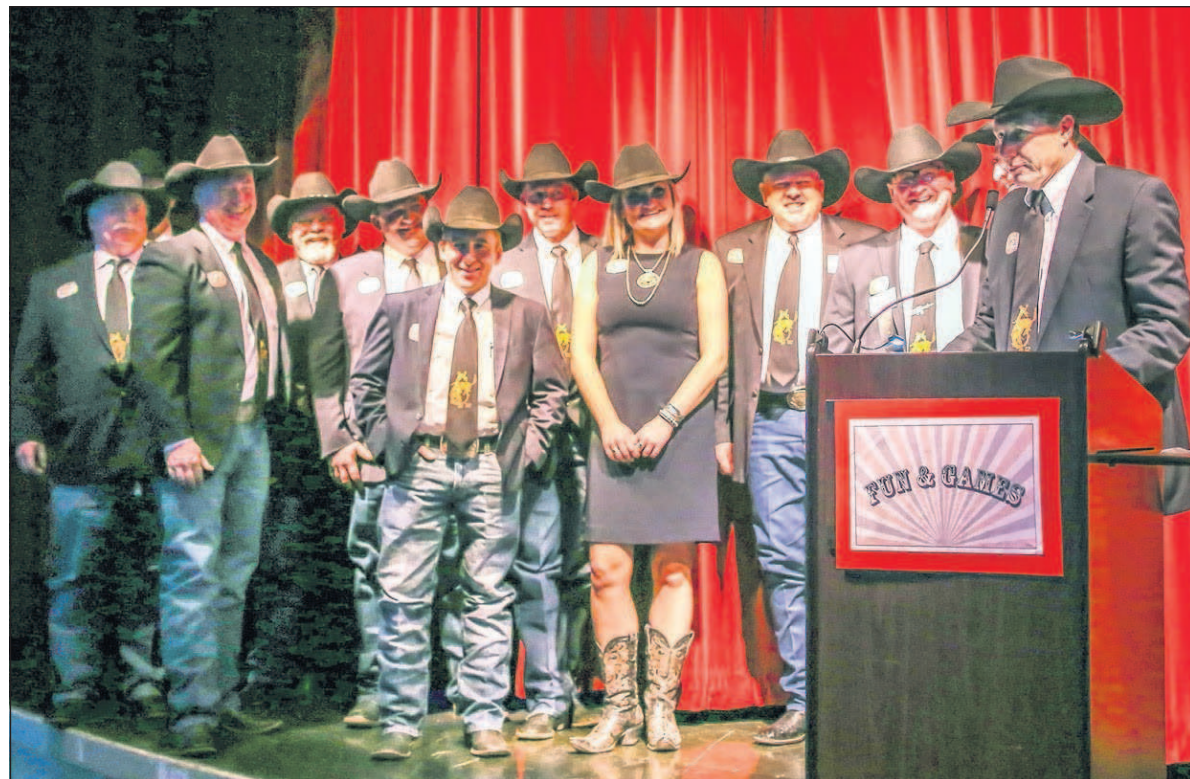
Andy McAnally
President's Award



Kathy Kinkead
Boss of the Year



Staff photo by Kathy Aney
Ron Martin smiles at the crowd after being named the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce 2017 Man of the Year.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney
Pendleton Round-Up Association President Dave O'Neill and his fellow directors accept the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce 2017 Excellence in Tourism Award.

CITIZENS: Prodigal Son Brewery named business of the year

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She earned a Crystal Apple award during her 32 years as an educator and coach, and also served in the community as a board member for the Pendleton School District and the Children's Museum of Eastern Oregon.

She continues to serve by attending every mobilization and demobilization for the Oregon National Guard, sometimes being the only one there to transport soldiers home.

Her husband, former Mayor Phillip Houk, won the Man of the Year award in 2000, but she's now a first citizen in her own right.

On the men's side, Martin got his own extended tribute after 10 years of delivering memorials.

Martin is a member of seemingly every civic and fraternal organization in town — Rotary, Elks, Eagles, Chamber Ambassadors and Knights of Pythias among them.

A supporter of Future Farmers of America, St. Anthony Hospital and the Pendleton Warming Station, his chapel hosts memorials on Christmas, Memorial Day and Veterans Day and lends his singing voice to events around town.

Martin told the crowd that his son once told him that he would be honored on that stage one day. Martin brushed it off, saying the stage was reserved for people who have "done something."

"I still don't feel like I've done anything," he said, Man of the Year Award in hand.

Besides man and woman of the year, the chamber handed out five other awards to Pendleton individuals and businesses.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney
Tim and Jennifer Guenther, owners of Prodigal Son Brewery, glance back at a group of their employees after their brewpub was named Pendleton Chamber of Commerce 2017 Business of the Year.

Business of the Year
The Prodigal Son's return is complete.

Only the second restaurant to win the Business of the Year award in banquet history, the brewery and pub were noted for more than doubling their workforce, serving food with locally sourced ingredients and starting the Oktoberfest Pendleton event.

"It is a community gathering place — the community's living room where everyone can intermingle," presenter Nicole Sorensen said. "It is one of the few places you can see a banker and a welder talking and laughing at a table next to a dozen family members celebrating a birthday."

Prodigal Son co-owner Tim Guenther thanked his employees, some of whom have been with the restaurant

since the beginning, unusual for an industry with a high turnover rate.

President's Award
When honoring Pendleton Whisky Music Fest co-founders Doug Corey and Andy McAnally were compared to none other than Roy Raley, the man who helped found both the Round-Up and Happy Canyon. Presenter JJ Spriet said they followed his example of making "something out of nothing."

With the third annual whisky fest on the horizon, Corey played with audience emotions a little bit, telling them that the next concert with A-list act was scheduled for July 14.

"And the artist will be," he said, adding a pregnant pause "Announced in early March."

The audience's groans rose in unison.

Boss of the Year
For the second straight year, the top boss was bestowed on a bank manager.

Kathy Kinkead, the manager of First Community Credit Union, was honored for all the things that make an exemplary leader: being the first one in and last one, leading by example, delegating fairly, organizing fundraisers for local organizations and participating in community events.

A 22-year veteran of First Community, Kinkead thanked her employees in her

acceptance speech.

Employee of the Year
Already on the clock and snapping pictures of the night's winners, East Oregonian reporter Kathy Aney was temporarily relieved of her photography duties by her husband Bill as she accepted the Employee of the Year Award.

A 12-year reporter with the EO, her impactful stories were attributed to her ability to build bonds with people through her sense of adventure and innate curiosity.

With typical humility, she thanked her bosses and

colleagues in her speech. "I am blessed with the job that I have," she said.

Customer Service Excellence
Having won the Customer Service Excellence Award last year, Dr. John McBee handed the award over to a different kind of diagnostician.

Premium Tire & Lube were noted for their dedication to their customers, like rush ordering a set of tires for a family on a vacation deadline or doing a free alignment for a customer who had asked for one at an earlier date but wasn't able to get it.

"We're just a growing business trying to set the bar high," owner Toby Carlson said.

Excellence in Tourism
Presenter Roberta Lava-dour dispensed with the tradition of trying to veil the identity of the winner until the last minute. After all, the Round-Up Association is perhaps the most well-known organization in town.

The Round-Up was recognized not only for its past contributions, but for its efforts to expand its campus and make the Round-Up grounds a year-round destination.

Round-Up President Dave O'Neill said the rodeo was now the longest lasting attraction in town, surpassing the prostitution industry. "I know this isn't a thing to hang your hat on, but it's an interesting piece of history," he said with a smile.

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