



LANE COUNTY
CULTURAL COALITION
Art · Heritage · Humanities

Lane County Cultural Coalition
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Written Testimony in support, SB 319

Senator Lee Beyer, Chair
Senator Bruce Starr, Vice-Chair
Senator Chris Edwards
Senator Fred Girod
Senator Rod Monroe
Senator Chuck Thomsen

Dear Senator Beyer and members of the Senate Business and Transportation Committee, – thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony in support of Senate Bill 319 to extend the sunset for tax credit for contributions to the Oregon Cultural Trust.

My name is Tina Rinaldi, I reside at 255 Roan Dr, Eugene, OR. I'm writing to you today as a long-standing member of the Lane County Cultural Coalition and I'd like to talk about a few of the unique features of the Oregon Cultural Trust that sets it apart from other public funding mechanisms in the country and to give a few examples of the impact of the Trust in Lane County.

1. As you know, the Oregon Cultural Tax Credit was designed to incentivize and increase philanthropic giving by individuals and businesses by extending a tax credit to those Oregonians and Oregon businesses who FIRST donate to private non-profit arts, heritage, and humanities organizations that do incredible work across the state of Oregon. Once that private, philanthropic gift is given at the local level, individuals and businesses can then match their gift to the Oregon Cultural Trust and receive a tax credit for the gift to the OCT. The affect of this dual giving incentive cannot be underestimated and I don't believe that the resources it generates could be matched in any other way.

2. The other unique aspect of the Oregon Cultural Trust is that 1/3 of the funds that are expended each year are expended at the local level through 36 county and 9 tribal Coalitions. When the Cultural Trust was created each of these Coalitions determined their own giving priorities through a strategic plan that was approved at the state level. In Lane County our giving priorities are in the areas of access, awareness and educations. These are our priorities because we know that this is where the greatest needs are in our community.

Various Lane County Cultural Coalition members have spoken with their legislators about the renewal of the tax credit and legislators have specifically mentioning that education and human services are their

current top funding priorities. I'd like to reiterate that many of the programs we fund are very much in alignment with these priorities. We fund education programs in schools, libraries, and community centers as well as programs for minorities, the elderly, and disabled members of our community.

Indeed, of the 136 grant requests we've received over the last three years, 62 (or 46%) of those grant requests have sought funding to support educational activities for both in school and out of school projects.

The grants we offer are modest, usually \$1,000 to \$2,000, but they have provided important seed money to new organizations, general support for existing organizations, funding for innovative new programs, funding for school-based programs, as well as funds to organizations that reach culturally diverse residents of our county. While the funds are modest, the organizations who seek these funds intend to have a significant impact in filling the void where other public funds have dried up. Here are just a few examples of the kinds of projects we fund. I'll read excerpts from three recently funded grant requests:

1. The Opal Center for Arts and Educations in Cottage Grove wrote in their grant: Access to arts education for South Lane School District's youth is bleak. Neither Latham nor Harrison Elementary Schools offer arts to its students; Lincoln Middle School offers some arts and craft electives, while Cottage Grove High School was forced to cut its art teacher to half time. Currently, there are no after-school visual arts programs in Cottage Grove that fill this vital need. In responding to this deficit, our vision [at the Opal Center for Arts and Educations] is to become an important educational resource for area schools, teachers, and families. Building our arts education programs, specifically our out-of-school programs, are an important step in this strategic direction.

2. The Summer Reading Program for Rural Children provides free books, snacks, entertainment, and supervision in weekly summer sessions at eight rural Lane County locations. Scattered across the county in granges, schools, and community centers from Alvador to Lowell, the sites are in areas that do not have access to public libraries. The programs are run by volunteers overseen by a paid Lane Library League supervisor, and use instructional materials recommended by the Oregon State Library. The primary objective of the Summer Reading Program is to improve literacy and school success among children in rural areas of Lane County. A second objective is to promote library use and awareness in rural Lane County, with the goal of eventually developing a county-wide library system. Currently 80,000 people in rural Lane County lack access to tax-supported libraries.

