who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who



Sofia Serio Cook

Scott's Roofing announces that **Sofia Serio Cook** has recently been promoted to operations manager. Serio Cook joined Scott's Roofing in 2024 as office administrator. She did not come from a construction trades background, but quickly learned roofing terminology and our customer base to be able to have detailed conversations with our current and potential clients. She jumped right in and handled setting estimate appointments; tracked leads, estimates sent and jobs won; posted job ads and screened potential candidates; and dealt with customer communication throughout the projects. Over the years, she has become even more instrumental in the overall operations of the business, including technology implementation, software training, social media marketing, standard operating procedures creation and organization, business prospecting and customer relations (she may have dropped off cookies or cupcakes to you!), and improving the overall customer experience.

Serio Cook will continue to expand and grow in our improvement of technology, processes, employee hiring and training, event planning, nonprofit events and drives like the back-to-school drive and holiday toy drives, as well as many other areas of the business.



Chris Laing

AARP Oregon has named **Chris Laing** of Sisters the recipient of the 2026 AARP Oregon Andrus Award for Community Service, the organization's highest volunteer honor. Named for AARP founder Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, the award recognizes Oregonians age 50 and older who use their experience, talent and leadership to enrich lives and inspire community service.

A founder of Age-Friendly Sisters Country and a longtime advocate for older adults, Laing is being recognized for leading a community-wide effort to help older residents remain safe, connected and independent. Through the volunteer-driven Serving Our Seniors (SOS) initiative, she has united residents, nonprofit leaders, local experts and community organizations around a shared goal: helping people stay in the place they call home as they age.

What began as a grassroots effort to understand older adults' needs grew into a community-wide initiative. Under Laing's leadership, volunteers conducted surveys and listening sessions, consulted health and aging experts and studied successful models across Oregon. The work culminated in a Senior Resource Fair and community forum that identified practical ways to support aging in place and improve quality of life.

SOS has formed volunteer-led teams focused on services, social connection, transportation, health care, caregiver support and neighbor-to-neighbor assistance. Working with nonprofits, public agencies, businesses and community leaders, the initiative is turning local input into coordinated action on rural challenges such as isolation, caregiving demands, home maintenance and limited access to nearby services.

Beyond SOS, Laing serves as a state-licensed long-term care ombudsman and advances age-friendly policies and practices. Colleagues describe her as an exceptional organizer, collaborator and mentor who inspires others to serve. Her ability to engage volunteers across generations has strengthened civic involvement and community care in Sisters.

Laing's work reflects the Andrus Award's focus on volunteer service that strengthens communities and inspires others. AARP Oregon honored her on October 13 at a community celebration in Sisters attended by local leaders, nonprofit partners, volunteers and residents. The event recognized her leadership in building SOS and advancing solutions that help older adults live safely and independently.



Ashley Hoff

Dr. **Ashley Hoff**, an OHSU residency-trained, board-certified dermatologist, has joined **Dermatology Health Specialists**, with offices in Bend, La Pine, Redmond and Burns. A Central and Eastern Oregon native, Hoff is thrilled to return home and serve her community through adult and pediatric dermatology care, as well as aesthetic and laser treatments.



Mairi Burns

Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) has named **Mairi Burns** as its chief growth officer, a new executive leadership role designed to help the foundation grow its capacity and engagement and increase its impact.

As chief growth officer, Burns will oversee OCF's marketing and communications efforts, driving strategies that connect more people, businesses and communities to the foundation's mission to improve the lives of all Oregonians through the power of philanthropy.

Originally from Scotland, Burns brings more than 25 years of leadership experience spanning financial services, consulting, agency leadership and nonprofit fundraising in both the United States and the United Kingdom. Most recently, she served as vice president of brand marketing at First Tech Federal Credit Union, where she led efforts to strengthen brand strategy, sponsorship investments and marketing measurement while positioning the organization for long-term growth.

During her time at First Tech, Burns created First Tech Beyond, a sponsorship and community engagement platform that significantly increased brand awareness. She was recognized as First Tech's 2025 Leader of the Year for her enterprise-wide impact.

Earlier in her career, Burns served as chief strategy officer at CMD, vice president of client services and strategy at Dunthorpe Marketing Group and led her own consulting firm, Caledonia Marketing, advising organizations on growth strategy, market positioning, customer engagement and organizational transformation. She began her career in the United Kingdom, working in financial services, agency leadership and nonprofit fundraising.



Michael Hammerstrom

The **Oregon Arts Commission** announced that Governor Tina Kotek has appointed **Michael Hammerstrom** of Portland, Oregon, to the Commission. Hammerstrom is a multidisciplinary theater artist and nonprofit professional whose career spans performance, arts nonprofits and public media.

