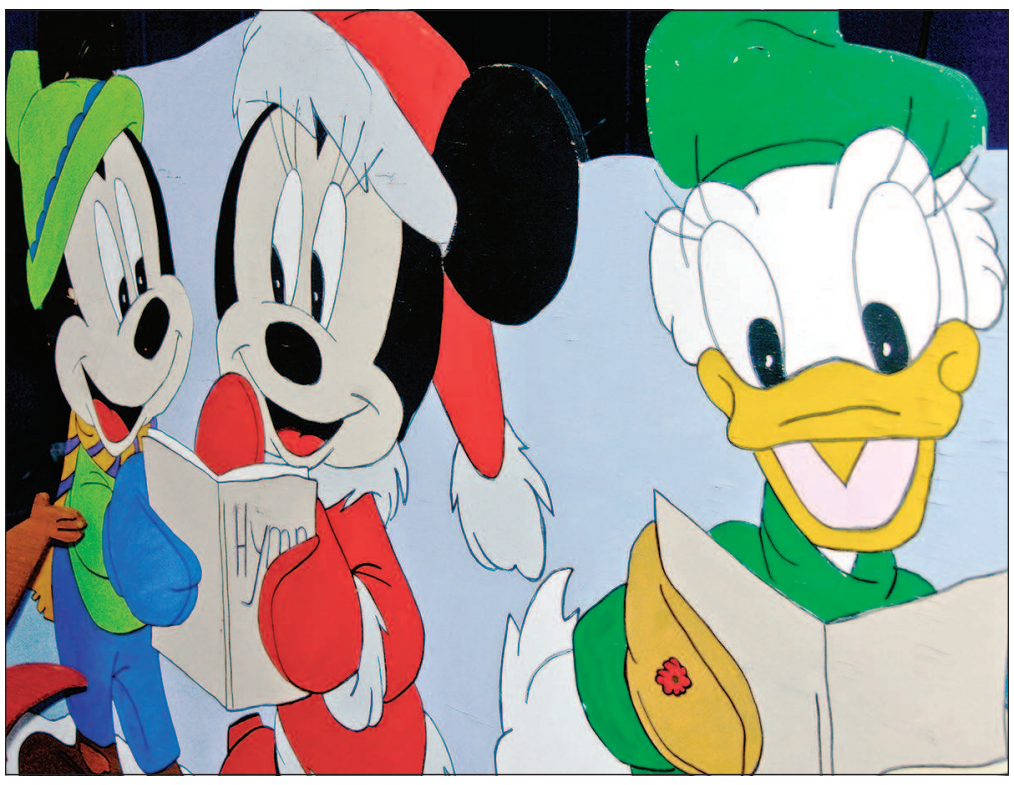


S. John Collins / Baker City Herald

Donald, Minnie and Mickey will be found along a path through the holiday scenes.

S. John Collins / Baker City Herald

No Christmas scene would be complete without this well-known couple.

TRADITION

Continued from Page 1A

Lee said his wife, Shandra, and 9-year-old son, Taylor, were enthusiastic about taking over Baker City's biggest Christmas display. He said he offered to do so because he knows how many local residents have made the annual visit to the Bass home an integral part of their holiday schedule — the Lee family among them.

"We've always made the walkthrough at the Basses," Lee said.

Lee also went to school with the Basses' son, Jack Jr.

The display was set up for the final time at the Bass home during the 2017 Christmas season as a tribute to Sam.

That tribute also served a second purpose — a dry run of sorts for Lee, even if it wasn't at his own home.

"Last year they showed me how to set up the display so I could move it this year to our house," Lee said.

The decision wasn't exactly a lark.

The Lees have for many years assembled one of Baker City's more elaborate displays of decorations and lights at their Birch Street home.

"We've always liked decorating and putting up a lot of lights," Lee said.

But taking on the Bass collection, which includes approximately 200 characters that Sam cut out and that he and Nora hand-painted, most of them featuring characters familiar from cartoons and films, is a considerably more ambitious undertaking.

"He put an enormous amount of time into this," Lee said, gesturing to the decorations that stretch across his backyard.

"We can carry on the tradition. I hope people enjoy it."

— Bill Lee

Lee understands the extent of Sam's commitment much better now that he's more than a spectator who merely enjoyed the fruits of the Bass family's labors.

