

FILM

Continued from Page A1

the EOU campus as part of the activities.

Fitzgerald said it was a great honor to be named a distinguished alumnus.

"It just serves as further motivation to engage with EOU and be part of furthering EOU's footprint," he said. "This place shaped me. I love this valley and I love this institution."

His high school in the small rural town of Monument didn't offer a theater program, but he loved English and one of his teachers made an effort to put on plays for the school. When it came time for college, Fitzgerald wasn't ready to head to a big city.

"I didn't want to live in the city," he said, adding that he enjoyed the opportunity to be up in the mountains on his bicycle in just a few minutes. Deciding to go to Eastern, he said, was "one of the best choices I ever made."

Fitzgerald recalled two mentors, theater professor Mark Kuntz and English professor Mark Shadle, who helped mold him during his tenure as a college student.

"I have both of them to thank for getting such a good education at EOU," Fitzgerald said, noting that the one-on-one support from professors was invaluable. "As a young man, you need that kind of encouragement."

That support and his small classes at Eastern, he said, opened his eyes to the arts and led him to pursue his passions, originally theater and later film.

Fitzgerald is drawn to documentaries for their "ability to engage topical issues, to bring issues to the light of day and probably mostly to shine a light on everyday heroes that people might not otherwise know about," he explained.

His documentary career has taken him around the world to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Cambodia and other places, often in conflict zones.

Just before his visit to La Grande, he was on a search and rescue mission off the Libyan coast, where he witnessed the rescue of more than 2,000 refugees.

"Being in that situation you see a scale of suffering that makes you sit up in your



Contributed photo

A wooden boat off the coast of Libya with over 700 refugees evacuated during the course of a day where Skye Fitzgerald was filming recently.

cosmic seat and say, 'Suffering is real,'" Fitzgerald said, noting that his two-man crew on occasion stopped filming in order to help with rescue efforts. That decision, he said, was a no-brainer, even if it meant the resulting footage might not be as strong.

For the EOU theater graduate, the traumatic scenes invigorate his desire to share those stories.

"I've got to bring this back and do whatever I can to touch people," he said. "We need to be inspired. Documentaries allow us to show the horrors of the world, but mitigate that with the beauty of humanity through individuals willing to act."

Though Fitzgerald has enjoyed success with "50 Feet From Syria" — it was short-listed with nine other short documentaries for an Oscar

nomination, won an award at the DOXA Documentary Film Festival and most recently was named recipient of the Audience Award at the Sebastopol Documentary Film Festival — his journey has been a long one.

Following his graduation from EOU, he enrolled in a master's of fine arts program at the University of Oregon for directing for the stage. A class on TV directing changed his trajectory.

Just before graduation, he was lined up to go full-time with a Eugene cable company, but the company was bought out and a hiring freeze left him without prospects.

Through a teaching assistant friend, he was hired on the set of "Ricochet River" as a production assistant. Released in 2001, it was actress Kate Hudson's first feature film.

"I knew I needed to learn and just soak it all up," Fitzgerald recalled. "I did everything I could to be near the camera department."

His strategy paid off, as he was quickly assigned to the department. Then, after a conversation with the director as he drove her from one location to another, Fitzgerald was named Second Unit Director, a good credit for a recent MFA graduate.

"I thought that would lead to a nice stepping stone to the feature film world," he said. "But it didn't."

That's when he decided try another route: documentaries.

As the founder and owner of Spin Film, Fitzgerald said he usually follows his instinct when looking for ideas.

"Usually one story leads to another," he said.

And while interest in the subject is important, Fitzgerald emphasized that complex issues must be explained through people in such a way that it elicits empathy among the audience.

"Touch the heart first," he said, "and then it goes up to the brain."

One of his favorite films he's produced is "Finding

Face," which tells the story of an acid attack victim in Cambodia. Many of his works highlight human rights issues, a topic Fitzgerald feels may not always be popular.

"What's different fundamentally (about "50 Feet From Syria") is it's on a topic that more people care about, and it has more traction in the media," he said.

Fitzgerald has no desire to strike it rich making films, noting that the best films aren't always the ones that makes the most money. Rather, he seeks to work within his own sphere of influence.

"I do believe that if you do that and do it well, and your craft is good enough, your story strong enough, you will find an audience," he said.

The alumnus, who minored in creative writing, said he enjoyed reminiscing with EOU President Tom Insko when he was back on campus for homecoming. Former classmates, the two walked together out onto the football field during halftime of the football game.

