



### Thummler Memorial Scholarship winners

Seneca Meadows awarded eight \$1,500 awards to two graduating seniors from each of the four school districts in Seneca County Sponsored by Seneca Meadows. Shown are Mary Willower of Romulus, Bree Minges and Ray Proudy of South Seneca, Lukas Ruddy and Courtney Scoles of Mynderse Academy with Seneca Meadows Community Relations Director Mark Benjamin, Not shown are Jennifer Tompkins of Romulus and Genevieve Schroeder and Elsa Jorgensen of Waterloo. Thus fas Seneca Meadows has doled out \$96,000 in scholarships encouraging environmental science. The recipients were selected by the respective school awards committees, and the committees chose outstanding students who have chosen to further their education in environmental conservation, environmental science or other related fields of study. Academic achievement, citizenship, and extracurricular activities were considered in making the selections. This is the 11th year of the annual scholarship with Seneca Meadows planning to continue the scholarship in 2015 as their ongoing initiatives of giving back and encouraging environmental stewardship.

## Romulus awards, scholarships

- JOHN AND HATTIE BROMKA: Jennifer Tompkins.
- GEORGE COVERT MEMORIAL: Benjamin Clise.
- FAYETTE MASONIC LODGE: Dakota Bennett.
- HERBERT S. FLEMMING: Breanne Berlin.
- CARLA LANNING: Jessica Rhone.
- RODNEY LITTLEJOHN: Timothy Mastellar.
- BRIAN LOTTERHOS: Anna Covey, Jennifer Tompkins.
- DAVID R. MAHON II MEMORIAL MUSEUM: Abbigail Kime, Jessica Rhone.
- JAMES R. McDONALD: Jessica Rhone.
- ROBERT DURKEE NIELSEN: Timothy Mastellar.
- OVID WILLARD LIONS CLUB: Edward Murray.
- TROOPER KENNETH A. POORMON: Tyler Case, Jennifer Tompkins.
- SENECA COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY: Jennifer Tompkins.
- BARTON VANRIPER: Marguerite Pasqua.
- VARICK VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY: Benjamin Clise.

## Being on a roll is good, unless skating downhill

It's been more than 250 years since John Joseph Merlin invented the roller skate. Considering there were no cement sidewalks, asphalt streets or concrete half-pipes in 1870, one can only assume Mr. Merlin's intention was to commit suicide.

*Hmmm, running myself into a wall at full speed probably won't do the me in. But maybe if I was rolling down a hill ...?!!?*

I thought about this during a recent trip to Eugene, which is the closest big city to us and home to many University of Oregon students who roller skate through downtown. They do this as a way to leave a smaller carbon footprint, which is ironic considering I go through twice as much carbon in my brake pads by trying to avoid hitting them in traffic. Don't get me wrong. I'm not a roller-skate prude shaking his fist at a generation of whippersnappers with their fancy moves and ibuprofen-free flexibility. In fact, it wasn't long ago (okay, 10 years \*cough cough\*) I was lacing up my own skates in a show of dexterity rivaling any speed-skating Olympian suffering a leg cramp at 40 mph.

In this instance, a friend had asked for my help with a skate party for his daughter – a sweet, thoughtful seven year old whose vocabulary didn't yet include terms like "compound fracture" or "hip replacement."

After getting skates for ourselves and her friends, we discovered the rink also had skates small enough to fit my then two year old son, transforming him into what was essentially a human bowling ball. With a little practice, he became an effective tool for humbling even the most accomplished skater.

However, as we feared, my friend and I were eventually asked to stop rolling my son like a smart missile and actually go out onto the skating area – something that, at first, resembled a pair of blindfolded chimps searching for bananas along the walls of the rink. To our surprise, we quickly discovered roller skating is just like riding a bike: Once you've learned how, the more likely it is you'll get cocky and run into a

post. Which isn't to say we weren't able to regain at least some of our former skating prowess. At one point, I began free skating in an impressive display of grace and speed that left my friend in awe.

Unfortunately, it also left a group of small children too frightened to return to the rink and scarred by the image of a faceless man grabbing at them in order to maintain his balance.

Naturally, it was about this time I realized my son needed a diaper change.

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**at the Speed of Light**  
By Ned Hickson



If you've never performed a diaper change in roller skates, you're missing out on one of life's great experiences, just like riding your bike into a parked car or almost making your victory leap over a tennis net. That's because aside from the normal challenges that accompany changing a squirmy child, there is the fact, at any second, you could find yourself under the changing table doing the splits – something, as far as I know, has only been attempted by Jackie Chan.

The fact I'm here to tell you the story proves I was successful; the fact I went from singing baritone to soprano should tell you to which degree. For example, a decade later my wife knows when I've had one too many drinks because I start involuntarily doing the splits during conversation.

I also can't watch any kind of Olympic skating event without a bag of cold peas on my lap.

Does that mean I regret some of the riskier things I've done? Or continue to do as a volunteer firefighter?

Of course not. Sometimes to get the most out of life you have to stretch yourself.

Hickson is a syndicated columnist with News Media Corporation. His first book, *Humor at the Speed of Life*, is available from Port Hole Publications, [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) or Barnes & Noble.

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