After making the five trips to haul the decorations to his home, Lee said he started stringing lights over Labor Day weekend.

"I wanted to get an early start," he said.

Lee buried extension cords just as the Basses did, to make sure nobody trips and falls while enjoying the display.

Lee started putting up plastic decorations in October. He waited until November to set up Sam's handmade plywood pieces, so as to minimize their exposure to rain, snow and cold.

To that end, Lee also built a shed this summer to house the ornaments. As their caretaker, he said he feels obligated not only to set up the display each year, but also to keep the paint fresh and the pieces well-maintained.

Although he said it's impossible to duplicate the display precisely — the Lee property doesn't have as many trees and shrubs as the Basses' yard, for one thing — he hopes residents will feel a sense of familiarity even as they see Sam's decorations in a new setting.

Lee has installed outdoor speakers that will play Christmas music, which was also part of the display at the Bass home.

"We can carry on the tradition, and it's been a lot of fun," Lee said. "I hope people enjoy it."

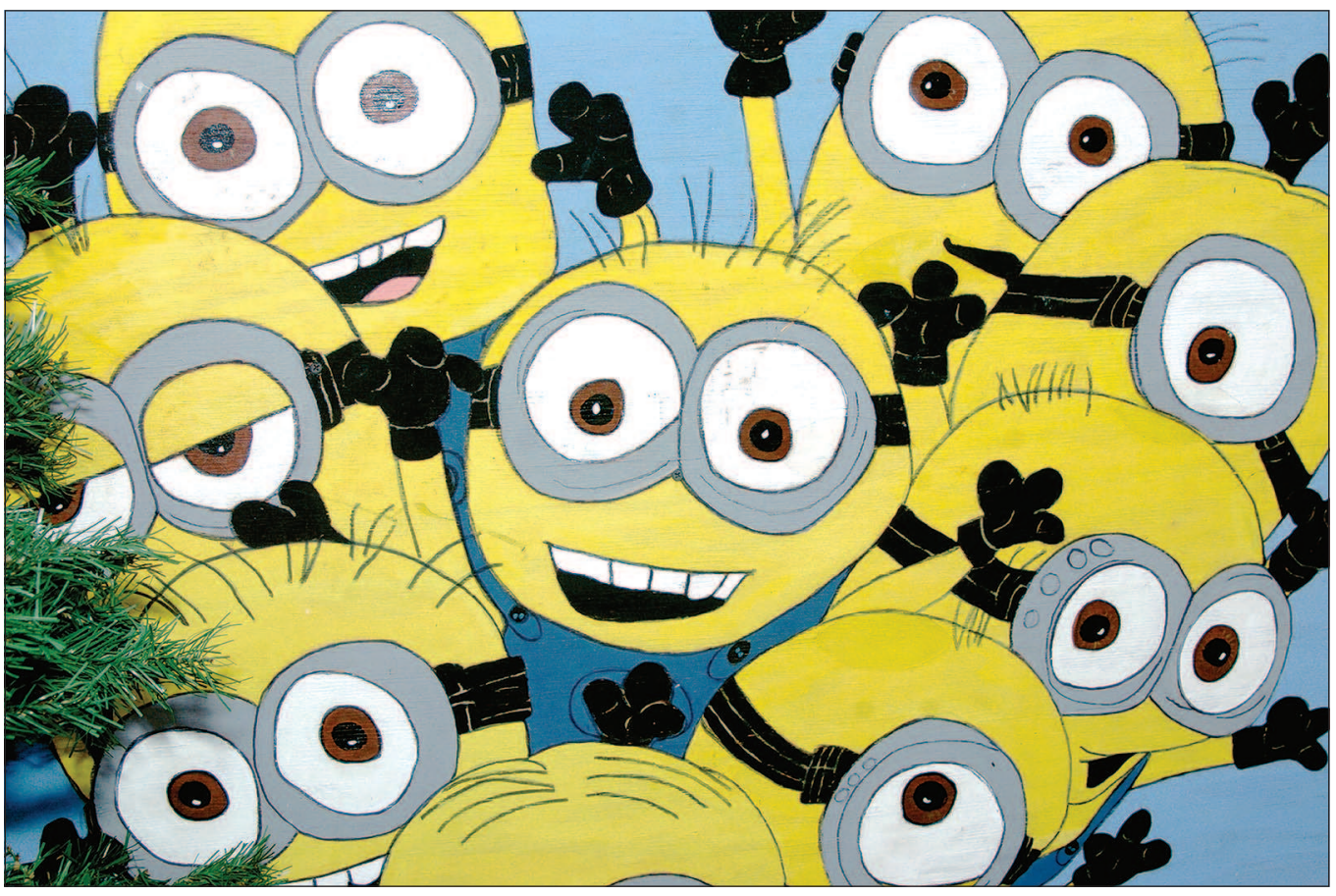
He said he was grateful that Nora Bass toured the display before it officially opened the day after Thanksgiving and suggested changes in the layout.

