

ENTERTAINMENT

entertainment CALENDAR

Today •

"War Zone: Sexual Harassment on the Streets of America" will be screened at 7 p.m. in the Price Lake Room of Plemmons Student Union. The event is free.

Akal dev Sharrone will perform a flute recital at 8 p.m. in the Recital Hall. Admission is free.

•March 24

APPS sponsors Noun at 9 p.m. in Legends. Noun is Appalachian State University's favorite improv comedy troupe. Tickets are \$3. The event is BYOB, six-pack limit with proper ID.

The Appalachian Dance Ensemble presents its annual dance concert showcasing student and faculty choreographers and dancers at 8 p.m. in Farthing Auditorium. Tickets are \$10 for the public and \$6 for students.

"Duel in the Sun" will play at Greenbriar Theatre at 7 p.m. Admission is free.

March 25 •

Grammy-winning bluegrass band Nickel Creek plays Holmes Convocation at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$10 in advance for students, \$14 for the public and \$14 at the door. Advance tickets can be purchased at the Holmes Center box office.

The Appalachian Dance Ensemble presents its annual dance concert showcasing student and faculty choreographers and dancers at 8 p.m. in Farthing Auditorium. Tickets are \$10 for the public and \$6 for students.

Taboot Productions presents Gomachi at Café Portofino at 9:30 p.m. Tickets are \$4 at the door. The event is all ages.

Captain Soularcat will return to Murphy's Restaurant and Pub at 10 p.m. The event is for ages 21 and up.

The School of Music presents Opera Theatre at 8 p.m. in the Broyhill Music Center. There is an admission cost. For more information, call 262-2030.

•March 26

The Appalachian Dance Ensemble presents its annual dance concert at 8 p.m. in Farthing Auditorium.

Diverse influences lend to Nickel Creek's 'newgrass'

BY DUSTY TENG
Staff Writer

Appalachian State University welcomes contemporary bluegrass band Nickel Creek and singer-songwriter Mindy Smith to Holmes Convocation Center Thursday.

Nickel Creek mandolin player Chris Thile, fiddler Sara Watkins and guitarist Sean Watkins are all under the age of 30, but have performed together for over a decade.

While bluegrass music is often associated with the Appalachian Mountain area, the three musicians of Nickel Creek grew up in southern California. Thile met the Watkins siblings at a pizza parlor that regularly hosted bluegrass bands.

Since then, the young trio has accumulated an impressive list of accolades, such as being named one of Rolling Stone magazine's "Best of 2002" bands and one of Time magazine's "Five Music Innovators for the Millennium."

Nickel Creek's "This Side" won a Grammy award in 2003 for Best Contemporary Folk Album after they had previously been nominated four times.

The individual members of Nickel Creek have also performed on various television programs and have been featured on the albums of musicians such as Bela Fleck, The Chieftains and Dolly Parton.

Although Nickel Creek is often categorized as a bluegrass group, the band also incorporates rock 'n' roll, pop rock and folk influences in its music.

Folk singer-songwriter Mindy Smith will open for Nickel Creek on Thursday.

The solo artist will perform music from her debut album "One Moment More."

"[Smith and Nickel Creek] are both on the same [record] label. They met each other through other occasions," Smith's manager Casey Verbeck said. "The folks of Nickel Creek are Mindy Smith fans, so they wanted to bring her out."

Smith is often considered a country



Special to The Appalachian

Nickel Creek mandolin player Chris Thile, fiddler Sara Watkins and guitarist Sean Watkins return to Boone Thursday night. The three musicians of Nickel Creek grew up and met in southern California, and have since accumulated an impressive list of accolades, including being named one of Rolling Stone magazine's "Best of 2002" bands and one of Time magazine's "Five Music Innovators for the Millennium." Folk singer-songwriter Mindy Smith will open for Nickel Creek at 8 p.m.

singer, but she actually blends country, gospel, folk and bluegrass elements in her album to cater to wide variety of musical audiences.

"It's definitely not country. It's more folk rock," Verbeck said.

Smith grew up in Long Island, N.Y., but is now based out of Nashville. After moving to Tennessee, Smith turned down offers from major labels that wanted to

present her as a country singer.

She wanted to avoid having a producer create a sound for her.

Smith's wait has paid off. "One Moment More" has received recognition from USA Today, Billboard magazine and National Public Radio's Morning Edition.

"Not only is she an amazing songwriter, she is an amazing vocalist. So

combined, it puts her at a whole other level," Verbeck said.

Nickel Creek and Mindy Smith will perform at 8 p.m.

The event is sponsored by the Appalachian Popular Programming Society and Holmes Convocation Center.

