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CROW to present 'Shrek the Musical Jr.' in April

According to Children's Repertory of Oregon Workshops (CROW), nasty will be nice and Florence will be "ogre-the-moon" when it presents its fifth main-stage production, "Shrek the Musical Jr."

This fun and flatulence-filled family musical will be presented April 15 to 17 at the Florence Events Center, but this nonprofit youth organization's all-volunteer production team has been working on it for nearly a year already.

With music by Jeanine Tesori and book and lyrics by David Lindsay-Abaire, "Shrek the Musical Jr." is based on the Oscar-winning DreamWorks animated film and the book, "Shrek," by William Steig.

"Shrek the Musical Jr." is an uproarious musical comedy that follows the adventures of an ogre named "Shrek" (played by Jacob Teryik) who sets off on a quest to save a feisty princess (played by Lacey Seeley) from a giant soul-filled dragon (played by Nyah Vollmar).

However, it turns out that in order to ultimately succeed, Shrek must battle an even bigger obstacle: learning how to believe in himself and open his heart to others. Along the way, he meets his comedic sidekick, "Donkey" (played by Cameron Utz) and goes nose to navel with the diminutive "Lord Farquaad"



COURTESY PHOTO

The cast of CROW's upcoming production of "Shrek the Musical Jr."

(played by Tristin Reber).

With a cast of more than 50 children and young adults, including seven adorable 4- to 6-year-old "Telegrammers," CROW works hard to provide the highest caliber sets, costumes, props and special effects for participants.

"The arts have the power to impact our youth in ways that nothing else can," says Melanie Heard, artistic director of CROW. "Shrek's unique story of discovery encourages each of

us to examine our prejudices, review what we believe to be our limitations and work to better understand ourselves and others.

"Our cast members have embarked on a similar journey, learning more about themselves and each other while collaborating towards the common goal of presenting this musical."

As with anything CROW does, Heard stresses that "Shrek the Musical Jr." is much more than just cute children singing

and dancing.

"This musical holds a strong central theme, which is relatable to all of us," says Heard. Shrek has learned the hard way that "people hate the things they cannot understand."

For many years he has pro-

tected himself from the hurtful actions of those who are scared of him by living as a recluse in a cozy cesspit.

One day, his peaceful swamp is disturbed by new tenants: fairytale misfits — including Pinocchio, the Ugly Duckling, the Wicked Witch, Peter Pan, the Three Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf — who have been banished there by the villainous Lord Farquaad.

In order to gain back his land, Shrek makes a deal with Farquaad to rescue Fiona from a tower guarded by a fierce dragon. Setting off with his wise-cracking companion, Donkey, Shrek begins the journey of a lifetime filled with adventure, romance and hilarity.

Tickets are on sale at the Florence Events Center. They are \$16 for adults and \$8 for kids ages 12 and under.

There will be four public performances: Friday, April 15, at 7 p.m.; Saturday, April 16 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; and Sunday, April 17, at 2 p.m.

Tickets can be obtained by calling 541-997-1994 or online at www.eventcenter.org.

Bond from 1A

on the latest Building Condition Assessment done for the district.

Renovating the existing building would be almost as costly as new construction, according to Angal.

"The best estimates to renovate and remodel to bring everything up to standard, including seismic, would be 75 to 100 percent of the cost of building a new building," Angal said.

"If we went for a remodel renovation, it would be so large scale we would have to house students temporarily in portable classrooms, which would need pads, plumbing and electricity. That would run another \$500,000 to \$1 million," she added.

District Business Manager Kari Blake said, "Next year, the new bond would add 29 cents per \$1,000 of property value over what we are currently paying."

According to Blake, the current middle school bond is scheduled to be retired in 2019. Because the interest of the new bond will be deferred until 2019, the total cost increase per \$1,000 of property value in 2017 will be approximately 29 cents. A home valued at \$200,000 would see an increase of approximately \$58 per year, or \$4.83 per month. As property values fluctuate, the rate could increase or decrease in coming years.

Currently, 10 of Lane County's 15 school districts pay a higher bond rate than what the proposed increase would create.

"In the new high school facility, we will have more classroom access for students, particularly in the sciences," Angal said. "We will have more lab space and better equipment in that lab space. We will have a workable auditorium for students to do plays and performances. And, we will have a working cafeteria so we can have students stay in school at lunch and have a good lunch."

Angal also said the district is working with Lane Community College Florence Center (LCC) to have a technical education wing that could be open in the evenings to allow LCC to teach college-level courses.

In the current environment, school safety and security are paramount.

"We are looking to build a safe school with controlled entry and the office near the

front, a school with a lot of natural light and space," Angal said. "Safety and security are the two major issues."

Because all district buildings are outside the tsunami zone, Angal said the new high school building could also be another community shelter in case of tsunami or earthquake, along with the Florence Events Center and the middle school.

According to Angal, the current high school building is not suitable as a community shelter because it is at high risk for collapse in the event of even a moderate earthquake.

The school district arrived at the \$36.9 million figure after receiving several estimates based on cost per square foot.

"We spoke with several architects and told them we wanted a clean, beautiful school but not a palace," Angal said. "We want one that works for the coast, that is safe and seismically sound and allows us to use our classrooms in a flexible 21st century way and to be energy efficient. We got several quotes and settled in the middle. We don't want more or less than we need."

Angal added, "It is important for those in our community, those with and without children in school, to ensure that

our kids in rural Lane County have the same educational opportunities as kids do in the valley."

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