"That was a great moment," said Fitzgerald, who ran cross-country as a student. "It was nice to see that someone's in position at the helm of the university who deeply believes in its mission as a regional institution."

Learn more about Fitzgerald's work at spinfilm.org.

CEO

Continued from Page A1

CEO for two and a half years of a Sanford-managed facility in the small town of Chester, Montana, near the Canadian border. The organization was smaller than Blue Mountain Hospital, he said, but was of similar scope, with a critical access hospital, a clinic and nursing home and assisted living populations.

Daly said he is excited for the opportunity to work in Grant County.

"We've got a great team of medical providers, a really great team," he said. "I think there's a lot of opportunity and potential for great things here moving forward. There's some new programs and services that I would hope to investigate to move forward with in 2017. ..."

"Obviously any time we have opportunity, there's a lot of work that needs to come into it. Programs don't build themselves overnight, and services don't get added, but I think we've got the ability to continue to do some good things here."

POT

Continued from Page A1

comprehensive video surveillance and a well-lit exterior.

"It's like a vault," Kidd said.

The dispensary will answer to the Oregon Health Association, and all sales will be tracked by the state government.

They are also hoping to strike a blow to the black market and give those in need a safe place to purchase their medicine. Kidd also anticipates picking up customers from Bend as more of their dispensaries convert to recreational facilities.

"It's going to create jobs and keep people from having to travel outside the area, and keep the revenue here instead of Bend," she said.

The Grant County Court voted Sept. 28 to pass an ordinance allowing registered medical marijuana patients to purchase marijuana at dispensaries in Grant County. The amended ordinance only allows medical marijuana, not recreational, dispensaries.

Your Rural Family Health Clinic

Grant County HEALTH Department
528 E. Main, St. E.
John Day

Monday - Friday
8am - 5pm

Karen Triplett, FNP

Appointments available

Call and schedule your appointment today!
TOLL FREE
888-443-9104
or 541-575-0429

Services Provided:

- Primary Care
- Acute Care
- Women's Health Exams
- Men and Children Exams
- Immunizations
- Family Planning
- Contraception
- Pregnancy Testing & Referrals
- HIV Testing & Referrals
- Cocoon
- WIC
- High Risk Infants
- Maternity Case Management

Grant County Health Department does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability or age in admission, treatment, or participation in its programs, services and activities, or in employment.

SUMPTER TREE LIGHTING, CHRISTMAS TRAIN PARADE

Christmas Bazaar

DEC. 10 & 11, 9 AM - 3 PM
at the MUSEUM.
Vendors needed,
call Nancy at 541-894-2264

04866

the corner's HOT SHOT OF THE WEEK

MAKENZIE JONES
School: Prairie City
Grade: 12
Parents: Tom and Jonie Jones
Sport: Volleyball
Position: Middle hitter

What I like best about my sport: "I love them (my teammates) to death, and I'm really glad I had them to finish out my senior year."

Coach's Comment: "MaKenzie was voted most inspirational by her teammates and the recognition was well deserved. She took charge of team meetings in a positive way, always keeping a healthy perspective and reminding the team what the bigger picture was - becoming contributing members of society, taking responsibility for your actions and representing yourself, your team, your school, your community and your family in the best way possible."
-Co-coaches Lance and Louanne Zweygardt

PROUD SPONSOR OF GRANT COUNTY ATHLETES
100 E. Main • Stoplight in John Day
541-792-0425

The Corner Cup

04873

DRONE Starting at \$39.99

HP LAPTOP Starting at \$599.00

LG 43" TV Sale \$439.99

RadioShack Dealer

DP HOME ENTERTAINMENT
139 E Main St. • John Day
541-575-1637

04801

Balance Today with Retiring Tomorrow

No matter where you're starting from, COUNTRY can help you achieve financial security in retirement. It starts with listening to your situation. Then we help you build a straightforward plan with step-by-step guidance. Call me to get started today.

Debbie Ausmus
245 South Canyon Blvd.
John Day, OR 97845
OPEN WED. & THUR.
9 am - 5 pm
541-575-1113
24 hrs/7 days wk

debbie.ausmus@countryfinancial.com

COUNTRY FINANCIAL

042013-01265AC

Sending Your Best At Christmas Time

SANTA

Special Holiday Hours

Monday - Friday, Dec. 1st - Dec. 23rd: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
SATURDAY
Dec. 3rd, 10th & 17th: Retail Hours 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm to help with holiday shipping.
Back to regular hours Dec. 27th.
JOHN DAY POST OFFICE

04795