

Blues *from A1*

turnout. This year's show drifted across the musical genres of jazz, blues, rock, pop and scat singing and featured performances by the high school's jazz band, jazz choir and the Microphonics vocal group. Adult performers also participated in various songs and acts such as a tap dance performance by Darcy & The Hot Mamas. Opening with a Beatles set of "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" and "With a Little Help From My Friends," the show wove through the decades with crowd-pleasers such as Sam Cooke's "Bring It On Home," Amy Winehouse's "Valerie" and Ah-ha's "Take On Me." Several of the musical numbers were arranged by Wright, who also corralled a selection of local talent to participate. "All of the adults from this incredible community are

what make the Metropolitan Rhythm & Blues Revue such an intriguing event," said Wright in a press release. "This 19-year-old vision to create a venue where the community and the high school can collaborate on a professional show has certainly come true. It is a remarkable event." Wright put the total number of students involved at more than 50 and applauded the amount of time they invested. Students started brainstorming and preparing for the show just after Thanksgiving, giving them about two months to put a show together. Some elected to perform solos while others suggested more ensemble sets. "We try to stretch that and give them some room," said Wright. "It lets them know that they can come together and do big things." The open room for ideas allows students to play around with more modern pop music as well. "I think that's a unique hallmark of the show," said

Wright. Wright also feels the production fills a gap in youth-oriented arts in the community. "It gives the community some insight into the good things that are going on at Cottage Grove High School - that we still are strong in the arts in our community and the kids are still working together and doing big things and it's not just turning into an isolationist world," he said. Besides the community connection, Wright hopes the production can provide an entry point for musically-inclined students. "The way I see it is, there will always be those who musically rise to the top and will follow their dreams in music," he said. "And that's awesome and of course this show supports that, but it also supports the student who's going to go directly into the work force. It may bring them back to the arts in some way either as a patron or a community member participant." In addition to putting talent

on display and inspiring interest in the arts, Wright estimates the production pays for 75 percent of the yearly budget for the music department. "That is very big for us," he said. "We would not be able to do most of what we do throughout the school year if we didn't do this show and raise these funds. ... We're one of the few school districts around that still has instruments that are owned by the school and our students don't have to go out and pay 50 bucks a month to rent an instrument." An estimated \$8,000 comes in from the production to aid with other expenditures such as entrance into music competitions and participation in music camps. Referring to his years living outside Oregon, Wright painted the production as one-of-a-kind. "I have never seen a show like this anywhere," he said. "I think you would be hard-pressed to find any show like it anywhere else in the country."



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SLCFR *from A1*

strategic plan when it formed in 2003. Wooten cited several issues with the current station as reasons for replacement, not the least of which was its failure to meet seismic safety standards, summarizing the building's safety assessment as: "if the ground shakes, it's coming down." Wooten also noted that the current station is not ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant, meaning it cannot serve as a site for public meetings. Taking up less than 6,000 square feet, said Wooten, the station also is running into space issues as service demand and technology grow. The bay doors, for example, are at risk of becoming obsolete as emergency vehicle sizes have grown over the years, Wooten said. Currently only one bay can house a fire engine. "If we wanted to put a second fire engine in here, we really couldn't," he said. "And the new ambulances that are coming are bigger." With steady population growth in both Cottage Grove and Creswell, increased demand will require various forms of SLCFR expansion. "In order for us to do anything in terms of even planning for expanding service in this area, that fire station needs to be replaced," said Wooten.

Properties zoned AE are considered to be at high risk of flooding under the National Flood Insurance Program. "A consensus was formed that the district and the city would basically swap properties," said Wooten. At more than 17,000 square feet, the new proposed station would serve as a second master station for the district and a standalone station in the event of a disaster. The proposal specifications call for a generator that could last up to four days, effectively providing SLCFR with a northern response station which would be independent from its southern battalion headquartered in Cottage Grove. The three-story station would also bring the structure into ADA compliance and include office space. With some elements of the construction meeting "greener" standards, Wooten said the new station's plans also include amenities tailored toward emergency responder staff. Drive-thru bays, for example, would allow vehicles to pull straight through the building to reduce accidents. With the inclusion of four sleep rooms and six dorm rooms, the station would also be fitted with alarms which gradually increase in volume to reduce stress on emergency responders' health. The project would also

include a retrofit for the Cottage Grove station to extend its lifespan by 40 years, Wooten said. The construction on the new station would take place while the current station is still in service so as to continue service throughout the project. With a \$3 million contingency built in to the plan, Wooten estimated the project budget would hover around \$12.5 million if the project went into action immediately. Construction is expected to see funding in the form of a bond measure in 2021. Wooten stressed, however,

that the new bond would in essence be an extension of a 2015 bond, which is slated to expire in 2021. The 2015 bond currently levies .30 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value on the tax district. "It's not an ask for new money," said Wooten. "If the board decides to put it on the ballot, it would be to continue that .30 cents for facilities." Monday night's presentation was intended for informational purposes. No agreement currently exists between Creswell and SLCFR and no bond effort has yet begun.

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Published weekly in the Cottage Grove Sentinel and online at cgsentinel.com

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