



New hiker-biker camp at Wallowa/10C



Dive into adventure in New Zealand/4C



Pig gets kisses from teachers/9C



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Tamara Strickley combines parts from two different piece of jewelry into one set of earrings during the Art Center Happy Hour recently at the Pendleton Center for the Arts.

ALCOHOL & ART

Pendleton Arts Center Happy Hour mixes booze and broken jewelry

By **TAMMY MALGESINI**
East Oregonian

Laughter and chatter filled the air as a dozen or so people worked on jewelry projects during a recent Arts Center Happy Hour.

"The 'drink and draw' type of painting classes that they offer at pubs has become really popular, and we wanted to offer something similar that would introduce different mediums," said Roberta Lavadour, Pendleton Center for the Arts executive director.

During the February event Jean Reiher talked about re-purposing broken jewelry as several uncorked bottles of wine sat on a table with hors d'oeuvres. Participants listened intently as Reiher talked about different types of jewelry clasps. The relaxed atmosphere encourages participants to grab a drink and a snack while working on art projects.

The topic couldn't have been more timely for first-time Happy Hour participant Marie Pratuch.

"I broke my necklace," she said. "They told us about the class and I decided to come."

Although she could have easily conducted an Internet search to figure out how to repair her necklace, Pratuch said the class also provides an opportunity to meet new people and renew acquaintances. She was pleasantly surprised to run into Tamara Strickley — also a first-time participant — who she

hadn't seen in a couple of years.

Strickley enjoys the camaraderie of working on art projects while visiting with others. She even coordinates a regular ladies night in private homes or restaurants. The big plus, she said, is getting out of the house.

"We get together, we drink wine and talk," Strickley said. "And we talk and talk."

The Happy Hour classes, Lavadour said, are a great way to meet people who enjoy creative activities. There's just something about keeping your hands busy that acts like a social lubricant, she said.

"Social crafting is something that is having a big resurgence right now," Lavadour said. "It harkens back to the quilting bees and sewing circles that were popular in the beginning of the last century."

Jean Eckles and Michael Greear are regulars at the Happy Hour. They both enjoy the atmosphere. And, Greear pointed out, people often linger well beyond the hour.

"I love the company of fellow artists and the interaction with people," Greear said. "It's a great forum to introduce the community to local artists and share the experience."

Looking through his junk drawer, Greear grabbed a few odds and ends before heading to the February Happy Hour. Using a bottle cap with a German shepherd on it and an ID tag from a dog



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Marie Pratuch models an earring she just made during a session of the Art Center Happy Hour recently in Pendleton.

he lost in 2007, Greear crafted the items into a memento to his old best friend.

Eckles said in addition to enjoying being involved in something creative and visiting with fellow participants, she gave kudos to Bonnie Day, the coordinator of education and outreach at the arts center.

"She makes you feel welcome," Eckles said.

Day coordinates with the arts center teaching roster to find fun projects for the Happy Hour. She said drop-in sessions like the Happy Hour often get people through the doors, providing an introduction to what's available at the arts center.

The beauty of the drop-in classes, Lavadour said, is that participants can complete a cool project in one session. In addition, the offerings are diverse and varied.

"We're lucky to have some really great artists on our PCA team, so we've got a pretty deep bench," Lavadour said.

Funded through a grant from the Oregon Community Foundation, the free program started in October 2015 at Pendleton Center for the Arts. It's held the second Wednesday of each month from 6-7 p.m. at 214 N. Main St., Pendleton. For more information, call 541-278-9201 or visit www.pendletonarts.org.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Jean Reiher demonstrates how to repurpose jewelry while teaching a class during the Art Center Happy Hour recently in Pendleton.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Caryn Appler checks out her work on an earring as Corrin Thompson works on a piece of jewelry during a session of the Art Center Happy Hour.