3. The Kennedy Mirror is a Creative Writing Program at A1 Kennedy Alternative School. The school serves the needs of students of South Lane County School District who are unable to thrive in a conventional setting by providing an education centered upon outdoor skills, sustainability, and environmental stewardship. Typically these at-risk youth have to deal with substance abuse, homelessness, and unstable and dangerous home lives. Kennedy does not have a budget to offer courses in the arts.

In this school year, Olive DelSol and Lokiko Hall volunteered to teach a creative writing class one-day per week. Interest has been high and consistent from the first day. The class size has grown and most of the students have carried through from term to term.

The class started with a focus on basic skills and free writing. We have progressed to learning root cultural references by examining fiction from its beginning in fable, fairy tale and myth; the students then wrote examples of each of these forms. In the final term they have become so

engaged and excited that they are working to produce Kennedy's first school magazine, featuring their stories, poems and opinions, as well as articles on what Kennedy students have accomplished in the last year and plan to do in the next.

Although the class started as an experiment intended to run for one term, we have kept it going for the entire year. The students talk about their hopes for next year and how they want to expand the publishing side of the class.

In the course of the year we have also organized a field trip to the Eugene Public Library and a writers' forum where we invited seven published writers from Cottage Grove and Eugene to talk about their experiences with their art.

Principal Tom Horn credits the writing class with helping Kennedy's pass rate for the state writing test increase by 25%. The teachers of the writing class believe that the school should be able to achieve a 100% pass rate within three years.

As you can see, these funds support a variety of important programs across Lane County that may otherwise go unfunded. I hope it gives you a sense of how public funds are being used to enhance and improve the educational outcomes of the citizens of the state. When the Lane County Cultural Coalition set education as one of the three areas of funding priority we knew that the need in this area was great. We are gratified every year to be able to support great projects through the unique funding mechanism of the Oregon Cultural Trust, which requires citizens to match their giving to private nonprofit arts, heritage, and humanities organizations in order to gain a tax credit for giving to the Oregon Cultural Trust. I, and the other eleven members of the Lane County Cultural Coalition, urge you to pass House Bill 2470 to extend the sunset for tax credit for contributions to the Oregon Cultural Trust.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify through this letter. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have by phone or email. 541/346-3989 | TinaMRinaldi@gmail.com

Distribution of Oregon Cultural Trust Funds through the Lane Arts Council 2010-2012

2012

Total Amount Granted: \$25,000

Downtown Languages

Eugene, OR

\$1,463—Funds to join with Eugene Arte Latino to provide a series of art workshops for middle school aged children to get a taste for art under the direction of talented Latin American artists.

Lane County Historical Society and Museum

Eugene, OR

\$741—Funds to undertake The Quilt Survey Project to catalog information about the museums quilt collection into a database that will be accessible to scholars and historians.

Museums of Springfield and Eugene (MUSE)

Eugene, OR

\$998 – Funds for MUSE Clues Scavenger Hunt, a printed promotional and educational program that features the fourteen MUSE member organizations.

Cottage Grove Artwalk

Cottage Grove, OR

\$1520 – Funds to continue a marketing effort to increase awareness about the Cottage Grove ArtWalks' opportunities for the area's diverse artist population and community in general.

Lane Library League

Eugene, OR

\$1425 – Funds for a summer program that provides free books, snacks, entertainment, and supervision in weekly sessions at eight rural Lane County locations that do not have access to public libraries.

Ballet Fantastique

Eugene, OR

\$1900 – Funds to send a trained dance educator to two classrooms at an elementary school in Cottage Grove, OR for a 10-week dance residency.

Pearl Buck Center

Eugene, OR

\$2375 – Funds to invite Jill Sager of "Hands on Rhythm" to provide instruction in the enjoyable and therapeutic art of hand drumming to enrich the lives of those affected by disabilities.

