

Volume 43, Issue 4

BLACK DIAMOND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Fall 2019



#### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

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# ELECTIONS

## TIME FOR ELECTION OF THE BOARD TERM TWO YEARS STARTING 11/1/2019 thru 2021

Are you are interested in becoming a Board Member (Officer or Director)? Contact President Keith Watson (cell# 425-214-3684) or Dee Israel (cell# 253-797-4456) or the Museum phone # 360-886-2142. Please consider running for one of these positions and contact us ASAP to get on the ballot.

At this time, the following have asked to be in the running:

**President:** incumbent Keith Watson

Vice President: incumbent Shawn Oglesbee

Secretary: Laurie Evans

Treasurer: incumbent Sherrie Evans

**8 Directors:** incumbent Gomer Evans, incumbent Don Mason, incumbent Rosemary Konoske-Bigalow, incumbent Susie Thompson, incumbent Dave Watson, Incumbent Elsie Parkin, BDHS Member Greg Lichty, BDHS Member Charlotte Berg, and BDHS Member Susann (Sue) Watson.

Our Annual General Membership Meeting will be October 27<sup>nd</sup>, 2019 from 1pm to 3pm. That is the day that the Officers and Directors of the Board will be elected and/or re-elected to a two year term.



## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2019 1 PM - 3 PM





The mission of the Black Diamond Historical Society shall be the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of the history of Black Diamond and environs, as it relates to King County and the State of Washington.

Black Diamond Bulletin is published quarterly by and for the members of the Black Diamond Historical Society. The society is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. (TIN51-0170304).

PRESIDENT Keith Watson
VICE PRESIDENT Shawn Oglesbee
SECRETARY (Interim) Laurie Evans
TREASURER Sherrie Evans

#### **DIRECTORS**

Howard Botts Gomer Evans, Jr.

Rosemary Konoske-Bigelow

Don Mason

Elsie Parkin

Steve Israel

Susie Thompson

**David Watson** 

MEMBERSHIP Laurie Evans
EDITOR Leih Mulvihill
FEATURE WRITER William Kombol

PHOTOGRAPHER Bob Dobson

#### ARTICLES

Black diamond bulletin invites articles for publication. Articles may be edited for style, length, and clarity. Please contact the society if you wish to submit an article, at, museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org

#### CONTACT

Black Diamond Historical Society and Museum P.O. Box 232

32627 Railroad Avenue Black Diamond, WA 98010

PHONE 360-886-2142

E-MAIL museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org

#### WEB

www.blackdiamondmuseum.org www.facebook.com/BlackDiamondHistory www.blackdiamondhistory.wordpress.com www.twitter.com/BD History

#### **HOURS**

Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday & Sunday, 12 to 3 p.m. (winter); 12 to 4 p.m. (summer)

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## Seattle Now & Then: "Pacific Coast, Seattle's Own Railroad"

The Museum had a visit from Jean Sherrard with Seattle Now & Then and author Kurt E. Armbruster who wrote the new book "Pacific Coast, Seattle's Own Railroad".

Kurt gave a wonderful video presentation about the history of the railroad who came to Black Diamond and served passenger service as well as hauling of coal to market service for many years. It's a fascinating read with many photos and would make a great gift. You may want to pick a copy up at the museum for a donation of \$20 or order it sent to you for a donation of \$25. Here is a photo of Kurt in front of the museum.



#### **SPECIAL NOTE:**

The BDHS fiscal year is now January 1 – December 31, as new by-laws were approved by the membership in March. Therefore, memberships due to expire on July 31, 2019, are now extended until December 31, 2019. We will provide reminders in the winter newsletter.

#### \*Front Page Photo Caption

1900 circa PCC079 entrance to the franklin mine 12 seam wooden coal cars and the electric trolley were typical mining machinery. http://blackdiamondmuseum.org/Gallery

## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE: FALL 2019

Hello and welcome to our museum newsletter.

#### **Black Diamond Labor Days**

Labor Day was another successful Black Diamond City event that was chaired by Tony Moss and put

A MESSAGE from the PRESDIENT



KEITH WATSON

together by all his helpful volunteers. The museum participated in the parade with Mike Androsco driving the museum's vintage 1947 Ford Cooper Black Diamond fire truck. After the parade he parked it at the museum for people to view. Thanks Mike, another great job.

