

# Happy Canyon honors volunteers for 2021, 2022

By JOHN TILLMAN  
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Happy Canyon recognized the work of volunteers with the return of its Volunteer Appreciation Awards Banquet.

The organization honored 2021 and 2022 winners Wednesday night, April 20, because the pandemic prompted the cancellation of the event last year.

The 2021 honorees were makeup artist Ingrid Thamert of Adams and dancer Mitzi Rodriguez of Pendleton. Actor Morning Owl of Pilot Rock was joined by his fellow 2022 award winners, servers Dave and Shirley Baird of Pendleton. The awards dinner was in the Happy Canyon Room of the Convention Center.

Happy Canyon President Kenzie Hansell said current and past board directors selected the award recipients through a nomination and voting process.

“All volunteers are Happy Canyon’s backbone and the reason why (the event) is celebrating its 106th year,” he said.

Allen Waggoner, former Happy Canyon president, was the master of ceremonies.

“We recognize that it takes all of us, no matter how small



Happy Canyon/Contributed Photo

Actor Thomas Morning Owl of Pilot Rock, left center, displays his 2022 Happy Canyon Appreciation Award during the organization’s event Wednesday, April 20, in Pendleton to honor its volunteers. Happy Canyon President Kenzie Hansell, left, and 2022 Happy Canyon Princesses Samantha Craig-Allen of Pendleton, right, and Marley Johnson of Portland, far right, flank Morning Owl.

the part, to put together all the pieces of the puzzle and make a beautiful show, year after year,” he said.

Thamert’s participation began in parades as a member of the Helix marching band. She has applied makeup in the small room under the grandstands for 31 years. She has loved watching the cast grow up through the years,

and enjoys the joking and fun which show participants bring into the room every night.

“Kids we started putting makeup on, like freckles, now have different parts and kids themselves,” Thamert said. “I love seeing the families passing down roles.”

Rodriguez led the Night Show’s Welcome Dance for

the Lewis and Clark party for 21 years. Her grandmother Anna Minthorn Wannassay helped Roy Raley write the script for Happy Canyon in 1916.

“Every time Mitzi performs in the show her grandmother helped write, she continues the beautiful history of what both Anna and Roy preserved for us

all,” Waggoner said.

Rodriguez said her participation began in Round-Up as a child, helping set up the teepees, before becoming a dancer.

“I will continue as long as I’m physically able,” she said. “On with the show.”

Waggoner said the Bairds have served since the 1980s and more recently 13 consecutive years for the Happy Canyon Co. during Round-Up week.

“Their hard work and service begins every year at the Kick-Off Concert selling scrip, the two nights of Extreme Bulls and ends in all four nights working behind Goldie’s Bar,” he said. “They faithfully stand on their feet serving people from all over the world for seven full nights. This is just one of the reasons Dave and Shirley have earned the award.”

“I never knew my wife to be a loss for words,” Dave Baird said. “We’re very humbled to be selected from hundreds of hard-working volunteers.”

Waggoner introduced Morning Owl with the story of his break into acting as a baby. His career began in 1963, when he was 7 months, portraying Jean Baptiste Charbonneau in the Happy Canyon Night Show’s Lewis

and Clark scene. His entrance was on the back of Veva Bill, playing Sacajawea.

“Whoever had a baby volunteered for the scene,” Morning Owl said.

Waggoner said Morning Owl in more than 55 years has played parts throughout the show, including in the wedding and war party scenes and lastly as a key drummer and singer in those scenes.

Morning Owl also narrated the show in the late 1990s and helped with changes and additions in 2000 to 2001, Waggoner continued. His grandfather George Spino, as well as other family members, acted and sang in the show, and at least five generations of his family have been participants.

“He missed acting in the show for only a few years, including those he served in the U.S. Army,” Waggoner said.

“I’d like to dedicate this award to those not here tonight,” Morning Owl said.

He also said because of Happy Canyon the tribal Wedding Dance was preserved.

“The rewrite integrated it into the show,” he said. “Without being incorporated, it probably would have been lost.”

## COMMUNITY BRIEFING

### Irrigon chamber plans community yard sale

IRRIGON — For an opportunity to sell items that have been gathering dust in your garage, consider joining the community-wide yard sale in Irrigon.

