

BRIEFLY
Youth symphony ensembles to perform free concert

PENDLETON — The public is invited to a concert featuring Oregon East Symphony’s two youth preparatory orchestras.

The performance is Thursday, Jan. 25 at 7 p.m. in the auditorium at Pendleton High School, 1800 N.W. Carden Ave. There is no admission charge.

The Preludes Orchestra will perform “Woodland Park” by Robert S. Frost, and “Barnyard Bash” and “Ragtime Fiddles” by Bruce Chase. A beginner level ensemble, Preludes is conducted by Melinda Tovey of Hermiston. Tovey is a private violin instructor who plays with the Oregon East Symphony and is an instructor in Symphony Strings, an after school program.

The intermediate level A Sharp Players Preparatory Orchestra will perform Trans-Siberian Orchestra’s “Wizards In Winter,” “Overture to Rienzi” by Richard Wagner and movements from “Masques et Bergamasques” by Gabriel Faure. The A Sharp Players are conducted by Bruce Walker, assistant professor of music at Columbia Basin College in Pasco.

For more information about symphony ensembles or classical music education programs, contact 541-276-0320 or oesofficeinfo@gmail.com.

Sports bar kicks off comedy night

MISSION — With the National Football League now in postseason, Wildhorse Resort & Casino has resumed its weekly comedy shows.

LOL Comedy is every Thursday at 8 p.m. in the Wildhorse Sports Bar, located at the casino off Interstate 84 at Exit 216. There is no cover charge for the 21-and-older event.

Each week, a pair of comics take the stage and laughs are plentiful. The Jan. 25 headliner is Susan Rice. Working in the loan department at a Portland bank, she started her stand-up career in 1983. Entertaining audiences across the United States and abroad, Rice moved to Los Angeles for awhile. She opened shows on the road with many well-known comics, including Jerry Seinfeld, Sam Kinison, Bill Hicks and Paula Poundstone. She became a regular at many of the southern California comedy hot spots, including the famed Comedy Store on the Sunset Strip in West Hollywood.

Opening for Rice is Gilbert Brown, a member of the Modoc, Klamath, Paiute and Warm Springs tribes. In addition to stand-up, Brown is a powwow emcee, a wild horse rodeo cowboy and traditional fisherman.

For the LOL Comedy schedule, visit www.wildhorseresort.com. For more about Rice, go to www.susanricecomedy.com, and for Brown, www.gilbertbrown.weebly.com.

Fishtrap welcomes three Wallowa County published writers

ENTERPRISE — A trio of Wallowa County writers will share their works during the upcoming Fishtrap Fireside.

Featured writers include Jenner Hanni, Catherine Matthias, and Zanni Schauffler. The fireside also includes an open mic for audience members to share their stories.

The free event is Friday, Feb. 2 from 7-9 p.m. at 400 E. Grant St., Enterprise. Light refreshments are available.

Hanni escaped the technology scene in Portland, moving to Wallowa County in September. He began writing prose poems and enjoys reading and looking for foxes at the Iwetemlaykin State Heritage Site.

A Joseph resident, Matthias developed a love for picture books at a young age. Four of her picture books and two of her middle grade nonfiction books were published by Children’s Press and in 2004, two of the fiction books were chosen as part of a three-book boxed edition. She continues to work on manuscripts in the quiet moments.

Schauffler, who grew up in Portland, has lived in Enterprise for 12 years. She writes poetry, but is currently embarking on an effort to write a novel about a sad girl. In addition, she’s a peer support specialist at Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness and recently developed an interest in cooking.

For more information, contact Mike Midlo at mike@fishtrap.org, 541-426-3623 or visit www.fishtrap.org.

Out of prison and back on tour

Billy Don Burns to perform in Heppner, Pendleton

Billy Don Burns is perhaps the greatest unknown figure in outlaw country music, so if you’re not familiar with the man, his story, and his music, you can be forgiven. But by the end of this piece you may be scratching your head as to why he isn’t more of a household name.

Born in Arkansas, Burns’ country music career had a rather unorthodox start when he picked up a gig performing as Hank Williams at the Opryland USA theme park 1973. It opened up the gates to a quick succession of recordings of his songs by popular performers: Rick Nelson (“Wild Nights in Tulsa”), Mel Tillis (“I Always Come Back To Loving You”), and Connie Smith (“Be Alright In Arkansas”).