Tickets are \$10 in advance for students and \$14 at the door for both students and the public.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Dance Ensemble performance incorporates unique music selections

Concert features eight diverse dances with modern rock, 'hardcore' jazz and a live collaboration with the Celtic band Sunday's Well

BY STEPHANIE MARSHALL
Staff Writer

The Appalachian Dance Ensemble performs its spring concert tomorrow through Saturday in Farthing Auditorium.

Director and assistant professor of dance Susan W. Lutz said Appalachian State University does not offer a dance major, but instead a dance minor.

"We feel it's a very strong minor and an important part of the dance experience is the performing experience," she said Friday. "We do a major performance every fall and spring."

"The program is over 20 years old and started with faculty members that are no longer

here, but it has certainly grown in its scope over the past 10 years," Lutz said.

"I have been involved with dance shy of two years and other kinds of dance all my life. I was part of the ensemble last year and it rocked my world. Every dancer should have this chance," student choreographer and senior music industry studies major Joel M. Stroup said last Friday.

"This year's production has eight dances which are very diverse. It has everything from modern to pretty hard-core jazz to another dance with live music," Lutz said.

Lutz said there are seven faculty members involved with this

year's production.

Three of the seven faculty members, Laurie Atkins, Regina Gulick-James and Rebecca Keeter, will collaborate with the Celtic band Sunday's Well for one dance piece.

Faculty member Steffie Beard is choreographing an intense fusion of modern and jazz dance for one piece.

"I am collaborating with theater faculty member Anna Ward, and we are doing a dance theater piece, using both dance and theater students. It is a comical look at self improvement and what we all do to try and improve ourselves," Lutz said.

Lutz said in this year's production there will be four dances choreographed by students.

"We feel it's important for the students to not only be able to perform, but also to have the opportunity to choreograph as well," Lutz said.

The student choreographers are Stroup, Sarah Burkhart, Lindsay Scarborough and Melissa H. Smith.

Stroup's dance is a quartet of women displaying the human identity cycle and a struggle for meaning with a spiritual aspect to it.

Burkhart's piece uses country music influences with a funny and light-hearted aspect.

Scarborough's piece will involve a marimba and a disc jockey with dancers performing to live music by John Leupold and Marley Carol.

Smith's dance is a fast paced



Beth Ramsey | The Appalachian

Rashael Cain, Kathryn Weaver, Emily Montague and Anna Sitting (l-r) are a part of the Appalachian Dance Ensemble's spring concert opening tomorrow night and running through Saturday. Performances begin at 8 p.m. in Farthing Auditorium, and promise to incorporate many musical genres.

modern piece portraying the pressure of everyday life.

"I have danced all my life and became interested in choreographing," student choreographer and senior elementary education major Smith said Friday. "My dance is about the four-year accumulation of pressure in a college student's life. The girls I am working with have been really respectful of me."

"The program is really well

balanced in terms of serious pieces and more light-hearted, enjoyable comical pieces," Lutz said.

"People who are not interested or stereotype modern dance will be surprised how much they will enjoy our show," dancer and sophomore advertising major Christine E. Wesche said last Friday.

"Appalachian is very lucky to have as many talented students

as we do.

"These dance students have spent so much time, energy, passion, love and commitment in doing this, and I think just like a good football game we should all support each other in our endeavors," Lutz said.

Tickets are \$6 for students and \$10 for the public.

For more information, contact the Farthing Auditorium box office at 262-4046.



Beth Ramsey | The Appalachian

Junior anthropology major Rashael Cain has been dancing since she was 3 years old. Appalachian State University currently offers only dance minors for students. Susan W. Lutz said the program is strong.



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Your government beat reporter

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ENTERTAINMENT

Evening for the Arts offers three-tiered benefit for Arts Council

BY ANNA OAKES
Staff Writer

Just an Evening for the Arts, a three-tiered benefit for the Watauga County Arts Council, takes place Saturday from 6 p.m. to midnight.

"Just the Beginning," the first tier of the event, will feature hors d'oeuvres and an art auction at Coffey's Restaurant. The second tier, "Your Just Desserts," offers a selection of desserts at the Appalachian Cultural Museum. There will be night of dancing and music at the Broyhill Inn & Conference Center during the final tier of the evening, "Just Dancing."

Each event will feature live music from local artists.

"We feel that the community

[will] enjoy a nice event as a way to bring in funds," event organizer Rachel J. Brandon said. "This is a high-quality event with wonderful local musicians, as well as the guests that will be coming.

"We hope that lots of people will come and enjoy it," she said.

