

Gearing up for the Fabulous '50s Charity Car Show

By **Laura Mancuso**
IVN Editor

Start your engines and head to Riverside Park in Grants Pass for the Fabulous '50s Charity Car Show Saturday, July 24 at 10 a.m. for the opening ceremony. This Fabulous show will also have '50s music, a raffle, 50/50, breakfast and lunch vendors, participant gifts and merchandise booths. Then, at 2:30 p.m. there will be an awards ceremony.

The car show is organized by the Rogue Valley Classic Cruisers (RVCC) with Chair Kathy Simmons at the steering wheel. Simmons has been organizing the Fab '50s for 15 years. When asked what motivates her to keep planning the show, she said, "The charities are so important for our community and our club is behind this."

Simmons explained that 80% of the proceeds go to RVCC charities. The 2021 charities will be Hearts With A Mission, Sleep in Heavenly Peace and Women's Crisis Support Team as well as two \$1,000 scholarships to Rogue Community College automotive students. Interestingly, Simmons reported that most of the recent scholarships to automotive students have gone to females.

The other 20% of the proceeds of the show go to local nonprofits in smaller donations.

Simmons says she has always

been motivated to volunteer. She is also a member of the Illinois Valley Garden Club and Beta Sigma Fi, a women's philanthropic group (nonacademic sorority).

If you're wondering how Simmons got involved with RVCC, then you haven't met her husband Bob.

Bob Simmons is an "antique car enthusiast" who has owned 96 antique cars in his 79 years of life. Just recently he won an award for his '55 Chevy, 4-door wagon he calls Buttercup at an RVCC show held at the Hidden Valley High School to support the girls' soccer team. "I won the 'Best Walmart Parking Lot Car' award and before that she won the 'Trailer Queen' award," said Bob with a chuckle, and then explained that they always come up with funny names at the Hidden Valley car show. "Out of 120 cars they only give out 10-15 awards."

Bob and Kathy Simmons have been married for 34 years and have lived in rural Cave Junction since 2004 when they moved from Ukiah, California to be close to family in retirement. Kathy is a retired administrator with the Bureau of Land Management of 30 years and Bob was an insurance salesman who then sold his business before retiring at age 60.

"I am very lucky with the wife I have," Bob said with gratitude. Kathy lovingly supports his hobby that he started when he was 13 years old living on a ranch in Hopland,



(Photo by Laura Mancuso for the Illinois Valley News)

Kathy and Bob Simmons in front of their rural Cave Junction home Sunday, July 18 with Buttercup, a '55 Chevy, 4-door wagon and Baby Blue, a '72 Chevy C10, shelf wheelbase stepside pickup.

California. "My first car was a '26 Bucket-T 48 Cadillac flathead and I paid \$25 for it."

When talking about his cars, Bob gets a twinkle in his eye and a spring in his step. "I bought this car (Buttercup) in Kansas City, Missouri and she was born in Lincoln, Nebraska. I found the original owner in Nevada and learned she had been used as a newspaper delivery car," said Bob as he showed off the detailed pinstriping done by the late Don Tippit from Nevada. He said this

yellow classic stands out in a show with the surfboards on the roof and island-themed décor.

His other street rod is just as impressive, a '72 Chevy C10, shelf wheelbase stepside pickup named Baby Blue. Bob bought the car from owners in Medford and he upgraded it with a different grill and a Tonneau retractable cover in the back. "This model was popular in early cars," said Bob with glee, and then demonstrated how fast his truck could go with a 350 hp engine.

Odds are that if you see a classic car with an octopus made of yarn hanging from the rearview mirror, Bob Simmons may have had a hand in it. His mother, who has now passed, made him an octopus for all his classics and he often handed them out to friends.

If you are excited for the car show and would like a sneak peak there is a free pre-show from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Growers Market parking Lot on F Street, between 4th and 5th Street in Grants Pass Friday, July 23.

Professionals of color speak up about racism

By **Laura Mancuso**
IV News staff

Racism still needs to be addressed in Josephine County according to a panel of speakers for "Inclusive Spaces for a Diverse Workforce" sponsored by a grant for SO Health-E that was held at the Allcare Conference Room in Grants Pass July 15.

The community organizer and moderator of the panel was Cave Junction resident Connie Dillinger, who is community advisory

council member for Allcare Health.

Many area human resources personnel and management teams that work with hiring and retaining employees were invited to this private event.

The panel was made up of professionals of color that included: Dr. Jacob Herring, Vincent and Brenda Aguilera, Rashi Woods and Nicole Schlienger.

Dillinger said, "The speakers are here to speak their truth about experiences, tell why they came here, and

how they have been treated."

The discussions were filled with emotion and real-life experiences that panel members have had with racial injustices that have happened in Josephine County during past events and current times. They all had hopes of making an impact in future social change.

One thing that all the panelists agreed upon was a statement made by Dr. Herring, a diverse workforce consultant. "Never say 'I don't see color.' The person

will think you are an idiot." Herring pointed out, "When you say that, you are wiping away a huge part of who I am." Herring told his truth about his Black son being bullied at a school in Grants Pass and how he decided to have him change schools.

Brenda Aguilera, a program manager for Project Youth Plus, said she wants change for all students of color. Brenda told the story about how one of her sons ended up moving away from Grants Pass to California and finally confided in her

that in Grants Pass he felt like, "I was a black dot on a white piece of paper." She explained that the population of people of color is growing in Grants Pass and "if you are hiring, you should make your job more known (to people of color)."

Rashi Woods, an Illinois Valley resident along with her husband and four children, told stories about how she and her family have been treated in Cave Junction. Her son has been called the "N" word and she has had sarcastic customers

try to converse with her in Spanish in a condescending manner, when she is a Black American that speaks English. She wishes that employers would pay attention to these situations and address them. One of her frustrations is the Confederate Flag being flown. "How can white people say that the flag is not racist?" Woods asked, and added, "It makes me feel that 'I don't matter and neither does my family.'"

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