His career seemed to be on the rise with his Porter Wagoner-produced debut released in 1982, but seemed to stall over a series of unrealized projects that included his production work on a shelved gospel album, “Outlaw at the Cross,” by Johnny Paycheck. Willie Nelson’s 1990 recording of Burns’ (“I Don’t Have A Reason) To Go To California Anymore” gave his career a much-needed shot in the arm. His recording career resumed not long after that, though many of his albums have gone out of print.

In 2015 Shooter Jennings (son of Waylon) recorded an intimate solo acoustic performance of Burns for his label. “A Night In Room 8” was recorded in the same room at the Joshua Tree Inn where Gram Parsons died. The album is as raw



J.D. KINDLE
Comment



Contributed photo

Billy Don Burns

as can be; between songs is banter between Burns, Jennings and his wife Misty, the guitar is slightly out of tune, and you can hear Burns breathing into the microphone, but you feel as if you’re right there in that hotel room, communing with Parsons’s ghost with Burns acting as medium.

Unfortunately for Burns, that recent period in his life was a bit of a blur. Not too shy to talk about his trials and tribulations with substance abuse, Burns confesses that he was so high that he hardly remembers the recording process and the subsequent tour.

“I went to prison right in the middle of that. It was a little ol’ dope charge. We played Cincinnati and crossed the Ohio River into Kentucky and that’s where it happened. They gave me probation and told me I couldn’t tour with Shooter. At that time Shooter was paying me good money so I ran off — what they call ‘absconded.’ Off course when I got picked up I got extradited and they sentenced me to two years. I did 13 months. I ain’t proud of it but I ain’t ashamed of it either. You know I don’t rob or steal. Anybody that’s perfect can throw the book at me but I’m a decent person.”

Released from prison early last year (due in part to a letter

from Willie Nelson pleading for leniency), Burns has set out for an extensive winter tour of the western United States with South Dakota compatriot Ken Fanger. The tour is titled the “Talk About Crazy” tour, named after the Burns song of same name.

“We are a pretty wild and crazy bunch,” says Burns. “When you do this for forty-five years like I have you’re kinda like a truck driver — you’ve been up and down the road so much you’re half crazy.”

This month marks the second time Burns has swung through Eastern Oregon. Last July Burns was the marquee performer at Heppner’s Ruckus in the Boonies festival, which features a rowdy mixture of outlaw country, crust punk and heavy metal music. Ruckus promoter Aaron “Dog Bite” Harris, himself a country-punk performer, sees as Burns as an overlooked legend.

“I think country music should appreciate guys like Billy Don more. They are a dying breed,” Harris emphatically states. “We need to take care of them, and help them as much as we can because they are treated like [garbage] in the business they helped create. I think it’s a tragedy that guys like Luke Combs are on TV and I’m booking Billy Don shows at clubs

See him live

Billy Don Burns with Ken Fanger and Dog Bite Harris performs at Bucknum’s (Heppner) on Sunday, Jan. 21, and the Great Pacific (Pendleton) on Monday, Jan. 22.

where 20 people show up and talk over his set. He’s also just a good soul. He’s one of the most understanding, genuine guys I’ve ever had the pleasure of working with.”

At 68 years old ,Burns has been experiencing a surprising and very welcome career renaissance. Rising contemporary outlaw country performers Cody Jinks and Whitey Morgan have recorded his songs, which has raised his profile with a new generation.

Says Burns: “I tell you I get a lot of respect from these kids. Most of them I play with are twenty, thirty. Cody says he’s been a fan of mine for five years. So it’s really nice to be treated that way in my old age. Of course I’m out there still doin’ it. I gotta keep doin’ it — ‘til the day I die hopefully.”

There are too many tales from Burns’ life to fit in the confines of this article: a broken engagement with Lorrie Morgan, dropping Johnny Paycheck off for a stint in prison, a lifelong friendship with Tanya Tucker, receiving a heartfelt letter from Johnny Cash, Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton declaring March 27, 1983, as “Billy Don Burns Day,” a duet album recorded with legendary songwriter Hank Cochran, etc. A documentary on Burns also entitled “Talk About Crazy” has been in the works for a few years and will hopefully do him justice. In the meantime, the best way to digest the Billy Don Burns story is to witness him live in concert.

