

QUILT: Frye brought out sewing machine after 33 years



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Frye embroidered the 20 names of fallen Air Force bomb techs that have died in the line of duty.

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There was only one problem — Frye wasn't a quilter. "You can do it, Mom," she remembers Brickey telling her. "I believe in you."

To understand why Frye might want to attempt this daunting task, one must go back a while to when her two sons (the other is an Air Force pilot) deployed overseas. As they headed into harm's way, she looked for ways to support her boys and the other troops.

She joined a group of "Mama and Papa Bears," who created care packages to send overseas. Boxes contained elk meat jerky, cookies, Christmas letters from local students and other treats.

"Her jerky and raspberry jam strips have been around the world," said Brickey, who is currently stationed at Hurlburt Field in Florida. "Guys would literally fight over them."

That was one way of serving those who serve. Sewing the quilt was another — if she could figure out how to do it. She walked across the street and knocked on the door of friend and neighbor Cathy

Brandhagen. As the veteran quilter listened to Frye's idea, she was both impressed and dubious. Frye hadn't even used her sewing machine for 33 years.

"The first thing you need to do is change the needle," Brandhagen joked.

But Brandhagen knew Frye's tenacity and talents in other arenas such as gardening, writing and crafting.

"I told her, 'OK, let's give it a whirl,'" Brandhagen said.

With Brandhagen, Brickey and husband Dave as cheerleaders, Frye plunged ahead. She learned techniques and styles and designed the quilt with the 20 names surrounding the EOD insignia, called the "EOD Crab." The badge, made from Pendleton wool, contains a wreath, unexploded bomb, two lightning bolts and a shield. The lightning bolts symbolize the potential destructive power of the bomb. The shield represents the mission to protect life, limb and property. The laurel memorializes bomb technicians who gave their lives.

Frye, who works as business assistant at the Pendleton School District, labored

over the quilt during evenings, weekends and wee hours of the morning. More than once, she tore out stitches and started over. Classes and Internet searches provided more guidance.

Frye shed some tears over the 20 names on the quilt. Tech. Sgt. Anthony Capra, Bo's first team leader, had left behind his wife, five children, his parents and 11 younger siblings. He died while conducting a post-blast analysis of a roadside bomb crater, finding a second explosive that detonated. Bo had attended EOD school with Tech. Sgt. Phil Myers and they worked together in Baghdad, where they were both team leaders. On the back of the quilt is a quote from Myers, who said, "EOD techs don't die, they go to heaven to regroup."

One woman's name appears on the quilt, Senior Airman Elizabeth Loncki. She was one of three on Team Lima killed by a large vehicle-borne IED. The team successfully executed 194 missions in Baghdad.

Frye designed and pieced together the quilt and had Johanne Moore sew the layers

together. Brandhagen and Brickey were impressed with the final product.

"She simply did an amazing job," Brandhagen said, "especially when you stop to consider how little she knew before starting this quilt. This is truly a work of art from the heart."

Brickey, who joined the Air Force at age 18, said his mother stitched the quilt for more than just him.

"The quilt wasn't for me — it was for my brothers and the EOD family," he said.

Frye said her quilt is for the living as well as the fallen.

"It's important for these guys to know they will never be forgotten," she said.

The quilt hangs at Thimbles Fabric N More in Pendleton for two more weeks. Frye will then package it up and send it to Brickey in Florida to be auctioned off in May at an EOD Warrior Foundation banquet. Auction proceeds provide financial assistance and college scholarships to families of the fallen.

Contact Kathy Aney at kaney@eastoregonian.com or call 541-966-0810

LEASE: Lease saves an estimated \$1M in modulars for students

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next year. The school has two available classrooms left, but "obviously you can't squeeze 150 kids into two classrooms," Smith said.

The new lease will allow the district to move its technology department out of two more rooms at the high school, freeing up enough classroom space to handle the school's predicted growth.

The district's administrative offices will also move to the new building from their current location in the modulars at Rocky Heights Elementary. Those modulars will be used to house Head Start programs, while the space across the street from the high school currently used for Head Start will become a new home for the pregnant and parenting teen program that the district needs to move out of the alternative school building to make room for growth.

