

Fahning family road trip wins Hometown Hero Scavenger Hunt

July 10, 2020



With the traditional 4th of July events canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Fahning family decided to go on a road trip.

Rather than heading somewhere outside the region, they chose to travel from one end of Del Norte County to the other, visiting all 12 sites of the Hometown Heroes and Historical Locations Scavenger Hunt.

The Fahnings were among a dozen participants to complete the challenge, sending proof to the event sponsor — the Crescent City and Del Norte Chamber of Commerce — that they'd visited all 12 sites. The Fahnings sent pictures of color-coordinated Lily, 8, and Cooper, 6, posing in front of each location's poster.

As a reward, the Fahning's name was drawn from a hat to receive a grand prize gift basket.

Hilary Fahning said the whole family was excited and was up for the challenge.

“They are game for everything, same with my parents,” Fahning said. “They didn’t know what to expect. They were excited, like dogs in a car. But I don’t think they knew it would be for four hours.”

She said they got a late start, waiting for her husband and father to get off work. With her parents in one car and the rest of the family in another, they kept in communication via walkie-talkie.

“I thought it would be fun to use walkie-talkies,” Fahning said. “Grandma and grandpa are social distancing using two cars. Plus, it’s fun talking to them, talking about the sites on the way all over the county.”

The scavenger hunt featured 12 “hometown heroes” nominated by the community. A short biography of each was featured on posters at 12 historical locations throughout the county. It took the Fahnings about four hours to hit all 12 sites, starting in Klamath and ending at the mouth of the Smith River, just as the sun was setting.

“The late start ended up being perfect,” Fahning said. “We were able to do it in one sitting, instead of breaking up over a few days.”

Along the way, they even ran across a poster honoring Fahning as one of the hometown heroes. It was posted at Patrick’s Creek. She was nominated for her work with literacy programs, including on the Del Norte Child Care Council’s Wonder Bus. She said she was completely surprised to be nominated among so many other amazing people.

“I don’t do things for recognition. I’d rather the spotlight be on other people,” Fahning said. “That’s why I made sure the kids were in all the pictures on the Wonder Bus. I do things for them and the community.”

Her own kids were “super excited” to reach Patrick’s Creek and see their mother’s poster.

Overall, Fahning said the scavenger hunt was a great replacement event for traditional 4th of July events.

“We all spend a lot of time in our own little bubbles. This was a great way to get out and see the beauty of our county,” she said. “We wouldn’t normally spend that much time driving around the community. But this helped make the most of yucky situation.”

Homegrown events

Cindy Vosburg, director of the chamber, said the Independence Day Community Pride Committee organized two homegrown events to help make up for cancelation of traditional events due to COVID-19. The other event was a patriotic decorating contest.

The organizing committee received “22 excellent nominations for hometown heroes,” Vosburg said. “Any one of them could be a true hero.”

Nominations were whittled down to the top 12. The heroes and a brief reason for their nominations are:

- Joe Gregorio— for all his volunteer work.

- Douglas Plack — for service to his community and helping to honor veterans at the Point of Honor Memorial.
- George Pettit — for rescue work going back to the 1964 tsunami.
- Denise Harnden — for service to teachers.
- Angela Glore — for service to kids.
- Hilary Fahning — for her work towards greater literacy in the community.
- YengLo — for serving the Hmong community members.
- Margaret Mathews — for preserving Native American history.
- Ashley Buckskin — for serving the Native American members.
- Shelly Pena — for serving the community's furry members.
- Emily Ricks — for serving community and country and representing our youth.
- Kelly Schellong – for tons of work she has done for everyone in the community.

Hero calendars

In addition to being featured on posters over the holiday weekend, the “heroes” are featured on 12-month calendars available for sale at \$10 each at the Crescent City/Del Norte Chamber of Commerce office. Each hero will be featured on a different month, along with beautiful scenic shots taken in the county.

“Best of all you’ll be supporting your local Del Norte High School Media Class and the Chamber of Commerce with this fun fundraiser,” Vosburg said.

Chamber office hours 9 am to 3 p.m. 707-464-3174 or email Director Cindy Vosburg director@delnorte.org for more information.