People are invited to submit their name/address to be added to the map. In addition, vendor space is available at the Irrigon Pavilion, Northeast Main Avenue — tables are \$15.

The event is May 7, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. To reserve a space or to provide yard sale information, contact the Irrigon Chamber of Commerce at 541-626-2045, irrigonchamberofcommerce@outlook.com or stop by the chamber office Tuesday through Thursday, 1-3 p.m. at 420 N.E. Main Ave.

### SDA pastor to share lesson from I Peter

HERMISTON — Pastor Kent Knight invites people to join him as he presents a lesson from I Peter 3:18-22, which refers to Christ preaching to “the spirits in prison.”

The free event is Saturday, April 30, 11 a.m. at the Hermiston Seventh-day Adventist Church, 855 W. Highland Ave. A question and answer period will follow. Those in attendance also are invited to stay for lunch.

Knight holds a master of divinity and a bachelor’s degree in behavioral science with an emphasis on anthropology. He will share what the passage means to Seventh-day Adventist Christians who believe the dead are truly dead — body, mind and spirit — until Jesus returns.

For more information, email Knight at bjkknight@hotmail.com or call the church at 541-567-8241.

### Presbyterian church cancels chili feed

PENDLETON — A chili feed to support Westminster Woods Day Camp/Vacation Bible School has been canceled.

The event, which was to be held May 6 at the Pendleton First Presbyterian Church, may be rescheduled in the future — or a simi-

lar fundraising event might be planned. For questions, contact Alison Moses, office manager, at 541-276-7681 or fpcp@pendletonpresbyte-rian.com.

### Nazarene church hosts yard sale

HERMISTON — In an effort to raise money for a July mission trip to build a

church in Honduras, Hermiston Church of the Nazarene is holding a yard sale.

People are invited to come shop for treasures Saturday, April 23, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the church, 1520 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston. For more information about the mission trip, visit [www.hermnaz.church](http://www.hermnaz.church) or call 541-567-3677.

— EO Media Group

### Sharon Johnson

May 18, 1935 - April 19, 2022

Sharon was born May 18, 1935, in the old Walla Walla General Hospital to Don and Elene (Tootie) Olinger. She lived on Upper Dry Creek Road north of Weston, Oregon, until age 18.

After graduation from McLoughlin High School in 1953, she started work at the Bank of Commerce. On Sept. 24, 1953, she married Joseph Roff and lived in Milton-Freewater, Oregon. During the course of their marriage, she had three children — Debbie, Dixie and Don. She began working part time at the bank for the next 20 years as it was more important for her to be a stay-at-home mom to raise her three children.

In 1980, Joe and Sharon were divorced. Two years later, she married Don Johnson in August 1982. They built a two-story house off Blalock Pond near College Place, and moved in to the completed home in February 1983. They sold Don Johnson Plumbing, and developed Don Johnson Sales into one of the largest horse and cargo trailer dealerships in the Northwest. She retired from the business in 1992, but kept an active interest in the trailers and visited the lot almost every day.

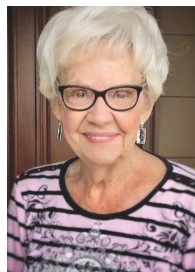
She belonged to several organizations such as the Blue Mountain Riders, Walla Walla Wagon Wheelers, Milton-Freewater PEO, Pythian Sisters and was a member of the College Place Presbyterian Church.

She enjoyed horses, having had them all of her life, and rode on the Chief Joseph Appaloosa trail ride for 29 years in a row, riding 100 miles in a week. Home cooking was another of her passions, especially with Dutch ovens.

She loved her family who had all been supportive, especially after the death of her husband, Don, in January 2010.

She is survived by three children, Debbie Miller (Dave), Dixie Aichele, (Gary) and Don Roff; four grandchildren, Justin Guild, Tiffany Klein, Nicole Kallstrom and Wilder Taylor Roff; three great-grandchildren, Brooklyn Klein, Silas Klein and Kadima Kallstrom; one brother, Jasper Olinger; and two nephews, Ike Olinger and Jason Olinger.

