



MEDIA RELEASE

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Friends of Trees Honors Community Leaders on May 17

Bob Sallinger, NW Natural, and Port of Portland Receive Awards

Friends of Trees celebrated another record-breaking planting season at its annual Leadership Awards Luncheon at the Multnomah Athletic Club today. At the luncheon, the nonprofit presented its 2012 leadership awards to Bob Sallinger (Individual Leadership Award), NW Natural (Business Leadership Award), and the Port of Portland (Community Partner Leadership Award).



KGW News Anchor Tracy Barry served as Master of Ceremony for the event, which was sponsored by *The Oregonian* and Rigert Shade Trees.

Bob Sallinger received the 2012 Individual Leadership Award for his successful advocacy for habitat restoration, which contributed to significant changes in Portland's tree codes, the planting of 21,000 new street trees through Friends of

Trees' partnership with Portland's Bureau of Environmental Services, and future restoration work through Friends of Trees' Green Space Initiative.

"It's been great working with Friends of Trees," Sallinger said following the standing ovation he received as he accepted his award. He added that while he served on many committees, Friends of Trees got to do the "real work of planting trees."

NW Natural Community Relations Manager Von Summers accepted the 2012 Business Leadership Award on behalf of the company, which received the award for its generous support for Friends of Trees, including support for Friends of Trees' expanded work in Eugene and Springfield.

"We've been a partner with Friends of Trees for about ten years," Summers said, noting that NW Natural plans to continue partnering with the nonprofit in the future.

Bill Wyatt, executive director of the Port of Portland, accepted the 2012 Community Partner Award on behalf of the Port, which was honored for contributing tens of thousands of dollars to community tree plantings during the past decade.

Wyatt noted that the work the Port of Portland does can “come at some expense” to the community, and the Port values its partnership with Friends of Trees so it can give back to the community. “I think we’re going to have a long a prosperous relationship,” he said.

At the close of the luncheon, Portland General Electric Senior Vice President Bill Nicholson presented Friends of Trees with a check for \$4,839 for the 4,839 PGE customers who signed up for paperless billing during a recent six-week period, when PGE pledged one dollar to Friends of Trees for each new paperless billing customer. The response to the paperless billing promotion, he noted, represented a 50% increase over the number of sign-ups during the same period last year.

In leading off the program, emcee Tracy Barry described her and her mother’s love for trees. “I always think the bigger, the better,” she said, which led to her family’s needing “to do a little transplanting.” Barry described how her mother used to rescue plants from the roadside. “If she saw a plant in harm’s way, she would save it,” Barry said, which is how her family ended up with a redwood in their small yard in Gig Harbor, Washington.

Because of her mother’s love for trees, it was especially meaningful to plant in her memory at Friends of Trees’ Gift Tree planting years ago. “Beyond anything else,” she said, “that was such a gift.”

With the help of more than 3,500 volunteers and hundreds of donors, Friends of Trees planted about 43,000 trees and native plants during the 2011-12 planting season. This included more than 5,300 street and yard trees, a 15% increase over last year, and nearly 38,000 trees and native plants in green spaces, a 36% increase over last year. Since 1989, the nonprofit has planted more than 450,000 trees and native plants in the Portland-Vancouver and Eugene-Springfield metro areas. To learn more or to order a tree for your home, visit www.FriendsofTrees.org.

Photo of award winners taken by Lucia DeLisa. From left, NW Natural's Von Summers, Friends of Trees' Scott Fogarty, Port of Portland's Bill Wyatt, Audubon Society of Portland's Bob Sallinger, and KGW News Anchor Tracy Barry.