

# **ENTERTAINMENT AND THE ARTS**

## **Introduction:**

The lack of space for classes in art and dancing or local theatrical performances and the inability to invite professional groups of any size to perform prompted local patrons of the arts to work together and unite in developing improved programs and facilities. Those interested in dance and theatre performance began to use the city-operated Naterlin Community Center, and those interested in the world of art moved into the old senior/teen center building at Nye Beach.

## **Yaquina Art Association and Building:**

Once World War II ended, a group of involved citizens established the Yaquina Art Association (YAA) in order to explore one another's artistic talents and improve their own. Under a reversionary deed from the City of Newport, the YAA began using an old building at Nye Beach for classes, which included pottery throwing, water and oil painting, and photography. Members have been able to visit together and learn from each other, and their work is regularly displayed for the benefit of the community. The association members also share in the operation and use of the new Visual Arts Center.

## **Visual Arts Center:**

Constructed in 1983, the Visual Arts Center (VAC) is located in Nye Beach on the turnaround next to the Yaquina Art Association Building. It consists of two stories, the first floor being the gallery and the upper floor for classrooms and work space. As time has passed, the YAA building has come to be used for ceramics and pottery and the Visual Arts Center for painting, photography (a photography lab is available for public use), and the like. The VAC is also now the site of an all-county juried student art festival, a very exciting event for local people.

Operations of the facility are overseen by a governing body --appointed by the mayor--comprised of members of the various groups who use the building for classes, workshops, and exhibitions. They meet quarterly at Newport City Hall to discuss and regulate policy. Represented are the Yaquina Art Association, the Oregon Coast Council for the Arts, the Oregon Coast Community College Service District (OCCCSD), the City of Newport, and individual artists. Scheduling is handled by the Yaquina Art Association as a volunteer group, while yet another organization, the Coastal Arts Guild, provides the staffing. The Guild was formed as an arts auxiliary.

Equipment for the Visual Arts Center was provided through donations by concerned

citizens and a fund through the Oregon State Checkoff of the Arts with locally generated matching monies. The building was remodeled in the late 1980's to add needed rooms and parking spaces. The center is again being remodeled by the addition of a third floor to house storage space, two studios, and an elevator. Parking spaces will also be added.

### **Oregon Coast Council for the Arts:**

The Oregon Coast Council for the Arts (OCCA) became a private non-profit foundation in 1977, and it now serves all of Lincoln County, the Tillamook area, and the western portion of Lane County. This organization is comprised of a 24 member board of directors, over 200 volunteers, and 6.5 paid staff members with offices in the new Performing Arts Center.

The OCCA states their mission is to "Enhance the quality of life of the central Oregon coast, provide development and employment opportunities for artists, and position the arts for an active role in economic development of the central Oregon coast."<sup>1</sup>

One of the OCCA's primary functions is the operation of the Newport Performing Arts Center. This facility provides:

- > Cultural performances on the coast.
- > The cultivation of tourism.
- > Activities for senior and retired persons (nearly 17% of Lincoln County residents are over 65).
- > Functions for students of all ages.
- > A home for local creative performance groups.
- > An appropriate facility for regional and national touring groups.

### **Performing Arts Center:**

A major achievement for a community Newport's size was the Performing Arts Center opening in September of 1988. The City of Newport provided 4.5 acres of land and then joined with the Urban Renewal Agency to provide \$1.1 million towards the initial construction. The Oregon Coast Council for the Arts began

their fund-raising adventures, and \$600,000.00 was added, bringing the total to \$1.7 million. The Portland architectural firm of Moreland Christopher Myles was eventually selected to design the facility, and they have produced a 23,000 square foot center with 400 seats in the main auditorium. There is an additional auditorium for smaller performances and theatre in the round, as well as the necessary support spaces of dressing rooms, costume rooms, and scenery shops. The performing arts in Newport--the Red Octopus Theatre Co., the Yaquina Chamber Orchestra, the Porthole Players, the Pacific Dance Ensemble, the Oregon Coast String Ensemble, Dance! And All That Jazz!, the Matinee Theatre (a senior

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<sup>1</sup> Oregon Coast Council for the Arts, Fact Sheet, no date.

group), the Ernest Bloch Music Festival at Newport, the Lincoln County Youth Players, the Oregon Coast Ballet Company, and the numerous musical and educational performances--have come home.

The Lincoln County School District makes use of the building about 60 times a year for various meetings, conferences, performances, and day-long Academically Gifted programs.

As a visibly important asset to our community, the Performing Arts Center attracts many visitors, travelers, and tourists who stop to inquire about the facility and its events.

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## **GOALS/POLICIES/IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES** **ENTERTAINMENT AND THE ARTS**

**Goal: To assure access to the arts for all citizens through the provision of appropriate facilities for Newport's many artists and support for a variety of arts programs.**

Policy 1: The City of Newport will continue to work with the various art groups to provide adequate buildings.

Policy 2: The City of Newport will provide maintenance and operation subsidies, subject to City budgeting constraints.