Other members featured in the parade on the "The Green River Queen", were Gomer Evans (driving), Frosty the Snowman, Santa Claus, and Mrs. Claus waving to the crowd. The trio will be back in town during our

"Hometown Christmas" on Saturday, December 14th from 10am to 3pm. Thanks to Shawn Olgesbee, Tom and Leih Mulvihill and other volunteers who helped invite all to the upcoming event.

Other volunteers operated a booth on the play field featuring donation drawings for beautiful gift baskets. Donations received will be used to fund the Home Christmas event.

#### Labor Day 1907



Here's the Labor Day celebration in 1907 by the Black Diamond train depot. On the right is the train depot (now the museum), Show Hall on the left in the background, with the Confectionery store on the corner. The buildings on the far left burned down with that whole town block in 1913.

The Hometown Christmas committee has been working hard to make this upcoming event every bit as good as the last number of years. There will be hayrides, cookie decorating, Christmas decorating, art instructions, a visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus, Frosty the Snowman will be present, King County library story telling will be in the museum, and much, much more.

## amazonsmile

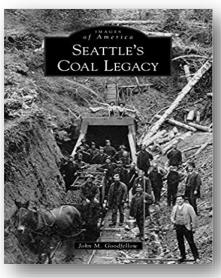
You shop. Amazon gives.

Thank you to all of you who are using Amazon Smile and selecting the Black Dimond Historical Society as your favorite non-profit organization. The costs are the same but part of the profits are sent to the Society.

#### Halloween Treat Oct. 31 at the Museum

On Thursday Oct. 31 at 10am John Goodfellow, author, will be presenting his new book "Seattle's Coal

Legacy" at the Black Diamond Museum. Please join us for this important event. The book tells an important story about coal and the role that Black Diamond played in the development of Seattle. The historical record and photo shared by the author will amaze you!



### BDHS DESIGN & UPGRADE SERIES #5 & #6

By Dee Israel. Design Team Coordinator & Photos by Keith Watson

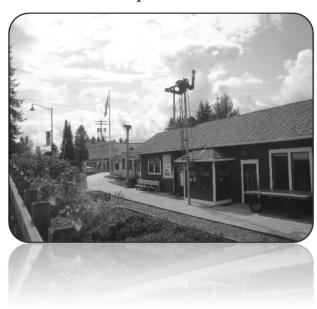
In the last newsletter, I didn't include an article because President Keith Watson had that came from the Black Diamond Catholic actually covered it in his Report. You remember, it was the wonderful things that we were able to accomplish around the museum with the help of 4Culture Grants, such as lighting upgrade, exterior repair & painting of the Museum (including a picture of the crew). As well as the Donation by McGann Electric of the upgrading of much of our electrical system.

I decided that should have been called Series #5.

Series #6 is a continuation of #5, and includes getting the painting of the out buildings done, as well as adding lighting to sever-

al display cases & the large church window Church. One of the projects we are working on now is the addition of monitors thru out the museum, showing our visitors slide shows of the people, artifacts and events of the past.

The attached picture shows how the museum and outbuildings look with the new paint. Since the newsletter is in black & white, you can't see how fresh & nice it looks, and the cabinet lighting & monitors do not show up in B & W, so this is an invitation to come and visit in person.



#### **Presidents Message**

Cont. from previous page

#### "THE BLACK DIAMOND STORY"

You are invited to see the professionally produced video of "The Black Diamond Story". It will be shown on Sunday October 27 at the General Membership Meeting in the museum. The meeting time is from 1pm to 3pm. This is also the time for members to elect officers and board members for the Black

Diamond Historical Society.

We wish you a happy fall season!

