

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce Announces Business of the Year Award Winner and Category Finalists in Fourth Annual Emerald Awards**

**Eugene, Ore.** – After reviewing nearly 90 nominations, an award committee of the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce has selected 12 finalists for its fourth annual Emerald Awards, as well as the winner of the newly added “Business of the Year.” Award winners will be announced at a ceremony at the Hult Center on Tuesday, Sept. 25.

The Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce developed the Emerald Awards program to honor businesses in the Eugene and Springfield area that contribute to our community’s vitality and quality of life by implementing sustainable business practices. Each award represents a core principle of sustainability and demonstrates the important connection between the success of local businesses and the quality of life in Eugene/Springfield.

Businesses will be recognized in categories that promote financial, social and environmental contributions to the community. The new “Business of the Year” award recognizes a company demonstrating outstanding contributions in all three areas (also represented in each of the individual award categories).

The presenting sponsor of the 2007 Emerald Awards is Isler CPA. Award sponsors include Detlefsen Nel & Associates LLC (Business of the Year), Smith Barney (Community Caring), Weyerhaeuser (Environmental Values), Bank of America (Growth) and Endeavor Law Group (Innovation). Media sponsors include KEZI-TV, KMTR-TV and Comcast. Nomination support includes All Academic, Inc.

Winner – Business of the Year:

**Wildish Land Company** has been selected as the Business of the Year for its strong community leadership and demonstrating a long-standing commitment to sustainable business practices.

Based in Eugene-Springfield since 1935, the family owned sand and gravel business serves the needs of customers ranging from do-it-yourselfers, to owners of complex, multi-million dollar facilities.

Wildish supports a variety of charitable organizations and schools,

including the Oregon Trail Council of the Boy Scouts of America, the University of Oregon and Oregon State University, the Eugene Symphony and Bach Festival, and the Springfield Renaissance Development Corporation's renovation of the former McKenzie Theater.

Wildish provides living-wage jobs for thousands of people and invests in employee development. The company's employees are also encouraged to care for one another and volunteer in the community. Wildish is environmentally sensitive, and is the only local sand and gravel company to transport material to its processing plant by conveyor belt rather than by truck.

Emerald Award finalists are as follows:

Emerald Award for Community Caring:

- **FOX-TV, KEZI-TV, KMTR-TV and KVAL-TV** for taking part in the local public-private partnership, One Voice: Media United Against Drugs. In their united effort, these companies provided information to our community to prevent, treat and diminish alcohol/drug abuse and its consequences.
- **PacificSource Health Plans** for its commitment to enhancing the quality of life in the communities it serves. Examples include commitments made through its foundation, promoting employee community involvement and support of United Way.
- **Symantec** for promoting and supporting community involvement. The company has a Matching Gift program, a Dollars for Doers program, and has continued to grow its investment and participation within the community year after year.

Emerald Award for Environmental Values:

- **Café Yumm!** for incorporating sustainability and preservation into every aspect of its enterprise. It uses a wide variety of recycled and earth-friendly products in its construction and design, and common restaurant elements are created from recycled agricultural waste.
- **Euro-Asian Automotive & Autohaus** for installing solar panels on their rooftops, which generate about one-third of their power supply. The EPA-certified shops earned the stringent city of Eugene ECO certification and have installed bulk oil systems for most oils and coolants sold.
- **Royal Caribbean International** for implementing strong environmental values throughout the construction of its LEED Gold certified facility in Springfield. Royal Caribbean helps preserve the world's oceans through the creation of its Ocean Fund.

Emerald Award for Growth:

- **Bow-Tech** for adding 141 jobs from January 2005 to December 2006, offering excellent employee benefits and demonstrating revenue growth.
- **Heli-Tech** for increasing its revenue 30 percent per year in 2005 and 2006. The small business recently made an investment in a new, \$2.7-million building and increased employment from 10 to 18 employees.
- **Oak Patch Gifts (formerly known as Jody Coyote)** for adding 52 jobs from 2005 to 2006 – a 26 percent increase. Net sales have increased by 80 percent for the same period and products can be found in more than 10,000 retail stores.

Emerald Award for Innovation:

- **Invitrogen Molecular Probes** for continuously improving its products and processes. The company’s “Find a Better Way Day” inspires employees to innovate and improve their work flow and response to customers.
- **Life Technologies, LLC** for developing assistive technology software to improve the lives of more than 13 million Americans with cognitive impairments. The company enhances independent living and improves quality of life for people throughout the world.
- **Rafters Footwear Company** for constructing sandals from shredded water bottles and recycled rubber.

Those interested in attending the Emerald Awards celebration can register online at [www.eugenechamber.com](http://www.eugenechamber.com) or call (541) 484-1314.

As the area’s leading business advocate, the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce works to create an environment in which business will thrive. The Chamber works with partners in business, government and education to improve the quality of life for local residents. For more information, call (541) 484-1314 or visit [www.eugenechamber.com](http://www.eugenechamber.com).

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