

Nurturing the next generation of quilters

By Jodi Schneider
Correspondent

Quilting has been integral to Diane Tolzman's daily life for the past 20 years. In 2014 when her 9-year-old grandson, Devin, showed an interest in learning the art of her craft, she was glad to serve as a model of inspiration for the future generation quilters.

"I was always quilting when my son, his wife and their kids moved up here to Sisters six years ago," Tolzman explained. "Devin was 9 at the time and spent time watching me quilt and then decided he wanted to make his first quilt. He searched through my fabric 'stash' and found what he wanted to use. He laid out the fabric in a design and I cut it for him. He learned how to use the sewing machine and sewed it together."

His first quilt in 2014, aptly named "All of my Favorite things," included just that: baseball, strawberries, glow-in-the-dark fish, airplanes and more.

Devin told *The Nugget*, "I needed a gift for my parents for Christmas that year and I thought a quilt would be nice."

In 2015, Devin designed a quilt after the Minecraft video game.

"Since the Minecraft characters are made of pixels, which are squares, I decided

to make that quilt," he said. "First, I made a pattern using colored pencils and graph paper, then cut out the squares using fabric from my grandma's stash."

Devin's latest quilt, crafted at age 14, was packed full of Oregon wildlife which hung in the special exhibit "Quilts Made By Men" during the 2019 Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show (SOQS).

"I wanted to make a quilt that shows all the winter animals of Sisters that visit us in our backyard," said Devin.

He had also made a special pink puff quilt for his baby sister Brooklyn in 2017.

"That quilt was a big challenge for me since I never made a puff quilt, so my grandmother helped," he said.

All of Devin's quilts were entered in the Deschutes County Fair & Expo, except for the first one. All three quilts hung in the Next Generation Quilt Exhibit at SOQS.

Devin's younger brother, Jordan, made his first quilt last year at age 5.

Jordan said, "I was watching my brother and thought quilting looked fun."

He named his quilt "Gone Fishing," since one of his favorite things to do is to go fishing with his dad. The 6-year-old has already reeled in three bass and two trout. Jordan's quilt hung in Next Generation Quilters at the 2019 SOQS and was



PHOTO BY JODI SCHNEIDER

Diane Tolzman has been mentoring her grandsons, Devin and Jordan, in the art of quilting.

entered in the Deschutes County Fair & Expo the same year.

Jordan is now working on a Christmas story quilt with Tolzman for next year.

Tolzman was drawn into the world of sewing when attending a Catholic high school in Beaverton.

"We had a sewing class and I began making all my school clothes," she said. "Years later, I took a quilting class at a community college and was hooked."

For Tolzman, who is co-chair for East of the Cascade Quilters, quilting is an enjoyable art form that can

fill the need for creativity.

She joined East of the Cascade Quilters about five years ago and has shared the

chair with Gilda Hunt for three years.

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