Keith Watson, BDHS President





MEMBERSHIP AND RENEWAL FORM (Renewals due January 1 of each year)				
Name(s)Address		Ann Individual Family Lifetime – Indiv Lifetime – Famil		
City State _	Zip	~~Donations~~ Newsletter Fund Other	\$	- -
Day Phone		Total Enclosed	\$	
Eve Phone  Cell Phone  Date of Birth (optional)  Gift? If so, who is it to/from?  How did you hear about us?		New	Make checks payable to BDHS  Mailing address: Black Diamond Historica Society P.O. Box 232 Black Diamond, WA 980	al
		BDHS is a 501(c)(3) 1	nonprofit organization (TIN 51-017)	9304)
(For museum use only) Referred by _				
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For individuals only. Business me	mbership forms can be fo			
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"Amazing!"

## FROM MULES TO MOTORS - THE STORY OF COAL MINE HAULAGE

BY WILLIAM KOMBOL

Coal mining was hard work, made harder by fundamental laws of nature. Newton's 1<sup>st</sup> law of motion states that a body at rest will remain at rest unless moved by an external force. To a coal miner this means that a loaded coal car on a track of rails is going to stay right there unless something moves it. In the very early days of coal mining, that's exactly what miners did – put shoulder to coal car and pushed.

Soon enough horses and mules were introduced underground. Mules were preferred over horses because of their superior intelligence. A mule is an offspring of a male donkey (jack) and a female horse (mare). According to research by British scientists, mules have a faster capacity to learn about spatial relations (figuring out and navigating around objects) than horses or donkeys. This was particularly important in the tight quarters of an underground coal mine. In popular imagination mules are characterized as stubborn, mean, and vindictive. However, these traits usually result from poor training or a bad handler.

While mules are the butt of many jokes, their im-

portance to early coal mining cannot be overstated. Before the introduction of electricity into mines, mules pulled heavy coal cars, hoisted timber, and performed haulage jobs which would have oth-



An underground mule barn at the Bellingham Coal Mine. Photo courtesy of George Mustoe.

erwise consumed the labors of a dozen miners. In Nora Finch's 1904 book "Colliery Jim: The Autobiography of a Mule," she concludes: "While man furnishes the brainpower, which directs the workings of the great coal industry, the mule constitutes its bone and sinew. Without this patient, homely drudge the coal industry could hardly be carried on, yet few persons realize his worth or take into account his sufferings."

A mule was a miner's best friend. The mule and handler were a team, working together hundreds of feet below the ground's surface. The mule's animal instincts



Bess the mule with an unnamed miner, March 17, 1914. Photo #28219 courtesy of Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma.

could warn of impending underground trouble. A mule 'felt' the earth quicker and 'heard' the rumblings sooner than the miner. The bond between man and beast was strong – a bond not always shared by mine owners.

One of the more famous local mules was named Bess. She was employed at the Cannon mine located on the banks of the Green River in Franklin. A photo of Bess' emaciated body landed on the front pages of Seattle newspapers in February 1914. She'd been working in the same mine where Andrew Chernick and Mike Babcanik were caught in an underground collapse. Chernick's body was soon found. But, fellow miners continued digging for Babcanik on the remote chance he might be found alive.

While details of the Babcanik's rescue attempt dominated the headlines, a reporter for the Seattle Star named Fred Boalt focused his story on Bess and her overworked body covered with sores and bruises.

The article went viral. The Humane Society "arrested" the mule and released her for rest and forage outside the mine. Animal cruelty charges were made against the mine Superintendent leading to his trial. Bess was transported to Seattle as an exhibit for inspection by members of the jury. Eventually the charges against the Superintendent were overturned after the fully restored Bess returned to work.

And what became of Mike Babcanik? Six days after the cave-in all hope was lost. But, Mrs. Babcanik was awakened from a dream in which her husband had come to their door. She went to the mine the following morning and urged miners to keep digging for her trapped husband. On mid-morning of February 23<sup>rd</sup>, Mike was found alive after being trapped underground for seven days.

