

2016 Green Award Winners Announced

By Beth Casper

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Judges had a tough time picking winners for the Green Awards, which celebrate the people, businesses and organizations that model impressive sustainability practices.

Indeed, in one category—the Green Product/Service of the Year Award—judges separated the nominees and selected two winners. It was a surprise to the nearly 300 audience members at the Elsinore Theatre on March 12.

The NorthWest Hub, a non-profit bike shop, bicycle reclamation program and training center, took home the Green Service of the Year Award. The nonprofit provides affordable services and sales to the general public and free bicycles, locks, parts, repair training and vocational rehabilitation to adults and at-risk youth. Last year, the group created 500 bike commuters.

“All of the NW Hub’s bicycle and parts inventory is reclaimed from discarded and unused bicycles,” according to the nomination. “Every part is re-used or else recycled into other innovative upcycled products. Furthermore, our bicycle reclamation ensures sustainable, emission-free transportation for hundreds of Salem-area residents.”

The Green Product of the Year was given to the the SEEDClassroom, a modular classroom with solar panels, a rainwater storage and treatment system, a living wall, a composting toilet, salvaged carpet and chemical-free paints and finishes. It not only serves as a space to teach students, but also as a hands-on laboratory.

The Green Awards have been spotlighting

sustainable people, businesses and organizations in Marion County for the past seven years. The annual event is a collaboration between the Straub Environmental Learning Center and Marion County Public Works Environmental Services department. In addition to the award presentations, this year’s event featured Green Moments—performances by local people with a passion for the environment.

Eight other people, businesses or organizations were honored with Green Awards and Barbara “Bobbie” Snead received the Lifetime Achievement Award for her work to educate students about the environment.

In her “retirement,” Bobbie now works for the Straub Environmental Center where she teaches the Nature Kids program, an evening program for second through fifth graders.

Before this, she was the Youth Environmental Education Specialist for the city of Salem for 19 years—providing nearly 10,000 presentations to almost 250,000 students about Oregon’s native wildlife, such as beavers, frogs, great blue herons and raccoons.

“If you have had a child in elementary school during the last two decades, your child most likely knows Bobbie and can tell you much about Oregon’s native birds and mammals,” according to the nomination. “Bobbie generally provided 4 presentations per day.”

In addition to Bobbie, two other individuals took home Green Awards.

Judy Skinner, a volunteer for Marion County for about 17 years, is the 2016 Individual Recycler of the Year. She completed the Master Recycler class and more than 300 hours of vol-

unteer payback hours. She volunteers on the Solid Waste Management Advisory Council, helps at zero-waste events, encourages reuse and repair at the County’s Repair Fairs, and assists local businesses to expand their existing recycling programs.

“She leads by example and is an inspiration not only to the other volunteers and public but also to those of us in (Marion County’s) Environmental Services,” according to the nomination.

Rich Swartzentruber, a teacher at North Salem High School, brings home the Green Apple Award. He gets his students outside and connected with the local environment regardless of the weather. He teaches a variety of environmental-related courses some of which he has created and are unique only to North Salem, such as Natural History of Oregon, which explores the physical and natural features of our great state, and Horticulture, which connects students to gardening and plant production in a real and authentic way as they plan, plant, and harvest produce from the garden.

The businesses, agencies and nonprofits that took home awards this year are not only doing great green work within their organization, but they are impacting the community in significant ways.

The Small Sustainable Business of the Year went to Friends of Family Farmers, a nonprofit that relocated its headquarters to Salem to be closer to where most employees need to be—at the state capital with policymakers. It also eliminates thousands of disposable serving ware by bring reusable plates, silverware and cups to its listening sessions around the

state.

In the Large Sustainable Business of the Year category, the Oregon Department of Corrections beat out six other businesses or organizations. Its win is due to its efforts to creatively repurpose fabric for items like aprons and reusable lunch bags; recycle unique items such as shoes and ballistic vests; save more than 9.3 million gallons of water each year through laundry and irrigation conservation programs; and save 200,000 kWh and 102,603 therms of energy last year. The department also offers education programs such as sustainable gardening, beekeeper apprenticeship, composting/vermicomposting, seed collection of endangered plants, and propagation of endangered plants for habitat restoration efforts.

