

## Local Community Leaders Receive Recognition



Amazing is one of the words **Hermiston Police Department** Crime Prevention Officer Erica Franz attributed to Chief Pat Hart (*pictured*), of **Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services**, during a safety luncheon recently held at **Good Shepherd Medical Center**.

“He helps keep our communities safe,” Franz said in presenting Hart’s award. Hart was among four people recognized for their service to area communities during the event

sponsored by the **West Umatilla & North Morrow Safe Communities**, in conjunction with **Good Shepherd Medical Center’s Education and Wellness Department** and the **Oregon Department of Transportation**.

Also recognized were Senior Trooper Amy Ford with the **Oregon State Police**, Carol Briscoe, chairwoman of the **File of Life Program** sponsored by the hospital auxiliary, and Sam Wick, a senior at **Hermiston High School**.

Hart humbly accepted the award and later attributed his success to the men and women who work in the trenches at Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services. “I work with a great bunch of people and they make me look good,” he said. “I enjoy the work I do and the people I work with.”

When introducing Franz to announce the award recipients, Kathy Thomas, the hospital’s health and safety educator, said the goal of the luncheon was to interact with community partners and recognize community leaders. “We think it’s important to stop and say, ‘thank you’ to those who have made a difference in the community,” Thomas said.

Although Hart was the only award recipient able to make the event, Thomas said the others have made important contributions in making our communities a safer place to live. Senior Trooper Ford has been with the state police since July 2000 and is co-chairperson of Safe Kids – Blue Mountain. Also, for the past seven years she has served as a certified child passenger safety technician – improving the health and safety of children and families throughout Umatilla and Morrow counties.

The local Safe Communities group focuses on various areas of safety including child safety seats, bicycle helmets and use of safety restraints. For more information, contact Kathy Thomas at [kthomas@gshealth.org](mailto:kthomas@gshealth.org) or 541-667-3502.

Photo and Article by Tammy Malgesini  
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