Sky's the limit for CROW's new 'Flight' dance team

COURTESY PHOTO

The ten members of the inaugural CROW 'Flight' Dance Team and Melanie Heard.

Last May, CROW (Children's Reperatory Workshop of Oregon) held an open audition for young dancers. This is nothing out of the ordinary for the local non-profit youth theatre organization, which holds many auditions throughout the year.

But this audition was different because it was a highly competitive audition for a brand new CROW dance team, called "Flight."

According to CROW's Artistic Director Melanie Heard, "Flight" marks an important milestone for the organization.

"It's a dream come true to be able to assemble this inaugural team from Florence's finest young dancers," said Heard.

The team consists of 10 young ladies and one young man, ranging in age from 10 to 16 years old. Heard is no stranger to the world of professional dance. Her background stems from the genre of classical ballet, and she studied with such prestigious groups as the Houston Ballet, Joffrey Ballet, Kirov Ballet School and Ballet West in her youth.

In her late teens, Heard began to explore other genres such as jazz, tap, lyrical, ballroom, swing, salsa and character dance. Heard performed in countless dance and theatre productions, including Broadway-style shows, which featured her dance talents.

She later went on to judge regional and national dance competitions throughout the United States.

Heard said she loves to choreograph various styles of dance, and has won several awards for her work such as an ACTF Meritorious Achievement Award for Outstanding Choreography.

"With Flight, we can do anything we want to do," said Heard. "We aren't limited by a script or a theme. We are all so excited to share the power of dance with our audiences. It's liberating, it's creative, it's worthwhile, and it's marvelous.

"Dance is pure magic."

When asked "Why do you like to dance?" sixth grader Willow Stone, 12, answered "because it's fun and it lets me process my emotions."

Graci Immel, also 12, answered the same question by saying "It's fantabulous. It makes me feel like a happy bird that's free and graceful."

Sixteen-year-old Kristin Owens said, "I've wanted to dance since I was young, but never got the chance. I'm really excited to learn."

The answers paint a picture that CROW has once again created a venue for young people to express themselves, and to tap into their creativity.

Part of CROW's overall philosophy is to create opportunities for local youth who might not have access to the same opportunities that exist in larger metro areas.

In addition to the above-mentioned members, "Flight's" dancers include: Alex Fuller, Kayla Rose, Victoria Schlager, Ashlyn Hart, Isabella Ramirez, Nyah Vollmar, Reanna Houlihan and Joseph Shepard.

"Flight" will make its stage debut with two numbers in the 2017 Holly Jolly Follies, subtitled "Totally Twisted Tinsel: The True Meaning of Christmas."

The Follies will be performed Dec. 1, 2 and 3, at the FEC and Tickets/info can be found at www.eventcenter.org or by calling 541-997-1994.

For more information about Flight, visit CROW's website at www.crowkids.com or call Melanie Heard at 541-999-8641.

Open auditions will be held once again in May, 2018.

Learn details on upcoming Medicare Open Enrollment

Every year from Oct. 15 through Dec. 7, people with Medicare have the opportunity to change their health and drug plans.

Companies that offer Medicare programs make changes in rates, co-pays, deductibles, drug lists and provisions each year. Consumers should receive information about the 2018 plans by Oct. 1, in time to review them before Open Enrollment.

Local Senior Health Insurance Benefits Assistance (SHIBA) counselors are gearing up for appointments to be held most Fridays during Open Enrollment in the computer lab at the Florence campus of Lane Community College.

SHIBA counselors meet with individuals to personally assist with Medicare choices, problems, enrollments and questions.

As trained volunteers serving under the direction of the Center for Medicare Services, they offer free, unbiased advice and services.

To schedule an appointment, call 800-722-4134.

Oktoberfest comes back to the FEC on Oct. 14

The City of Florence is known for its many fabulous events, including the annual Rhododendron Festival and the Rods 'n' Rhodies Invitational Car Show. The month of October continues this tradition with Ocktoberfest on Saturday, Oct. 14.

The Florence Events Center (FEC) is organizing a traditional Bavarian celebration that includes music from the Cultural Ecology Band, the Alpine Echoes Band and dancing by the talented and fun Tirolean and Skandia Leikarringen Dancers, as well as traditional German food and beverage from some of our local nonprofit organizations.

Then, take a little break for the Weiner Dog Races outside at 3 p.m.

An all-day pass for the music, dancing, races and fun is $7 in advance or $8 at the door. The FEC is located at 715 Quince St.

The Florence Events Center is proud to put on this great cultural community event, but it couldn't happen without the dedicated efforts and support of the many amazing volunteers and community sponsors.

If you would like information on how to be a sponsor of this event, please contact Jenna Bartlett at 541-902-3524.

For more information on the event itself, visit eventcenter.org or call 541-997-1994.

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FLORENCE FOOD SHARE — Sharing Is Caring

Florence Food Share provides food to those who are hungry in our community. If you have four hours a week available, we are in need of volunteers to staff our Front Desk and also act as Guides as clients walk through the pantry. Please call our volunteer coordinator, Ivy Medow, @ 541-997-9110 (Monday – Friday, before noon) to learn more about volunteering. info@florence-foodshare.org 2190 Spruce Street.

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In Honor of All Veterans

The staff at the Siuslaw News is preparing to publish the annual Veterans Day publication, which is a special supplement to the newspaper that is devoted to all military veterans who currently are Florence-area residents or have a connection to this area.

If you are interested in sharing your military background information in the annual tribute publication, or in updating information that we have published previously, please complete this form and submit it to the Siuslaw News. Service photographs are also welcome.

Submit forms and photos by email to nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com, by regular mail to Siuslaw News, Attn: Ned Hickson, P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR 97439; or drop off materials at the Siuslaw News office in Old Town, 148 Maple St.

If your profile was published in the 2016 Veterans tribute and you do not wish to make any changes to the profile, there is no need to resubmit this form or your military information.

Please be sure that all materials are carefully labeled with your name and phone number and are submitted by **October 27, 2017.**

Thank you for participating in this project to remember and honor our veterans.

Name: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Branch of Service: _____

Rank Achieved (optional): _____

Dates Served: _____

Where did you serve? _____

_____

Special Information (E.G., POW): _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Has your veterans information been published previously in the Siuslaw News Veterans Publication?
YES NO

Do we have your military photo(s) on file? YES NO

(Note: If you have submitted photos in the past, we will still have them on file.)