



PHOTO BY SUSAN SPRINGER

Mark Miles and Don Boyer of Boyer Tile & Marble won a national award for their project at McMenamins Old St. Francis School in Bend.

Sisters tile company wins award

By Susan Springer
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What began as a small job for a Sisters tile company turned into an artistic masterpiece that won a national award.

The work of Boyer Tile & Marble stands out to visitors of McMenamins Old St. Francis School in Bend. The company tiled the centerpiece of the historic lodging and restaurant facility — the Turkish-style soaking pool. McMenamins calls the turquoise pool a “feast for the

eyes” with its hand-painted tile murals on the walls, a sun mural on the pool floor and tiled columns.

The pool is reminiscent of the classic baths of the ancient world.

“You only get to do things like this once in a lifetime,” said Don Boyer.

Boyer’s company received the Grand Prize TileLetter Award in the commercial category from the National Tile Contractors Association. The judges chose Boyer from 87 entries noting the “difficulty of installation, with an

incredible amount of radius cuts and challenging layout.” They called the end result “awe-inspiring.”

Boyer credits his employee Mark Miles with much of the project’s success, calling him the future of his company. Miles worked 12 hours day, seven days a week to meet McMenamins’ deadline of a Thanksgiving 2004 grand opening. In addition to the soaking pool, the project grew to include tiling the full baths for the 17 classrooms

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PHOTO PROVIDED

The Turkish soaking pool at McMenamins Old St. Francis School required intricate tile work.

TILE: Tile setters enjoyed creative effort on project

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turned lodging rooms and for the four vintage cottages.

“Even though we were working long days, we had a blast because we were being creative,” said Miles.

Boyer and Miles call the McMenamins brothers “gifted” and added it was a rare project in which artistic excellence was more highly valued than pinching pennies.

Boyer began his craft 45 years ago and started his company in California.

He moved to Sisters about five years ago and does both residential and commercial work.

“We’ve worked hard

getting the business to where it is today,” said Boyer. “We won’t cut corners.”

Boyer has seen his trade become more challenging over the years with such a wide variety of tile now available from around the world. Boyer said it’s not an easy trade to learn.

“You get one shot at it,” said Boyer adding that tile can’t be sanded, patched or painted if you make a mistake.

Boyer and Miles were happy to get the award although “it took a while for it to sink in.” Mostly, they’re happy with their contribution to the artistic renovation of McMenamins Old St. Francis School.

“It was one of those projects where you didn’t want to leave at the end of the day,” said Miles.