

Continued from previous page

The arrival of the Cocktail Cabaret is nearly perfect, as the theme of the evening is “And the Award Goes to ...” — well-timed with the upcoming Academy Awards on April 25.

Brad Ruder of Limelight Entertainment will serve as the host, while musical director Scott Michaelsen will provide piano accompaniment for the show’s 17 numbers, all songs that were either Oscar winners or nominees.

But this isn’t the first time Limelight has attempted to present this particular show. The first time was in late March of last year at Seven Restaurant and Nightclub, “which

as everyone knows was right around the time that it was ‘shelter in place, we’re going to do a lockdown for two weeks,’ so we had to cancel that show,” Ruder said. Refunds were issued.

When the Tower reopened after the first shutdown with limited seating of about 80 patrons in the theater, “I was like, ‘That’s, like, right up our alley’” in terms of crowd size, Ruder said. That led to last August’s Cocktail Cabaret, although it had a theme of “The Show Must Go On,” featuring show tunes touching on hope and courage.

The second abortive attempt to present “And the Award Goes to ...” show occurred last November.



Ryan Brennecke/Bulletin file

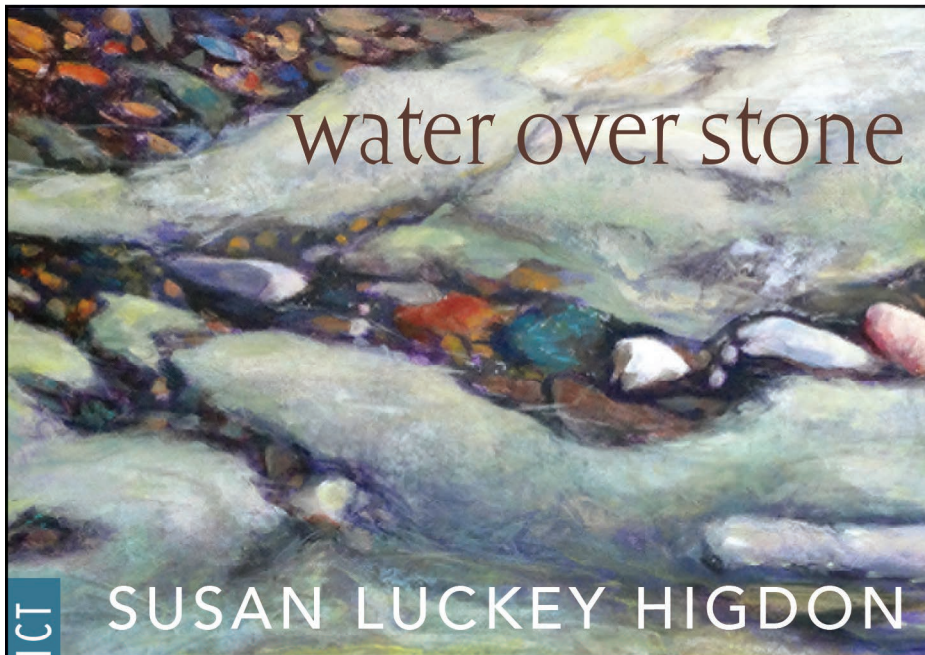
Ray Solley, executive director of the Tower Theatre Foundation, photographed in December in the downtown Bend theater

“Everyone was on board, and so we set that up. Tickets were selling, we were rehearsing, and then literally, like, the Wednesday before our event is when Kate Brown said, ‘Hey we’re doing another lockdown,’ and we had to cancel it again,” he said, adding with a laugh, “So 0 for 2.”

Ruder is hoping the third time’s the charm. And even if it’s not, the arts will go on, he said.

“The arts will always persist,” he said. “Having people that are going to perform and stand on stage and create and entertain audiences is what nourishes the soul for people to get through these rough times. And that’s all we’re trying to do is continue that creation and give things to people that move them.”

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