

Learn from AI

Rainsong. "It just supports us at a ground level so that I can do a lot of this work."

With the challenge posed by COVID-19, however, the center is exploring new avenues of education.

While Singing Creek Educational Center has only been in Cottage Grove about a year, it has a history in the area.

From 2007 to 2015, Rainsong coordinated educational programs at the Alvord Farm and Museum in West Eugene, which included summer camps, workshops, field trips and special events like visiting with baby farm animals.

Following that, the center operated out of a farm in Junction City for four years before moving to its current location in Cottage Grove.

"So I've been doing this about 12 years now," Rainsong said.

The educational center is now located in the historic Snapp House on 360 River Road along the Coast Fork of the Willamette River greenway.

The location is also adjacent to a city park, which allows room for outside activities as well as its inside programs.

The house, built in 1886, bears the name of one of Cottage Grove's first physicians, Dr. G.O. Snapp.

The doctor built the house to serve as his residence and office and was later moved to its current location to preserve it.

As well as the house retaining many of its historical features, the Cottage Grove Prospectors and Goldiggers Club has furnished the historic building with period furniture that was common when it belonged to Dr. Snapp.

The center's programs take deep dives into local Oregon history and attempt to bring the experience alive to children.

"We really focus on kids," said Rainsong.

The programs center around concepts such as sustainable living skills, how to "live lightly" on the land and how to recycle and reuse materials through the lens of historical methods.

"We've always done crafts and activities and food-making and things that revolve around these ideas, but now we want to emphasize them and bring them more into our everyday, modern lives," Rainsong said. "We want to start as far back as we possibly can with learning about indigenous people's relationship with the land

and how they used plants and animal resources in a way that was sustainable as well as ethical."

The ideas of human reciprocity with the landscape, a natural flow of give and take and getting kids in touch with nature are key elements to the process.

The age of technology, Rainsong said, can often be a barrier to this in daily life.

"It's really easy to become distanced from nature and see yourself as separate from it, so we attempt to remedy that," she said.

The center's curricula may tie into pioneer settlers' lives, for example, by visiting with domesticated animals and participating in activities like grinding grain and churning butter.

Even older skills such as making cordage out of native plants are employed.

"So we have a volunteer that comes in with dried, stinging nettle stocks — that don't sting you anymore — and he is an expert cordage maker," said Rainsong. "It's these kinds of skills that are often lost in our modern culture that we're helping bring back."

While Singing Creek Educational Center has used the Snapp House to teach crafts and conduct other programs, it also has shown up at school sites when requested.

"Whenever a teacher would order the program ... we would come into the classroom and do a half-an-hour to 45-minute presentation," said Rainsong.

One program developed by the center, for example, helps teachers meet state standards for literature and writing by letting children engage with fictional letters based on real journals from



DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

Executive Director Karen Rainsong dresses in fashion of the historical period while engaging children in hands-on experiences.

the Oregon Trail.

Rainsong is also looking to expand with a program looking into local the mining history.

Meeting the Challenge

Meeting this standard of "living the experience" amid the pandemic, though, is a new challenge.

"We've really had to adapt with this pandemic and it's tough because what we do is hands-on, in-person — that's who we are," said Rainsong.

The sudden halt of attendance due to health-based state mandates has slowed the center's momentum, too, putting newly developed classroom-based programs and field trips on hold.

children.

"So it's almost going to be like a kids' history TV channel with all the different videos I'm going to be doing," said Rainsong.

The project is slated to start in September and run through next May and Rainsong is hoping to work with community partners who will help create video interviews at sites such as farms or animal rescue ranches.

Each month will be characterized by a different theme, starting September off with a seasonal approach to cooking and gardening.

Rainsong plans to have a youth ambassador who will lead kids on the video tours on each of these monthly visits.

There is also a Facebook group page called the Singing Creek Center Community on which students are encouraged to post work online to share with others.

For the more hands-on projects which require materials, parents will be provided with a list of resources to find those materials.

Rainsong also emphasized that the center will focus more on "decolonization training" this fall and winter by representing indigenous voices in their programs.

"We want to start each video with a land acknowledgement," said Rainsong.

In particular, she hopes to provide the native Kalapuya perspective in the videos through storytelling and other resources.

At a subscription price of \$15 a kid per month, she believes that with enough sign-ups, the project will be financially sustainable.

To achieve these goals, though, local volunteers and partners must be willing to play a part.

Rainsong is looking for volunteers with specific skills including video editing or locals willing to provide locations and native perspectives for the video tours.

"I'm also looking for community partners that are related to sustainable living or historical things such as a history museum," she said.

The center also relies on donations and Rainsong anticipates needing to invest in the center's own video equipment should the COVID-19 restrictions continue.

With this new project on the horizon, though, Rainsong is optimistic that the center's popularity and magnetism for community participation will continue.

