

# WENATCHEE NORTH ROTARY June 27, 2012

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# FOUNDED APRIL 1, 1969 Sports Awards homer



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## The banquet was delicious because commander-in-chef 'Alice' had nothing to do with food preparation



In his last really official duty as commander-in-chef of WNR before locking the doors to the restaurant, Steve Ellis stayed out of putting any sort of elbow grease into the preparation of food for the 42nd NCW Sports Awards banquet. Thank goodness, because 'Alice' would have had the throng of attendees eating meatloaf or chicken fried

steak rather than the buffet that was presented - perhaps the Wenatchee Center's best effort ever.

Not only was the chow as good as it gets at a "rubber chicken" banquet like the Sports Awards, but every facet of the event was top notch with virtually 100% favorable marks. Jim Haglund was at the top of his game as emcee with the only blemish being forgetting to give out the Blindfolded Orangutang Award that annually goes to the member of the Selection Committee who picks the most recipients correctly. That person just happened to have been at the banquet, by the way. So it goes.

Greg Brown dazzled us not only with the amount of energy he poured into several vital tasks associated with Sports Awards success, and thanks to modern technology, he also resurrected the "slide show" that used to be a part of the ceremony for several years about a quarter century ago. Jeff Mertes supplied most, if not all of the photos, and Brownie added the blood, sweat and tears to put it all together - truly a highlight that required the metabolism of a fly to make happen. He definitely should be awarded a 'purple helmet' for his efforts.



The banquet was set-up better than ever with Rich Adams and Brownie paving the way. Jeril Hanson's piano playing was a nice touch thanks to Adams who also stepped forward to be the 'mule' in picking-up and packing-in the Sports Awards Illustrated programs and getting them distributed at each place setting, then taking tickets at the door to give us an accurate count of attendees.

Then there's Steve Tidd for being the little guy with the odd running gate who did nothing but win races and for inviting his 'old coach', Mac Bledsoe, to be the featured speaker. The silence was deafening while Mac spoke and there wasn't a person in the audience of about 300 left untouched by his inspirational message.

And Earl Tilly, for suggesting that we consider Roger Barnhart for the Don Elliston President's Award, assembling statements of support for the selection, and then coming to the banquet all the way from Bend, Oregon where he was playing in a seniors tennis tournament.

Finally, a pat on the back to Joe Gaspers who now has the unenviable task of billing advertisers. Needless to say, he has discovered how much additional time it takes to locate addresses that weren't indicated on order sheets. Considering there are 128 supporting the Sports Awards with their messages, Joey 'The Geek's' task is herculean.

Although pre-banquet coverage by The Wenatchee World was disappointing, in some respects shut-out by large women's roller derby articles and giant photographs of Labron James at practice, radio stations and weekly papers came through for us. It appears that post-banquet coverage, even in The World, will be good.

No doubt there were others deserving of recognition who worked behind the scenes to make the 42nd Sports Awards a success in all respects. But, dang (who says that?), we're out of space for any more accolades.

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## PRESIDENT'S INSTALLATION

A highly informal ceremony at the  
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Remove the sack and what you have will prompt immediate rebagging.

The first time this Unknown ever flew in an airplane, he bailed out and parachuted back to earth from 3,000 feet guided by scratchy radio instructions after surviving free fall. An Apple Capital native, he graduated from the University of Washington with a bachelor of arts degree in communications with special focus on copywriting and the psychology of how best to induce the masses to buy more stuff than they really need by convincing them that they must have it, and thereby making the U.S. economy robust as a result. With the only hundred dollars ever sent from home long since spent, this Unknown, although accepted for grad school, opted instead to try to earn some 'big bucks' right out of the chute because scholarships for impoverished students hadn't yet been invented. But the only offer that met his salary requirements in those recession days of billboards in Seattle reminding the last person leaving town to please turn out the lights, was at the newspaper in Ketchikan, Alaska (the same one that Earl Tilly was a paperboy for as a lad). Married to high school sweetheart Kathy, who gave up a full-ride scholarship to follow him to the UW, they raised two daughters - Courtney and Kelsey - and now have two grandsons. Residences have included Seattle (a couple of times), the aforementioned Ketchikan, Bellingham and Wenatchee. This Unknown has shown a knack for concocting games and motivating people to play them over the years. Other pasttimes include dabbling in oil painting and cartooning, occasional rounds of golf that run him about \$300 each, sitting in CenturyLink Field, and trying to keep up with the grandkids. Favorite vacation spots are Washington D.C. and surrounding battlefields, Mexico, Hawaii and Vancouver Island. He and Kathy were once rearended by a driver distracted by a 5-foot boa constrictor loose in the backseat.

Who Dat? Jeff mertes



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