

Opal *from A1*

culminating in a performance at the end of the week.

"It's exciting because we haven't had a year-round children's program and the community has been asking for it," Rose said.

The youth program is being paid for in part by a \$2,500 grant from the Oregon Community Foundation, allowing Opal to put on two summer camp events and recruit help from the community.

"We're looking at hiring a few young helpers, high school students, to help with the youth program this summer," said Rose.

The nonprofit is applying for larger grants this year as well, hoping to apply more money toward the Opal Young Performers program for more scholarships and more learning opportunities.

Also set to be expanded this year, Creative Chaos is adding a Christmas performance to the calendar.

Directed by Carmen Dowell, Creative Chaos offers to an expressive platform for people living with disabilities, giving participants creative control of their show.



Eliza RoaringSprings, left, and Elizabeth Peterson rehearse a scene from the upcoming two-woman show 'Night, Mother.'

"They design the show around what the participants want," said Rose. "Carmen really tailors to the show to different people's different abilities. For example, some people are non-verbal, so she will work them to come up with something that they can do."

This year will be the third for the program. Its running

success, said Rose, has even attracted the attention of educators who would like to apply the program to a curriculum.

"[It's] really unique," said Rose. "Opal is proud to be home of Creative Chaos."

On top of expanded pro-

grams, Opal is also adding monthly presentations from the newly-formed Cottage Grove Cinema Guild, a project started by local film archivist Gerald Santana. The showings will be exclusively

of 16mm films from Santana's collection.

"I've got maybe about 4,000," said Santana. "Expect to take a trip back in time and see Hollywood films that are both familiar and obscure."

The presentations will also be interspersed with old advertisements, TV series and movie trailers calling back to another era.

Despite the expansions and new additions, Rose ensured that certain hit performances are unlikely to change. Shows such as the Halloween Mashup, Trashion Show and DanceAbility are on schedule to return.

Rose herself is set to continue directing the Trashion Show.

"It's a fashion show with everything made out of trash and recycled items," she said. "I direct the Trashion Show, but I also design for it, so I end up working all year long on my stuff for the show."

The show is scheduled for April 19 and 20.

To successfully execute the

range of programs and shows, Opal relies heavily on community volunteers to support the center's productions.

"The lighting, the choreographer, music, actors, whatever. It's all volunteer," said Rose. "It does take a lot of energy to put on a production."

While a core group of about six directors handles the roughly 10 shows put on in the year, people are continually needed to fill in the various roles each production requires.

"We have very limited volunteers on sound and lighting," Rose said. People skilled in such areas as costuming and props are also welcomed to help.

With more volunteers, Rose hopes to include more interactivity in the theater by staging one-day events, providing a place for community and talent to mingle.

"I'd like to bring more community involvement," she said. "We have so many talented people in this community. I'd like to see them come in."

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DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Are you ready?

Emergency preparedness tips for seniors

Natural disasters can strike at any time, and when they do, the damage is often considerable. According to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, between 2005 and 2014 natural disasters caused \$1.4 trillion in damage across the globe, affecting 1.7 billion people along the way.

Various preventive measures can protect people and their homes from the potentially devastating impact of natural disasters. For example, oceanfront communities may be able to decrease property damage by exacting certain measures, such as building homes on stilts.

Another way to prevent tragedy related to natural disasters is to develop an emergency preparedness plan before the next storm strikes. That's important for everyone, but especially so for seniors, many of whom live with mobility issues that can compromise their ability to escape the eye of oncoming storms.

In recognition of the potential problems seniors face when natural disasters strike, the American Red Cross offers the following tips to seniors and their families so aging men and women can make it through such situations safe and sound.

- Make arrangements to contact loved ones. Prior to an emergency, seniors and their support network should make arrangements to make immediate contact once a disaster strikes. Determine who will make initial contact and how that contact will be made (i.e., via phone, text message, social media, etc.), as well as who will be responsible for providing assistance if necessary. Such a plan lets everyone within the support network know their precise responsibilities, which limits confusion in the sometimes hectic hours and days after disaster strikes.
- Exchange keys. Make sure everyone in the support network has keys to seniors' homes. In so doing, support networks are increasing the chances that someone will be able to reach potentially vulnerable seniors if the primary contacts are incapable of doing so.
- Let others know where emergency supplies are kept. Everyone should have emergency supplies in their homes. Seniors should not take it for granted that such supplies can be easily found if they become incapacitated during a storm. Make sure such information can be easily accessed during a storm by emailing it to your support network and/or posting the information in a convenient location in your home, such as on the refrigerator.
- Share your evacuation plans. In the wake of recent disasters, many communities that did not previously feel vulnerable to natural disasters have devised evacuation plans for residents. Seniors should share these plans with their support networks. Doing so makes it easier for relatives to find you if you must evacuate your home before help arrives.
- Share important medical information. Seniors should share medical information, such as healthcare providers and a list of the medications they're taking. This can make things easier for emergency responders to successfully treat people who become incapacitated during storms.

Emergency preparedness strategies save lives. More information about how seniors can prepare for emergencies is available at www.redcross.org.



PUT TOGETHER A PLAN

Make sure all the pieces are in place to render you and your family prepared in the event of a natural disaster.

- Listen to radio or television newscasts for the latest weather information, and follow all evacuation directions and suggestions.
- Keep a stock of non-perishable food items as well as bottled water on hand inside your home.
- Keep a 72 Hour Kit on hand inside your home that is easy to get to in the event of a disaster.

For more information and tips on disaster response and preparedness, contact your local emergency services center.
South Lane Fire & Rescue • 233 Harrison Ave, Cottage Grove 541-942-4493 • 55 South 1st Street, Creswell 541-895-2506

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