



Hikers enjoyed the Spring Wildflower Walk in the Jacksonville Woodlands, led by Larry and Linda Smith.

## Jacksonville Community Center activities for adults and children

BY SUE MILER

Since opening in 2019, the Jacksonville Community Center (JCC) has been sponsoring a variety of wellness and enrichment activities open to residents of our entire area, including the Applegate Valley, Medford, Ashland, Central Point, Phoenix, Talent, Rogue River, and other communities in the valley. The JCC serves both adults and children of all ages.

Among the JCC programs are wellness classes, intended to promote healthy activity and social connections. The weekly classes include Line Dancing, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, Zumba Gold, and Yoga. Aspiring writers can attend a session of Shut Up and Write, which provides quiet time for writing in all genres, including fiction, nonfiction, and memoir.

JCC also has a range of one-time sessions covering local and natural history, issues in successful aging, making beautiful crafts, cooking, technology skills, and travel. A recent April session featured an outdoor wildflower walk in the Jacksonville Woodlands.

Programs scheduled for June and July include a Nature Art Party held in a local park, where kids (accompanied by a parent or grandparent) can create beautiful art forms from items gathered from nature. The presenter for a session called "A World without Polio: Odyssey to India" is a Jacksonville resident who, as a retired doctor, accompanied a Rotary service group to immunize children in India and then visited some of the important cultural sights there. In late July, we will have a fascinating program about Robbie Collins, who led the effort to get Jacksonville designated a National Historic



Nature art party examples by Heidi Elliott, program leader.

Landmark, helping to ensure that over 100 commercial and residential buildings in town were preserved.

We have recently received grant funding to hire a Youth Program Coordinator, who is organizing daytime kids' camps this summer, including one for performing arts and another for nature exploration and journaling. We will also have parent/child walks in the woods in July and August. A parent advisory committee is helping to plan activities for the school year.

Online registration for JCC activities is highly recommended and, in some instances, required. For those needing help or having technical issues with the registration process, call JCC at 541-702-2585 and leave a voicemail. For more details about JCC programs, including dates and times, as well as the most current schedule of activities, visit the JCC website at [jacksonvillecommunitycenter.org](http://jacksonvillecommunitycenter.org).

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## Celebrate diversity at the Village of Ascension's Cultural Unity Fest

BY TAMAURA MURPHY

Come one, come all to Merete's Cove for the Village of Ascension's Cultural Unity Fest on Sunday, June 11, noon-7 pm.

Merete's Cove, formerly the Wayside Park and renamed in honor of owner Keith Wetlesen's late mother, is at the convergence of Thompson Creek and the mighty Applegate River. Join us there to take in the gorgeous views and to network together and work on pooling our skills and hand-manifested goods to usher in a much-needed resource-based economy! Stay for the stellar entertainment!

Keith has graciously offered this utopia, with its perfectly poised swimming area, to the Village of Ascension for this festival. It is in a convenient space next to Applegate Store and Cafe, adjacent to the iconic Applegate Bridge. He will have life jackets for the little ones, which they must wear.

The second Sunday in June (June 11, this year) is a universal holiday known worldwide as Race Unity Day.

The festival will provide many things for you to learn about, such as regenerative farming techniques, aquaculture methods, and hempcrete versus concrete (what's the big difference?). Children's projects will include puppet shows and puppet-making. Workshops include one on medicinal incense rolling and another on tie-dyeing. (Bring your own natural fibers—wool, silk, rayon, cotton, hemp, bamboo—in order to participate.)

We will have some awe-inspiring entertainment, such as the soulful sounds of the Four Winds Quartet by the Williams World Choir. These four singers started as an offshoot of Williams World Music Choir in 2016, under the instruction of Harmony, a professional voice trainer who brings sounds from all over the earth. Apocalipstick, featuring rockin' tunes about oneness and beautiful themes you will love, will be joined by Huck Reason, self-taught on his 12-string guitar.

There'll be African dance and singing and Native American music—flutes and more! Zombrie Plowboy + J. Bartolero, a Texas duo made up of Southern Oregon Songwriters Association (SOSA) members Katy and Tom Noyse, will rock you with country tunes and rock-a-billy their way into your hearts!

Two other not-to-be-missed shows are (1) Ballet Ritmo Alegre Folklorio, a Latina



A-Rae of Light Dance instructors, Aimee Dietrich (right) and Kala Jade Mulvey.

ballet with an incredible visual and sound medley featuring breathtaking traditional costumes of Latina women and melodic rhythms—a treat for all ages, and (2) A-Rae of Light Dance Studio's 45-child dance troupe formed three years ago by a visionary dance instructor named Aimee Dietrich, who had a vision to give local children something other than electronics to focus on during the pandemic and began teaching at Pacifica Garden, in Williams. Joined by Aimee's assistant instructor, Kala Jade Mulvey, these young people will leave you breathless with their renditions of hip-hop, modern dance, and tap.

And then, just when you thought you'd seen it all, here comes the Migrant Worker Crew with original music to make you wanna rock it, Ras David's reggae music, and Native American drumming by Freaq.

We'll have 30 booths featuring local crafters with hand-created items, food creators, health practitioners, entrepreneurs, plants, natural health products, and other products to help build a resource-based local economy. A Jewish kibbutz speaker will highlight the key to an intentional community. Learn how it works: everybody can do something. To top it all off, we'll have baked goods from Guam.

Come for the networking—stay for the fun! Join the Village of Ascension for the Cultural Unity Fest on Sunday, June 11. Bring your friends and loved ones! A two-dollar bartering day pass gets each patron a free raffle ticket to win gifts and services!

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*Village of Ascension is a volunteer group striving to solve social problems.*

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