Hammerstrom earned a BFA in Musical Theatre from The Boston Conservatory at Berklee. While touring the country performing children's theater, he discovered a passion for ensuring that kids can see themselves represented in the arts from an early age.

He built his nonprofit career in Washington, D.C., at KABOOM! and PBS before returning home in 2019 to serve as director of marketing and development at Oregon Children's Theatre. He currently works as a market research analyst for Oregon Public Broadcasting, where he also serves on the organization's equity team.

An active member of Portland's theater community, Hammerstrom has also performed extensively in New York City and regionally, and has sung with the Portland Gay Men's Chorus and the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, D.C. His board service includes Theatre for Young Audiences/USA, Bridging Voices and Many Hats Collaboration. He is a contributor to *Anti-Racist and Anti-Oppressive Futures for Theatre for Young Audiences: An Interactive Guide*. He lives in Northwest Portland with his dog, Dexter.



EMILY LAPLUME OF SATURDAY SWIMWEAR | PHOTO COURTESY OF BOW

Saturday Swimwear founder **Emily LaPlume** of Portland, Oregon, took home the $10,000 audience-selected cash award at the 2026 BOW BreakOut Pitch Event on October 14 at Volcanic Theatre Pub in Bend. The annual event brought together outdoor brands, investment companies, industry leaders and outdoor enthusiasts for an evening celebrating entrepreneurship, innovation and the strength of the outdoor community. The event also celebrated the Bend Outdoor Worx (BOW) Production Financing Fund, with a total of $975,000 in financing checks awarded to BOW alumni companies Spiral Wax and MODL.

Hosted by BOW, the nation's first and most experienced outdoor industry accelerator, BreakOut once again drew a packed house, with attendees showing up to hear founders share their stories, pitch their businesses and compete for the no-strings-attached cash award.

LaPlume and Saturday Swimwear joined the four other companies from BOW's 2026 Cohort on stage: Toast Wear (Bend, Ore.), Fire Science Solutions (Bend, Ore.), Merge4 (Santa Cruz, Calif.) and Pine & Co. (Vancouver, B.C.). Each founder brought a unique vision to the stage, offering a glimpse into the creativity, determination and entrepreneurial spirit shaping the future of the outdoor industry.

The evening also highlighted BOW's commitment to helping outdoor brands grow beyond the early stages of business. Through its Production Financing Fund, BOW awarded a $175,000 check to Spiral Wax and an $800,000 check to MODL, providing a combined $975,000 in production financing to the two BOW alumni companies. Alongside Saturday Swimwear's $10,000 BreakOut award, the event marked a total of $985,000 awarded to outdoor businesses.

The 2026 BOW BreakOut Pitch Event was part of High Desert Innovation Week.

The **Deschutes Cultural Coalition** (DCC) is seeking applications for grant funding from all sectors within the culture field, including arts, heritage and humanities. Grant funding is sponsored by the Oregon Cultural Trust and Deschutes County. The partnership with the county, which began in 2022, will continue into 2027 to help cultural nonprofits build program and operation capacity.

The online grant application for Cultural Grants opened on Monday, October 26, 2026. The complete application is due Friday, January 8, 2027, at 5pm. Guidelines and instructions are available at deschutesculturalcoalition.org/grants. The Coalition will make its awards in January.

In 2026, the DCC awarded $50,000 to

More Who's Who Next Page ▶

The Deschutes County Sheriff's Office Announces Expansion of School Resource Deputy Program

by JASON CARR, Public Information Officer — Deschutes County Sheriff's Office



DEPUTY CASEY KARPSTEIN WITH STAFF MEMBER AND STUDENTS



DEPUTY JEFF WOODS WITH STAFF MEMBER



DEPUTY TRISTAN COX WITH STUDENT | PHOTOS COURTESY OF DESCHUTES COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Deschutes County Sheriff's Office is expanding its School Resource Deputy (SRD) program as part of Sheriff Ty Rupert's operational plan and ongoing discussions with Command Staff and community partners. The position was posted on October 22.

In response to the recent tragedy at Silver Rail Elementary School, Sheriff Rupert has authorized an additional SRD position dedicated to serving county schools. This expansion underscores the Sheriff's Office's commitment to maintaining a strong, coordinated law-enforcement presence in local schools and supporting partner districts during critical incidents.

"Our schools must remain safe places for students to learn and grow. Expanding our School Resource Deputy program strengthens our partnership with local districts and reinforces our commitment to protecting children, staff and families throughout Deschutes County," said Deschutes County Sheriff Ty Rupert.