In the early 1900s electric powered trolleys or locomotives began replacing mules as the preferred method of haulage in the bigger underground coal mines. Electricity was often generated from on-site, coalfired power plants. The largest companies were typically the first to convert to electric haulage motors including those in Black Diamond. On Dec. 1, 1905, the Enumclaw Courier reported. "Half a hundred mules which have not seen the light of day, some of

them for ten or twelve years, will soon be taken from the mines of the Pacific Coast Company at Black Diamond and at Coal Creek and electricity will be used in their place to transport cars underground. It is the intention of the Pacific Coast Company to install electricity as motive power in all of its



Jack Cloves Smith shown operating an electric motor outside the mine at the Carbonado mine, circa 1936-37. Photo courtesy of Robert Peloli.

mines as soon as possible."

Manufactured by companies such as General Electric, Jeffrey, Porter, and Baldwin these mine trolleys were often called haulage motors, locomotives, or some-

times electric mules. Using 440-volt direct electrical current, a wooden arm connected the motor to a thick, high-voltage copper wire hanging from timber supporting the mine's roof. Others operated with stored en-



An electric motor hauls a train of coal cars to the plant near Ravensdale Lake. Photo #53911 courtesy of the Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma.

ergy from batteries which needed periodic recharging. The haulage motors could pull several loaded coal cars whose collective weight was far greater than any team of mules or horses could handle. By the late 1920s, electric hauling motors had replaced mules in most, but not all the larger coal mines in Washington.

Haulage motors were also used outside the mine. At the Ravensdale mine, a mile-long electric tramway was constructed in 1927 to transport coal to the processing plant located near the south shore of Ravensdale Lake.

All the same, many mines continued to use mules to move coal underground. In 1943, Stephen H. Green detailed the haulage method for every coal mine in Washington. That year, 34 mines produced over 1.8 million tons of coal, nearly half of which came from Roslyn. Surprisingly, underground haulage by mules and horses still accounted for 398,000 tons, or over 22% of the state's coal production including the number three producer, Bellingham Coal Mine. Manual haulage (i.e. miners pushing coal cars) comprised 44,000 tons or 2% of Washington's output. The rest used electric motors for underground transport.

In Bayne, Jim Bolder operated the Carbon Fuel

#### **HAULAGE** Cont. from previous page

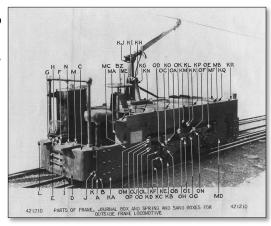
Mines where mules were used well into the 1950s. George Costanich worked there with fond memories of a mule named Jack. "I worked as a mule skinner for Bolde when I started in the mine. I had a whip and hit the mule on his butt a few times, but he wouldn't move. I didn't see Jim as he was sitting on some timbers off to one side . . . it was a bit dark." Bolde interrupted, "Georgie you shouldn't hit Jack with a whip and swear at him. You have to talk nice to him." Bolde approached the mule and said, "Come on Jackie, get up." This went on for about a minute. Then Jim started swearing and picked up a 2" x 6" board and hit Jack between his ears yelling, "You black S.O.B., when I say 'get' you better move." George flicked the whip and Jack started to go.

At the mine exhibit outside the Black Diamond museum, an actual haulage motor is shown pulling a coal car complete with a replicated overhead line. Seattle researcher, John Taubeneck



http://blackdiamondmuseum.org/ Gallery

with the help of Robert Lehmuth has assembled a comprehensive list of the type, manufacturer, and model of electric motors used in most every Washington coal



GE Electric motor design diagram courtesy of Palmer Coking Coal Co.

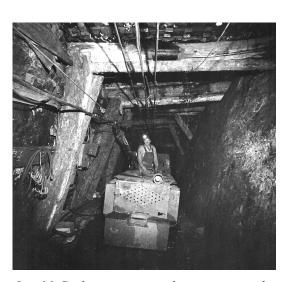
mine. Ralph E. Dockham did similar research into underground mine equipment including trolley motors and locomotives.

Today, most underground coal mines which employ the boom and pillar mining method transport coal with rubber-tired haulage vehicles called shuttle cars. The shuttle cars move coal from the working face to a centrally-located belt loading area for transport to the surface.

Electric mules, just like the real mules before them have generally faded into history, or become relics as museum exhibits.



An electric motor pulls loaded coal cars through the gangway of the Wilkeson mine, March 18, 1944. Photo #D17170-21 courtesy of Tacoma Library.



