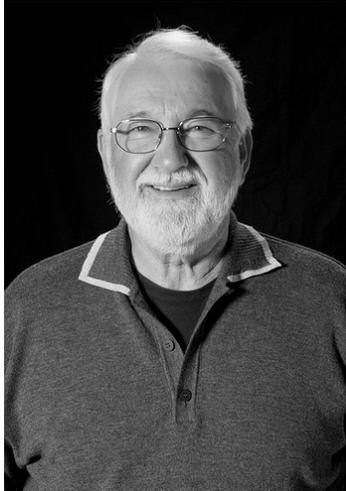


# Central Oregon Heroes of 2010



## **Tom York, Blood Hero**

Tom York is a friendly, modest man. A retired security executive with Albertson's living in Redmond, he devotes many hours per week to volunteer activities in Central Oregon. As part of the Supervisory Advisory Board for the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office, he reviews inmate charts for consideration of early release, serves on phone banks during fire emergencies, answers questions for impacted families and volunteers as a Certified Range Safety Officer for Redmond Rod and Gun Club.

York has shown his greatest commitment to volunteerism as a blood donor, having given more than 14 gallons of blood since he began donating more than 50 years ago as an 18-year-old student at the University of Portland. He is "on call" as an apheresis donor for cancer patients. Tom came to view regular blood donation as even more important when his then 10 year-old grandson was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoma Leukemia.

Volunteerism runs in the family -- his grandson, now 23 years old and a reserve officer with the Redmond Police Department, devotes two weeks each summer as a counselor for children at "Cancer Camp", where he once attended as a patient.

When asked why he volunteers, Tom says that he is now retired and has time to give back to the community. "Getting out also keeps you connected. I stay pretty busy." And why donate blood? "There is no synthetic supply. It is the duty of those of us with our health to get out and do our part to help others." Despite having saved countless lives, Tom is still modest. "Well...if I have, I am pleased."



## **Bea Leach, Health & Safety Hero**

On the morning of February 28, 2009, Bea Leach and her husband attended the Sunday service at the Mountain View Methodist Church in Redmond. Bea left the service briefly to go to the restroom and found a woman outside the door who told her there was someone sick inside. Bea immediately entered to find Joel Irnerwin lying on the floor in one of the stalls, apparently unconscious. Her pale face was turning blue, with her tongue to one side of the mouth. She was not breathing.

Bea went into action, pulling Joel from the stall and laying her on her back on the floor. Bea had just seen a segment of the Dr. Oz show about CPR, to which she paid particular attention since her husband had suffered a heart attack a few months earlier. She knew how to compress the victim's chest and began the procedure as someone else called 911. Bea told Joel, "You are not going to die on me...dying is not an option!"

Not knowing when paramedics would arrive, Bea asked a woman standing nearby to perform mouth-to-mouth. The woman turned out to be Joel's aunt. The pastor stopped the service and came to help. The patient started to revive, but when paramedics arrived they could not find a pulse. Joel was rushed to St. Charles Redmond where she remained for almost a month, followed by two weeks of rehabilitation. Joel, who has had CPR training herself says, "Everybody did everything right." Bea Leach says of the incident, "My instinct was to run to it, not from it. The feeling of satisfaction in saving this life is like giving birth."



## **Tonya Harvey, Health & Safety Hero**

Tonya Harvey has lived in Central Oregon for approximately four years, working for Applebee's Restaurants for the past seven. On the evening of March 15, 2009, she was working at the Applebee's in Redmond when the unusual happened. As Tonya left the kitchen to serve food to waiting customers, she noticed a woman -- Paula Lee -- and a man standing by their table. The woman was choking.

Tonya's father, a firefighter and longtime La Pine resident, had trained her from an early age in first aid, CPR and abdominal thrusts, commonly known as the Heimlich maneuver. She immediately recognized what was happening, set down the food she was carrying and took control of the situation. Tonya performed abdominal thrusts on Paula and, after three attempts, dislodged the blockage. After Paula and her companion were re-seated, the restaurant quickly returned to normal.

While Tonya believes "people should help other people, not for recognition," and doesn't think she did anything particularly unusual or heroic, Paula Lee may be alive today because of Tonya's quick thinking and the training she received from her father.



## **Ireland the Dog, Pet Hero**

On the night of February 3, 2009, Stephanie and Joe Ague were asleep in their Redmond home when they were jolted awake at 11:30 pm by a loud crash. They went to their front door to find that their neighbor's car, parked across the street, had been hit and seriously damaged by another vehicle. As it turned out, a drunk driver recklessly continued down the street, hitting two other parked cars.

Stephanie ran across the street to alert her neighbor of their damaged car. As she crossed the street, the drunken driver turned his truck around and sped toward Stephanie. Their dog Ireland -- still inside the house -- sensed danger, broke through the screen door and ran into the street, pushing Stephanie out of the path of the on-coming truck. Ireland took the full force of the impact and was killed. Although she was clipped by the speeding truck and suffered a broken shoulder, broken leg and two displaced hips, Stephanie's life was spared. Stephanie's husband Joe chased the hit and run driver at speeds up to 120 MPH until he was finally apprehended in Terrebonne.

Ireland was a beloved pet that the Agues took home as a puppy about 18 months earlier. She had no formal training that would explain her heroic actions that night. She had a perfect heart shaped spot on her back and the Agues have placed her ashes in a special glass heart shaped box. As Stephanie says, "Ireland was more than a pet; she was a member of the family."



