

Cowboy tunes: Slow Ponies offer a blend of harmony, history

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

To hear the Slow Ponies sing is to journey back in time, to the magical era of television cowboys (and, the group is quick to point out, cowgirls.)

On Friday, the Ponies — composed, according to its promotional materials, of a “veritable who’s-who of regional folk artists” — journeyed back to Cottage Grove and the Axe & Fiddle Pub for a gig that’s become one of their favorites.

Their costumes and tunes are classic, though the Slow Ponies also boast personal histories that are perhaps as significant to this area as the songs they sing together with an undeniable familiarity. Shannon and Susan Applegate are the proud descendants of one of the area’s oldest pioneer families, while Esther Stutzman, an educator, storyteller and Kalapuya elder, has performed regionally since she was a small child. Liz Crain provides the bass tones for the group, which also includes the re-

nowned fiddle work of Linda Danielson and the harmonies of Melissa Ruth, a newcomer with a budding musical career in her own right.

“We just love music, and some of us have been singing together all our lives,” Stutzman said. “We love the history of the songs and how nostalgic they are, and how simple.”

Many of the songs the group loves share as their subject “a time when the West was new and exciting,” Stutzman said.

According to Shannon Applegate, her love of cowboy music harkens from a “little room at the old Applegate House,” where the family’s cowboy gear and radio lived.

“It’s a big deal to be able to get together and sing a song like ‘Ghost Riders in the Sky,’” she said. “This is music that has a rich tradition here, that was in part inspired by this part of Oregon.”

Tradition is central to the bond that has held the Slow Ponies together these past 10 years.

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photo by Jon Stinnett

The Slow Ponies perform at Cottage Grove's Axe & Fiddle. Pictured from left to right are Susan and Shannon Applegate, Esther Stutzman, Melissa Ruth, Linda Danielson and Liz Crain.

Flyers gather at CG Armory

South Lane RC Modelers hoping to attract a new generation

BY JON STINNETT
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The Cottage Grove Armory was literally abuzz Friday afternoon, the sound of small aircraft at times filling its cavernous gymnasium space.

A gathering organized by the South Lane RC Modelers and Cottage Grove’s Youth Advisory Council drew young and old for an event that the club, which consists of enthusiasts of radio-controlled aviation that have gathered together for nearly 30 years, hopes can become a regular happening.

“We’re hoping to get kids interested in model aviation,” said club member Dave Sharpe. “It’s a fun hobby that’s good for parents and kids.”

Sharpe said that he was interested in aviation as a young man but soon realized that obtaining a pilot’s license would be too expensive. Model aviation, he said, lets him indulge his love of flying in less-than-ideal conditions.

“On a rainy day at home, it’s a lot of fun,” he said. “You can fly all around the cabinets, chase the dog...”

Sharpe said the group is mainly composed of retirees that gather on Tuesdays to fly their craft, which on Friday consisted largely of small airplanes and helicopters. According to the South Lane RC Modelers website, the year 1985 saw the formation of the Cottage Grove R/C Club, and the name

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photo by Jon Stinnett

Dakota Roth gives his drone, or multi-rotor, a head start at the Armory during a “Fun Fly” on Friday.

Safe Haven gains non-profit status

Group hopes to found a home for recovering addicts

The efforts of community members to establish a home in Cottage Grove for those recovering from addiction got a recent boost with the establishment of the group as a non-profit organization.

A recent press release announced that Safe Haven has been approved as a non-profit organization, and the group’s Dolores Anderson said events planned in April and May aim to get the word out about its efforts.

Many of those committed to the effort are participants in Alcoholics Anonymous or other groups, Anderson told the Sentinel in December, adding that the beginnings of the Safe Haven effort can be traced to Billie Bird, who arrived in Cottage Grove 18 months ago and noticed that the community did not have its own “recovery house.”

Anderson said that the group appreciated the support of Oregon State Representative Val Hoyle and Chief District Judge Ann Aik-

en, each of whom attended a fundraiser before Christmas and expressed support for Safe Haven’s efforts.

“We look forward to providing necessary safe homes for recovering addicts and alcoholics to maintain sobriety in our community,” the press release stated.

Anderson said donations have helped fund a Post Office box and storage of furnishings that have been donated for the house the group hopes to purchase. Safe Haven seeks to establish a house and an office at a separate location, she said.

“People are still very passionate about this,” Anderson said. “We had our first meeting in July, and we’re still going strong.” The group will install more members of its board of directors on Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. in the Cottage Grove Community Center.

Safe Haven can be reached at PO Box 1146 in Cottage Grove or at cottagesafehaveninc@gmail.com.

The tooth, the whole tooth and nothing but the tooth

Who’s the top-grossing actor in kids’ tooth decay stories? Sugar. And in February 2016, during National Children’s Dental Health Month, the American Dental Association is bringing “Sugar Wars”** to a dentist’s office near you.

Your child’s dental hygiene isn’t only about brushing and flossing. The best way to prevent tooth decay and the costly dental cavities that result is to tackle the problem where it starts: eating sugary foods.

Everyone likes a treat now and then, but when you and your kids do indulge, it’s extra important to remember a couple of things.

- Don’t eat candies or sugary foods throughout the day; the bacteria that cause decay feed on sugar, so it’s important to give your mouth a break.
- Brush your teeth with a dentist-recommended toothpaste after you’ve eaten a sugary snack or dessert. This does two things: it removes any stuck food particles from the teeth and gums, and it helps the saliva return to a normal pH level that doesn’t favor tooth decay.

Generally, it’s best to avoid eating sugary foods every day for your dental health and overall health. Opt for desserts that feature fresh or frozen fruits, nuts and low-sugar recipes. At snack time, choose fresh fruit or vegetables, nuts, cheese, whole-grain products or other low-sugar foods that don’t easily get stuck in the teeth. Plan an attack on sugary sodas, fruit drinks pastries and candies.

Teaching your kids good dental habits is the best way to fight the Sugar Wars. Remind them to brush at least twice a day (once before going to bed), rinse after snacking, floss daily and choose low-sugar snacks.

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