Lew McCauley operates an electric motor in the Rogers No. 3 mine, Jan. 1973. Photo by Larry Abele courtesy of the Renton Record-Chronicle.

# Obituaries



#### Vivian Ruth Hofto May 13, 1910 - July 22, 2019

Vivian Ruth Hofto passed away on July 22, 2019, in University Place, WA. Born in Black Diamond, WA, May 13, 1910, she was one of four children of parents Jane Dunn Ayers

and George Ayers. Her father George was a coal miner who often needed to move the family to other mining towns.

From age four to eight she and her family lived in Issaquah and later she graduated from Cle Elum High School. The family moved to Tacoma around 1928, where she met Henry Hofto, marrying him in 1934.

During the depression years, Ruth found a job at JC Penny department store and helped support her family. Henry was a musician and a builder. Ruth helped him with his business and also pursued her love of art and crafts. She was very active in Lakewood Artists, Tacoma Arts and Crafts, Allied Artists, and exhibited her multimedia works juried shows, winning many awards. She loved doing oils and acrylic landscapes, paper collage, woodcuts and copper enamels.

At 97 years old Ruth was asked to give a gallery showing of her works at the Lakewood Library. She was still creating until the time of her first stroke in 2009, which left her with impaired vision and hearing and some loss of speech. Some of her paintings hang in Black Diamond Historical Museum and Issaquah Museum, depicting how it looked long ago.

Ruth loved traveling with Henry and daughter Jacqueline, taking many cross-country and continent trips to attend Jacqueline's musical competitions and performances. Ruth and Henry celebrated 64 years of marriage before Henry passed away in 1999. On Ruth's 107th Birthday, the Mayor of University Place honored her with a special proclamation and King 5 News interviewed her at the party, sharing the video with several local television stations.

Ruth is survived by daughter Jacqueline Hofto and nieces Jane Elizabeth Ayers and Susan Cisco. The family is grateful for the loving care Ruth received during the last seven months at Villa Cynthia Adult Family Home and Franciscan Hospice, University Place, WA.

In lieu of flowers, the family would like donations to be made to Washington Talking Book and Braille Library 2021 9th Ave Seattle WA 98121-2783, online www.wtbbl.org. Or you may make donations in Ruth's memory to the Black Diamond Historical Society.



#### James Robert Wetton January 30, 1944 ~ July 30, 2019

Jim and his twin brother Dick were born to Margaret and Dick Wetton. Their growing up years were spent in Black Diamond with their parents and beloved sister Mary

Lou.

Jim's enjoyment of fishing and hunting began in his early years. Later he became an avid vegetable gardener. His hobbies expanded into sauerkraut and Polish kielbasa making, grilling salmon and other delicacies on the barbecue.

For the last thirty years Jim's livelihood came from his business Jim Wetton Plumbing.

For the last fourteen years, Niley his constant sidekick, kept him company as he moved around the property from chore to chore.

In 1973 Jim married Kathy Douglas. For the last fortysix years Jim and Kathy have been a special couple, loving, enjoying, and cherishing each other. They shared their joy, generosity, and willingness to help with a host of family and friends.

Jim has left a big hole in many lives. He is survived by Kathy; his son Jeff and daughter-in-law Joell; grandsons Jeffrey and Jake; goddaughter Alyssa; many relatives and friends; and Niley. Jim was preceded in death by his parents, his brother, and his sister.

A celebration of Jim's life was held on Friday, August 23, 2019 at the Enumclaw VFW at 2:00 p.m. The celebration will be followed by a potluck.

Donations may be made to the Children's Hospital Foundation, P.O. Box 50020, Seattle, WA 98145 or the Enumclaw Fire Department, 1330 Wells St., Enumclaw, WA 98022.

