

'Dancing with Sea Lions' makes big splash

FLORENCE — More than 750 people were in attendance for the official "Splash Off" of the FEC's Dancing with Sea Lions reveal, which is part of the center's 20th anniversary celebration. The project is a public art program featuring 20 hand-decorated fiberglass sea lions on display from Reedsport to Newport and locations throughout Florence.

On April 8, the FEC held an artist reception for the Dancing with Sea Lions artists, committee members, sponsors, underwriters and the Friends of the FEC before the free public Splash Off! event April 9.

Jennifer Connor, FEC marketing specialist and project coordinator, said she loved that the project makes art accessible.

"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.

FEC Director Kevin Rhodes opened the artist reception, where all 20 full-sized sea lions filled the flat floor of the events center. Rhodes said the FEC continues to host local and regional events. By the end of this year, the tally will total 8,000 events.

"Although the celebration continues throughout the year, Dancing with Sea Lions is certainly the pinnacle event. Jennifer and the whole committee has done a fantastic job," Rhodes said.



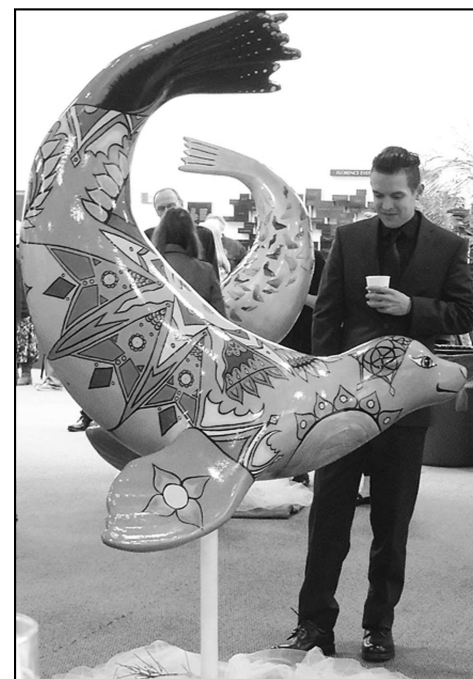
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The 20 artist-created sea lions were revealed April 8 at the FEC.

Each Dancing with Sea Lions sculpture was sponsored by an area business or organization. The project was underwritten by Sea Lion Caves and Three Rivers

Casino Resort.

City Councilor Joshua Greene, who is also active in the Public Arts Committee and Florence Urban Renewal Agency,



said, "When you think about the FEC and all that Jennifer and her team have done to get this done and get it out there from Newport to Reedsport, this is really terrific. You come in here and you see this unbelievable expression of creativity, fun and excitement, and all by these artists in our community."

City of Florence Public Works has installed the sea lions at their locations around Florence. For a full map, information on the artists and more pictures, visit www.dancingwithsealions.com.

Enjoy an evening of Wallflowers and Wine at the FEC

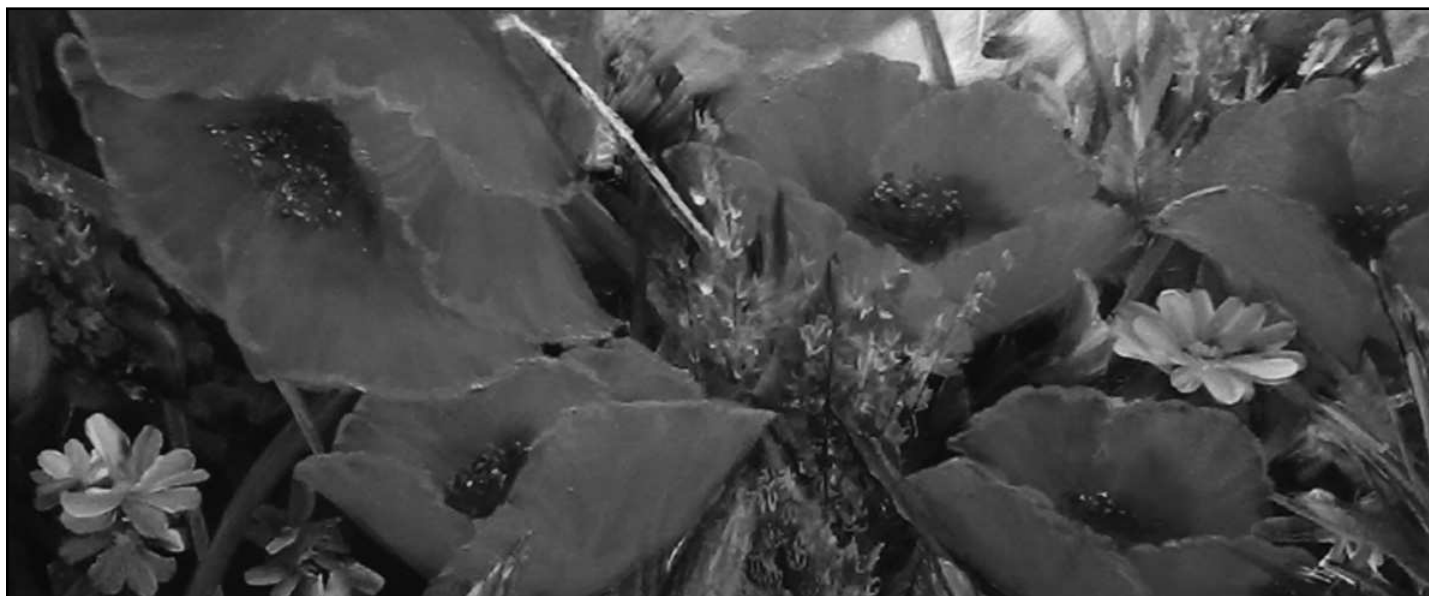
FLORENCE — Come create your own wall art with artist John Leasure while enjoying a glass of wine Saturday, May 14, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

All the paints, canvas and art instruction are provided to create your own sunflower masterpiece.

Tickets are \$40 per person and include a free beverage (one glass of wine or non-alcoholic choice) and a multitude of delicious snacks while participants are given professional, step-by-step painting instruction.

Space is limited, so reserve your spot by visiting www.eventcenter.org, stopping by the FEC box office at 715 Quince Street, or by calling the box office at 541-997-1994.

This fun event is sponsored by the Friends of the Florence Events Center.



"Poppy Squash" by artist John Leasure