

'No Talent Show' raises \$600 for LGBT center

Local group Q sponsored a fundraiser Saturday to build a LGBT community center

Chelsea Duncan
Freelance Reporter

From a juggler who could barely juggle a single ball to rappers who simply read lyrics off a crumpled piece of notebook paper, members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community faced an exceptional array of "no talent" this weekend at a fundraising event for a new LGBT community center.

About 85 people attended the "No Talent Show" in Agate Hall on Saturday night, an event sponsored by Q, a local queer resource for social change.

Stephanie Carnahan, executive director of Q, said the group is trying to raise between \$150,000 and \$200,000 for the center by the end of this year. She said Saturday's event raised about \$600 to \$700.

The center will provide resources for young people as well as newcomers to the Eugene and Springfield areas. It will also serve as a place for members and supporters of the LGBT community to

meet and organize.

"We really need some community support," she said, adding that community participation in the future will sustain the center once it's built.

Senior Michael Eaves was one of many students at the event.

"I guess ultimately I came to show my support," he said. "Any kind of solidarity within the queer community is something that we really need."

The two rapping members of the group Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays showed their support on stage in the no-talent show along with Newman, a comedian who attempted, and failed, to juggle.

The no-talent show often drew bursts of laughter and applause from the audience.

Q board member and comedian Jennifer Self read a poem titled "Ode to Q," as other board members did an interpretive act on stage recounting the story of Q's creation and values.

The event turned serious for a moment when Oregon ACLU Executive Director Dave Fidanque took the stage to read excerpts from a U.S. Supreme Court decision that allows the Pledge of Allegiance to be voiced in schools.

Later that night, the comedy improvisation troupe WYMPROV! sawed a friend in half during its no-talent magic show.

One talented supporter lulled the audience with his flute, accompanied by a piano. He said that as a kid, he was discouraged from playing the flute because it was a "girl's" instrument, but he followed his passion anyway.

"When I played flute, it was the only time I felt powerful," he said.

Self emceed the event, along with local newscaster Tim Joyce.

"I think it's really important to have comfortable space and a safe space," Joyce said in reference to the community center.

The evening closed with a performance by the Deb Cleveland Band, and chairs were pushed aside for audience members to dance and enjoy the music.

"I think my favorite part of the evening was seeing such a wide range of people — from little kids to 80-year-old women — enjoying some untalented, talented people," Carnahan said.

Chelsea Duncan is a freelance writer for the Emerald.

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West Nile Virus (lecture sponsored by Human Resources), noon-1:30 p.m., EMU Fir Room, free.

"Slavery, Space and Gender in Peace & War" (lecture with Stephanie Camp), 6-8 p.m., Knight Library Browsing Room, free.

"Celebrating Black Achievement" (guest speaker, sponsored by Black Student Union), 6:30-9:30 p.m., EMU Fir Room, free.

Mitch Lockett (reading and storytelling), 7 p.m., Flying Dogs Cafe & Deli, 1249 Alder St., free.

Hundredth Monkey Ensemble (University Contemporary Ensemble), 8 p.m., Beall Hall, \$5, \$3.

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International Student Health Series:

Wednesday discussions 5-6 pm. Stress reduction, April 30. Tobacco, May 14. Contraception, May 28. 346-0562 for more info.

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