Tickets for the first tier of the event are \$35. Tickets for the following tiers are \$25 each. Tickets for each portion may be purchased separately or guests may pay \$75 for the entire evening.

Group discounts are also available.

The doors of Coffey's Restaurant open at 6 p.m. for "Just the Beginning." Hors d'oeuvres will be served at 6:30 p.m. and a cash bar will be available. Local musician Charlie Ellis will provide live

music, Brandon said.

Locally-donated sculptures, paintings, literary works and other pieces will be auctioned off by Hank Foreman, Brandon said. All proceeds will go toward the Arts Council's budget, she said.

"Fundraising is always an issue for nonprofits," Brandon said. "In recent years, with ... the economy, grants have been cut."

Musical guests Naren Schoenacher, The Mountaineers, Billy Ralph Winkler and family and Witold Kosmala and family will provide music in two venues during the second tier, Brandon said.

"There will be wonderful desserts," Brandon said. Many of the desserts will be prepared by members of the Arts Council Board of Directors, she said.

Dr. Elizabeth "Bettie" Bond is the co-chair of "Your Just Desserts."

"It was only in the last decade that the Town of Boone recognized how important [the arts] are," Bond said. "One of the reasons downtown has revived is because of the arts."

The final tier begins at 9 p.m. at the Broyhill Inn & Conference Center and will last until midnight. Music will be provided by the Gary Weaver Quartet. Light refreshments will be served and a cash bar will be available. Brown-bagging is also permitted, Brandon said.

"[The arts] are a tremendous economic force," Brandon said. According to a survey carried out by the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce, the arts bring at least \$26 million to this county annu-

ally, she said.

"We are an entity that has been largely unknown," Brandon said. "For the most part, the community still doesn't really know what the Watauga County Arts Council really does. So when we are out there competing for dollars ... the arts often take a backseat [to other programs.]"

The Arts Council hosts a free gallery and reception each month and provides free concerts on the lawn of the Jones House during the summer. The Arts Council, together with Appalachian Cultural Affairs, also puts on a children's touring program in Farthing Auditorium for Watauga County students in grades K-12, in addition to many other events, Brandon said.

"We earn about 10 percent [of

our overall income] through our special fundraisers," Arts Council Executive Director Cherry Johnson said in the March issue of the Arts Council's newsletter. "About 18 percent comes from contributions and sponsorships of our programming."

The remainder comes from grants, partnership arrangements and local government allocations, Johnson said.

"Those of us who feel the value of the arts in our lives, continue to struggle and hang in there so that the art forms don't die out and there will always be an audience for the arts," Brandon said.

For a reservation form or more information about Just an Evening for the Arts, contact the Arts Council office at 264-1789.

Improv group begins year with new faces

BY BILL CUTLER
Staff Writer

In the midst of a "rebuilding year," the Appalachian State University student improvisational group Noun comes to Legends tonight.

After losing three of its founding members to graduation, Chicago and Los Angeles, Noun moves into 2004 with its first show of the year.

Specializing in short-form improvisational games made famous on television shows like "Whose Line is it Anyway," Noun also mixes in long-form bits, setting up scenes for more "thinking-man" comedy pieces.

"When you take larger risks you tend to get bigger laughs," sophomore Noun member Nat

W. Bailey said.

The team is rounded out by seniors Timothy E. Young Jr., Seth D. Olson and Bailey and newcomers Matthew P. Herr and Ira E. Sargent.

"I know a lot of the people coming expect some of the old members, but I have a lot of confidence in the new guys, and I really think we'll be an amazing group," Bailey said.

The new members were added on through a long audition process that included many practice games challenging newcomers to develop relationships with the rest of the participants.

The audition process was also a way for the returning members

WANT TO GO?

**When: Tonight
9 p.m.**

Where: Legends

Tickets are \$3

to look at potential members from an overall perspective, not just from one hilarious bit.

"The thing with improv is that you have off days and to have just one audition day is unfair to a performer," Bailey said.

Noun has also recently participated in many improvisation workshops, including the Chicago Improv Festival and Dirty South Improv Festival, which took place in Chapel Hill.

Both offered the members of Noun an opportunity to show off their abilities as well as work with seasoned experts, coaching them in the art of the truly random.

With a motto that reads "Truth, Comedy, Destruction," one can only expect the sheer absurdity Noun will bring to the Legends stage tonight at 9 p.m.

"It's really nerve-wracking,



Fuzzy Gerdes | Special to The Appalachian
Noun at the Dirty South Improv Festival in March 2002.

but when it turns out good, it's worth it.

"If you can channel that energy

into strong characters and scenes, it's worth it," Bailey said.

Tickets are \$3 for the public.

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