

Pizarro: Opera San Jose launching anti-bullying program

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Opera San Jose is starting an anti-bullying program as part of its celebration of National Opera Week, which begins Friday.

The company will launch a one-act touring opera, "Billy Goats Gruff," with a free performance at 4 p.m. Nov. 1 at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library in downtown San Jose. The company puts a contemporary twist on the fairy tale, as it tackles the issue of bullying. The show is set to melodies from composers including Mozart, Rossini and Donizetti.

No reservations are required for the performance, which will take place in room 225/229 of the library. Opera San Jose is also booking performances for schools and youth organizations during the 2012-13 season. Contact Outreach Coordinator Lettie Smith at 408-437-4464 for details or go to www.operasj.org.

NEW FUNDRAISER: Great news for the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America, which has sold out the room for its first Toque of the Town benefit in Silicon Valley on Nov. 3.

It's no wonder that seats went quickly for the new event. The dinner at the Rosewood Sand Hill in Menlo Park will be created by chefs Mark Sullivan of Spruce and The Village Pub and Peter Rudolph of Madera. Sullivan has a personal stake in the event; He was diagnosed with Crohn's disease in his early 20s but has been in remission for many years.

The foundation also will honor two Palo Alto residents -- venture capitalist David Hornik and his wife, Pamela Hornik, who devotes much of her time to the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford. Their son, Noah, was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis in 2007, and the family actively supports the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America.

KIWANIS HONOR: The Palo Alto Kiwanis Club is honoring Palo Alto resident Robert Freeman on Thursday with its first Kiwanis Angel Award, given to individuals or groups that mentor kids and positively impact their lives.

Freeman, who teaches social studies at Los Altos High, is being recognized for his work as the founder of One Dollar for Life (www.odfl.org), which tackles Third World poverty by channeling dollars collected by high school students into infrastructure projects in developing countries.

The award is being presented Thursday at 5:30 p.m. at the Sheraton Palo Alto, emceed by State Sen. Joe Simitian. Tickets are \$55 at the door.

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