



Warrenton representatives show off their award. They are, L-R, city employees Morgan Murray and Kevin Cronin, team members Lori Beth Kulp, Norm Hoxsey and Brenda Hoxsey, and Oregon Main Street coordinator Sheri Stuart.

City, grassroots team honored for improvements

The Columbia Press
Downtown Warrenton was recognized during a statewide conference of Oregon Main Street.

The city, along with Spruce Up Warrenton, were named "The One to Watch."

There were 20 businesses, projects, and people recognized at the annual awards event held late last week in Tillamook.

"The city and Spruce Up Warrenton have been working hard on revitalizing downtown (and) South Main Avenue and it is getting noticed!" the city exclaimed on its Facebook page.

Brenda Hoxsey, director of the grassroots Spruce Up Warrenton group, was surprised they'd won an award. She and others from their group had attended the conference to

pick up some tips.

"I had no idea and, when we registered, they had little nametags that hung around your neck. Norm (her husband) and I both got one. And it said we were an award winner. I thought there must be a mistake here," Hoxsey said.

Spruce Up has been working separately but in cooperation with the city. Together they've helped revitalize more than a dozen downtown properties, removed weeds and trash, and encouraged businesses to add planters and flowers.

The city has worked with property owners to remove blight at dozens more properties throughout the city. Marina staff created a successful Fish and Farmers Market on Thursdays. Commissioners created an area for a food truck court next to City Hall, and its Urban Renewal Agency embarked on a landscaping plan at the four-way stop, near the high school and along South Main Avenue.

"We've got a lot to do yet," Hoxsey said. "People are taking a lot more pride in the community. It's been very rewarding."

The group plans several large projects in the spring and is working with Warrenton High School's welding class on decorative trash cans and with art students to do some murals.

Also recognized:

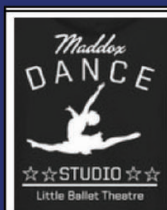
- Sarah Lu, Astoria Downtown Historic District Association's executive director, was named Main Street Manager of the Year.

- Marcus and Michelle Liotta, owners of the M&N Building, 248 Marine Drive, for Best Historic Preservation Project.

"We are so inspired to see how our historic downtowns ... are coming to life through the creativity, passion, and plain hard work of community members," said Sheri Stuart, Oregon Main Street coordinator.

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