

Celebrate the season with Händel's 'Messiah'

■ Choir of performers from Eastern Oregon and Washington presents the concert Dec. 15 at La Grande High

LA GRANDE —To help celebrate the Christmas season, Händel's oratorio "Messiah" will be performed at 6:30 p.m. Dec. 15 in the auditorium at La Grande High School, located at Second Street and J Avenue.

The choir and orchestra are volunteer musicians from Eastern Oregon and Washington.

For perspective on the historical greatness of this famous work, consider this: The Messiah is the only classical work to be performed every year dating from the mid-18th century to the present. This is primarily because of its popularity with audiences and its value when used as a fundraiser in benefit performances throughout history. Its first performance on Easter 1742 in Dublin, Ireland, was conducted by G. F. Händel, and the proceeds were donated to aid unfortunates in debtors' prison.

This year's choir consists of 50 singers; the orchestra is composed of 20 instrumentalists. In order of appearance, the vocal soloists are: Jared Hulme, Wes Rampton, Trina Butler, Chris Blair, Brianna Wadouds, Jeannette Rampton Smith, Kristen Rushton, Jocelyn Berado, and Brent Smith. Orchestra member Becky Mularkey will perform the trumpet solo.

The conductor is Dr. Ed Dixon, retired music professor from Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington. Dr. Dixon is currently active as a cellist, performing in several orchestras and as a soloist. He also guest conducts regional orchestras in the Inland Northwest.

"It is an extremely enjoyable project, working with the La Grande choir musicians, vocal soloists and the whole orchestra," he said. "We hope to keep doing this. It



Jeannette Rampton Smith is one of nine solo vocalists for this year's performance of "Messiah" in La Grande.

is a collaborative effort that is made all the more gratifying by sharing it with the people of La Grande and surrounding communities, and all the music lovers out there and those who love the spirit of Christmas and the unfolding story told in the music."

This is Dixon's second year conducting the performance in La Grande.

Next to the concert entrance there will be a small showing of Nativity sets by La Grande residents. Donna Sands will exhibit a set she purchased this year in the Holy Land. Those desiring to see the creches on display should arrive a little early to allow some viewing time.

Admission is free, but as a community service there will be an opportunity for attendees to donate to the Union County Warming Sta-



Dr. Ed Dixon, retired Whitman College music professor (left), directs the traditional holiday musical performance in La Grande. The free "Messiah" concert will be held Dec. 15.

tion. Volunteers will be on hand to receive those donations and provide tax-deductible receipts to donors. This is strictly voluntary.

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MON-THURS: 7:00

FORD V FERRARI PG-13
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SAT & SUN: (12:45) (3:50) 7:00
MON-THURS: 7:00

FROZEN 2 PG
FRI: (4:10) 7:20
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