

# Giving back

*MacLaren kids find ways to give back, including a check for \$5,000 to help at risk kids*

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As a way to make restitution for their crimes, youth at MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility recently donated \$5,000 to the Snowman Foundation.

The money, earned through fund-raising projects, was presented to Michael Allen Harrison, founder of the foundation which seeks to make the arts more accessible.

Gary Lawhead, superintendent of MacLaren, said he had been looking for a way to participate in the cause.

"After discussions with some staff and youth here at the facility, it was decided that we would try to gather funds through a variety of ways and make a contribution to the Snowman Foundation on behalf of the youth at MacLaren," he said.

Lawhead presented a check for \$5,000 to Harrison at the annual Ten Grands Concert on April 19.

The money was raised in partnership with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and Noho's Hawaiian Cafe.

Youth from MacLaren made Christmas wreaths, which were purchased by the tribe, and which made up a significant portion of the \$5,000.

Noho's also made a contribution to

the foundation in the name of MacLaren.

In turn, Noho's was hired to provide food for the facility's end of summer Olympic-style event.

MacLaren is home to approximately 400 of Oregon's most dangerous juvenile offenders.

"They have gone past the at-risk stage of troubled youth in the community, but some day will be returning to that same community," said Lawhead.

Part of the treatment for these young men involves three basic components:

- Taking ownership and responsibility for the harm they have done to the community and the victims of their crimes;

- Learning the skills necessary to help make better choices in their lives, instead of acting out against other people;

- And "giving back," partially making amends to the community and victims they have harmed, through restitution to victims, community service work for the local community, and contribu-

tions in other ways.

The Snowman Foundation interested Lawhead, he said, because it aims to reach youth in the "at-risk" stage.

"With Snowman, through its cause, it may help youth who may be at risk for coming to MacLaren," said Lawhead, "to not come here, and to channel their interests into something more acceptable, like music, sports, art, so they don't run the streets and do bad things to people."

The goal of the foundation is to enhance the performing arts in the Pacific Northwest and make them accessible to all members of the community by cross-

ing socioeconomic, cultural, geographic, and generational boundaries.

Youthful, "at-risk" and rural community members are among the targeted groups.

Lawhead said MacLaren is a good place for juvenile youth to learn how to make better decisions about their future.

"This is not a place where youth offenders do time," he said. "This is a place where they are given opportunities to learn some skills to make better decisions in their lives.

"It's all about choice," said Lawhead of those opportunities.

When youth offenders have gone

through the steps of recognizing what they have done wrong and have learned skills to make better choices, learning to "give back" is a natural step in the process, Lawhead said.

"It is an expectation of their treatment program," he said. "Whether they're making direct retribution to their victims or to community projects, it puts more of a personal touch on what I consider to be a payoff to the community from which they have robbed and pillaged."

Some other projects MacLaren youth have done are making wooden toys, painting the Settlemier House, and building and selling a trailer.



Michael Allen Harrison (center) is all smiles after receiving a \$5,000 check from MacLaren Superintendent Garry Lawhead (left) and W.D. Thompson of Grover Cottage (right). The money, raised by the kids at MacLaren, will go to the Snowman Foundation, which seeks to reach "at risk" youth.