

## HIMBERT: Project is a finalist in DIY Challenge

*Continued from page 1*

could I recover and do things I did before. You have no idea how frustrating it is to be 6-foot-3 and not be able to do simple things like change a lightbulb or reach things on the top shelf at the grocery store.”

His invention not only has added to Himbert’s well-being, but has vaulted its designer into the spotlight as one of five finalists nationally in a contest sponsored by Eastwood Co., which makes vehicle restoration and customizing tools. The company’s DIY Challenge requires contestants to make some mode of transportation, completing the project solely by themselves.

Himbert and the four other finalists each received \$500 and equipment valued at \$2,000 to help them complete their project.

Himbert worked in his garage shop, and will know soon whether he’s the national winner. The announcement will culminate with an appearance by the winner at a major automotive trade show in Las Vegas in early November, during which the winner’s project will be displayed.

Himbert and a friend already have been flown to Philadelphia by Eastwood for the announcement of national finalists. He completed his final project in mid-August

and since then people have been voting online for their favorite among the five finalists’ projects. A panel of judges will use that online input to make their final decision, but they also will score the potential grand-prize-winner on originality and creativity.

Online balloting at [www.diylegends.com](http://www.diylegends.com) is over, but those who want to know more about the contest and how Himbert fares in the final selection can find out on the website.

After the snowboard accident, but well before he knew about the Eastwood contest, Himbert built a standing frame to hoist himself up out of his chair for periods of time.

“The problem was that I’m just standing, not going anywhere,” he said.

The standing wheelchair was his next step. It was an idea he’d been toying with, and the contest gave him impetus to begin construction.

“It’s kind of a prototype and I’m still working out the bugs,” he said. “I did it over a six-week period, but I think most of it was scratching my head.”

Himbert, 38, has the spirit of an entrepreneur, and hopes to find a way to produce standing wheelchairs for other people. He wants to work with a nonprofit group of some kind, possibly with a link to military veterans or a hospital.

Some companies currently make standing wheelchairs, Himbert said, but he

considers those too heavy and expensive. Also, they don’t break down easily to put into a car as does his model, he said.

Unlike most entrepreneurs, though, Himbert isn’t looking to become rich.

“I’m not in it for the money,” he said. “I want to help other people.”

He earlier exhibited his skills by building a 1958 Chevy pickup truck and a 1954 Bel Air car, designing the hand controls for both vehicles.

“I think I’ve been an engineer since I was born,” said Himbert. “I’ve always been interested in how things work. Not having the use of my legs has required me to build things to be able to do what I want in life.”

The former Southern California resident acknowledges that his strong faith has helped him weather the effects of his snowboard accident. Himbert teaches music at Sisters Christian Academy as well as offering private music lessons. Other times, you’ll find him working in his garage with the thought of benefiting fellow chair users.

“The contest kick-started this idea I had in my head,” he said. “The contest is good exposure, if nothing else. I’ve always thought, ‘How can I make this help other people?’”

## FORUM: Event set not long before ballots are due

*Continued from page 3*

few general guidelines may help to rationally evaluate the candidates.

In the August 2016 issue of *Local Focus*, Mike McCauley, executive director of the League of Oregon Cities, penned a thoughtful commentary on what is required of city officials in order to ensure effective leadership and decision-making.

McCauley suggests integrity is the primary factor necessary to be an effective leader.

“Integrity builds trust and teamwork. It puts the community before the individual... Integrity is about doing the right thing, not the expedient or profitable thing... A lack of integrity hurts organizational performance.”

McCauley went on to say, “A city cannot reach its potential or solve problems without high-integrity officials.”

Presuming a public official is making decisions with integrity, McCauley proposed 11 other attributes that would be helpful in promoting effective leadership in order to help facilitate good decisions, health of the city, and service to the citizens:

1. Integrity.

2. It’s about the community.

3. Humility — we not I.

4. There is no formula. You can learn something from different approaches, but no formula is right for all circumstances.

5. Play on the team.

6. Inclusion — a corollary of it’s about the community.

7. Be yourself. You can learn from others, but you cannot be them.

“A city cannot reach its potential or solve problems without high-integrity officials.”  
— Mike McCauley

8. Own the problem, own the solution — you are in your position to get it done, not to blame.

9. Look beyond today — a city needs vision and foresight.

10. Set goals — without a destination, you will never arrive.

11. Do your homework — you can’t make good decisions without knowledge and understanding.

12. Respect roles, people, and different opinions — without respect there is no trust, the foundation of true inclusion.

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