

QUILT SHOW: Show dodged inclement weather

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Pilak said.

“The board of directors of SOQS wants to thank the businesses and community for their help and support,” Pilak added.

The sun finally peaked out from behind threatening clouds to welcome more than 10,000 visitors from all 50 states and 27 foreign countries that arrived in Sisters by tour bus, RV, bicycle, motor vehicle and even on foot to take it all in.

Sandy Lachowski was the featured machine quilter this year and had a showcase of quilts that she creatively sewed together. Using a variety of decorative stitching with her traditional quilter or long arm she skillfully provides each quilt with that finishing touch.

“My customers piece the quilts and I do the machine work,” Lachowski told *The Nugget*. “They put the quilt top together and I do the decorative stitching to secure all of it together. I have a lot of customers that trust me! It’s the most amazing job in the world.”

The Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show’s mission is to educate and inspire the public about the art of quilting, and that it did at the Quilting Activity Area located at the parking lot of Melvin’s Fir Street Market where the special exhibit, the Next Generation Quilters,

was on display. Sewing machines and a variety of fabrics were on hand for kids up to 16 years old to learn about the art of quilting.

The exhibit was hosted by “The Crazy Quilters 4-H Group,” based in Crooked River Ranch with kids from Redmond and Terrebonne. The group of five youths guided other kids in several make-and-take projects.

Christopher Martin, one of the quilters and a student at Ridgeview High School in Redmond, comes from a family of quilters.

“I have been quilting for six years and have been going to family quilting retreats all my life. I enjoy helping the younger kids learn,” Martin said.

The quilt show is always a family affair — including the furry family members — and even though the temperatures

stayed cool, Furry Friends Foundation supplied lots of water and treats for pets and hosted a few doggie pools at Fir Street Park, just in case. Furry Friends Foundation, which provides pet food for families in need in Sisters, was also selling raffle tickets for a dog-themed quilt made and donated by Valerie Fercho-Tillery.

Quilter Rob Appell, who recently gained “sew-lebrity” status on YouTube from his ManSewing tutorials, was the Inspired Instructor for this year’s SOQS. Quilters stood in line to have their photos taken with him under his quilt “And the Flag was still There,” an 8-by-5-foot waving American flag quilt.

In 2014 Appell was selected by fabric manufacturer Island Batik as one of the celebrity quilters in the national touring exhibition



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Ron Appell with his quilt “And the Flag was still There.”

“Quilted in Honor.”

“I’m getting to meet a lot of service men and women. This quilt means a lot to people, and I am very touched to meet all the folks that have served their country,” Appell said.

A group of six women from Tigard, who call themselves “The Sunflower Sisters,” all wore the same blue and white outfits with a sunflower design on their T-shirts.

“This is our 16th consecutive year coming here. Most of us are quilters or are learning to be a quilter and we all graduated from the Tigard school system together. We wouldn’t miss the SOQS, we all enjoy every minute,” said Sandy Hanneman.

In a special exhibit, Sisters quilter Leotie Richards premiered a series of 12 quilts titled “American Folk

Heroes.” She retired to Sisters after 20 years of designing graphics and textiles for retail stores and began quilting seven years ago. In 2014 she began her series of portraits that feature American folk heroes, from Annie Oakley to an exact copy of a poster from Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show.

“It’s fun to dress them and show their spirit,” Richards said. “Having my series at SOQS is a dream comes true for me.”

The Wish Upon a Card Project benefits the SOQS Arts and Design Scholarship Fund for Sisters High School students pursuing visual arts and design higher education. The project is in its 10th year and features a fabric challenge, sponsored by Michael Miller Fabrics.

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