■

James Dean Kindle is a Pendleton musician and executive director of the Oregon East Symphony. Contact him at jamesdeankindle@gmail.com.

WHAT TO DO

Festivals

Eagle Cap Extreme Sled Dog Race

•Jan. 17-20
•Joseph, Enterprise, Fergi Ski Area
www.eaglecapextreme.com
Free, except banquet (\$20/ adults, \$8/ages 5-12) People can watch races, which includes the Iditarod & Yukon Quest qualifiers; meet-and-greet with mushers at vet checks; Race Central and Kids’ Corner.

Pursuit Conference 2018
•Saturday, Jan. 20, 10 a.m., 2 p.m., 7 p.m.
•Hermiston Assembly of God Church, 730 E. Hurburt Ave.
www.pursuitconf.com
Free. Faith-based conference featuring live music, inspirational speakers and more.

Melonville Comedy Festival

•Saturday, Jan. 27; 8 p.m.
•Hermiston Conference Center, 415 S. Highway 395
www.facebook.com
\$35. 21-and-older show features co-headliners Kermet Apio and Derek Richards. Opening the show is Cory Michaelis. Tickets available at the conference center. Food available for purchase.

Art, Authors & Museums

Photography Club Exhibit

•Monday-Thursdays; 11 a.m.-7 p.m.,
•Friday-Saturdays; 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
•Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave.
www.hermistonlibrary.us
Free. The work of Photography Club members is on display. Runs through Jan. 31.

New Year’s Show
•Tuesday-Sundays, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
•Peterson’s Gallery and Chocolate, 1925 Main St., Baker City
www.petersonsgallery.net
Free. Features the work of three of the past year’s most requested artists. Runs through Jan. 31.

Fishtrap Fireside

•Friday, Feb. 2; 7 p.m.
•400 E. Grant St., Enterprise
www.fishtrap.org
Free. Featured Wallowa County writers will share from their works, including Jenner Hanni, Catherine Matthias and Zanni Schauffler. An open mic follows for audience to share their stories.

Watercolor Society of Oregon

•Monday-Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
•Betty Feves Memorial Gallery, Blue Mountain Community College, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton.
Free. The traveling show features 20 award-winning paintings from the society’s bi-annual juried exhibition by noted artist/juror Paul Jackson. Gallery also open by appointment by calling 541-278-5952. Runs through Feb. 15.

2018 ArtWORKz Junior Art Show & Competition

•Jan. 27-March 17; exhibit displayed
•Saturday, Feb. 10; 1 p.m., artists’ reception
•Tamastslikt Cultural Institute, near Wildhorse Resort & Casino.
www.tamastslikt.org
Free. Features artwork of regional artists who are 18 and under.

Music

Joseph Hein Band

•Saturday, Jan. 20; 7-9 p.m.
•Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., 403 S. Main St., Pendleton

No cover. All ages. Musician creates harmonious sounds with energetic up-tempo rhythm.

Branded

•Saturday, Jan. 20; 8 p.m. No cover
•Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

The “Dear Darla” Band

•Saturday, Jan. 20; 8:30 p.m.
•Midway Bar & Grill, 1750 N. First St., Hermiston

The Wasteland Kings

•Saturday, Jan. 20; 9 p.m.
•Hamley Steakhouse & Sa-

loon, 8 S.E. Court Ave., Pendleton

No cover. The La Grande-based group offers a unique twist on classic rock and Americana sounds.

Billy Don Burns

•Monday, Jan. 22; 7-9 p.m.
•Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., 403 S. Main St., Pendleton

No cover. All ages. Features the country music warrior who carries his guitar like a sword.

Wasteland Kings

•Thursday, Jan. 25; 7 p.m.
•40 Taps, 337 S.W. Emigrant Ave., Pendleton

Preludes Orchestra & A Sharp Players

•Thursday, Jan. 25; 7 p.m.
•Pendleton High School, 1810 N.W. Carden Ave.
www.oregoneastsymphony.org

Free. Ensembles of the Oregon East Symphony, the beginner level and intermediate level orchestras will perform.

Troy Fair Band

•Friday, Jan. 26; Saturday, Jan. 27; 8 p.m. No cover
•Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

Exza Rose Band

•Saturday, Jan. 27; 7-9:30 p.m.
•Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., 403 S. Main St., Pendleton

No cover. All ages show features the Portland-based band whose sound is described as dreamy, soul and rock ‘n’ roll with minimalist melodies and eerie harmonies.