"It's going to be a challenge, but the more engaging we can make the videos and make them speak to children — not talk down to them, but speak to them at their level — then I think they'll watch and get engaged," said Rainsong. "We have had pretty good, consistent attendance all these years."

"Being here in Cottage Grove, I feel that we're really poised to be a big part of the community and have a lot more participation."

Donation options and more information can be found online at www.singingcreekcenter.org.

The center can be contacted by phone at 541-968-1986 or by email at director@singingcreekcenter.org.

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 Christian Education: Pre-K through 5th
 Tim Baker, Senior Minister
www.6thandgibbs.com

Calvary Baptist Church
 77873 S 6th St • 541-942-4290
 Pastor: Riley Hendricks
 Sunday School: 9:45am
 Worship: 11:00am
 The Journey: Sunday 5:00pm
 Praying Thru Life: Wednesday 6:00pm

Church of Christ
 420 Monroe St • 541-942-8565
 Sunday Service: 10:30am

Cottage Grove Bible Church
 1200 East Quincy Avenue
 541-942-4771
 Pastor: Bob Singer
 Worship 11am
 Sunday School: 9:45am
 AWANA age 3-8th Grade,
 Wednesdays Sept-May, 6:30pm
www.cgbible.org

Cottage Grove Faith Center
 33761 Row River Rd.
 541-942-4851
 Lead Pastor: Kevin Pruett
www.cg4.tv
 Full Children's Ministry available
 Services: 9:00am & 10:45am

Delight Valley
 Church of Christ
 33087 Saginaw Rd. East
 541-942-7711 • Pastor: Bob Friend
 Two Services:
 9am - Classic in the Chapel
 10:30am - Contemporary in the Auditorium

First Baptist Church
 301 S. 6th st • 541-942-8242
 Pastor: David Chhangle
 Sunday School 9:30am
 Worship Service 10:30am
 Youth Wednesday 6:30pm
cgfirstbaptist.com

First Presbyterian Church
 3rd and Adams St
 541-942-4479
 Rev.: Karen Hill
 Worship: 10:00am
 Sunday School: 10:00am
fpcgrove.com

Hope Fellowship
 United Pentecostal Church
 100 S. Gateway Blvd.
 541-942-2061
 Pastor: Dave Bragg
 Worship: 11:00am Sunday
 Bible Study: 7:00pm Wednesday
www.hopefellowshipupc.com
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Hope In The Grove Baptist Church
 77820 Mosby Creek Rd
 Pastor: Wayne Husk
 Worship: Sunday 10:00am
 Evening Bible Study: Wednesday 6:30pm
 541.649.1043

Living Faith Assembly
 467 S. 10th St. • 541-942-2612
 Worship Services Sundays: 9a & 11a
 Youth Worship Sundays: 11a (all ages welcome)
 Mondays: 5:30p (6th-12th grades)

Non-Denominational Church of Christ
 1041 Pennoyer Ave
 541-942-8928
 Preacher: Tony Martin
 Sunday Bible Study: 10:00am
 Sunday Worship: 10:50am & 5:30pm
www.pennoyerveccoc.com

Old Time Gospel Fellowship
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 541-942-3420
 Father John J. Boyle
 Holy Mass:
 Saturday Vigil - 5:30 pm
 Sunday - 10:30 am

For weekday and Holy Day of Obligation schedule see website OLPHCG.net
 Confession: 4 PM to 5 PM
 Saturdays or by appointment
 St. Philip Benizi, Creswell
 552 Holbrook Lane
 Sunday 8 am

St. Andrews Episcopal Church
 1301 W. Main • 541-767-9050
 Rev. Lawrence Crumb
 "Church with the flags."
 Worship: Sunday 10:30am
 All Welcome

Seventh-day Adventist Church
 820 South 10th Street
 541-942-5213
 Pastor: Kevin Miller
 Bible Study: Saturday, 9:15 am
 Worship Service: Saturday, 10:40
 Mid-week Service: Wednesday, 1:00

Trinity Lutheran Church
 6th & Quincy • 541-942-2373
 Pastor: James L. Markus
 Sunday School & Adult Education 9:15am
 Sunday Worship 10:30 am
 Comm. Kitchen Free Meal Tue & Thur 5:00pm TLC Groups
tlccg.com

United Methodist Church
 334 Washington 541-942-3033
 New Pastor Craig Pesti- Strobel
 Worship 10:30am
umcgrove.org

"VICTORY" Country Church
 913 S. 6th Street • 541-942-5913
 Pastor: Barbara Dockery
 Worship Service: 10:00am
 Message: "WE BELIEVE IN MIRACLES"

CRESWELL: Creswell Presbyterian Church
 75 S 4th S • 541-895-3419
 Rev. Seth Wheeler
 Adult Sunday School 9:15am
 Sunday Worship Service 10:30 am
 website www.creswellpres.org

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