The Opal Center for Arts and Education

Cottage Grove, OR

\$1425 – Funds the The After School Art! program, a project-based class that teaches a variety of media, such as drawing, collage, painting, and clay.

Sparkplug Dance Educational Resources

Eugene, OR

\$1625 – Funds to partner with the Relief Nursery of Eugene and Springfield to address Relief Nursery children's lack of exposure to movement and dance education.

Lane County Historical Society and Museum

Eugene, OR

\$1900 - Funds to allow the Museum to scan, digitize, and catalog its collection of Don Hunter slides, while making them available to the public via the Museum's website.

Eugene Symphony Association

Eugene, OR

\$1900 – Funds The Play it Again! Adult Chamber Ensemble program to extend the benefits of intensive arts participation to amateur adult musicians by providing formal opportunities for adults to practice, perform, and study classical music in a small ensemble setting, and to receive coaching and instruction from professional Eugene Symphony musicians.

Siuslaw Public Library District

Florence, OR

\$1705 – Funds the acquisition and placement of a life-size bronze sculpture at the main entrance to the Library on Ninth Street in Florence.

The Cottage Grove Historical Society

Cottage Grove, OR

\$2138 – Funds to help with the production of a 2-set DVD and companion booklet that will include a compilation of interviews and photos from long time area residents who participated in the Morelock Film Project.

Lowell Grange #745

Lowell, OR

\$950 – Funds to install a commercial heating and cooling system to serve the main hall and dining room areas of this historic building, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Emerald Empire Art Association

Eugene, OR

\$1425 – Funds to help grow The McKenzie Art Festival, a vibrant, family-oriented gathering of artists, community members, and visitors.

Community Center for the Performing Arts

Eugene, OR

\$1520 – Funds to support the second year of Sound, Light, and Production Workshops, a series of backstage workshops to engage at-risk youth in community arts at the WOW Hall.

2011

Total Amount Granted: \$27,000

Cottage Theatre

Cottage Grove, OR

\$2,500—Funds to create special family pricing for Bring Your Whole Family to A Year with Frog and Toad!

Ballet Fantastique

Springfield, OR

\$2,000—Funds to support Experience Dance, a dancer residency programs at elementary schools in Springfield

Lane Library League

Rural locations in west and east Lane County. OR

\$2,000—Funds to support a weekly Summer Reading Programs in Rural Lane County

DanceAbility International

Locations around Lane County, OR

\$2,000—Funds to support the promotion of DanceAbility 25th Anniversary Awareness and its 25 years of connecting people with and without disabilities through dance

Roving Park Players Theater Company

Eugene and Springfield, OR

\$800—Funds to subsidize the enhancement of Roving Park Player sound system

Fred Crafts' Radio Redux

Eugene and Springfield, OR

\$2,500—Funds to support Radio Redux sound system acquisition

Friends of Florence Events Center (Friends of All Events Center)

Florence, OR

\$1,000—Funds to support the 2012 Florence Winter Folk Festival and Kids Koncert

Cottage Grove Art Walk

Cottage Grove, OR

\$500—Funds to support awareness materials for the Cottage Grove Art Walk sponsored by Cottage Grove Area Chamber of Commerce

Oregon Mozart Players/CAMEO

Locations around Lane County, OR

\$2,000—Funds to support CAMEO (Chamber Music Education & Outreach)

Siuslaw Public Library – Mapleton Branch

Mapleton, OR

\$1,119— Funds to support Young Poets Rock!

Skinner City Farm

Eugene, OR

\$2,000—Funds to support Skinner City Farm’s Heritage Food Preservation Demonstrations

Huerto de la Familia

Locations around Lane County, OR

\$1,500— Funds to support the creation of Harvest de Pride, a series of short documentary films about migrant workers reconnecting with their heritage

Friends of Florence Events Center

Florence, OR

\$1,000— Funds to support a digital submission process for the 2011 Celebrate Arts!