## **Clay Davis, Wilderness Rescue and Safety Hero**

Clay Davis is a young firefighter and EMT with the Sisters Camp Sherman Fire District. He is also an avid skier and outdoorsman, as is his uncle, Tom Gall, a fellow firefighter/EMT and resident of Rhododendron. On December 26, 2009, Clay visited his aunt and uncle and, late that afternoon, the men -- along with their friend Phil Todd -- decided to go cross-country skiing for a few hours. The trio planned to ski along the unusually accessible Pacific Crest Trail, starting at Lolo Pass. Gall had been there the previous day without incident, so none of them could have predicted the scary adventure to come.

A mile from the trailhead, the trio had to cross a steep open pitch. Gall, an experienced backcountry skier, led the way and told the others to plant their poles for traction. A minute later he heard a scream. He turned to see "a giant snowball" (Phil Todd), tumbling down the precipitous slope. Todd had slipped and plummeted over the edge onto a steep snow slope, skidded over a blocky cliff, and rag-dolled through trees and bushes before he came to rest 600 to 700 feet below the trail. His friends could not see him. When asked later what he remembered of the accident, Todd said, "I just remember sliding, and then it all goes blank."

Ten minutes passed before Gall and Davis could reach Todd. Gall called that the worst part of their experience, ten minutes of deathly silence. "I just knew it was not going to be good." On their arrival they found Todd upside down, semiconscious, face bloody, clothes shredded, skin exposed and with an obvious leg injury. Gall was concerned that Todd was also showing signs of a head injury. After splinting Todd's leg with a ski pole, Gall took a GPS reading, climbed back up the slope and went for help. Davis stayed with Todd, precariously balanced on the hillside as daylight was waning, knowing that the rescue could take hours.

Clay did everything possible to keep Todd comfortable and awake. He gave Todd his hat and coat and sat in the frigid temperatures wet, having run through a stream when he and Gall descended the hill to reach Todd. Clay held Todd in a manner that allowed Todd to breathe easier and keep them both warm. After arranging the rescue, Gall returned about two hours later. Eventually 25 rescuers arrived on the scene. As rescuers arrived, Clay was showing signs of hypothermia and Gall sent him down the hill to the warmth of one of the vehicles. As he came downhill, Clay saw a rescuer toting a heavy rope and pitched in to help until he was once again ordered down hill. Eight hours later, Phil Todd was successfully evacuated. Clay also recovered without injury.



### **PFC Alex Johnson, Military Hero**

PFC Alex Johnson joined the Army at the age of 18, looking for more excitement in his life. Alex was assigned to the 569th Engineering Company, whose mission in Afghanistan was to clear mines and improvised explosion devices (IED) on routes that would be traveled by supply convoys.

On October 23, 2009, the third day of a four-day mission out of Kandahar, the lead truck in Alex Johnson's convoy of Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles was hit by an IED and disabled. Shortly thereafter, Alex's vehicle was hit and disabled. He climbed into another MRAP to continue the mission when that vehicle was destroyed by an estimated 800 lb. IED that detonated directly beneath the vehicle. Two soldiers were killed and four, including Alex, were injured in the blast. Alex suffered two broken legs and back injuries, for which he has since undergone multiple surgeries.

Alex was airlifted from the scene back to Kandahar and then to Kabul. He was then airlifted to Ramstein AFB in Germany, where he received treatment for two days before being flown to Washington, D.C. and Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Alex remained at Walter Reed for about one month -- where he received much-needed personal supplies from the Red Cross -- and has since received treatment at Madigan Army Medical Center at Fort Lewis (WA), Palo Alto Veterans Hospital (CA) and Brooks Army Medical Center (TX). Alex does feel that he's getting the assistance he needs for recovery, which is expected to take at least another year. His Army enlistment is up August 1, 2012, and he has no immediate plans after that. His focus, as it should be, is on his recovery.



### **SPC Reid Walsh, Military Hero**

Reid Walsh was a young man living in Redmond, working for a fencing company. Many of his friends had joined the active duty military. After talking with a customer -- a retired Captain in the Oregon National Guard, Reid decided that he wanted to make more of a difference in his life and joined the Guard. Today, Reid serves with the 41st Special Troops Battalion (STB), 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

The unit's mission in Iraq was to provide convoy security. They had been deployed for about two months and were on their sixth or seventh escort mission when, on August 28, 2009, they were attacked while crossing a bridge in Rashid, Iraq. Enemy combatants fired an armor-penetrating explosive formed projectile (EFP) from a distance of about 15 meters at the vehicle. Reid was riding as the gunner. The explosion destroyed the vehicle, killing two other soldiers, PFC Taylor Marks and Sgt. Earl Warner. Reid was seriously injured, with shrapnel to both legs.

At first, Reid was dazed and could not catch his breath for about 30 seconds. A piece of hot shrapnel lodged in his flack jacket was burning his skin. He also felt panic when he discovered that he could not move the turret on his vehicle to defend the convoy with his 50 caliber machine gun, should they be stormed by insurgents.

Reid was evacuated to a field hospital and eventually returned to Redmond. He is now dividing his time between home and Madigan Army Medical Center in Fort Lewis (WA). Recovery has been "long and slow," but Reid feels he's getting the support he needs. He has particularly high praise for his counselor, Allison Perry, a therapist with the Central Oregon Outreach Clinic. At this point, Reid is not sure what direction he will take when he completes his National Guard enlistment. But as he continues his recovery and moves on with his life, Reid Walsh wears a black bracelet on each wrist with the names of PFC Taylor Marks and Sgt. Earl Warner.