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Mountain Communities Award Banquet

By Staff Writer, Mountain News

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All community awards recipients, including Goodwin's employees, assemble on stage

CRESTLINE - Several citizens were recognized for their outstanding service to our communities on May 11, as the Rotary Club of Crestline-Lake Gregory presented the 2023 Mountain Communities Award Banquet. The banquet was provided by Thousand Pines, where the event took place. The program was structured like a typical Rotary Club meeting, with opening ceremonies and a meal. The host for the recognition program was the Reverend William "Bill" Mellinger, Past President of the club, and minister of First Baptist Church of Crestline.

A number of local organizations each chose an individual to be honored. Rebuilding Together Mountain Communities selected Diane Davis. Diane plays many roles in organizing Rebuilding Day, including recruiting, registering, training, feeding, and assigning jobs to those who come to help rebuild. According to Diane, "It's the community that rebuilds the mountain." Rebuilding Day was postponed from April, and will take place June 24 this year.

San Bernardino County Fire Department, with three chiefs present, selected Firefighter/Paramedic Robert Stine to be honored. According to the department, Stine "came in to work while off duty to assist with the 2023 storm, put the community ahead of himself, and worked tirelessly." Stine has been a coordinator and trainer of Urban Search and Rescue (USAR). In accepting his award, Stine gave credit to the entire firefighting community.

Mountain Homeless Coalition submitted Wendell Wilson as their honoree. Wendell is the chair of the MHC Housing Committee. He finds and manages properties to provide living space for people coming from homelessness. He manages and maintains cabins co-owned by the Housing Authority and MHC. Wendell thanked Rotary for presenting the event.

Sara Green was honored by Crestline Connect. Sara holds many positions in the community in organizations that enhance life for citizens, including managing The Market at Lake Gregory, and officer positions in

Crestline Chamber of Commerce, ROTW Education Foundation, and Rim Vets Outreach. She is active in many facets of our community, and says, “Community changed my life.”

Soroptimist International Rim of the World designated Sandy Puglisi to be recognized. Sandy edits the monthly newsletter, and manages all aspects of technology and media for her club, including building and managing the club website. Her communication talents have enhanced the effectiveness of many of the club’s projects. Puglisi says she is just “one cog in the wheel.”

Rim of the World Education Foundation selected Pricilla Williams. Williams, as an officer of the Arrowhead Villas Mutual Services Company, works to ensure the residents have safe drinking water and cleared roads. As Chair of the Partnership with Schools Grant Committee, she has helped to award \$80,000 to Rim Schools. She can often be found volunteering for various school programs.

The Crest Forest Senior Citizen’s Club put forward Jeronimo Breen. He is currently the Purchasing Agent for all of the club’s projects, but he participates in many of the club activities, such as the Senior Luncheons, the fundraisers, and the thrift store. “This is more about the club, than it is about me,” said Breen.

Mountain Sunrise Rotary Club picked Geoffrey Hopper to be awarded. Geoffrey and his wife Lauralea created a scholarship program through the club, which awards two \$1,000 scholarships for college or vocational students each year, Hopper also runs the Rotary auction each year. Hopper says, “I love to volunteer. It makes me feel good.”

The Women’s Club of Lake Arrowhead honored Geri Quintero, who has volunteered for WCLA at Mountain Thrift Shoppe for hundreds of hours. Quintero, a member for over a decade, said, “Moving to the mountains is my life experience.”

Customarily, Crestline-Lake Gregory Rotary designates someone as a Mountain Hero. This year the club selected Dr. Kimberly Fricker and Goodwin’s Market/Mike Johnstone.

In the recent disastrous storm, Dr. Fricker stepped up to meet many needs of the community. She began to advocate for the community to authorities off the mountain as the urgency of the event grew. She opened school facilities as shelters, food delivery points, and food dispensaries. She pushed for more plows to allow students to attend school, and thereby helped open Highway 18. She emerged as an unofficial disaster coordinator. Dr. Fricker responded to her award, “You have welcomed me with open arms and real affection.

Goodwin’s Market, serving Crestline since 1946, is led by David Goodwin, a third generation Goodwin, and Mike Johnstone, from the fourth generation. When the big storm began to cover the roads, many employees hiked through snow to keep the store operating. Then, on Mar. 1, the store roof completely collapsed. The employees’ response was to convert the store into a food distribution site, starting with food that could be salvaged, then pass out donations brought in by others. It was obvious that the Goodwin’s team was inspired by their leadership. Mike has found roles in other operations for many of his employees. Mike and David did not attend the banquet, but sent some of their loyal employees to be recognized instead. The employees passed on a message: “Thank you for choosing our family and community for recognition.”

In the final stage of the evening’s program, the Crestline-Lake Gregory Rotary Clubs recognized two members of the club, Stanley and Linda Oswalt, as Rotarians of the Year. According to the club, the couple

“jumped right into our projects and have become a vital part of the club. Stanley and Linda have a heart for service and exemplify the Rotary motto: ‘Service above Self.’”

<https://mountain-news.com/news/42222/mountain-communities-award-banquet/>

Dog rescued from 15-foot-deep sinkhole in San Bernardino

By Nelson Espinal, The Sun

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The dog after being lifted from the sinkhole (Courtesy of San Bernardino County Fire)

San Bernardino County Fire Department crews on Wednesday afternoon rescued a large husky dog that was stuck in a sinkhole in San Bernardino, authorities said.

It happened in the 100 block of East Mill Street, where San Bernardino Animal Control reported the dog was stuck. Fire crews arrived to find a large husky 15 feet below the surface of a parking lot.

They used a specialized camera to assess the situation and slip a rope around the dog to quickly hoist it to safety, the fire agency said in a statement.

The dog appeared unharmed and was given to Animal Control staff for transport to a local veterinarian.

It was unclear how long the dog was trapped in the hole.

<https://www.sbsun.com/2023/05/17/dog-rescued-from-15-foot-deep-sinkhole-in-san-bernardino/>