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Sisters, Oregon

Tuesday, February 14, 2006

## McDonald, Sisters Coffee Co. honored

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Jeff McDonald was named Citizen of the Year and Winfield and Joy Durham's Sisters Coffee Co. was honored as Business of the Year at the annual Sisters Area Chamber of Commerce dinner on Thursday, February 9.

Chamber members met at Eagle Crest Resort for an installation dinner to celebrate the Chamber's 30th anniversary and to honor those who have made a difference in the Sisters community.

The Business of the Year award winners were taken by surprise. Sisters Coffee Co. owners Winfield and Joy Durham had not been to a Chamber dinner before, so they joked they were glad they decided to come this time. Last June, the Durhams moved their coffee business to a large, new lodge-style building on Hood Avenue.

The Citizen of the Year sat hoping the person he nominated would win until he slowly realized the honor was being bestowed on him. Jeff McDonald, manager of Ray's Food Place, was chosen by the Chamber Board of Directors for going above and beyond his duty in supporting the Sisters community.

"I was a bit overwhelmed," said McDonald of his award. He was praised for being "endless in his personal effort on behalf of children."



McDonald said from his family to his business to his fellow members of the Chamber, he has had wonderful examples around him of what it means to support the community.

McDonald said being active in the community was something instilled in him by his parents. He said they taught him to "do your part" to give back to the community. Also, McDonald said he feels lucky to have worked for a company for the last 23 years that fosters a sense of responsibility toward the community.

McDonald has been active in Sisters Kiwanis, serving as president last year. Also, he promotes Ray's programs to support Sisters including the Community Rewards program which recently raised \$10,000 for local nonprofits.

"I'm an advocate in getting those things out there so people can participate," added McDonald.

"If I'm deserving, it's because I've paid attention to a lot of great people," said McDonald. He added that people active in the Chamber had set good examples for him.

The evening also included a changing of the guard. Chamber Executive Director Cheryl Mills thanked outgoing board members and President Donna Kightlinger.

“I appreciate your help, your guidance and your service,” said Mills.

Before turning the presidency over to Chuck Fadeley, Kightlinger bestowed the President’s Award on two people who she said “have been the glue that’s held us together” through transitions in leadership. She called Chamber employees Jeri Buckmann and Jeanne Nolander “spunky,” adding “we truly thank you.”

Kightlinger said accomplishments this past year include increased marketing for the Sisters area and a redesigned Web site which will be launched in a few months.

Past Chamber President Peter Storton officiated at the dinner, bringing the crowd from tears to laughter. Storton asked for silence to remember people dear to the community who had lost their lives last year including Bill and Jan Reed, who Storton said “contributed so much.” The couple, active supporters of the Chamber, schools and other activities, died in a plane crash last July.

The crowd was brought to the other end of the emotional spectrum with a roast of retiring long-time Chamber member Bob Grooney. He raised money for the Sisters “flush fund,” eventually culminating in the public toilets in Barclay Park. For that effort he was “honored” with a one-of-a-kind plunger hat.

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