Although people have already found the new site of Sam's display, Lee said a special event is set for this Saturday at 6:30 p.m., following the downtown Christmas parade and tree-lighting ceremony. Santa is scheduled to make an appearance.

The display will be open Sunday through Thursday from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., and Friday and Saturday from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Hot chocolate will be available for sale on Friday and Saturday nights.

Lee said that although his family is excited to be responsible for such a special tradition, they know it will never be quite the same. They will always remember fondly the chilly evenings they walked through the Basses' yard and were greeted by Sam in his Santa hat and a fistful of candy canes.

"We'll miss it, which is an odd thing to say since all of the decorations are in our yard," Lee said.



Lots of Minions have eyes on visitors to the Christmas display.

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ELECTION

Continued from Page 1A

In the general election, Harvey's advantage over Nichols swelled to 526 votes.

They were the only two candidates on the Nov. 6 ballot.

The May primary was a three-candidate race, with Baker City Mayor Mike Downing joining Harvey and Nichols on the ballot.

Vote totals from the primary:

- Harvey, 2,232
- Nichols, 2,137
- Downing, 557

Harvey won 12 of the 17 precincts in the May primary, including three of the five precincts inside the Baker City limits.

He won 14 of 17 precincts in the general election, including all five of the Baker City precincts.

Overall, Harvey's advantage over Nichols in the Baker City precincts increased from 59 votes in the primary to 232 in the general — a net gain of 173.

A majority of that gain happened in one precinct — No. 5, east Baker City. That precinct is generally east of Ash Street and Elm Street.

In the general election, Harvey received 97 more votes than Nichols in precinct 5, Harvey's biggest lead in any precinct. His advantage in the primary was 24 votes in that precinct.

(Baker City precinct 1 is north of B Street and west of Ash Street; precinct 2 is north of Baker Street and west of Ash Street; precinct 3 is north of Estes Street and west of Ash Street; and precinct 4 is south of Estes Street and west of Elm Street.)

In the Sumpter precinct, Harvey's lead over Nichols increased from 23 votes in May to 86 votes in November. The Sumpter precinct includes most of Sumpter Valley, including the city of Sumpter.

Harvey, who received 12 fewer votes than Nichols in May in the Haines precinct, beat Nichols in the general election by 28 votes in that precinct, a net gain of 40 votes.

Nichols won two precincts in both the primary and general elections — Huntington and Pine Valley, the latter of which includes the city of Halfway.

Nichols' advantage was smaller in both precincts, however, in the general election.

Voter turnout was higher in the general election than in the primary.

In the primary, Harvey, Nichols and Downing combined to receive 4,926 votes.

In the general election, Harvey and Nichols received a combined 7,810 votes.

Precinct	General Election		Primary Election	
	Harvey	Nichols	Harvey	Nichols
Baker City No. 1	395	378	213	223
Baker City No. 2	391	344	200	164
Baker City No. 3	406	388	201	204
Baker City No. 4	520	467	270	261
Baker City No. 5	560	463	313	289
Baker Country	368	297	216	173
Durkee	50	24	25	20
Eagle Valley	195	153	119	104
Haines	275	247	148	160
Hereford	36	20	18	15
Huntington	74	91	48	25
Irondyke	24	13	5	4
Keating	92	49	41	29
Pine Valley	230	248	156	117
Poca-Wing	363	330	232	226
Sumpter	166	80	67	44
Unity	24	50	22	18
TOTALS	4,168	3,641	2,232	2,137

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