



Redlands staff and volunteers nominated for honors

By DAVID JAMES HEISS
Staff Writer

Several people have been nominated for their service to public education in Redlands for the countywide Medal of Honor.

Among those who have won include faculty from the Colton-Redlands Yucaipa Regional Occupational Program, PTA members and local business owners.

Nominations for the Education Medal of Honor were made in six categories: Volunteer in Action/Community Volunteer; Volunteer in Action/Service Group; Partners in Education/Small Business or Franchise; Partners in Education/Corporation; Excellence in Education/Education Professional; and Excellence in Education/Student Alumni.

"It's a great honor, and we're very proud to be nominated," said John Walsh, who co-chaired the Measure J campaign with Renee Kern to pass a bond to complete the construction of Citrus Valley High School.

Walsh and Kern were nominated in the category of Volunteer in Action/Community Volunteer.

"While Renee and I are the faces of Measure J, this nomination really honors the community," Walsh said. He noted that scores of commu-

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nity volunteers were on board to help with the Measure J campaign.

Nominees for CRY-ROP are: Claudia Cooley, teacher, Excellence in Education/Education Professional; Greg DiGiovanni, teacher, Excellence in Education/Education Professional; Bonnie Farris, teacher, Excellence in Education/Education Professional; and Becky Sharp, teacher, Excellence in Education/Education Professional.

Others also nominated for their dedication to Redlands Unified School District are: Paul Barich, Volunteer in Action/Community Volunteer; Cherry Bordelon, principal, Redlands Adult School, Excellence in Education/Education Professional; Emily Bueermann, Cope Middle School, Volunteer in Action/Community Volunteer; Barbara "Bobbi" Cummings, volunteer, Volunteer in Action/Community Volunteer; Larry Dodge, Excellence in Education/Student Alumni; Robert Hodges, retired superintendent, Excellence in Education/Student Alumni; Dennie-Marie Morales, preschool education teacher, Redlands Adult School, Excellence in Education/Education Professional; Chuck Wilburn, owner, Shakey's Pizza, Partners in Education/Small Business or Franchise.

For the Yucaipa-Calimesa Joint Unified School District, nominees are Beth Baker, owner, UPS Stores, Partners

in Education/Small Business or Franchise; Mary Drexler, PTA president, Dunlap Elementary School, Volunteer in Action/Community Volunteer; Bob Erickson, president, Yucaipa Valley Kiwanis Club, Volunteer in Action/Service Group; Sue Gray, owner, Kopper Kettle Kafe, Partners in Education/Small Business or Franchise; and Richard Rios, attorney, Olson Hagel & Fishburn, Partners in Education/Small Business or Franchise.

"I'm flattered to be in such great company," said Barich, a businessman who campaigned to have hand sanitizers installed in all of the district's classrooms.

Barich knows most of those who were nominated for him, and pointed out that Bordelon, who is retiring in June after 22 years, took his father's place as principal at Redlands Adult School.

George W. Barich retired as the adult school's principal in 1989, when Bordelon took over.

Paul Barich worked with then-superintendent Bob Hodges' administration to partner with Redlands Community Hospital and P & R Paper to install hand sanitizers in the schools.

Barich was honored to be in the same company as Dodge, who provided the funds for the Dodge Family Stadium, which opened this year at Redlands High School.

The nominees are among more than 40 across the county who were suggested for the 2008 awards.

The Education Medal of Honor program is sponsored by the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, the San Bernardino County School Boards Association and the County Communicators Network.

Frick, Frick & Jette Architects, Inc. in Victorville, the Orange County Teachers Federal Credit Union and J&M Trophies in Redlands are sponsors.

Members of the California Inland Empire Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America served as an independent judging panel.

Morales was surprised to learn she was nominated for the honor, and was curious to find out who nominated her.

"There are so many dedicated teachers in the early childhood field, it is humbling to be nominated for this award," said Morales, who advocates readiness skills for kindergarten and the importance of preschool. "We all work diligently in the trenches because we so ardently believe that early education can prevent problems 'down the road.' Any child who is adequately prepared for kindergarten by attending a quality preschool is fortunate."

Recipients of the Education Medal of Honor and Distinguished Service Award will be recognized at a banquet on April 28 at the Etiwanda Gardens in Rancho Cucamonga.

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