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Quotes of the day

"He not busy being born

Flute choir will perform Sunday

By JANE WILSON
NEWBERG GRAPHIC NEWS INTERN

If you think you've seen it all, think again.

Generally, the first thing that comes to mind when you think "instrumental ensemble" is a band or orchestra with a variety of instruments, each contributing its unique sound. What probably does not come to mind is a score of musicians playing the same instrument.

Such a group does exist: the Rose City Flute Choir (RCFC), which will perform from noon to 2 p.m. Sunday at the Dundee Farmers' Market on Highway 99W.

Between 15 and 18 flutists will play their instruments for the public's entertainment — no admission required.

Fear not, attendees will not be subjected to shrill tunes en masse. Rather, there exist flutes in all shapes and sizes. Together, the instruments in the choir provide a range of five octaves.

Constituents of the RCFC will play four kinds of flutes, resulting in a typical four-voiced choir-like ensemble, said Phyllis Louke, choir director.

The highest voice, or soprano part, is played by the piccolo, a tiny instrument that is one octave above the most common concert flute.

The alto part is played by concert flutes, found in most bands and orchestras — "the garden variety," teased Louke.

The tenor part will be played by alto flutes, which are longer and larger in diameter than concert flutes and uniquely set in the key of G, while all others are in the key of C.

The lowest and biggest flute played by the choir is the bass flute, which sounds one octave below a concert flute.

Not only are there different sizes, the larger flutes also vary in shape. There are two kinds of alto and bass flutes: one is straight like the typical trans-

verse, side-blown instruments; the other has a curved headjoint, shaped like a J or a candy cane to help flutists reach the keys more easily. Flutists joke that the curved flutes look like a pipe found under the kitchen sink.

"Flute choirs have actually been around for quite a while," said Louke. "I have been playing in them since 1971.

"There are so many flutists around, the problem is that many bands, orchestras, and ensembles have a limited number of how many flutes can perform."

Flute choirs have increased in recent decades, Louke said: "They have been catching on at college-level to promote a chamber type of music. It has become a good performance outlet."

RCFC is an adult choir formed in 1986 by Treese Kjeldsen as a nonprofit organization dedicated to weekly rehearsals and the performance of quality flute ensemble literature. Louke became director about 12 years ago.