



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Roger Bounds speaks after being named Man of the Year at the Hermiston Distinguished Citizens Award Banquet on Wednesday in Hermiston.

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doesn't live in town. Rep. Greg Smith received the inaugural Nobel Laureate award, which honors professional accomplishments that benefit the region.

"Chances are, if there's a project in the Columbia Basin, (Smith's) fingerprints are all over it," said U.S. Rep. Greg Walden, who presented the award.

Smith, in the middle of the 2018 legislative session, thanked his family and staff.

"It's by being focused and by being of one mind that we're going to continue to make Hermiston the great community it is," he said.

The district-wide teacher of the year was Kent Barnes, a science teacher at Sandstone Middle School whose impact interim superintendent Tricia Mooney said stretches far beyond his classroom.

"I truly do have the best job," Barnes said.

Educators of the year for each school included Barnes, Katie Abbott, Tina Crowell, Michelle Dunkel, Ashley Nicodemus, Sandra Rice, Bridget Schultz, Leah Smith, Emily Strot Smith and Tracy Tynkila. Larry Usher, Hermiston High School's athletic director, was honored as Administrator of the Year.

The two Merit of Honor Awards went to Alice New-

man and the employees of the Wal-Mart Distribution Center. Newman, who works in many capacities with the Umatilla County Fair and with youth in the community, was recognized for her commitment as a volunteer.

"Any time there's a Bulldog in need, Alice is there," said presenter Dan Dorran.

Newman was humble in her receipt of the award.

"I stay in the background," she said. "I do the things I do because I like to stay in the background."

Members of the Wal-Mart Distribution Center team were recognized for their donations to Hermiston and surrounding communities. Presenter Phil Hamm said the company has made cash donations of \$90,000 and 150 tons of merchandise, including 98 tons of food, in the past year. General Manager Josh Burns said the team includes 816 associates.

Eldon Marcum won the Fire Service award. Marcum is a Stanfield firefighter and Umatilla County Fire District board member with more than 40 years of firefighting experience. Chief Scott Stanton noted Marcum's willingness as a community volunteer.

"I'll do anything for anybody I can help," Marcum said.

The Bob Severson Rotary Business of the Year award went to Mike and Jonette

Atkinson of Atkinson Staffing, who were honored for their contributions to the agricultural industry, providing needed staff to many other businesses in the region. Mike surprised and amused the crowd with a story about how he had always wanted to win a "life-saving award" when he was a Boy Scout. After orchestrating a perilous situation (pushing his non-swimming friend into a pool and diving in to save him) went without proper merit, Mike said he finally had fulfillment.

"I no longer feel I need that award," he said, holding up the plaque he and his wife received.

Gabrielle Aceves-Galindo and Kyle Ketchersid of Hermiston High School were awarded the Altrusan Outstanding Young Citizens Award for their accomplishments and contributions to the school and community. Presenter Nancy Lauck said Aceves-Galindo is an opera singer and teaches piano. She sings at local retirement homes and in her church choir, and works with special needs children. Ketchersid is involved in music and theater, and just starred as the Cat in the Hat in Hermiston High School's "Seussical the Musical." He plays bassoon in several regional orchestras, and currently serves as assistant drum major for the high school band.

SUICIDE

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another person cannot put the idea in their mind.

QPR, she said, is comparable to CPR in that it allows laypersons, rather than health professionals, to help someone in crisis.

"It's a brief intervention, and most people will refer those at risk to a provider for ongoing treatment," she said.

Walsborn noted that Umatilla County over the past decade has averaged about 12 suicides per year. In 2016, she said, that number jumped to 16. Oregon has one of the higher suicide rates in the U.S., coming in at 12th. States with the highest rates were Alaska, Wyoming and Montana, and the lowest rates were in New Jersey, New York and Washington, D.C.

Walsborn said the rates likely are related to population density, as well as the availability of providers.

"They may be in major metropolitan areas where they can walk to a doctor's office," she said. "We don't have that here, and certainly not in Alaska."

She said that while availability of providers does heavily impact people's ability to receive mental health treatment, it's an obstacle that can be overcome by training civilians knowledgeable about the QPR process.

