

KIDS CHOIR:

Students work hard on their singing

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“The energy in the room is infectious; these are students who want to sing, and want to get better. We are having a ton of fun together, and they are brilliant at picking up difficult phrasing in our pieces at a quick pace. Wednesdays are my new favorite day of the week.”

Prior to joining Sisters School District, Miller spent four years teaching pre-kindergarten through eighth grade at a private international baccalaureate school in Bend. She has conducted choirs, and she brings a zest for singing to our own singers here in Sisters.

The Kid’s Choir Festival has been drawing fourth- and fifth-grade singers from around Deschutes, Crook and Jefferson counties for years to spend a day at Bend Senior High School, working under the direction of a guest conductor specializing in children’s choral groups.

The festival was started by area music teachers who longed to have their students experience a high level of choral singing, in addition to

their general music classes at school.

Each school that participates has a designated time for rehearsals; all schools learn the same music while under the direction of their school’s music teacher, then gather for a day of rehearsals, this year under the direction of Kim Skondin, the artistic director for Oregon Repertory Singers in Portland.

Along with Skondin, past guest conductors for Kids Choir Festival included Shirley Van Paepeghem from Meridian, Idaho, who was Miller’s mentor and vocal coach throughout her middle and high school years. Both guest conductors are also past directors with the Youth Choir of Central Oregon, based in Bend for the last 29 years.

Each year sees around 200 students attend, and this year Sisters Country will have their own representation.

Author will delve into frontier history

Sisters author Jim Cornelius will explore the legacy of frontier history in a talk at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 13, at the Fireside Room at Sisters Community Church. The public is welcome.

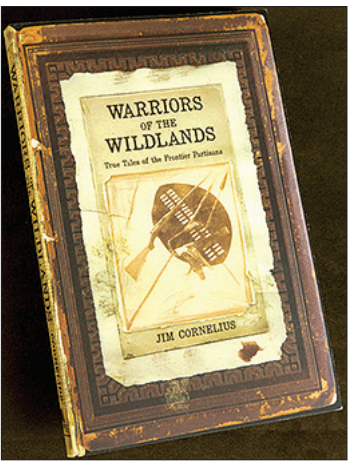
The talk is part of a series of public forums on important topics of interest to the broad Sisters community, hosted monthly by the church and pastor Steve Stratos.

“Many of the most difficult topics we wrestle with today — race, borders, cultural identity — were seeded in the history of American expansion across the continent,” said Cornelius, who published his book “Warriors of the Wildlands: True Tales of the Frontier Partisans” in 2017. “The frontier story is the American epic, and

it is a heroic tale in many dimensions, — and it’s also wrapped up in a whole bunch of cultural conflicts and contradictions that we can’t ever seem to move past.”

Cornelius will tell some stories from the book, but what he’s most looking forward to is a discussion.

“When you step outside the contemporary political context of these issues and start delving into the history, you find these incredibly rich human stories,” he said. “When you put yourself in a historical person’s moccasins for a bit, you realize that these folks were complicated, messy humans just like we are, driven by passions to heroic acts and dirty deeds, mixtures of idealism and self-interest... I love telling these stories and exploring



the human drama of it all with interested folks.”

Sisters Community Church is located at 1300 McKenzie Hwy., Sisters. “Warriors of the Wildlands: True Tales of the Frontier Partisans” is available at Paulina Springs Books in Sisters.

For more information, call 541-390-6973.

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