



The Rivoli Theater before (left) and after (right) façade improvements assisted by the Pendleton Development Commission.



The Medernach Building on Main Street before (left) and after (right) façade improvements assisted by the Pendleton Development Commission.

## PENDLETON: City manager wants to move the railroad switch yard out of the downtown area

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way to the red-brick frontages that more closely resemble their historical character.

The façade program was a point of pride for many participants, especially the St. George Plaza project, which brightened a formerly derelict building. Denight said the façade grant program was still providing assistance to projects like the Oregon Grain Growers Brand Distillery, Sisters Cafe and Dairy Queen.

A few audience members also lauded the second-story program and the commission's efforts to catalog the vacant historic spaces and work with building owners to develop them. Jordan McDonald, a member of the commission's advisory committee, said the program needs to remain a priority, and could bring some properties back onto the tax rolls.

"If they're not assessed, it's like they're invisible," he said. "Putting them back in use is like building a new building. To me, that's the most important thing we can do."

But not every program has bore fruit. A few commission and committee members mentioned the river quarter, a stretch of Court Avenue land by the Umatilla River between Southwest First Street and Southwest 10th Street that was supposed to use incentives to spur riverfront development. To date, no private developer has used the incentive or started any development.

Chuck Wood, a former city councilor and commission chairman, said the river quarter was a "jewel" that was being "totally underutilized." Councilor Neil Brown compared the area to the Pearl District in Portland, saying it was too expensive to develop.

Other meeting attendees said the commission needed to focus more on blight. Paul Chalmers, a councilor and commission chairman, called it the "elephant in the room."

Mayor John Turner said combating blight was easier said than done.

"It's easy to talk about (blight)," he said. "It's easy to come up with plans to try to improve it. But to actually implement those plans, it's very frustrating."

Rather than propose broad, overarching ideas, some attendees favored targeting specific areas for improvement.

Denight liked the idea of improving the urban renewal district on a block-by-block basis. More specifically, Denight wanted to target the LaDow Block at the 200 block of Court Avenue, as well as Zimmerman & Co. True Value Hardware for façade grants.

City Manager Robb Corbett also had a specific list of projects he wants the commission to accomplish, including more festive lighting in the downtown area during Christmas, moving the Union Pacific Railroad switch yard out of the

downtown area and finding a sustainable source of funding for the Pendleton Downtown Association. The merchant organization currently relies on the commission for operational costs.

Several councilors seemed open to the idea of the commission buying

blighted properties and working with a private developer to develop them.

The meeting ended without a consensus on whether the district should continue beyond 2023.

Councilor Scott Fairley suggested more public input and work would need to be

done before that decision was made.

"Let's identify what we want to accomplish and let's see if that merits extending the district," he said.

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## BECK: Funeral service is Nov. 25 at New Hope Church

Continued from 1A

"Foul play is not suspected at this time," Kilian said. "We are chasing down some leads as to where she could have gone before her death."

Kilian said he hopes to receive the report by this week.

Smith said they don't know much about the events that preceded his mother's death, but they know she visited a bar that evening. He said someone did see her at the bar, but he's not sure who.

Smith said his father, Darrell Smith, found his mother. He said Darrell arrived after his sister alerted him that Beck was missing.

"He met up with the police, had dinner, and then they went back to the hotel," Smith said. "He told my stepbrother to pack, and then he said he went down to the canal, looked and saw her backside and legs."

Smith said his father called the police, and it took them five or six hours to remove Beck from the canal. The area was treated as a crime scene.

Smith said his mother had lived in Hermiston until June, when she moved to Gresham. While in Hermiston, Beck became known for her work as an autism advocate. Jacob has autism and Beck founded a nonprofit organization called Unlocking Autism.

Last December, she donated Christmas gifts and a visit from Santa for autistic students at West Park Elementary, raising money through her membership with the Hermiston board of Realtors.

She was also active in helping Jacob go to a national zookeeper's conference by making and selling jambalaya in the community.

Smith said he spoke to his mother a few hours before she went missing.

"The one thing I can say walking away from this is that I'm just happy she got to spend time with Jacob before it was all over," said Smith, who is Jacob's twin brother.

A family friend has set up a GoFundMe page to raise money for funeral expenses, and to help support Beck's four children.

There is a funeral service for Beck on Saturday, Nov. 25 at 1 p.m., at New Hope Church, 1350 S. Hwy 395, Hermiston.

Smith said they are looking for answers, but they also hope to be able to find peace of mind.

"I think all of us are taking it one day, one hour at a time," he said. "We just want everyone to come and show respect at the funeral."

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**CHI St. Anthony Hospital**

# Winter Fest

FORMERLY THE Festival of Trees

*Celebrate THE Spirit OF INSPIRED GIVING*

<p><b>FRIDAY DECEMBER 1, 2017</b></p> <p><b>Evening Celebration   6:00 PM</b></p> <p><b>TICKETS/ADMISSION: \$35 per seat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Prime rib &amp; seafood dinner</li> <li>◆ Live and silent auctions</li> <li>◆ Live jazz band &amp; entertainment</li> </ul>	<p><b>SATURDAY DECEMBER 2, 2017</b></p> <p><b>Family Day   10:00 AM – 2:00 PM</b></p> <p><b>FREE ADMISSION</b> (thanks to Wildhorse Resort &amp; Casino)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Lunch with Santa &amp; his elves</li> <li>◆ Make ornaments &amp; playdough</li> <li>◆ Write letters to Santa</li> </ul>
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BOTH EVENTS WILL BE LOCATED AT THE **Pendleton Convention Center**

For more information or to purchase tickets, contact **St. Anthony Hospital Foundation at (541) 966-0528.**

*All proceeds benefit the Children's Museum of Eastern Oregon, Pioneer Relief Nursery, and St. Anthony Hospital Foundation.*