

DATE: November 21, 2022

RE: Grand Marshal, Bend Christmas Parade

From: Dina Barker

Bend, Ore: Jim Lussier will be honored as Grand Marshal of the Bend Christmas Parade on December 3, 2022. The parade will begin at noon traveling from Harmon Street and Newport Avenue to Wall Street through downtown, onto Bond and returning to Harmon. Parade goers can watch the parade from anywhere along the route. Jim will be riding in a red convertible Corvette during the parade. Our 2022 Deschutes Pioneer Queen, Shirley Kilpatrick will be riding in a vintage Ford Model-T.

When you talk about health care in central Oregon, the name Jim Lussier will likely come up in conversation about how this once small town built a world class health care system that now serves the entire tri-county area.

Born in Great Falls, MT., Jim moved with his family to Salem, Oregon when he was in high school. He attended the University of Oregon and received a bachelor's degree in Sociology and went on to complete his MBA. After graduating college Jim joined the Air Force, hoping to become a pilot but due to health concerns his military career took a different path. Instead, he was recruited by the Air Force Command to do studies of the Air Force's practices on logistics, equipment, and health care system. Through his studies and subsequent reports of the military health care system, Jim gained a wealth of knowledge on how these large hospital systems and administration ran from top to bottom.

Shortly after leaving the military in 1970, Jim answered an ad for hospital administrator in Bend. It was at this interview with Sister Catherine, where he was recruited to build a new hospital and that launched his 36-year career with St. Charles Health System. Jim did not get the administrator's job to start, but in 1988 was named CEO and served in this position for the next 18 years before retiring in 2006 to start The Lussier Center (TLC).

During his time at St. Charles, Jim focused his attention on broadening all services beyond acute care and encompassing the patient experience through environment, food, and music while creating a culture surrounding the principles of love and compassion. Treating the mental health and wellbeing of each person as well as their health care needs. He did this by making the hospital a positive, calming and nurturing place for the community. Which has expanded into Redmond, Madras, Prineville, Sisters and La Pine. For his leadership role in bringing world class health care to central Oregon, he was honored with the naming of the North Tower when it opened in 2020. Currently Jim is back working with St. Charles as Chairperson of the St. Charles Foundation.

Over his lifetime, Jim has been a tireless volunteer and strong community leader. A Rotarian since 1970, his work with Rotary includes being the District Governor, Curriculum Coordinator for 750 clubs along the west coast and 2 trips to Africa. He and his late wife Margie hosted an exchange student, Beate Skonnord Fodstad from Norway, who still holds sports records at Mt. View High School. Jim was also a founding member of City Club and Volunteers in Medicine, a board member with Bend Chamber of Commerce, spent 19 years on the Board of Directors for Central Oregon Community College, and served on the Board of Directors for the Oregon State Board of Higher Education.

A spry 80-year-old, Jim does not plan to slow down. He still enjoys working out daily and spending time with his 2 daughters and 4 grandchildren. Christmas is Jim's favorite day of the year and wanted to share his wish for all of us. To share the "spirit of Christmas with everyone, every day, all year."

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