

Local artists to begin 'Dance with Sea Lions' in preparation for FEC's 20th anniversary

2016 marks the FEC's 20th anniversary as a leader in community arts and entertainment. A coast-wide celebration of this milestone will come in the form of the iconic sea lion and its longstanding relationship with the Florence area. Jennifer Connor, FEC marketing specialist and event coordinator, said, "This is a project not just for the FEC and our celebration, but a project for the city, community and whole Oregon coast."

Dancing with Sea Lions will be a public art display sponsored by the nonprofit group Friends of the Florence Events Center and local businesses and individuals.

As many as 20 area artists will be a large part of the historic project, which is centered around 20 fiberglass sea lions that are 7.5-foot tall. Each is a blank canvas that can be decorated to reflect the artist's own unique style. Sponsorships are available for the project. Sponsoring a sea lion costs \$1,500, with a total of 20 sponsorships available. Other sponsorship options are also available. For example, two businesses, Sea Lion Caves, Three Rivers Casino Resort and FURA, have teamed up under the name "Stellar Underwriters."

"I keep going back to our original theme, that the arts have a ripple effect on the community. Art reaches out to all ages, and this project will reach out to all ages too," Connor said.

The "blank canvas" is a plain design nicknamed "Porter," which is modeled after a cow sea lion.

The project officially kicked off Nov. 1, when the call to artists went out. A grant from Spirit Mountain Community Fund will provide a \$500 stipend for the artists who are selected and complete their project.

"In the beginning, they will get \$250 up front so that they can get their supplies and start the project. When the sea lion is completed, they'll get another \$250. We hope that's an incentive to bring in the artists, and that will get a lot of ideas going," said Connor.

The Florence Public Arts Committee is helping set standards, so certain designs will not be allowed. Selected artists were notified by the end of December. They will receive their statues this month and finish work in March, before the April 7 and 8 Dancing with Sea Lions Splash Off, when all 20 unique sea lions will be on display at the

FEC.

"I foresee some of these sea lions will be in the area for years," said Connor.

While they are on display, a map will detail each of the 20 locations, starting at the Umpqua Discovery Center in Reedsport, stretching through Florence to the Sea Lion Caves on Highway 101 and up toward the Sea Lion Foundation in Newport. Many of the sea lions will be available for auction in October 2016.

For more information about Dancing with Sea Lions, visit www.facebook.com/DancingWithSeaLions.



Calling all artists 'For the Love of Animals'

The month of February will include the second annual "For the Love of Animals" exhibit at FEC. This highly successful event is a chance as an artistic community to support the local Florence Area Humane Society (FAHS). By renting a rod for \$20 for up to three paintings or photographs, artists can help get the word out about the importance of supporting shelter animals.

Beside each rod will be a photo of an animal up for adoption at the FAHS. Artists will receive the proceeds of any artwork sold (minus FEC commission). All proceeds from the exhibit Feb. 12, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., will be donated to FAHS. While at the reception, guests can buy raffle tickets to win a voucher for a portrait of their pet to be painted by well-known local artist

John Leasure. The drawing will be held at 2 p.m. Also, we will have a photo booth set up for pet photos, to be developed almost instantly.

Complimentary refreshments will be served to delight pet owners and their pets, and we will have a bin for donations of pet food for the FAHS.

This exhibit will be a win-win for all involved in this annual event. Artists are encouraged to sign up for a rod by Jan. 25 at the FEC. Three-D items relating to the animal theme are also welcome for the display case, at \$20 for up to three items, space permitting. Application forms are available weekdays at the FEC Office, or on its website at www.eventcenter.org.

Cast announced for upcoming 'Diary of Anne Frank' production



The story of Anne Frank captured with heartbreaking eloquency in the pages of her diary have been shared on stage, film and countless art forms over the decades. However, newly discovered writings from her diary, along with survivor accounts, have been interwoven into a contemporary and impassioned re-telling of the lives of

people persecuted under Nazi rule.

Written by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett, and adapted for the stage by Wendy Kesselman, the play has been described by The Associated Press as "A powerful new version that moves the audience to gasps, then tears."

The play captures the claustrophobic realities of the families in hiding as they move through a daily existence mixed with fear, hope, laughter and grief during the two dark years Anne Frank and her family managed to stay alive within the confines of a space that was both safe haven and prison.

Presented by The Last Resort Players and directed by Jennifer Connor and Cathy Dupont, auditions for "Diary of Anne Frank" were held last month, with the following

cast members announced for the show's April run:

Otto Frank — Dana Rodet
Edith Frank — Kate Gibson
Margot Frank — Brooklyn Cahoon
Anne Frank — Memphis Glieve
Mr. Putti Van Daan — Jim Wellington
Mrs. Petronella Van Daan — Jackie

Crave

Peter Van Daan — Kyle Hight
Jan Dussell — Grant Harmon
Miep — Trudie Cahoon
Mr. Kraler — to be determined
Nazi soldiers: Wayne Sharpe, Taylor Smith, Jamison Smith and James Bonisteel

For more information, visit www.lastresortplayers.org.