Please share a memory on the tribute wall at ww.weeksfuneralhomes.com



## **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**

BY LAURIE EVANS, MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

The Black Diamond Historical Society now has 276 memberships. We are pleased to announce that during the 3rd quarter of 2019, we have acquired the following new members:

Individual: Cheryl Araujo

Cindy (Maks) Jessup

Peter Loke Jenna Rossi Chris Wisnoski Family:

Steve & Charlotte Berg

Business:

Black Diamond Automotive Johnson Home & Garden Redline Mechanical

We are saddened to report that we lost four valued members due to death – Jim Wetton (obituary in-

cluded), Ruth Hofto (obituary included), George Costanich, and Emma Barber.

Since we changed our membership year from January 1 – December 31, all memberships expire at the end of the year, therefore, we are no longer going to show "renewals" in the newsletter, just new members.

#### DONATIONS

We wish to thank the following for their generous donations during the 3rd quarter of 2019 to the Black Diamond Historical Society.



## MEMORIAL DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF:

Gail Kuzaro - J. L. & J. P. Cunningham

Joyce DalSanto Cindy Jessup Ed & Lois Osborn Palmer Coking Coal

Bryon & Janie Parkinson

Janice Ranton

Jim Wetton - David & Janet McCrindle

Sherrie Evans Janice Ranton

Daryl Sleigh - Janice Ranton

David Media - Janice Ranton

Nola Fontana - Janice Ranton

Tom Gorney & Angie Erath - Fred & Mary Jo Carlson

#### GENERAL FUND DONATIONS MADE BY:

Bounce

Tom & Joyce Erath Gene & Ellie Kerr

Johnsons Home & Garden

Richard Major

DONATIONS ARE ALSO WELCOME FOR -

**NEWSLETTER FUND** 

ARCHIVE PRESERVATION FUND

FIRE TRUCK RESTORATION

FRANKLIN FUND

**HONORARIAM** 

**MINER'S DAY** 

SPECIAL PROJECTS

WELSH HERITGE DAY FUND

#### HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS FUND

Nonie Coby & Bob Hickle

Columbia Bank

Karin Ambur, Mary Kay Independent Beauty

Consultant

Commercial Waste Reduction & Recycling

Rainier Legal Center, Inc., P.S.



Thank you, City of Black
Diamond for the
Operations support!



These donations are greatly appreciated. The Black Diamond Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the Law.



#### PO Box 232♦ Black Diamond, WA 98010-0232 Phone 360-886-2142

E-mail museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org

# BLACK DIAMOND HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM ELECTION OF OFFICERS & DIRECTORS FOR THE BOARD The winners will begin their two year term on November 1, 2019

#### ABSENTEE ELECTION BALLOT FOR 2019-2021

EACH MEMBER MAY HAVE ONLY ONE VOTE - Write-in nominations shall precede election. Counting of all ballots will be done by the Nominating/Election Chairperson and two other members of the Society during the General Membership meeting on Sunday, October 27<sup>nd</sup>, 2019

The followin	ig members have been nominated:	
Officer	s (Vote for 1 in each position)	
President	* Keith Watson	
Vice President	* Shawn Oglesbee	<b>Signature</b> of the absentee voting member
Secretary	* Laurie Evans	
Treasurer	* Sherrie Evans	Print Name:
	by checking the box after ( $8$ ) eight names) re are 9 people running for these positions)	Print mailing address
	* Gomer Evans □  * Rosemary Konoske-Bigalow □  Greg Lichty □	Print email address
	* Don Mason  * Elsie Parkin  * Susie Thompson  * Dave Watson	Print Phone number:
	Susann (Sue) Watson	Date

\*Star in front of the names of the incumbents. You may **Write**-in an alternative in the blanks.

This ballot must be postmarked by October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019



**Black Diamond Historical Society** PO BOX 232 \* Black Diamond, WA 98010-0232

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#### **PAID**

BLACK DIAMOND, Washington PERMIT No. 17







#### Do you like Black Diamond history?

Come join the fun on Facebook, Twitter, our blog and our website!

www.facebook.com/BlackDiamondHistory www.twitter.com/BD\_History www.blackdiamondhistory.wordpress.com www.blackdiamondmuseum.org

And make sure to tell your friends, too.

Renewals due January 1st of each year.

# BLACK DIAMONDS CITIZEN OF THE YEAR presented to DON MASON

In appreciation for his dedication to our community Black Diamond Labor Days 2019