Bethel Heights Vineyard is the winner of the Sustainable Wine Producer of the Year Green Award. This vineyard is certified Salmon Safe and LIVE, generates more than 60 percent of its energy through solar panels, and partnered with the Willamette Partnership to restore potential habitat for the endangered Fenders Blue Butterfly. It recycles the cardboard wine boxes, glass wine bottles and plastic shrink wrap, and reduced water use by installing a steam cleaner for wine barrels.

The Assistance League of Salem-Keizer is this year’s Business Recycler of the Year. It promotes reuse by running two consignment stores, reuses plastic bags and cardboard from the purchase of new school supplies and clothes for school children, established a purchasing agent position to ensure the purchase of “greener” products, and hosts many fundraisers that are nearly zero-waste events. It runs its nine philanthropic programs entirely with 400 volunteers, who all learn and are committed to the League’s reduce, reuse, recycle practices.

Marion-Polk Food Share, which distributes more than 9 million pounds of food and runs 68 community gardens, received the Earth-WISE business of the Year award. It serves more than 40,000 people each month, saved 320,866 pounds of food waste in farmers’ fields or individuals’ gardens with Salem Harvest, redistributes 9 million pounds of food from food processors or large producers who have out-of-spec products, and kept 4,123 pounds of paper and 6,470 pounds of plastic out of the garbage in 2014. Its partnership with dozens of grocery stores sends about 1.5 million pounds of food to hungry people instead of the garbage and the Food Share aims to capture an addition 505,000 pounds when it expands its program.

“This year’s Green Award winners are incredible sustainability leaders in their field,” said Alan Pennington of Marion County Environmental Services. “Their impact will be felt for years to come within their industry and within our community. We are so grateful for their green efforts, and we hope these Green Awards show others in the area that they too can make a real difference.”



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2016 Earth Day Poster Contest Winners

The grand prize winner of the 17th Annual Oregon Garden Earth Day Fair poster contest has been selected by a panel of local judges. Allium Letey-Moore, a 10th grade student at Sprague High School, was the winner for both her age category and for the grand prize.

Allium's entry will be used for this year's poster and other promotional advertisements for the upcoming Earth Day event that will take place on April 23, 2016, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at the Oregon Garden in Silverton. Admission is free.

This year's theme—Clean Water, Clear Skies—drew numerous entries from students throughout the area. As the grand prize winner, Allium will receive a certificate and a \$100 gift card from Fred Meyer. This year we will also recognize Allium's art teacher, Connie Toland. As the teacher of the grand prize winner, Ms. Toland will also receive a \$100 gift card to be used for classroom supplies.

Other winners include: Olivia Carr, a 3rd grade student who also attends Abiqua Academy, and Alexis Reeves, a 5th grade student at Hammond Elementary. Both of these students will receive a certificate and a \$50 gift card from Fred Meyer.



The Marion County Board of Commissioners will present each of the winners with their certificates and gift cards during a regular board session meeting on April 20, 2016.

The winning art work and honorable mention entries will be on display at the Oregon Garden in the Grand Hall during the Earth Day Fair. The honorable mention posters were:

- Ava Wolf from Wright Elementary
- Olivia Bellin from Englewood Elementary
- Krystian Davis from Community Roots School
- Savannah Pfeiff from Saint Mary Catholic School
- Enoch Mendoza from Livingstone Adventist Academy
- Oliver Samiee from Abiqua Academy
- Kylee Baughman from Saint Mary Catholic School
- Allyssa Beermann from Stayton Middle School
- Kyra Gilbert from Sprague High School

Sponsors for Earth Day include Marion County Public Works with additional, generous sponsorships from the Oregon Garden Resort and Renewal by Andersen.



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Calendar of Events for April

- 4/1/2016 Ribbon Cutting - Adam's Rib Smoke House
- 4/1/2016 Greeters Networking - Hosted by: ABC Window Cleaners
- 4/7/2016 Public Policy Session
- 4/8/2016 Greeters Networking - Hosted by: Heritage Grove Federal Credit Union
- 4/11/2016 Forum Speaker Series Luncheon: City Council Candidates
- 4/12/2016 Chamber Business Women
- 4/15/2016 Greeters Networking - Hosted by: City of Keizer - Keizer Community Center
- 4/22/2016 Greeters Networking - Hosted by: Bud Pierce for a Better Oregon
- 4/25/2016 Power Hour
- 4/26/2016 Leadership Youth Graduation
- 4/27/2016 LEAD Business Summit 2016
- 4/29/2016 Greeters Networking - Hosted by: Queen of Peace
- 5/6/2016 Greeters Networking - Hosted by: Keizer Heritage Center

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