

Pendleton Center for the Arts bids farewell to J.D. Smith

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PENDLETON — After more than 20 years of service, J.D. Smith is retiring from the Pendleton Center for the Arts.

Robert Lavadour, executive director, describes Smith like this:

"In almost every arts organization there's one person who has shaped the heart and soul of the mission. While the work of artists, advocates and donors gains most of the limelight, those working behind the scenes are often the ones keeping the institutions financially sound and able to do their important work. J.D. Smith is one of those people."

In addition to writing grants

and managing PCA's membership program, Smith has been instrumental in conceiving what have become the center's most successful programs. Lavadour said that Art Rocks Teens, the free after-school/summer program for ages 13-18 and its accompanying Rock & Roll Camp, were inspired by a desire to see positive activities for his own then teenage son and other youth. She said Art Rocks Teens continues to be a central part of PCA's programming, and the Rock & Roll Camp celebrated its 15th year this August.

"Smith's success comes from the intersection of a belief in the power of art and music to elevate the human spirit, a passion for helping those who may

not have a voice in the community, and his skill in being able to clearly communicate the stories of the organizations he's representing," Lavadour said in a press release.

Smith has also made contributions to the Walla Walla Symphony, the Oregon East Symphony and other organizations, raising money for performances and youth programming.

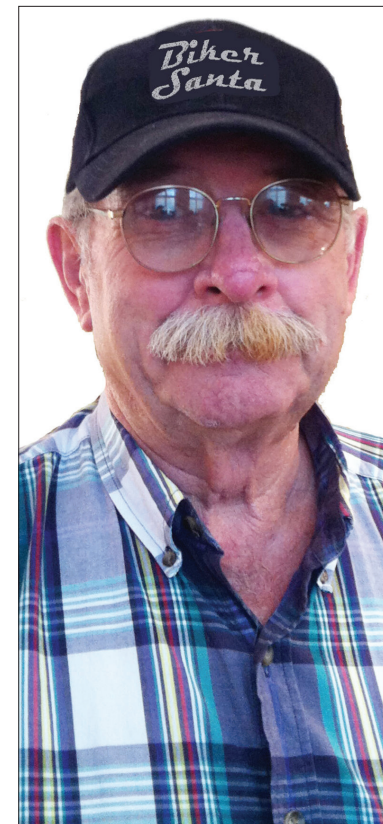
Smith holds a master's degree from Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts, where he studied Latin and Greek, and he worked toward a doctoral degree at Harvard until leaving to teach in a one-room schoolhouse in Montana. He was heavily involved in the civil

rights movement in the 1960s and served as a key member of the Amite County Project in Amite County, Mississippi, where some of the most horrific violence of the Jim Crow era took place.

At the age of 26, Smith served as manager and editor of the Whole Earth Catalog, contributing his own commentary and sharing in the honor in 1972 when the organization received the National Book Award for The Last Whole Earth Catalog.

His column "From the Headwaters of Dry Creek" has appeared in the Long Valley Advocate in Cascade, Idaho, and the East Oregonian. He also makes finely crafted leather and wood works that are sold in fine-craft venues across Eastern Oregon.

"J.D. leaves enormously big shoes to fill in hiring a new grant writer for the Arts Center," said Board President Susan DeMarsh. "He has shaped



Pendleton Center for the Arts/
Contributed photo
J.D. Smith is retiring after 20 years with Pendleton Center for the Arts.

the cultural life of Pendleton in a profound way. We're excited for him to enjoy retirement and look forward to reading about his travels."

The Pendleton Center for the Arts has the half-time grant writing position listed at www.pendletonarts.org/join-the-team-2.

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