

Awards from 1A

"Without imagination, we wouldn't have video games, computers, automobiles, airplanes television — we wouldn't have all these things that we have because somebody put their imagination hat on and thought about and imagined something that wasn't yet there," Hannigan said.

Innovation and imagination became the driving force behind one chamber committee's efforts to draw national attention to Florence. The Downtown Revitalization Team, led by Chairwoman Ellen Huntingdon, has helped Florence get into the top 10 towns that could potentially be featured on the "Small Business Revolution — Main Street" TV series and received \$500,000 for local small business. "One of the things that's happening, thanks to the Small Business Revolution, is that we have an entire community that has put their imagination hats on," Hannigan said. "I am so excited to look into our community and have people so invested."

The Small Business Revolution will make an announcement on the towns that got into the top five on Tuesday, Feb. 14, at 4:30 a.m. Hannigan recommended that those who aren't morning people could consider staying up until 4 a.m. for the announcement.

"If we're in the top five, we'd better hit the ground running. Anybody with an email address — or four — can vote every single day with every single email address. So, all around the world, anybody you know, you're going to want them to sign in and vote, and vote often," Hannigan said. "If we get it, it's \$500,000 for economic development into our community."

For more information, visit florencechamber.com.

Hannigan and Chamber Board President Bobby Jensen listed some further changes at the chamber in 2017, including a remodel of the Visitor's Center, 290 Highway 101, which now allows for a rotating display of art, and a board that is "focused on sustainability, growth and value."

"The word is out, and when you partner with the chamber, you partner with success," Hannigan said. "With this team at the helm, I'm confident that our growth and success will continue. To each of you members, it is my extreme pleasure to serve you. I'm here to help you grow your business. That's my job. ... If you're going to be important, you have to serve. And it is my job to serve you."

Pastor Dale Edwards of Cross Road Assembly of God gave the invocation before the dinner, catered by Pavilion Catering.

"We are honored to have so many people here who make such a difference in our community. I don't think that's an accident; I truly believe there are moments when God divinely ordains each of our steps to come together in almost a collision fashion to change a community," he said.

Jensen gave a brief State of the Chamber, focusing many of his remarks on encouraging people to get more involved.

"When you join the chamber, get active in a committee. That is where you're going to get the value, build the networks and help things get done in this community. It happens at the committee level."

He gave a brief overview of chamber committees and board members before unveiling a new committee that is just getting started.

"By the request of the mayor, and with the dedicated focus of the voluntary aesthetic progress of the north end of our community, we shall soon see the creation of the Uptown 101 Committee," Jensen said. "The businesses of the north will now be noticed, empowered and involved, just like the special businesses downtown. This is the committee I'm going to go on."

Jensen also prepared to present the Distinguished Service Award.

"In the community of Florence, being chosen for this award is a big deal because Florence is a community of volunteers, unlike any other," he said. "We're like the service major leagues here. As the name suggests, the recipient has placed their priorities on serving the community. This award merits a very special presenter."

At that time, Chris Bones, son of Florence Ambassador and long-time area spokesman Mike Bones, came to the podium to present his father the honor of the

Distinguished Service Award. Almost as soon as Chris came on stage, the applause for Mike began.

Chris said, "I grew up in a household where volunteer work, service work and helping others was just the norm. ... Through the years, my dad has shown me many things. One of the things that he showed me without actually telling me was the value in giving back to your community. The community where you live gives you so much. It helps form who you are, where you go in society and what you do. What my dad has shown me is that it is also very important to give back what you can do. In a society where we look to try to help and support each other, my dad is a shining example of that."

"My dad truly and utterly cares about Florence and everyone here. He shows that every day that he can."

Mike kept his comments short, saying he was speechless. As he left the stage, he said, "Keep on caring. This is Florence!"

At that point in the evening, chamber members began presenting Siuslaw Awards to esteemed local businesses.

Hannigan and Coast Radio Host Wayne Sharpe introduced the Community Caring Award nominees: Banner Bank, Beach House Gifts, Beauty by Deliver Day Spa, Friends of the Florence Events Center and Lane Community College Florence Center.

"This is a hard pick, because so much gets done in this community and people have shown how much they care about living here," Sharpe said. "This is awarded to a business that supports nonprofits and projects that enhance the community."

Banner Bank, which has worked with such nonprofits as Florence Food Share and the Oregon Coast Military Museum, won. The presentation detailed the bank's dedication to monetary donations and volunteer time.

Branch Manager Dee Osborne accepted the award.

"I'm a native of Florence, and I am so excited because I love Florence and I love Banner Bank," she said. "Thank you for being Florence, and we hope to be a part of the area and contribute for a long time to come."

