

# Community events create connections

By Sue Stafford  
Correspondent

For music, dancing, fun, free food, and gifts for the kiddos, plan on heading over to the Village Green park on Wednesday, July 17, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., to gather with friends, family, and neighbors for a summer evening of happy hearts, joy, and summertime fun.

The Village Green will be transformed into a Sisters community gathering of all ages and musical abilities, called Rhythm and Song at Village Green, to enjoy a free dinner and create music, connections, and community. This is the first of two repeat events planned for this summer in Sisters by Citizens4Community to bring the community together, to build relationships and bridge divides.

The second event, the Fiesta de Independencia, will celebrate Mexican Independence Day and offers all of Sisters Country an opportunity to gather together on Sunday, September 15 and enjoy a community-wide fiesta at Fir Street Park, 1 to 5 p.m.

The Rhythm and Song

evening will begin with a free community BBQ dinner at 5:30 p.m. The facilitated evening of rhythm and song performances and interactive fun will occur between 6 and 7:30 p.m.

Jodi Winnwalker will again be leading this event alongside other members of the committee. Winnwalker is the owner/founder of Earthtones NW, a Portland-based music therapy agency serving people of all ages and abilities. She has special training in community drum circle facilitation, and will be leading the circle, coordinating the rhythmic interchange between the community and participating musicians. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own instruments. Shakers and other rhythm instruments will be provided for the evening.

Some of the guest musicians who will be on hand to join the fun include: Sisters Uke Players, Kirk Olsen and his African bass guitar, drums by Tim Shuler, African drummer Anna Marie Crosier, and Katie Cavanaugh and her drum. Shannon Rackowski will perform the hula and invite others to join her.

According to Winnwalker, “This is an event to celebrate the rich diversity of our community and to provide a space where everyone knows that they belong and have something special to contribute.”

This second annual event is made possible through the support of generous partners and supporters, including: The Ford Family Foundation, St. Charles Health System, Coldwell Banker—Reed Bros. Realty, The Lodge in Sisters, SPRD and Age Friendly Sisters Country.

All ages and stages are



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Last year's inaugural Rhythm and Song at Village Green brought together many enthusiastic Sisters residents of all ages.

welcome — the young and young-at-heart. Dogs are also welcome if on a leash. Some

tables will be available but bringing lawn chairs or blankets might be a good idea.

## Events build bridges in Sisters

The Rhythm and Song at Village Green and the Fiesta de Independencia are part of Citizens4Community's Building Bridges for Our Future series of events, planned for 2019 into 2020. They expect to receive a grant from The Ford Family Foundation for this community-building work, which will also involve local non-profit organizations, businesses, leaders,

and numerous community members.

Building Bridges for our Future offers about 20 activities in four focus areas that attract people in different ways and at different levels. The activities work to: build relationships (Let's Celebrate events like the summer ones planned); bridge divides (the emerging Let's Talk series); encourage collaborative

action, for instance on the local visioning effort (Let's Collaborate); and build and practice communication and community-building skills (Let's Learn).

Each event is designed to have individual merit, and the series as a whole seeks to strengthen Sisters Country networks and empower community volunteerism and engagement.

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