One of the most cherished operas of all time will be in the spotlight at ABAC on January 22 when the Peach State Opera Company presents “The Elixir of Love” at 7 p.m. in Howard Auditorium.

“Gaetano Donizetti’s ‘The Elixir of Love’ combines whimsical wit and charming characters with dazzling arias and breathtaking duets. We are very pleased to bring it to the ABAC stage,” Jones said.

Formed in 2009, the Peach State Opera Company is a touring company that brings the excitement of live opera to small communities in Georgia and surrounding states. The company presents well-known and portable English-language productions and helps emerging operatic professionals acquire opportunities to perform new roles. The company resides at the Clarkston campus of Georgia Perimeter College as one of the college’s “Artist Affiliate” organizations.

“The Elixir of Love” involves a fake love potion which leads the characters into unexpected situations and romantic entanglements. With love triangles, con men, and inspiring music, this production highlights the best in theatrical presentation.

While available tickets will be sold at the door for each show, Jones encourages advance purchase of tickets to ensure seating. Individual tickets fare $15 for adults and $10 for students under 18 years of age. Tickets can be purchased online at www.purplepass.com/abac or by phone at (229) 391-4895.

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Dr. Mark Johnson joins the faculty of the School of Human Sciences as an assistant professor of education and family and consumer sciences. Johnson comes to the campus from Plymouth State University in New Hampshire.

Johnson said he was immediately drawn to the teaching position at ABAC because most of his family still lives in Berrien and Tift Counties.

“I did not expect to be able to be a professor and live so near to my family, so this was a pleasant surprise,” said Johnson. “My interest in rural education and ABAC’s growing Rural Studies program was also a draw.”

Like most other professors, Johnson looks forward to connecting with students this semester, mentoring them, and beginning to establish a reputation as professor who allows/challenges students to think critically and creatively.

“As a professor of education, I hope to help my students imagine and practice how they, if interested, might also learn how to become accomplished facilitators of thinking and learning,” said Johnson. “Outside of the classroom, I hope to soak up as much knowledge as possible from the senior faculty and my peers and begin to be a helpful and contributing member of the college.”

Johnson earned his AS in science form the Georgia Military Academy in 1993, his BA in philosophy and psychology in 1997 from the University of Georgia, his MA in philosophy from Georgia State University in 2004, and his Ph.D. in educational theory and practice from the University of Georgia in 2014.
Auditions for ‘The Whipping Man’ January 20-21 at ABAC

Auditions for the Baldwin Players spring production of “The Whipping Man” by Matthew Lopez will be held January 20-21 at 6:30 p.m. in Conger Hall, Room 323. This play will be performed to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the end of the Civil War.

“The Whipping Man” is an intimate look into the lives of three Jews – one, a badly wounded Confederate soldier, and the other two previously his slaves. Set in April 1865 they assign ever-changing interpersonal roles, corroding faiths, and basic survival after General Lee surrenders at Appomattox. The play is a story of bindings – chains, love, and faith – and secrets.

There are three roles available – two for African American men and one for a white man.

“Because race is such a key historical element of the time – and because it is one of the issues that had a major influence over the social changes that began with the end of the Civil War and continue to this day – the race of the actors to be cast in this play is a serious issue,” said Baldwin Players Director Dr. Brian Ray.

“In fact, it is crucial for the telling of this story that the two former slaves in this play be played by African-American men.”

Auditions for the production are open to anyone interested in live theatre including ABAC students, staff, faculty, and local community members. The auditions will consist of reading selected passages from the play itself. There is no cost to audition.

Performances of “The Whipping Man” will take place March 5-7 at 7 p.m. at the Peanut Museum of the Georgia Museum of Agriculture and Historic Village at ABAC. Admission is free to ABAC faculty, staff and students. The ticket cost is $7 per person for the general public.

For more information about auditions, interested persons can contact Dr. Brian Ray, Director of the Baldwin Players, at bray@abac.edu.

