

Court

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and string section, all of the musicians, a mix of professionals and students, performed on the fourth floor of the meeting-room-turned concert stage beautifully, Aimer said.

The director, Daniel Gibson, conducted via a livestream feed on a TV in front of the stage.

"We utilized technology for not having a pit," Aimer said. "This orchestra really helped capture the essence of the film and they did so essentially from a recording studio, not a pit."

A smaller group of these musicians will be performing in the next Enlightened Theatrics' performance of "Plaid Tidings," which runs from Nov. 23 through Dec. 11. It's a special holiday edition of "Forever Plaid," and is the story of a deceased barbershop quartet breathing some new life into the holiday season via some tradition yule songs.

It's sure to put attendees in the holiday spirit.

Pre-show tickets go on sale Sept. 14. Go to enlightenedtheatrics.org to buy them online then.

Veterans stand down

Most of us have heard about health fairs for low-income folks. Now comes a Veterans Stand Down, an event just for veterans of the U.S. military.

From 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 31 at the Salem First Baptist Church, a group of community organizations have joined together to bring an army of services together under one roof to ease the burden on veterans.

It's the only fair of its kind for veterans in the Mid-Valley, and has been held annually since 2009.

But **Rosy Macias** of the Salem Veterans Center, **Amy Schroeder** of the **Community Action Agency** and **Arlene Janssens** a volunteer for both, said they want more veterans to attend and they need more volunteers to help them.

Funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, the Veterans Stand Down will include services from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Benefits as well as opportunities to enroll in the VA, learn about the Veterans Center, find medical and dental services, get housing assistance, find employment services, pet care, military surplus, Social Security information and more.

"We'll even drive folks to the DMV to get a license or identification card if they need it," Macias said.

Macias said the event, which is for veterans and their families, will also provide vets with an opportunity to meet with representatives from 10 local companies who are ready to hire veterans at 11 a.m. Wednesday. There will also be a workshop prior to the employment recruitment at 9:30 a.m., which will offer tips for getting a job including how to prepare a resume and mock interview sce-

narios.

This is a free event and breakfast and lunch will be served free to veterans as well. No proof of military service is required for entry into the event, but discharge papers will be needed if a veteran wants to start a claim for benefits.

"All we ask is what branch of the military did you serve in," Schroeder said.

At least 21 more volunteers are needed to serve meals during the afternoon shift. To register, go online to <http://signup.com/go/RLVJGn>

The Salem First Baptist Church is at 395 Marion St. NE.

Fun fiesta

Elena and **Raul Pena** and their grandson, **Diego Pena**, 7, came by to promote the Community Fiesta, a two-day celebration of Mexican music, food and traditions coming up in Independence this weekend.

The festivities start at 4 p.m. and run through 10 p.m. Saturday night at the Riverview Park Amphitheater with food vendors, music and the coronation of the Fiesta Queen, Rosa Elena Lua.

Then, from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday, internationally known musicians Sonora Dinamita will perform along with Raul's group known as "Romance." Other local bands will also play Mexican and Latino music throughout the day, and the Penas say there will be traditional dancing and more.

The festival is alcohol and tobacco free, and Elena describes it aptly as a "family friendly" event. There will be games and children's activities.

Special guest Alex "El Genio" Lucas will make a return visit, offering his inspirational message to families, Elena said.

There is no admission charge, but the Penas say there is a suggested donation of \$5.

"We need to pay for next year's entertainment and security," Raul said.

Riverview Park is off of Independence Highway, which turns into N. Main Street.

Lunch and learn

"Change hurt into hope" are the watchwords of Liberty House, Salem's outstanding center for assessment, advice and support for children and families facing concerns about child abuse and neglect.

On Tuesday, Sept. 20, at the Salem Convention Center, the public will be invited to a complimentary lunch to learn more about the non-profit and the prevalence of child abuse in our community.

Kelley Parosa, project coordinator for Liberty House, said the organization is "about a third of the way" toward its goal of signing 1,000 monthly donors. The luncheon may prompt more individuals to join the campaign. That is the hope, anyway.

"We'll see more than 600 children this year in an environment that is neutral and objective," Kelley said.

Kathy Saunders, a luncheon table sponsor, helped arrange an assort-