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Seussical

Music by Stephen Flaherty

Lyrics by Lynn Ahrens

Book by Lynn Ahrens & Stephen Flaherty

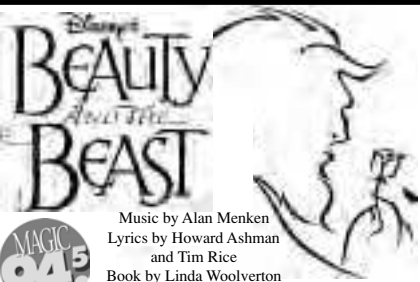
Based on the Works of Dr. Seuss

"...one of the most dazzling productions ever seen at Actors Cabaret. 'Suessical' is great fun for anyone who has ever read a Dr. Seuss book."

- Dorothy Velasco, Register-Guard

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OPENING FEBRUARY 4!!!



Music by Alan Menken

Lyrics by Howard Ashman and Tim Rice

Book by Linda Woolverton

February 4 - March 12, 2005

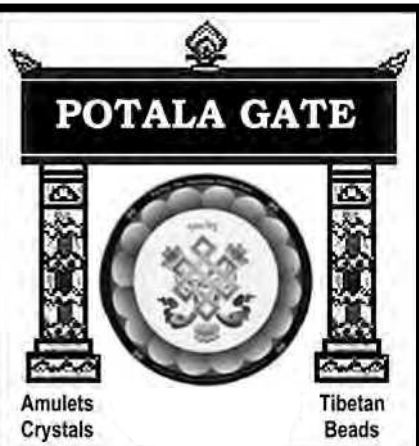
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THEater BY SHARLEEN NELSON

Filling the Gap

Pleasant Hill Community Theatre keeps drama alive.

With a surplus of Eugene-area theaters vying for patrons, one might think that there wouldn't be room for one more. But that's not a problem for a non-profit group in Pleasant Hill — because it's all about the kids.

According to Mike Moskovitz, who serves as vice-president on the five-member volunteer Pleasant Hill Community Theatre Board, the goal is to provide a much-needed venue for youth in Pleasant Hill and its surrounding area to participate, learn, and explore dance and theater arts.

"Our goal is to actively engage area youth in a range of activities," Moskovitz says. "We're extremely excited to be able to put this together."

The organization has assembled a group of directors, instructors and volunteers to guide the theater's programs and activities that will kick off later this month with a jazz and tap dance clinic, followed by theater workshops and a Broadway musical to be performed by local high school students. Additionally, plans are in the works to expand the program to include a venue for music programs as well as to eventually host kids' theater camps.

"The plan is that it will be a place that is available to the entire community for use as a performance venue," Moskovitz says. He explains that the programs offered by the organization will fill a void left by deep budget cuts that have hit particularly hard in rural school districts such as Pleasant Hill, resulting in broad slashing of after-school and extracurricular activities. For many school districts, even sports-related activities took a hit, forcing parents and students to resort to fundraising. So it was no surprise when the high school's drama department was cut entirely.

With a gaping hole in the community's available programs for kids, the organization sought out ways to not only benefit the community, but also to get the schools involved in their endeavor. According to Moskovitz, the group decided to approach

the local schools for their input and possible involvement and was extremely pleased with the response.

"We sent out letters outlining the program to all the schools, and the principals are 100 percent supportive," he says.

With the schools on board, the organization hopes to expand the program to meet the needs of both the students and the community. "Our main goal is to work closely with the schools to incorporate their curriculum — to devise some sort of mutual benefit to both the theater and the schools," he says. "We're also looking into developing some sort of program whereby high school kids can receive school credit for their participation."

Moskovitz concedes that because not all kids excel at sports, these programs offer children alternative opportunities to get involved, whether it's onstage or behind the scenes painting sets, selling tickets or learning how to operate lighting and sound equipment. "There's something for everyone," he says.

Moreover, the group's goal is to be all-inclusive, so if a family in the community can't pay for activity fees, the organization will work closely with them to arrange funding. They also intend to offer scholarships.

Meanwhile, the group and volunteers are busy applying the finishing touches to the former Zephyr Way metal shop, which has been converted into a theater with a seating capacity of 200 and portable seats that can easily be removed to transform the audience area into a floor for dance classes. The group has also published a website where people can offer input and comments, as well as volunteer for any number of available jobs, including experienced directors to guide their children's programs.

"The response from the community — mainly through the website — has been overwhelming," Moskovitz says. "We're getting two to three positive responses per day from people who are excited and eager to volunteer."

For more information, call 988-1195 or visit www.phct.org

EW



THE WAIT IS OVER!
JAN. 27...
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Eugene Weekly's Restaurant Guide

Chow! features reviews of area eateries and a directory of Eugene and Corvallis restaurants.

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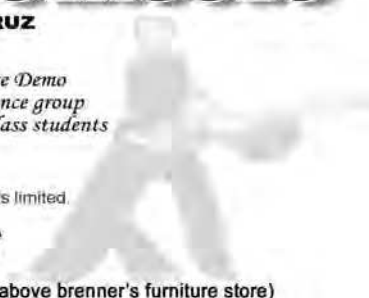
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