"It's important to have individuals trained as suicide prevention gatekeepers," she said.

Walsborn reviewed some clues people can look for to determine whether someone may be considering suicide. She said those clues can be verbal, situational or behavioral, and direct or indirect.

Many behavioral clues, she said, will include previous suicide attempts, stockpiling guns or pills,

moodiness or depression, putting personal affairs in order, or drug and alcohol abuse or relapse.

Situational clues often include experiencing some type of loss, whether a financial setback, death of a loved one or an unexpected loss of freedom or fear of punishment.

Walsborn noted that it's important to watch people for signs of abnormal behavior — which may be different for different people.

She recalled a student in Pendleton who was typically unruly and didn't do homework or participate in class. The student came back one weekend, and was subdued, doing her work and not making a scene in class.

"Thank goodness her teacher noticed and took action," Walsborn said. "She was able to communicate to the student some resources — she was experiencing some behavioral health issues, and was likely at risk for suicide."

Walsborn had the students role play some scenarios where a person might be at risk for suicide. She encouraged the person asking to be direct with their questions.

"You want to be very clear and intentional with your questioning," she said. "If you're in doubt, don't wait to ask. Talk to the person alone in a private setting, and give your full, undivided attention."

She added that the person asking questions should be careful not to ridicule, or imply that thinking about suicide is stupid.

"You're setting them up for a 'no' answer," she said.

Then, she said, listeners should offer their help, and refer the person to a provider who can assist them further. Ideally, she said, take the person

directly to someone who can help them. If that's not possible, call and make an appointment for them.

Juli Gregory, the hospital education coordinator, said this was the first QPR training that Good Shepherd has hosted.

She said it was a good introduction, and that many in the health field don't even know the correct way to respond to those who may be suicidal.

"I think (Amanda) kind of nailed it. Suicide has affected most of our lives — it has in mine," she said.

She was happy to see a mix of community members and hospital employees at the training.

Erin Stocker, the Human Resources director for the Morrow County School District, was at the training with her 14-year-old son Tyson, and her mother Barb Gibbs, a licensed practical nurse at Good Shepherd. She said she was glad to receive the training to be able to support staff and students.

"I think it's good to be able to identify classmates or help anyone in that situation," Tyson said.

Gibbs said she was at the training not as a nurse, but as a community member.

"I'm at a loss to help," she said.

Stocker said the subject of suicide is uncomfortable to discuss, but she hoped talking about it through trainings like this one would provide some resources, and some relief.

"If we do talk about it, there's only one outcome — the improvement of the crisis we're facing in our society with this type of thing."



BTW

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Patrons of the Umatilla Public Library can now utilize passes for admission to the SAGE Center in Boardman.

The pass, which can be checked out from the library for a week, offers free admission for up to six people. If the pass is lost, there is a \$20 charge.

In addition, the library has other museum passes that can be checked out, including for Maryhill Museum of Art, located near Goldendale, Washington, and Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute in Mission.

For more information, call 541-922-5704 or stop by the library at 700 Sixth St., Umatilla.

The Stanfield Community Center is really cooking with recent upgrades. It recently updated its kitchen with a range, hood and vent system thanks to grants from the Oregon Community Foundation and Union Pacific.

The center, said Rose Emerson, has been working on upgrades for the last few years. The new range, hood and vent, along with some other updates, have resulted in a more efficient system, she said.

The center can be rented by the public for four-hour (\$125) or eight-hour (\$250) rental periods. For more information, call 541-449-1332.

You can submit items for our weekly By The Way column by emailing your tips to editor@hermistonherald.com or share them on social media using the hashtag #HHBTW.

MISSING PERSON!



29-year-old Drew Langton returned home after a family vacation and was last seen leaving his Pendleton residence Monday, Feb. 26 at approximately 11 a.m.

- Drew is 5'8", 180 pounds with blue eyes.
- Drew drives a 2006 black Ford Freestyle, Oregon plate 627KEN.



His phone has been turned off and there has not been any communication with family or friends which is uncharacteristic of him.

If you have seen Drew please contact Pendleton Police Department's 24-hour dispatch center 541-966-3650

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