

Pacific Power technician, late city attorney Snow given awards for service

The Columbia Press
Gary Dick, a Pacific Power lineman, was given the top service award for Warrenton during the chamber of commerce's annual meeting and banquet.

Others won awards for top service in Astoria, lifetime achievement, top chamber member and special recognition.

"(Dick) is the kind of person who steps up without telling anyone or seeking recognition," Mayor Henry Balensifer said in presenting the award. "He goes above and beyond to support organizations in our community. His co-workers at Pacific Power say he has an unparalleled work ethic and that he's also kind beyond words."

Dick has worked for Pacific Power for four decades and each year helps the city hang Christmas lights and seasonal banners. He sets poles, nets and lights at the soccer fields in Warrenton in support of the Lower Columbia Youth Soccer Association. He's usually the guy who returns to fix and rehang lights that get damaged during storms.

"Co-workers describe him as the hardest-working, most com-

passionate and most modest person they know – the type of person they aspire to be," Balensifer said. "In fact, 15 of his colleagues signed a letter written in support of his nomination for this award – and many of them came out tonight to cheer him on."

Dick said he was completely surprised to receive the award, named for Richard Ford, a longtime Warrenton firefighter.

"I had no clue," he said. "I'm appreciative and humbled."

He worked with Ford when he was a young man and signed up as a volunteer firefighter. He is grateful to his company, Pacific Power, for allowing employees to use the company's equipment for community service projects.

The Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce's 145th annual meeting brought 200 people to the Clatsop County Fairgrounds Jan. 27 for an Olympic-themed dinner, raffle and program.

Those who won awards:

• **George Award** for Distinguished Service in Astoria: Julie Flues

• **Richard Ford**
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Ignoring the city sign prohibiting it, an elk herd camps out at Hammond Marina on Wednesday. Last week, police handled a complaint of an unruly bull elk sparring with dogs in a fenced yard near Eighth Street and South Main Avenue.

Photos by Cindy Yingst

Tax season begins ... with a kicker

The Oregon Department of Revenue and the IRS began processing tax returns this week, officially kicking off the tax season, which ends April 17.

Taxpayers can submit their returns earlier, but processing won't start until the tax season officially begins. Once processing begins, returns will be processed in the order received.

Much like last year, Oregon won't be issuing personal income tax refunds until after Feb. 15. The refund hold is part of the state's tax fraud prevention program, which allows confirmation that the amounts claimed on returns matches what employers report on forms W-2 and 1099.

The IRS also holds federal personal income tax refunds, but only for those taxpayers claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit or the Additional Child Tax Credit. There's a kicker this year, Revenue officials said. To figure out how much to claim for a kicker credit, taxpayers should multiply their 2016 tax liability before credits -- line 24 on 2016 Form OR40 -- by 5.6 percent. Taxpayers can also use the "What's My Kicker" calculator at www.oregon.gov/dor, found under "Popular Topics." Filing a 2017 return is the only way to claim a kicker; there are no kicker checks.

AARP Foundation has begun providing free tax assistance and prepa-

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Man robbed at gunpoint downtown

The Columbia Press

A man walking near Main Street Market was robbed at gunpoint Saturday night.

Officer Robert Wirt, who was clearing from a traffic stop nearby, was flagged down by the victim's mother at 7:45 p.m.

Her son, who is 22, was walking on the sidewalk on Second Street when he was approached by a man brandishing what he thought was a black handgun, Police Chief Matt Workman said.

"He demanded money. The victim gave him his wallet, which had no money, just other miscellaneous items," Workman said.

The gunman then headed west on Second and disappeared at Cedar Avenue, continuing west.

He was described as 6-foot 2-inches tall, 200 pounds and wearing a black hoodie with the hood pulled over his head, gray shorts, white socks and white shoes.

Officers from Astoria Police Department and the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office quickly arrived to help Warrenton officers search for the gunman, but no one was found who matched the description, Workman said.

Investigators are checking video surveillance in the area and attempting to locate any witnesses.