An experienced deputy who previously served as an SRD has been temporarily assigned to provide interim school coverage until a new deputy is hired.

The SRD position is now posted internally, and the deputy selected will be assigned to an area that best fits the needs of the team and our schools. Adding an additional SRD enhances the Sheriff's Office's ability to prevent, prepare for and respond to threats in local schools while providing a visible and trusted law-enforcement presence for students, staff and families.

"I want to acknowledge the fears and expectations of families who are asking for full-time SRDs in every school, and today's action is one step forward," said Sheriff Rupert. "Protecting our entire county is critical, and our schools have become an even higher priority following this tragedy. I'll continue partnering with Bend-La Pine Schools and our community to build on our SRD program that helps better protect our children."

The Sheriff's Office currently has three full-time SRDs serving schools in Sisters, La Pine, Terrebonne, Tumalo, Bend's Buckingham Elementary, Realms Middle School and Sunriver's Three Rivers School. Adding this new position will bring the team to four deputies, and the Sheriff's Office will continue working on future plans to further expand the SRD program.

sheriff.deschutes.org

A Garden for Every School

Grant Applications Are Now Open for the 2026-27 School Year!

by DENISE ROWCROFT, Youth Education & School Gardens Program Director — The Environmental Center

At The Environmental Center, we believe that every child in Central Oregon should have access to a garden. When children participate in hands-on outdoor education, whether that's playing in the dirt looking for worms, growing their own carrots to eat or using their senses to explore the garden, we believe that outdoor learning opportunities produce happier, healthier students. School gardens also offer valuable social-emotional learning benefits, giving students and staff peaceful, restorative spaces to connect with nature.

Since 2018, our school garden grants have supported school gardens across our region, raising and distributing over $140,000! We raise money every year to help schools achieve their goals of either building a garden from the ground up, funding improvements to their current garden or supporting access to nearby community garden spaces. The Garden for Every School Grant Program serves public and private pre-K-12 schools and youth organizations in Central Oregon. If you are a teacher, principal, school staff, student or parent volunteer with a great idea, this grant is for you!

About The Environmental Center:

The Environmental Center's mission is to embed sustainability into daily life in Central Oregon. We translate sustainability into practical, local action in order to create a healthy future for people and the planet. We are focused on building community, educating kids, revolutionizing energy, rethinking waste and advocating for change.

envirocenter.org



PHOTO | COURTESY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

Who's Who

Continued from previous page

local nonprofits such as **Dry Canyon Arts Association**, **Sunriver Music Festival** and **Ellipse Theatre Community**. The Deschutes Cultural Coalition provides grant funding from all sectors within the culture field, including arts, heritage and humanities. This grant funding must support projects and activities that address one of the four priorities outlined within the Deschutes Cultural Plan:

- Encourage greater awareness of local culture.
- Ensure that a variety of cultural resources and programming are accessible to all residents.
- Provide cultural education in Deschutes County
- Help new and established cultural organizations increase their capacity to fulfill their mission.

Rudy's Markets shares that the founder and executive chairman, **Rudy Dory**, has been named the first recipient of the National Grocers Association (NGA) Foundation's Catalyst for Independence Award. He accepted the honor, which comes as Rudy's Markets marks 50 years in Central Oregon, at the recent 2026 NGA Executive Conference in Chicago.

The new award recognizes leaders at NGA member companies who go out of their way to mentor, empower and develop the people who will lead independent grocery next. The Foundation chose Dory for his work with emerging leaders, his support for employee ownership and his belief that independent grocers have a future worth investing in.



PHOTO | COURTESY OF RUDY'S MARKETS

Dory has worked in grocery for more than 50 years. He began in 1976 by building La Pine's first grocery store from the ground up. Since then, he and his wife, Debbie, grew that single store into a family of markets across Central Oregon, which includes Newport Avenue Market, two Oliver Lemon's locations and Ollie's Kitchen. He also helped guide Newport Avenue Market as it became Central Oregon's first locally founded, 100 percent employee-owned grocery store.

A central part of Rudy's legacy is how he planned for what comes next. He mentored and shared ownership of the business with his daughter, Lauren G.D. Redman, and gave her the responsibility and the room to grow into a leadership role. Today she serves as CEO and president of Rudy's Markets, evolving and carrying the family business successfully into its next chapter.

NGA President and CEO Greg Ferrara said the future of independent grocery depends on leaders who invest in those who come after them and called the opportunities Dory has created for others to lead his greatest contribution. NGA Foundation Vice President Chelsea Matzen added that Dory reflects what the award is meant to honor by being a leader who opens the way for others so that independent grocers can keep serving their communities and stay independent.