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FRAA offers introductory art demo classes Tuesday

Whether it's about trying a new art form or refreshing a skill you knew in the past, the Florence Regional Arts Alliance (FRAA) is offering complimentary demo classes at its art center.

Beginning Tuesday, Jan. 6, from 2 to 4 p.m., nationally acclaimed artist F. Michael Wood will be doing a demo on how to paint clouds and sky-scapes.

Also in January, talented and well-known local artist John Leasure will be giving a free demo class on painting flowers.

This class will take place Saturday, Jan. 10, from 10 a.m.



An example of John Leasure's flower paintings.

to noon.

Then, on Jan. 12, Bettie Egerton will be offering a free introduction to sewing fashion and accessories for fun and profit.

For more information about any or all of these free classes, call 541-999-0859 to reserve a space.

The FRAA Art Center is at 4969 Highway 101, Munsell Lake Plaza #4.

For more information on the many other classes going on at the FRAA Art Center, visit www.fraaoregon.org.

CROW to hold play auditions next week

You may think you know the story of "The Princess and the Pea," but did you know that Princess Winnifred actually swam the moat to reach Prince Dauntless the Drab? Or that it may not have been the pea at all that caused the princess a sleepless night? Carried on a wave of beguiling songs hilarious and raucous, romantic and melodic, this rollicking spin on the familiar classic of royal courtship and comeuppance provides for some side-splitting shenanigans.

Chances are, you'll never look at fairy tales quite the same way again.

CROW (Children's Repertory of Oregon Workshops) will hold open auditions Jan. 12 and 13 for "Once Upon A Mattress," the musical comedy with music by Mary Rodgers, lyrics by Marshall Barer and book by Jay Thompson, Dean Fuller, and Marshall Barer.

This marks CROW's fourth mainstage production.

The show will be performed April 10-12, at the Florence Events Center, and for invited school audiences on April 9.

Local audiences may recall that last spring, CROW produced a main stage production of Disney's "The Little Mermaid Jr." which dazzled and delighted local audiences.

CROW is a Florence-based nonprofit organization dedicated to giving back to the community by providing quality performing arts experiences to local youth. Artistic Director, Melanie Heard, is a credentialed teacher and founder of the program.

"We are not your 'typical' children's theatre organization," said Heard. "The CROW team has done away with the concept of charging families a fee for the experience of performing in one of our main stage shows. We strive to give kids and young adults an experience that they will remember for the rest of their lives.

"It's much more than just theatre. It's an opportunity to hone crucial life skills such as teamwork, motivation, dedication and follow through."

Heard has done plenty of research on "Mattress" and planning has already begun to create a spectacular show that

will rival a Broadway youth production. In addition to providing a professional working environment for the cast members, CROW utilizes the highest caliber costumes, sets, lighting design, choreography, music, sound, stage makeup and much more.

"Just wait till you see this year's costumes and set," said Heard.

There are great roles for ages 6-22 and older, and all young people are encouraged to try out regardless of previous stage experience.

Mature 5-year-olds may be considered for "telegrammers."

Auditions will be held at the Siuslaw Middle School cafeteria on Jan. 12 and 13 at 6:30 p.m. Invited callbacks will be held Jan. 14 at 6:30 p.m.

There are approximately 40-45 onstage roles, and several behind the scenes jobs for kids interested in technical theatre.

To audition, kids will need to bring 16-32 bars from a song that they would like to sing (sheet music is preferred, but a CD track with no background voices is also acceptable).

Prospective cast members will also be taught a dance combination, and those asked to come to callbacks will read sides from the script.

"No experience is required, so don't be afraid to come and give it a try," said CROW assistant director and musical director Jason Wood. "You should definitely check out the CROW website for all of the information you need to prepare for the audition."

Rehearsals will begin Jan. 26 and are held Monday through Thursday evenings, from 6:30 to 8:45 p.m. A schedule will be available for perusal at the audition.

Heard stresses that performing in these productions is a big commitment.

"Performing in one of our shows is very hard work and requires dedication, but when the curtain opens in April, we know you will agree that it was worth it," said Heard.

For a casting breakdown and detailed audition information, visit www.crowkids.com, or contact Heard at 541-999-8641 or by email at crowtheatrekids@yahoo.com.

Fruit tree pruning class to begin Thursday

The OSU Extension Service of Lane County will conduct its annual Florence class on pruning tree fruits Thursday, Jan. 8, from 9 to 11:30 a.m.

The demonstration of proper pruning techniques is open to the public. The class will be led by Ross Penhallegon, OSU Extension Service in Lane County Horticulture Agent.

Interested participants can

meet at the Florence Events Center, 715 Quince Street, at 9 a.m. The group will then carpool to the pruning site in the Florence area.

Call 541-344-5859 to pre register so there will be enough pruning publications available.

For more information, call Penhallegon at 541-344-1709.

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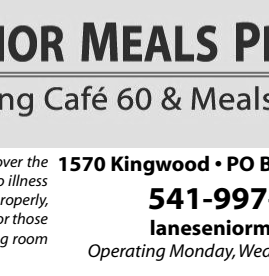
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