Memorial services will be held at the College Place Presbyterian Church on Friday, May 6 at 3 p.m. Any donations in her memory may be made to the Blue Mountain Humane Society or the College Place Presbyterian Church.



### Heidi Kelly

April 28, 1973 to April 5, 2022

Heidi Kelly went to be with the Lord on April 5, 2022, in Salt Lake City, Utah, due to complications in surgery. She was born in Pendleton, Oregon, the daughter of Lanny and Lois Cooper.

Heidi graduated from PHS in 1991, went to BMCC for one year and transferred to Boise State where she received her degree in graphic design. She loved her field and began that journey at Cougar Mountain Software. From there, she went to Albertson’s corporate, Critical Mass, Oliver Russell, CLM and her present position as creative director for Power Engineering, a job she loved so much as well as her co-workers.

In 1995, she married the love of her life, Sean Kelly. On May 25, 2005, they were blessed by a son, Ronan Kelly.

Heidi is survived by her husband, Sean, son, Ronan, parents, Lanny and Lois Cooper, brother, Erik Cooper and sister, Kiersten Cooper.

A memorial service will be held April 30 at 1 p.m. at Eastwind Community Church, 4750 S Surprise Way, Boise, Idaho.

In lieu of flowers a scholarship fund has been established for Ronan Kelly. Donations may be made thru mealtrain.com or checks can be made to Sean Kelly, Dennis Technical Center, Ronan Kelly Scholarship Fund, 3324 S Milwaukee Street, Suite 110, Boise, Idaho 83709.



### William "Bill" Norwood Reynolds

May 6, 1937 - January 13, 2022

William Norwood Reynolds (aka Bill) was born in Roswell New Mexico to his parents, James T. Reynolds and Catherine M. Corley Reynolds, on May 6, 1937, (the day the Hindenburg crashed and burned, Bill was born on an auspicious day). He died on Jan. 13, 2022, in Hermiston, Oregon, at the age of 84 years.

Bill received master's degrees at the University of New Mexico, University of Colorado and University of Hawaii in agricultural engineering and business management. He always said he was educated beyond his intelligence. Bill was known as a very intelligent and humble man. He always did his best to do things right and honest. He did engineering projects in the U.S., South America, Africa, the Middle East, Jamaica and Canada. He was well known and respected internationally as well as by the local farming community.

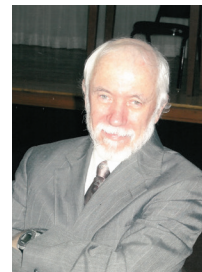
Bill leaves behind his beloved wife of 30 years, Thelma Wynne-Reynolds, four children, David Reynolds, Bruce Reynolds, Kathy Shultz and Cynthia Alexander.

Bill’s memorial service will be held on May 7, 2022, at 11 a.m. at the First United Methodist Church in Hermiston, Oregon.

In lieu of flowers he has asked that donations be made to the First United Methodist Church or Guide Dogs For The Blind.

Please share memories of Bill with his family at [burnsmortuaryhermiston.com](http://burnsmortuaryhermiston.com)

Burns Mortuary, of Hermiston, Oregon, is in care of arrangements.



### Steven Joe Myers

October 17, 1950 - April 16, 2022

Steven Joe Myers was born in Pendleton, Oregon, on Oct. 17, 1950, to parents Clarence and Naomi (Nunn) Myers. He passed on to heaven April 16, 2022, surrounded by his family.

While living with his parents, they traveled the world serving the U.S. military. Steve graduated high school in Richmond, Kentucky, then worked for the FBI in Washington, D.C., and later made his home in northeast Oregon.

Steve made growing crops his career as a center pivot technician while raising his family in Boardman. He later retired in Stanfield, where he enjoyed gardening, rock hunting and adventuring in the scenic northwest.

Steve is survived by his wife of 43 years, Roxie (Fuller) Myers; and four children and families, Anthony and Sarah (Myers) Scott, Farmington Minnesota; Alicia Myers, Salem Oregon; Henry and Ashlee Myers, Hermiston Oregon; and Anthony and Carrie (Laird) Myers, Albany Oregon; and six grandchildren, Spencer, and his wife, Heather; Wyatt, Adelaide, Dimitri, Henry II and Isabella.



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