Two-Lane Highway Band

•Saturday, Jan. 27; 8:30 p.m.
•Midway Bar & Grill, 1750 N. First St., Hermiston

No cover.

Jam Night

•Thursday, Feb. 1; 6:30-8 p.m.
•Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St.
www.pendletonarts.org
Free. Join other local musicians for an informal evening of jamming.

Misty Mouth CD Release Party

•Saturday, Feb. 10; 8-10 p.m.
•Great Pacific Wine & Cof-

fee Co., 403 S. Main St., Pendleton

No cover. All ages. Classically and garage band trained, the Pendleton-based band features Adam Lange on bass and vocals, Addison Schulberg on lead guitar, Greg Schulberg on percussion and Rian Beach on lead vocals/rhythm guitar.

Stompin’ Ground

•Saturday, Feb. 17, 9 p.m. No cover
•Riverside Sports Bar, 1501 Sixth St., Umatilla

Night life

Karaoke w/DJ David

•Saturdays; 8 p.m.
•Riverside Sports Bar, 1501 Sixth St., Umatilla

DJ & Trivia

•Saturdays; 9 p.m.
•Midway Tavern, 1750 N. First St., Hermiston

Holiday Hangover Pub Crawl

•Saturday, Jan. 20, 4-10 p.m.
•Multiple locations, downtown Pendleton
www.eventbrite.com

\$15/presale, \$20/day of event. Ticket includes stainless steel pint glass, deals at participating locations — Great Pacific, Oregon Grain Growers, Hamley’s, Sister’s Cafe, Cimmiovotti’s, The Packard, Prodigal Son, 40 Taps — and a chance to win a grand prize raffle item.

Thirsty Thursdays

•Third Thursdays; 6 p.m.
•Midway Bar & Grill, 1750 N. First St., Hermiston

No cover. Hosts a local brewery offering tastings. Jan. 18: Pelican Brewing Company.

LOL Comedy Jam

•Thursdays; 8 p.m.
•Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

No cover. Jan. 25: Gilbert Brown, Susan Rice

Wine tasting

•Fridays, 4-8 p.m.
•Sno Road Winery, 111 W. Main St., Echo.

Karaoke w/DJ David

•Fridays; 8 p.m.
•Riverside Sports Bar, 1501 Sixth St., Umatilla

DJ and dancing

•Fridays, 8 p.m.
•The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

BOOK REVIEW

A couple — and a country — at war

Collins Hemingway’s trilogy of the missing years of British author Jane Austen’s life, an exploration of what might have happened if the famous writer had married, comes to its tragic conclusion in Volume III.

Volume I of “The Marriage of Miss Jane Austen” details the wooing of the strong-willed, intellectually inclined but impoverished daughter of a clergyman by neighbor Ashton Dennis. Volume II explores not only the

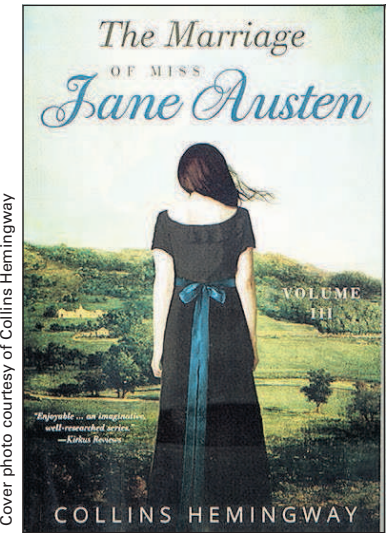
first 14 months of their marriage and the birth of a child, but also clashes with former friends now intent on ruining the couple.

As Volume III opens, all is not well with baby George. A fundamental disagreement about his treatment has shattering consequences for the family, and the rift created threatens to destroy them. Can a war with France create an unlikely path to forgiveness and healing? Or will old enemies return to finish what

they started?

Hemingway twines the real tumult of the early 1800s in England with the fictional chaos of Austen’s life, creating a seamless narrative and a plausible explanation for her destruction of all references to what should have been the best years of her life.

“*The Marriage of Miss Jane Austen: Volume III,*” written and published by Collins Hemingway, © 2017.



Cover photo courtesy of Collins Hemingway