

# Smiley Brothers recognized for Coho Salmon Project

The Smiley Brothers have yet another reason to smile. This past weekend Mike Ehlen of Manzanita accepted the Outstanding Oregon Tourism Volunteer Award at the annual Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism in Salem. With fellow recipient Bill Campbell, also of Manzanita, out of town it was up to Ehlen to accept the award and deliver an acceptance speech, something he's not accustomed to.

"I'm not the type that generally enjoys getting up in front of 500 people to speak," said Ehlen, "but, being a dutiful soldier and proud team member, I accepted my fate... I have to say, all in all, it was a fantastic event."

The award recognizes

significant commitment by an individual or a group of individuals exemplifying the positive impact of volunteers on Oregon's tourism and hospitality industry and on Oregon's economy. Though Campbell and Ehlen as the principal instigators who spearheaded the project each fall were the recipients of the award, Ehlen is quick to point out that it is a community effort that has made the program a success.

"When Bill Campbell first told me about this award, I have to admit a feeling of pride and accomplishment for all that everyone has done in this community to make this happen - ODFW, Tillamook Bay Boathouse, Neah-Kah-Nie High School,

our local Rotary, volunteers, and community support of businesses and individuals. This is truly a grassroots and local effort with great representation of our area of the north Oregon coast."

Travel Oregon hosted the annual "Celebrate Our Stars!" kickoff event at the Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism on Sunday, April 14, during which the 2012 Oregon Tourism & Hospitality Industry Achievement Awards were presented. The conference is a once a year opportunity for industry folks on all levels to gather for three days of tourism-related presentations and seminars. Seven industry awards were given at the opening of the conference.

"Hopefully I did not embarrass the family too severely," said Ehlen following the ceremony. "I'll admit I did have a pretty good time and of course the upshot is that the Smiley Brothers program has more support and recognition than ever. A big shout out to all the folks around here that have, are, and have been involved with this project over the past four years. And guess what... we're just getting rolling."

Currently under construction, the Smiley Brothers are looking to launch a website in the next month or so, with the help of webmaster Gene Dieken. "It will be under [Smileybrothers.org](http://Smileybrothers.org) or .com," said Ehlen. "Not sure which yet."



Mike Ehlen (right) of Manzanita with Todd Davidson, Chief Executive Officer of Travel Oregon, at the Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism in Salem where Ehlen received the Outstanding Oregon Tourism Volunteer Award on behalf of the Smiley Brothers for its Waterhouse Falls Coho to Food Bank project. Photo by Janice Gaines