# LAST RESORT PLAYERS CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY

 $\mathbf{T}$ he spring of 1993 was an exciting time in Florence. There was a new hospital, a new Siuslaw Library, and, most interesting of all, plans for building an all-purpose event center were afoot. Bob Barker, a local resident with years of experience in theater, had urged that the building include a full theater complete with fly loft and full backstage facilities. Fundraising was in full swing.

At that time, the only venues for shows and concerts were the Siuslaw High School, the Elks Club and various churches. There was no place to hold large expositions and exhibits.

Barker had an idea that a popular play combined with an exhibit by local artists could help raise awareness of the need for money as well. Thus was born the Florence Performing and Fine Arts Festival.

A large metal truss supported tent (60' x 40') was erected by a was no heat and no way to se-



a municipal facility and possibly crane, a stage was set up at one cure the tent at night. end with seating for about 100 spectators and a juried art show more easily solved than the were only two problems: there tent and several of us took turns

The second problem was exhibition area in the rear. There first. An RV was parked by the spending the night in it as se-

curity guards — interrupted at intervals during the night when the real Florence police cruised by. Heat was another issue alto-

The first annual Florence Per-

forming and Fine Arts Festival opened the Florence Events took place in September — and Center with "Music Man" in if you've ever camped out on the fall of 1996 and have nevthe Oregon coast at that time of er looked back. We became the year, you know what the nights are like. WE FROZE! Actors and audience alike. Trying to solve on the first two weekends of the problem with generators only made things worse. The audience could hardly hear us over

But all agreed that the first venture of what was to become the Last Resort Players was a success. Our festival was eventually able to contribute \$5,000 toward the building of the Florence Events Center, 715 Quince St. And here we are 25 years later celebrating a quarter of a century run as the Last Resort Players!

We shared the tent during the day in 1993 with the fourth Annual Family Farm Music Festival and on Sunday morning with an Gospel Music Fest.

The Last Resort Players 1994.

center's resident company, traditionally performing a musical November and two plays in the spring and summer.

Be sure to see the LRP's latest offering, "A Nice Family Gathering," opening at the Florence Events Center on June 8. Written by Phil Olsen and directed by Judy Kaplan, this family comedy is guaranteed to make you laugh and maybe even shed a tear or two. It's the story of a man who loved his wife so much, he almost told her.

Performances are Friday and Saturday evenings at 7 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. June 8 to 10 and 15 to 17.

Tickets are \$18 and are avail-Ecumenical Church Service and able at www.eventcenter.org or the FEC box office at 541-997-

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If the primaries were done away with, and the ballot had Trump, Clinton, Sanders, Rubio, Ted Cruz and others, perhaps the election would go beyond just tactical voting and become something more substantive.

"I think that psychology is a big part of it," Roberts said. "By giving people a new method of voting that allows them more mous task to work on money expression on each candidate, I think psychologically it will break some people out of that trap where they feel like they have to vote for that person because the system is rigged to elect that person."

give another candidate like Sanders a win. The results could stay the same. But Roberts believed the process could help quell the divisive political party politics that has enveloped the nation over the years. Instead of voting for a party, people could just vote for individuals they think would just do a good job.

### A FIRST STEP

STAR wouldn't be the endall-be-all to fixing voting in America. It's just a first step.

"I think it's a powerful, revolutionary first step," Roberts said. "I don't think it's a cure-all patch for everything, but I think it's absolutely a step in the right direction for our voting method. Whatever changes need to be made to go along side of it, we can address those one at a

Even if money could be saved by not doing primaries,

name out to the public will es. What will it look like when placed on the Lane County balstill be based on campaign do- it gets into more heated, and lot. nations.

"Money will still be a huge component," Roberts said. "We do run into people who say that the number one problem is money in politics, and ask why we aren't working on that. We understand that, and we do see voters to decide in November, in Multnomah County. that as a huge problem.

"Because it's such an enorand politics that, rather than redirecting energy into ending Citizens United, we believe that this is something that is a smaller chunk of change that we have the capacity to effect here locally in our area. Rather than just That's not to say that STAR being overwhelmed by money would create a Trump loss or in politics, we believe this is an achievable goal here locally. It is a step toward freeing people to vote for their favorite candidates, which is huge."

And there are still questions about how STAR will be implemented in the future. Right

how each candidate gets their now, it is for non-partisan racfinancially backed, races state-

> Will people become confused in how to use the system? And will they trust the mathematical algorithms used in the runoff?

when STAR is expected to be

For more information about the process, or to sign the petition to get STAR on November's ballot, visit www.starlane.us or www.equal.vote.

Beyond Lane County, STAR That's something for the is also running a twin campaign

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Rob Shepherd, "Senior Real Estate Specialist"

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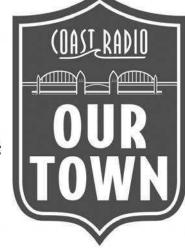


This month on Our Town we look at the future of the Electric Car with Chris Chandler of Central Lincoln Pud and take a look at what is available for the kids once school lets out with Eli Tome, **Executive Director of the Siuslaw Watershed** Council, Andy Grzeskowiak with Siuslaw Schools, and Keri Tatum, Principal of Siuslaw High School. We'll talk recycling with Dave Twombly of Central Coast Disposal and the Oregon Coast Military Museum with Cal Applebee.

WEDNESDAY • JUNE 6 FROM 4-6 ON KCST 106.9 FM REBROADCAST • JUNE 7 FROM 10-NOON ON KCFM 104.1/1250 AM



with host GEORGE HENRY



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