Ron Green and Sally Wantz presented the Curb Appeal Award. The nominees were Heceta Head Lighthouse Bed & Breakfast, P.S. Winkles, PeaceHealth Peace Harbor and Polished Boutique & Salon.

Heceta Head Lighthouse won due to it being the most photographed lighthouse in the country and for its history, as well as the bed-and-breakfast's décor, landscaping and attention to detail.

"They do a wonderful job creating an image that is Florence," Green said.

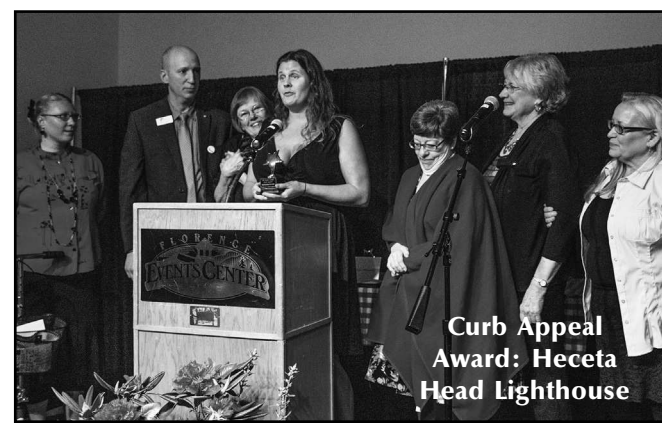
Manager Misty Anderson said she brought her team with her, "Because I don't make the Heceta Head Lighthouse what it is. It is these people who are here every day. ... Thank you for acknowledging that hard work."

Sadie Ward and Pete "Boa" Warren presented the Excellence in Customer Service Award. The nominees were Abel Insurance Agency, BeauxArts Fine Art Materials, Florence Tech Solutions, Jerry's Place and Sand Master Park.

Sand Master Park won for its staff's effort to "give each and



Community Caring Award: Banner Bank

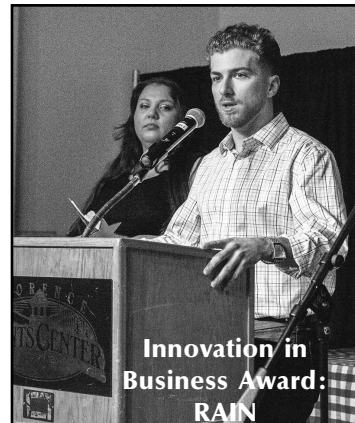


Curb Appeal Award: Heceta Head Lighthouse

PHOTOS BY RODGER BENNETT



Non-Profit Achievement Award: CROW



Innovation in Business Award: RAIN



Excellence in Customer Service Award: Sand Master Park

every visitor an amazing experience that they will cherish for the rest of their life," Ward said. "Their motto is that this is their customer's time, visit and vacation, so Sand Master's goal is to make it their favorite vacation here in Florence."

"We take a lot of pride in getting to help everyone have the best vacation that they can," the representative from Sand Master Park said.

Dr. Charles Korando and Crystal De La Cruz introduced the Innovation in Business Award, uniquely representing a 34-year-old business and a 3-month-old business.

"It is an amazing thing to stick through the hard times and still make your industry better and bring new things to it," De La Cruz said.

The nominees were RAIN (Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network), Siuslaw Broadband and the Small Business Management Program, with RAIN being named the winner.

RAIN Coastal Venture Catalyst David Youngentob accepted the award and pointed out the many small businesses the organization has worked with on the Oregon coast.

"Innovation brings something new to the table. I define it as when something new meets mass adoption, and you have very wonderful people here in the community that I'm honored to get to work with who want to see that happen from Florence outward," he said.

The Non-Profit Achievement Award was presented by Michael and Nancy Pearson. The nominees were CROW (Children's Repertory of Oregon Workshops), Florence Regional Arts Alliance, Siuslaw Vision 2025, Soroptimist of Florence and Siuslaw Pioneer Museum.

"Tonight, this award is presented to the nonprofit which demonstrates excellent stewardship of its donors, has developed a close partnership with the business community, and has community involvement," Nancy said. "They are sound businesses while heading the commitment of the organization's mission."

CROW, a local group which works with youth in theater, dance and other arts, won.

Artistic Director Melanie Heard said, "We were nominated with so many worthy nonprofit organizations, and there are so many good

people in this community that I am proud to call Florence my home. We really believe in the power and the magic of the arts, and I have seen firsthand what it can do for a child."

Casey Farm and Russ Pierson introduced the Stu Johnston Business of the Year Award, which is named for the 1969 Florence First Citizen Stu Johnston. According to his family, Johnston was most proud of the infrastructure that the City of Florence invested in during his 20 years in city government.