Lane County Historical Society and Museum

Eugene, OR

\$1,861—Funds to support Lane County Historical Museum Photo Digitization of the General Collection

Junction City Historical Society

Junction City, OR

\$2,456— Funds to support History @ Your Library, a project to place historical photographs of the area throughout the Junction City Public Library

Oregon Old-Time Fiddlers Association – Dist 6 Fiddle Camp

Westfir, OR

\$1,000—Funds to support the 2011 West Cascade Fiddle Camp and Workshops (WCFCW)

The Arts & Business Alliance of Eugene

Eugene, OR

\$1,000—Funds to support the ongoing maintenance of Eugene A Go-Go an online social network of arts and cultural community members that provides information about area events, artists, venues, and ways to engage with arts and cultural organizations

2010

Total Amount Granted: \$36,000

Youth Empowerment Project

Eugene, Oregon

\$1580—Funds to support teach art to children of migrant farm workers

Edison Elementary School

Eugene, Oregon

\$1750—Funds to support a monthly multicultural storytelling program

All Species Project

Cottage Grove, Oregon

\$2,000—Funds to support classroom and community based workshops to create puppets and costumes for the All Species Parade, held annually on Earth Day in Cottage Grove.

Arts Umbrella

Eugene, Oregon

\$3,000—Funds to provide beginning strings instruction to more than 150 4th and 5th graders in Lane County.

Priority Areas: Education & Arts

Writers in Lane County Schools

Eugene, Oregon

\$3,000—Funds to send a published, professional local writer for an extended residency in Lane County schools.

Emerald Empire Art Association

Springfield, Oregon

\$2,500—Funds to provide Free Family Art Sundays, low-cost Saturday art studio, free art tables a summer art festivals and migrant education summer school.

Haceta Head Coastal Conference, Inc.

Florence, Oregon

\$500—Funds to support the Haceta Head Coastal Conference to educate the public about the need for a healthy, productive and resilient marine ecosystem in the Pacific Ocean off the Oregon Coast.

Oregon Covered Bridge Festival, Inc.

Cottage Grove, Oregon

\$2,500—Funds to place interpretive plaques at each of the six covered bridges that comprise the Cottage Grove Covered Bridge Tour.

Chamber Music Amici

Springfield, Oregon

\$2,500—Funds to collaborate with the Eugene Ballet and Springfield Public Schools to perform Peter Schickele's "The Emperor's New Clothes" for 600 public elementary school students in the Springfield School District.

FloTones

Florence, Oregon

\$2,500—Funds to purchase wireless music amplification system to enable the musical group to perform in a wider range nursing homes.

Olive Del Solo and Lokiko Hall

Cottage Grove, Oregon

\$1,850—Funds to continue and expand A1 Kennedy Alternative High School’s creative writing program.

Lord Leebrick Theatre Co.

Eugene, Oregon

\$2,500—Funds to continue the \$10 Student Pricing Project.

Priority Areas: Access & Arts

Ballet Fantastique

Eugene, Oregon

\$2,000— Funds to send a professional dancer and educator for an extended residency in the Mapleton School District.

Free Shakespeare in the Park

Eugene, Oregon

\$2500—Funds to support choreograph and train volunteer student actors in stage fighting techniques, and support the “Creating Ensemble” program that teaches middle and high school students to perform major operations of stage management and production of community theatre.

Glenada-Odd Fellows Cemetery Association

Florence, Oregon

\$759—Funds to purchase and replace markers to identify the unmarked graves in the historic Glenada Odd Fellows Cemetery.

Gallery Association for Learning and Art (G.A.L.A.)

Florence, Oregon

\$260—Funds for provide bus tours of local art galleries in Florence.

Oregon Mozart Players

Eugene, Oregon

\$2,500—Funds to support a Youth Baroque Outreach Concert for students of Lane County Schools and youth oriented organizations.

Breaking the Sound Barrier Deaf Choir

Cottage Grove, Oregon

\$2,500—Funds to promote performances.