Purchase Tickets Now for 14th Annual Fillies Pancake Breakfast

The Fillies’ softball team will hold its 14th annual Pancake Breakfast at Applebee’s on January 24 from 8 – 10 a.m. Tickets for the breakfast are $6 each. Menu items will include pancakes, sausage, and a choice of beverage. Take-out orders will also be available for those who purchase tickets in advance.

Tickets can be purchased from Coach Donna Campbell or any Fillies’ softball player. For more information or to purchase a ticket, interested persons can contact Campbell at (229) 391-4929 or via e-mail at dcampbell@abac.edu.

ABAC Athletics Hall of Fame Nominations Due Thursday

Nominations are now being accepted for the Athletics Hall of Fame at ABAC. The deadline for nominations is Thursday.

ABAC Athletics Director Alan Kramer said any individual, living or deceased, may be considered for induction into the ABAC Athletics Hall of Fame. Individuals are nominated in one of three categories: Athlete, Coach, or Contributor.

Kramer said athletic achievement as well as integrity, sportsmanship, and character will be considered. He said the college is also looking for individuals who may have been good athletes while at ABAC, but who went on to coach high school or college teams to state or national titles.

Alumni as well as the general public are encouraged to nominate individuals for this honor. Hall of Fame criteria and a nomination form can be found at www.abac.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/ABAC-Nomination-Form-2014.1.pdf.

For more information on the 2015 Athletics Hall of Fame, interested persons can contact Shirley Wilson in the Office of Athletics at (229) 391-4930.
Retired ABAC Professor Opens One-Man Exhibit at Museum Gallery

A one-man exhibit featuring the works of Dr. Vincent Keesee is now open in the lobby of the Georgia Museum of Agriculture and Historic Village. The exhibit will remain in the Museum lobby for one month.

Born in Campbell County, Va., Keesee studied art at Richmond Professional Institute, now Virginia Commonwealth University, where he painted with Maurice Bonds, Milton Hull and others. After graduating, he worked in Atlanta in graphic art and design. He also attended evening classes in painting at the High Museum of Art with Joel Reeves.

Keesee then entered the University of Georgia (UGA) and obtained a master’s degree in fine art where he studied painting with Lamar Dodd, Howard Thomas and Joseph Swartz. In 1972, he received a Ph.D. in art history from UGA.

Keesee joined the faculty of the Division of Humanities at ABAC in 1965 and taught art classes until his retirement from the college in 1995. He has exhibited his paintings at many regional shows including individual shows in Roanoke, Va., Huntsville, Ala., and various locations in Georgia.

“Dr. Keesee’s painting is figurative and usually reflects some aspects of the southern culture and environment,” Huff said. “Using his unique eye and ear for ‘truisms’ found above and beneath the surface of everyday life, he captures the joy and energy of life with movement and color. His oil paintings show images of people and rural scenes.”

“His work is influenced by various kinds of music,” Huff said. “Often the paintings reflect the spiritual roots gained from attending fundamentalist church services as a young boy. He has found inspiration in contemporary rock ‘n roll music and the energy of dance.”

Keesee spends time in West Point, Va., when he’s not painting in his studio in Tifton. Huff is available for more information at phuff@abac.edu.

Away are the days of nursing students with huge bags of textbooks. Students entering the ABAC nursing program this semester will begin the program with a 7” screen, 8 Gig, Samsung Galaxy Tab 4 tablets. These devices will connect to D2L and the web by WiFi, contain all of their textbooks, allow access to specialized nursing and health care apps and provide access to a web-based simulated patient records platform. Beginning this week, Nursing students will access learning resources on their tablets all over campus, in the classrooms and in the hospitals – anywhere there is WiFi. ABAC is the first nursing program in the state to provide tablets and electronically integrate learning resources for a more up to date student learning experience.

Are you in need of some updated campus maps for your office? Email the Office of Public Relations at publicrelations@abac.edu and a stack will be sent through campus mail.

ABAC BIRTHDAYS

12 Anita White 14 Rhonda Lewis
18 Dill Driscoll 18 Kaycee Jones

Please submit information by Thursday at noon to Lindsey Roberts at lroberts@abac.edu for inclusion in the next edition of the FOCUS.