Special education offices housed at the Kik Center north of town will move to the former grocery store as well, freeing up sorely needed space at the center for the transitions programs that teaches life skills to disabled students. The extra space will also allow the district to bring its records archives back from the warehouses in Portland where it is paying to store them, and to create a space for professional development.

Smith said the landlord, Double H LLC, is willing to retrofit the building to the district's needs. It will provide the 18,000 square feet of space the district currently needs with an additional 6,000 square feet to grow.

"I think this is an outstanding opportunity," he said.

The parameters state the lease is not to exceed \$1.05 per square foot per month, which comes out to roughly

LIBRARY: Loan would default in April if no deal was reached

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finish the process so the public can see the beautiful work here."

A crowd of about 20 residents applauded after the city council voted unanimously to approve the deal. Mayor Sam Heath adjourned the meeting, and invited everyone for refreshments to celebrate what she described as a momentous occasion.

"We're really excited to see everything come together," Heath said. "I think everybody is happy here tonight. We're looking forward to a good relationship, and the library will be looking forward to opening their doors here very soon."

It hasn't been an easy process. The \$1.2 million library — built as an attachment to city hall on Northeast Main Street — initially opened for less than a month last year, until its occupancy permits were pulled by the city building official.

At issue was a firewall built between the two properties. Though the library and city hall are in one building, they are techni-

cally located on separately owned lots. In that case, Oregon law requires a four-hour firewall, so named for the amount of time it can withstand a blaze.

The wall was not built to code, and was thus legally considered a fire hazard. City and library officials could ask for a waiver of the requirement, but not without an intergovernmental agreement between the two parties.

For eight months, the city and library district swapped proposals through their attorneys outlining management and responsibility for the building's shared lobby, restrooms and meeting room. At one point, the district filed a notice of intent to sue the city for damages if the issue could not be resolved. A \$300,000 construction loan for the project would go into default in April if the library could not reclaim its occupancy permit.

Cooler heads ultimately prevailed, as the district formed a subcommittee in January to review the city's first IGA proposal made in

October. OTLD Director Marsha Richmond said that was a major positive development in identifying common ground.

With the agreement signed, Heath and Richmond can go ahead with a building code modification and waiver of the firewall requirement, which Palmquist said he will forward to the city's building official as soon as possible. Once the permit is restored, the library can go about preparing for its big reopening.

Until the new building was completed, the Irrigon library and its 2,500 books were operated out of a retrofitted school bus located behind the city's only gas station. Heath said she is excited to see all the new library has to offer the community.

"It's been stressful for both parties," she said. "We're just trying to work together in the best interest of the people and the taxpayers."

Contact George Plaven at gplaven@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4547.

WOLVES: More livestock killed in 2014

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gon Cattlemen's Association wolf committee, has said producers will push for delisting in 2015 and that lethal control is critical for dealing with problem wolves.

"Compensation of depredation is a Band-Aid, but when you have depredations, we need to be able to take out those packs," Nash said during the Umatilla County Cattlemen's Association annual meeting last December in Pendleton.

Conservation groups, however, said the state should move slowly in considering whether or not to remove protections. Population growth in 2014 was lower than the 2013 rate of 33 percent. And of the 77 wolves counted, 26 are pups less than a year old.

"The population remains fragile," said Steve Pedery, conservation director for Oregon Wild, in a prepared statement. "ODFW must resist giving in to political pressure, declare mission accomplished, and turn their back on important protections for wolves that have gotten this far."

ODFW staff will brief the Fish and Wildlife Commission at its March 6 meeting in Salem. The commission could make its decision on delisting as early as June, after hearing input from the public.

The 2014 wolf report also shows the department investigated 34 incidents of wolf predation on livestock in five counties. Of those incidents, 11 were confirmed by ODFW in Eastern Oregon, down from 13 a year ago.

But while the number of incidents was down, the number of animals killed was drastically higher. Local ranchers lost 30 sheep and two cattle during the year, compared to just 12 total animals in 2013.

Compensation totaled more than \$150,000 from the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance County Block Grant Program. About 90 percent of that money was awarded to producers in Wallowa, Umatilla and Union counties, with the vast majority earmarked for non-lethal preventative measures such

as range riders and fladry fencing.

Kevin Andrews, MD, L.L.C.

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