

QUILTS

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Of course, they enjoyed the quilts, but what particularly caught their eye was the way the decorative covers were displayed.

After talking with those who put on the Pendleton show, the couple brought home with them details of an innovative system used to stabilize PVC pipes on which the quilts are displayed.

In the past, the Baker City Quilt Club has used a 2-foot-long pipe placed on each side of the connected PVC pipes to form the base of each quilt rack. The 2-foot-long protruding pipe on each side of each rack is cumbersome and is a tripping hazard and an obstruction for those who use wheel chairs, the Luschens said.

Instead of using the 2-foot pipe extensions to form the base of their racks, the Pendleton show sponsors used two square metal plates with metal pipes welded strategically to the plate at several points. The squares also have a slot measuring 2 inches by 4 3/4 inches cut out to allow for easy stacking of the bases.

While Cheryl is the quilter in the family, she says Phillip has an eye for design and brings 40 years' experience working as a carpenter, including carpenter welding, to benefit the club.

"My husband is a big help with our quilt stuff," Cheryl said. "He has a really good mind for figuring things out."

And as the husband of a quilter, Phillip says, "I know pretty well where all the quilt shops are in Oregon."



S. John Collins / Baker City Herald

Andrew Adams makes a weld, checks to keep the pipe square with the plate, and then makes another weld.

Once the Luschens secured the pattern for the metal bases from the Pendleton club, they next needed to find some welders to complete the work.

That came in the form of a recommendation from a fellow quilt club member, who just happens to live next door to Ryan Butler, the welding instructor at Baker High

School's Baker Technical Institute. And other quilt club members gave their support for the project to proceed.

When Phillip Luschen spoke with the teacher, Butler said his class would be happy to take on the community service project, which students perform for organizations, but not for individuals in the

"It's wonderful that they were willing to do that."

— Cheryl Luschen, Baker City Quilt Club

community, he said.

Butler said Wednesday that he has placed BHS junior Andrew Adams in charge of the project, with Butler's guidance along the way.

"He's making sure everything is cut out right and laid out right and then the other guys can follow his lead," Butler said.

Andrew used a plasma torch to cut the slot for stacking the metal bases Wednesday. He followed a template students designed to ensure accurate cutting on each piece.

Ryan Lemmon, another BHS junior, was busy cutting the pipe lengths and removing one inch of paint from one end to prepare them for welding during class time Wednesday.

"I thought this would be a great project for the kids to start working on their fabrication skills," said Butler, who's in his second year as the BTI welding instructor.

The quilt club supplied the materials, about \$600 worth, for the class project. They hope students will be able to put together about 90 bases for the quilt racks.

"It's wonderful that they were willing to do that," Cheryl Luschen said.

Her husband had already been in Wednesday night to inspect the students' work and was happy with what he saw.

"I was very, very pleased with what they're doing and that they're doing it as a community project," he said.

FORUM

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"The audit is fine with exceptions of several different things, we will get a clean opinion," said Nichols.

In addition to the adjustments the audit is also almost 10 months late.

Both candidates were given the opportunity to explain why the audit was late and how the problem could be avoided in the future. Harvey said the main reason for the audit being late was that the county was using a new audit firm, Pauly Rogers & Co.

"It's not waiting because of us [the county], we are waiting on them," said Harvey.

According to Harvey the firm only has one person working on the county's audit.

"It's a very young man, he's trying but I don't think he really fully understands all the process," Harvey said.

Nichols agreed that the change in auditors was part of the reason the audit is late, as well as the \$6.5 million in adjustments.

"The audit firm is not at fault," Nichols said.

Neither candidate cited county personnel as the reason for the delay or the adjustments.

Nichols didn't disclose the adjustments till the end of the forum when both candidates got five minutes to talk about anything. Nichols spent the first half of his time talking about Tri-County Weed Board concerns and the rest about the audit adjustments. Harvey didn't have a chance to address the audit issues after Nichols disclosed them. Harvey said today that he wasn't aware of the adjustments prior to Thursday's forum.

The forum was the last of three scheduled for Harvey and Nichols, the two candidates for the commission chair position. The candidates discussed a variety of other county issues including: forest access, county management, interactions with federal and state governments and transparency.

The forum started at 7 p.m. at the Sunridge Inn and replaced the livestock association's monthly meeting. The previous two forums were hosted by the Baker County Republican Party and the Eastern Oregon Mining Association. Earlier in the evening, Nichols attended a meeting of the Baker County Democratic Party as a guest speaker. Harvey has been serving as chair since 2014 and Nichols has been in his position since 2016.

FIRES

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"Firefighters had a path to approach," Sterns said. "(Controlled burns) not only make fires less likely to grow, they

make them safer to fight."

With fire comes smoke, though, and that's been the big stumbling block in making wider use of controlled burns. The Oregon Smoke Management Plan, adopted in 1972

to conform with the federal Clean Air Act, essentially prohibits any controlled burn that results in visible smoke in a populated area. Every five years, the plan comes up for review and that process began

early in 2017 with a series of five meetings across the state.

Among the stakeholders at those meetings was Carrie Nyssen, senior advocacy director for the American Lung Association, who sometimes felt like the odd person out at the meetings as one of the few who resisted the push to relax regulations.

"It's a difficult issue for the Lung Association. It's hard for us to support any policy that puts more smoke in the air,"

she said. "But we know there is no option where there's no smoke and we want to make sure folks in affected communities know when it's coming, what there options are and where they can go."

Joining Nyssen on the panels were public health officials, forest collaboratives, environmentalists, timber operators, elected officials and a tribal representative, all of whom aired their differences and forwarded a set of recom-

mendations to state officials.

Among the recommendations: a relaxation of the threshold for smoke intrusions, but also an increase in communication to affected communities so arrangements could be made by those most vulnerable.

The benefits would be multifold, according to Bailey.

"If we proactively and consciously go after this buildup of fuels, it will reduce the amount of fire, the amount of money we spend on fire and the number of fatalities we have," he said. "All of that equals less smoke in the air."

State officials are reviewing comments on the proposed changes, which could be approved and put in place as early as January 2019.

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