

Jazz Choir travels to Newport

By Sianna Flowers
Correspondent

The Sisters High School jazz choir regularly share their talents with the residents of Sisters, but once a year they travel out of town for their annual trip to share their music with a new audience. This year the jazz choir took a four-day trip to Newport. The trip was chaperoned by director Rick Johnson and pianist Julie Cash.

Every year the jazz choir president and vice president plan a handful of trips which are then presented to the choir and voted upon in the first couple months of the school year. The rest of the year the jazz choir fundraises for the trip. Most of their money comes from seasonal "singing-grams."

Jazz choir president Ross Grant explained, "The jazz choir takes one performing trip a year to expand our musical knowledge, to bond as a choir, and to have fun."

The trip, or "tour" as it is sometimes called, is a showcase of all the music the jazz choir has learned over the

year. They perform at several scheduled venues, and spontaneously as they travel.

This year they performed at the Oceanview assisted living home, which was a highlight for many students.

"Afterward we got to roam and spend time talking with (the residents) for awhile," said Shea Krevi. "They were so appreciative. One lady even said we give them hope for the youth of today."

Another performing highlight was the Yaquina Bay Lighthouse Museum. The jazz choir performed there two years ago, and the museum was thrilled to have them back.

"They set up a stage and chairs for people to come and watch us perform. It was a full audience and the guests and staff were incredibly moved. The room, the sound, it was all awesome," said choir vice president Robert Merolla.

There is often some kind of special event planned like seeing a play or, in this case, whale-watching. It was a big hit.

"We had the whale-

watching experience people dream of," said Merolla.

Krevi remembers that, "The whales came right up next to the boat, and these were 30-45-foot fanimals. It was crazy!"

The greatest take-back from the trip is always the bonding experience. Julianna Pade said, "We all are a lot closer now and hang out more even though we're from different groups of people within the school."

The jazz choir gives students from across the high school the ability to connect through music. From this trip — and jazz choir as a whole — Krevi "learned to appreciate the way music can connect people."

As Merolla said, "Jazz choir is about opening up and connecting with your peers." This trip is a unique bonding experience that students always remember fondly.

"I don't think any of us are going to forget (the trip)," Grant said. "We got the chance to go to the beach for four days with some of our best friends. What more could we possibly want?"

Council looks at public-records fees

By Sue Stafford
Correspondent

The Sisters City Council is planning to change the way it handles public-records requests and fees.

As proposed, a fee of \$40 per hour will apply to all public-records requests to cover staff time for locating, researching, scanning and sending documents. Staff may waive inspection or research fees for not more than five requests that require half-an-hour or less of staff time, from the same requester in a calendar year. All requests will be prorated to 15-minute increments.

In gathering information regarding public-record requests, City Recorder Kathy Nelson sent out an inquiry to cities across Oregon to obtain information about their procedures and fees for public-information requests. Fifteen responses were received.

As of today, Sisters' hourly charges are determined the same way as most other cities. The average dollar amount

of certain City employees' hourly rates of pay plus cost of benefits is determined and that becomes the hourly rate charged. However, Sisters' rate has been based on five-year-old figures at \$32.33 per hour.

The current Sisters average hourly rate plus benefits is \$41.53 and therefore, the recommendation is to charge \$40 per hour, bringing the fee more in line with actual costs to the City. Several cities charge \$100 an hour for electronic records searches and don't allow for any free time.

Increasing requests for public records are requiring a great deal more staff time, particularly on the part of the City recorder, through whom all of the requests must be processed.

If any councilor makes repeated requests for large amounts of information, that person must have the approval of the other four City Council members.

In other business, council agreed to extend the application deadline for the vacant council seat to May 1.

Agenda

Sisters Planning Commission, City Hall, 520 E. Cascade Ave.

Thurs., April 30, 5:30 p.m.

• Public hearings:

A. File No: MP 15-01, SUB 15-01 — Applicant: 3 Sisters Partners, LLC/Peter Hall. Type III Review of a Master Plan for a 20.02 acre property, including a site plan for a proposed park within the master planned area, and a tentative subdivision plan for a five-phase, 77-lot subdivision.

B. File No: CI 15-01

Applicant: Michael Black. A code interpretation/land use decision clarification to

consider allowing options to build single family detached dwellings and/or attached dwellings (townhomes) on 21 remaining lots in the Aspenwood subdivision.

• Text amendments

A. TA 14-06 Sign Ordinance revisions.

B. TA 14-07 Formula Foods Establishments-2.5.300 Development Standards - Highway Commercial District.

• Transportation System Plan update.

• Transportation growth management grant application for plan refinement.



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