"That is one of the things we are doing again today, so that is really amazing," Farm said.

The nominees were Driftwood Shores Resort, Korando Dental Group/Charles W. Korando, DDS PC and Tony's Garage.

Tony's Garage won, and Tony Phillips accepted the award.

"The business is truly a family business, with sons Kevin and Kyle part of the team, along with their granddogs, who are a big hit with the customers who think of the garage not only as 'Tony's Garage,' but their garage, too," Pierson said.

Phillips said, "I have the perfect job. I get to work with family and we're a heck of a team. I couldn't do it without them, and all our customers are awesome."

He added that the dogs were a highlight for him, as well.

After the Siuslaw Awards, presenters prepared to deliver the final two awards.

"Let me tell you this: You are all winners and this community makes me very proud to be mayor, simply because of your spirit," Florence Mayor Joe Henry said.

He and the 2016 First Citizen, Ron Caputo, read the nominees for Florence First Citizen. These were Jean Murphey, president of the Kiwanis Club of Florence and volunteer with Mapleton and Siuslaw schools and food shares, Relay for Life, Rhody Mosey and

more; Rachel Pearson, volunteer with Siuslaw School District, especially the band, Florence Community PTA, Lane Community College and the Winter Music Festival; and Sam Spayd, pilot and volunteer with Boys and Girls Club, the Rotary Auction, the chamber, Siuslaw School Alumni Association, multiple boards and most recently as the area coordinator for Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign.

Caputo said, "Each and every one of you is deserving of the award."

Rachel was announced the winner and thanked God, her family and the community for their support.

"You are amazing, our opportunities are amazing, and you make it happen," she said. "Look at all these volunteers — and those who aren't volunteering are busy making money to support good causes."

She took a moment to bring out a "Siuslaw Proud" sweatshirt given to her by the Siuslaw High School Band.

"They gave this to me two years ago, and it says, 'Band Mom,'" Rachel said. "It's the proudest thing I have to show you."

Siuslaw School District Superintendent Andy Grzeskowiak and Counselor Steve Moser read the nominees for the Future First Citizen, high school seniors from Siuslaw, and introduced the parents of the candidates. The nominees were Jared Brandt, Abigail Coday, Kaylee Graham and Kyle King.

"In terms of the selection of the Future First Citizen, the choice will be incredibly difficult. Luckily we don't have to make it," Grzeskowiak said. "All the students, while individually tremendous, do share some great common characteristics that can be seen in past nominees and other awardees. All are what you would

consider a well-rounded kid. They excel in the classroom, are members of the National Honor Society, are involved in athletics and well involved in the community at large."

Moser said, "These are four of the most fantastic students that Siuslaw has had."

Graham was declared the winner.

"Kaylee is mindful of others at all times, is virtuous in her choices and actions, and is willing to face new challenges head on with optimism," Moser said. "She looks to the future for ways to increase the positive outreach of Power of Florence (a service project that she began when she was 11). With the spirit of volunteering and helping those less fortunate, Kaylee does an amazing job of making the community of Florence a better place to live."

Graham accepted the honor and said, "These are the kids I've been growing up with, and they are such great people. I don't know how people chose these, because everyone I've heard about tonight is amazing."

She thanked her parents for raising her to volunteer and help her community.

Hannigan ended the evening by thanking past and current First Citizens and Future First Citizens, as well as those who attended the awards.

"You reflect the future and the sustainability of our economy, and I appreciate all you are doing, the sacrifices that you make and the innovations," Hannigan said. "It was an honor to see the representatives here and be associated with you all. ... We can learn from one another, and together we make Florence what it is, and it is so special."

Throughout the event, the chamber thanked its underwriters Driftwood Shores Resort and Conference Center, the Korando Dental Group, Three Rivers Casino and Resort and TR Hunter Real Estate.

The chamber's Distinguished sponsors are 101 Things To Do, Banner Bank, Beachcomber Pub, Bi-Mart, Blue Heron Gallery, Burns's Riverside Chapel, Coast Radio, Fred Meyer, Lofy Construction, Oregon Pacific Bank, PeaceHealth Peace Harbor, Sea Lion Caves, Siuslaw News, Spruce Point Assisted Living, the Turrell Group and Wind Drift Gallery.

Other event sponsors included American Mattress, Christina Voogd of Berkshire Hathaway and Creations Hair Studio and Spa. In addition, Chamber Ambassadors, Florence Events Center staff and volunteers, Denny Weaver, Rodger Bennett, Pavilion Catering, Laurel Bay Gardens, Bones Nursery, Florence in Bloom, Florence Sign Shop and Copier Doctor and BeauxArts Fine Art Materials contributed to the evening's success.

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