

Celtic musicians, Craicmore, return to Condon for March 16 performance

Craicmore, a lively four-person Celtic band, will return to Condon for a performance timed with the traditional St. Patrick's Day celebration. The band will entertain at the Condon Elks Lodge Friday, March 16, 8 p.m. Tickets are available at the Times-Journal in Condon, \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door.

Craicmore, which is an Irish word for "great fun," plays contemporary traditional Celtic music. With deep roots in the music of Scotland and Ireland, Craicmore features the critically acclaimed vocalist Nancy Johnston. Her deep, rich, contralto voice is rare in the genre. Driving rhythms from guitar, bass, Bodhran drum, conga and other percussion, along with high-

spirited whistles, flutes and bagpipes, powerfully render jigs and reels. Four-part harmony, rhythmic hardshoe dancing, an East Indian Shruti Box and rumbling Didgeridoo all accent the warmth and passion of Craicmore's fiery performances.

They have toured for over eight years throughout the Western States and recently performed a 14-concert engagement in Shanghai, China. Craicmore's music has been heard on the NBC daytime drama "Days of Our Lives" and the CBS primetime hit "Without a Trace." The band performed at Condon's Liberty Theatre in July 2004. "We're a contemporary traditional Celtic band," the group

agrees. Formed in 1992, they draw their words and music from the traditional music of Ireland and Scotland and claim influences as diverse as the Afro Celts, Chieftains and Pogues, rock and Australian indigenous music.

"It's an amazingly seductive marriage," say critics, "one that never fails to turn new faces into fans, an audience that continues to grow with Craicmore's aggressive touring and the release of its second critically acclaimed CD, "Too bad for heaven, too good for hell."

Making up the group are Nancy Johnston, vocals, bodhran and hard shoe; John MacAdams, vocals, guitar, percussion, didgeridoo; Simon Watkins, vocals and bass; and Dave Champagne,

Irish flute, orchestral flute, whistles and pipes.

Craicmore has an Arts in Education residency, "Celtic Connections," and frequently spends an afternoon in the schools working with youngsters. The program brings a positive message of cultural diversity, demonstrating how Celtic music has accepted many global influences while retaining its fundamental traditions. Receiving accolades from educators and students, the group's interactive program reached over 11,500 students, kindergarten through 12th grade, during 42 performances in the 2005 - 2006 season.

Irish Road Bowling to be held Sunday, March 18

The 25th Annual "Wee Bit O' Ireland" Celebration in Heppner, Oregon, will draw to a close on Sunday, March 18, with the Road Bowling Competition.

Road bowling has been popular in Ireland for centuries, introduced by the Irish who would abscond with the English cannon balls under dark of night and use them for some mischief and friendly competition. The sport was brought to the attention of the Heppner celebration's planning committee three years ago but not introduced to the local event until last year, when Tim Daly, a Western-Oregon man raised on Little Butter Creek, near Heppner, provided the bowls and encouragement needed for the event.

The rules for road bowling are simple: Teams of two to four bowlers take turns tossing the small, iron bowls through a course about a mile long. Each team is responsible for keeping track of the number of tosses it takes. At the end of the course, which will be laid out for participants when they sign in for the event, the team with the fewest tosses wins. The prize will be half the entrance fees, which will be \$5 per team member, and the winners' names will be engraved on the Road Bowling Trophy. The "Wee Bit O' Ireland" fund also receives half the entrance fees.

The trophy displayed in City Hall is topped by a bowl and is now etched with

the names of the first year's winning players from Redmond, Oregon: The four-member team of Kirk and Lottie Holcomb, who come virtually every year for the annual celebration. Last year was their first encounter with road bowling, as it was for the players, and they vowed to return this year with winning strategies.

Interested persons, (adults only because of the weight of the bowls) will meet at the corner of Main and May Streets, where Heppner City Hall is located, at 1:30 on Sunday, March 18. A sheet of complete guidelines will be distributed then. Organizers suggest that each team bring a small rug or bulky jacket, something to stop the bowl if necessary to keep it from damaging anything in its path. "The bowl is small but heavy," cautions the chairperson. Some rugs will be available at the gathering site.

The local Chamber of Commerce has decided to participate in the event this year. In fact, the Chamber has issued a challenge to other area chambers, hoping for some friendly competition on the side, with bragging rights as the best prize. Challenges will be accepted at the Chamber Office, 541-676-5536, up until the day of the event.

More information about the Heppner competition is available from Doris Brosnan, at 541-676-5382, and at the Chamber Office. Information on road bowling is available on the Internet.

Pre-registration due for Cruz-In

Pre-registration is due Tuesday, March 13, for the seventh annual St. Paddy's Cruz-In to be held Saturday, March 17, at noon in Heppner. The 25th celebration of St. Patrick's Day will have many events all weekend.

Entry forms for the Cruz-In are available by calling the Heppner Chamber of Commerce office at 676-5536 or visit www.heppnerchamber.com or mailing your entry form to P.O. Box 1232, Heppner, OR 97836. Pre-registration is \$10 and includes a dash plaque. On-site registration will be \$15.

Vehicles will gather between 10 and 11:30 a.m. at the northwest entrance to Heppner, Highway 74/207 (former Kinzua Mill site). Following the parade, vehicles will be on display on Willow Street in downtown Heppner.

The Great Green Parade begins at 1 p.m., following the Cruz-In.

Mrs. O'Leary's Irish beef stew feed to be held March 16

Mrs. O'Leary's Irish beef stew feed will be held Friday, March 16, 2007 from 5 - 7 p.m.

The Heppner United Methodist Church members and friends will be serving stew, coleslaw, rolls and dessert at the St. Patrick's Senior Dining Hall on Main Street.

Bring your family, have a good visit with your neighbor or meet new people. The cost will be: adults-\$6; children 6-12-\$2; and children 5 and under eat free.

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