

Dinner at the Castle Wednesday, May 3 at 6 p.m.

In the tradition of great houses where strolling minstrels enacted plays for the guests after dinner, Dinners at Six of the Culinary Arts Guild will transport the Gualala Arts Coleman Auditorium to “that pleasant district of merry England which is watered by the river Don, there extended in ancient times a large forest, covering the greater part of the beautiful hills and valleys which lie between Gualala and the pleasant town of Point Arena.”

Thus begins, with addendum, Sir Walter Scott’s famous 1819 story of “Ivanhoe,” a romantic tale of peril and rescue, chivalry and pageantry. It is the tale of Sir Wilfred of Ivanhoe, a knight returning from the Crusades who finds himself disinherited and thwarted in the pursuit of the Lady Rowena.

However in the here and now, the title has been converted to “Ivanha,” the story up-dated to our times with humor and sparkling fun. Instead of Old English troubadours, this play will be performed by members of the Point Arena High School Drama Class under the direction of Jim Myers.

In support of this marvelous theatrical effort, Dinners at Six will offer guests the experience of a traditional English dinner from the eighteenth century. The menu includes Roasted Bones (served on wooden platters), Yorkshire pudding with gravy, and a Sticky Toffee Pudding/Cake.

Before seating, wine and hor d’ouvres will be served. As is customary with Dinners at Six, if one wishes more wine with the meal, guests are invited to bring their own. Tickets are \$25 for both dinner and play. Guests are encouraged to appear in costume.

High School Students present “Ivanha” Thursday, May 4 at 7:30 p.m.

The performance of “Ivanha” presented on Wednesday for Dinners at Six will be repeated Thursday night on the stage in Coleman Auditorium for theater goers.

Highway One Jazz Choir Concert Sunday, May 14 at 3 p.m.

The Highway One Jazz Choir celebrates twenty-three years of singing together with a very special concert of hits from the Everly Brothers, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, Otis Redding, and Aretha Franklin.

Carolyn Steinbuck, who teaches at both Santa Rosa Junior College and College of the Redwoods, is the conductor. The choir will be accompanied by Marion James, piano, Daney Dawson, bass, and Dan Albrecht, drums. Admission is free as a gift to the community, though donations are requested to help cover expenses. Refreshments will be served.

Solving Problems with Building Permits for the Next Phase of Construction

Since 1997, when the Gualala Arts building was completed, the art center has been occupying the building under a temporary permit. The original permit was not finalized because of issues with the old state highway. When the current Gualala Bridge was completed and the old bridge abandoned, the State gave the county all its ownership rights to the old State Highway that runs between Gualala Arts property and Gualala Redwoods property down to the railroad easement next to the river.

This was no problem to anyone until 2002, when Gualala Arts acquired Moscone Center’s old risers for its stage performances. Gualala Arts needed a place to store the risers, and other equipment that is used periodically, and therefore applied to the County for a building permit to construct the storage area. The new permit was denied because the final occupancy permit had never been issued.

Gualala Arts asked the county to finalize the original permit and was told that it first needed to fix drainage problems along the old road. Gualala Arts fixed the drainage and was then told that the State’s ownership rights to the old road had to be researched before the issue could be resolved, to verify whether the road was actually owned property or if the State merely had an easement. At Gualala Arts request, First American Title’s Senior Title Officer researched the historical ownership issues and proved to the County Dept. of Transportation that the “ownership” the State passed to the County was simply an easement. The land under the old highway was actually owned by the owners of the parcels on both sides of it and split on the yellow line in the middle – so the current owners are Gualala Arts and Gualala Redwoods Inc.

At the request of both the County Planning and Transportation Departments, Gualala Municipal Advisory Committee (GMAC) held a hearing on April 6, when they found no negative issues and ended up recommending to Mendocino County that they vacate the old road easement and sign off on the final permit for Gualala Arts. As Gualala Arts current and former presidents (Cliff Putnam and Bruce Jones) requested, this should enable Gualala Arts to apply for building permits and raise funds for building projects like any other valid, law abiding organization in Mendocino County.

Thanks to the Frank and Helen Klembeck, Michelle Marshall, Jim Grenwelge, Paul Styskal, Cliff Putnam and Bruce Jones for attending the GMAC meeting and presenting Gualala Arts’ case.

The final step in the process (we hope) will now take place when the Board of Supervisors holds a Public Hearing for the Old State Highway Road Vacation Petition on Tuesday, May 16, 2006 at 11:30 a.m. We will need to make sure that the issues are again presented at that time.

Sign up to carpool for the trip to Ukiah by calling the Gualala Arts office at (707) 884-1138.