

Front Page News

A 2nd act for RCC's dormant concert bowl?

By Chris Bristol of the Daily Courier

The campaign to revive and modernize the concert bowl at Rogue Community College's Redwood Campus has already begun.

Described as a band shell when it was built in 1982 and formally named in 2003 for one of the founders of the college, the Marjorie Holzgang Concert Bowl can seat up to 1,900 people but has been closed for years because it is not ADA-compliant for wheelchairs and scooters.

It is where RCC once held graduation ceremonies, and would like to again. It is where the performing arts once held stage, interspersed with everything from political rallies to church services over the years.

But reviving the facility is going to take some money. Not just to make it ADA-compliant, but to transform it into something resembling an amphitheater like the Britt Festival Pavilion or the Hollywood Bowl. Only just right for the size of Grants Pass.

Estimated at \$6.5 million, the work would be done in stages, or phases, starting with the raising of \$1.6 million by Dec. 31 to pay for the accessibility upgrades, some serious ground shaping, and to replace the flooring on the stage.

The Phase 1 goal is to have it ready in time for summer commencement 2024.

Leading the effort is Anna Manley, interim executive director of the RCC Foundation. Teaming up with her is Juliet Long, RCC's vice president of student learning and success.

"A lot of great memories, a lot of community building. We want that back," Manley said during a tour of the facility on Tuesday.

"We want to make it even better," added Long, who played violin there in 1989, when she was in the student orchestra at Grants Pass High School, and says the acoustics are excellent.

Long-term plans — phases 2 through 4 — include upgrades to the lighting and electronics, installing staggered seating and more restrooms, and improving pathways and parking for better handicap-accessibility.

Other plans call for improvements to the stage, the orchestra pit and the dressing rooms. And accommodations for food trucks.

A community festival to kickstart the fundraising effort is planned for June 24, but in the meantime Manley and Long are getting the word out about the project.

That word includes legacy opportunities that start at \$1,000 for a 4-by-8 brick with your name on it, \$2,500 for an 8-by-8 brick (again, with your name on it), and bronze stars of 12-by-12 or 24-by-24 that will go for \$25,000 and \$50,000, respectively.

The bricks and stars will line the walkways and walls leading into the amphitheater and are designed to stand the test of time. That's what a legacy is all about.



JULIE ANDERSON / Daily Courier
Juliet Long (right), Rogue Community College's vice president of student learning and success, and Anna Manley, interim executive director of the RCC Foundation, describe the plan to revive the Marjorie Holzgang Concert Bowl on RCC's Redwood Campus.



Manley said the foundation will be going after other fundraising opportunities as well, including grants. But it starts at home.

"We're trying to tap into everything," she said. "We just want to remind the community that this is a gem in their own backyard."

Long, meanwhile, said she feels like the project is something the community can get behind.

"It's the right time to do this," she said.

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