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NEWS BUREAU/Courtesy

LEIGH CAPPILLINO, Shelley Breen and Denise Jones make up contemporary Christian trio Point of Grace. The group formed in 1991 with Breen and Jones, along with alumni Terry Jones and Heather Payne. They released their first album in 1993 and have since had five gold albums and two platinum albums.

FOC features Ouachita alumni Point of Grace

By LARA OVERMAN
News Bureau

Ouachita's School of Fine Arts will present its annual Festival of Christmas in Jones Performing Arts Center on Dec. 2 and 3 at 7:30 p.m. The show will feature Christian music group Point of Grace. Tickets are \$20 each, and students can purchase one ticket for \$10 with their student IDs.

"The Festival of Christmas featuring our own Point of Grace graduates is a fitting end to what has been a rich celebration of Ouachita's 125th anniversary year," said Ian Cosh, vice president for community and international engagement and chairman of the 125th anniversary steering committee.

Since forming at Ouachita 19 years ago, Point of Grace emerged as one of the biggest names in Christian music. The two-time Grammy nominees have sold more than 6.5 million albums and earned 24 consecutive No. 1 singles, including radio staples "Steady On," "The Great Divide" and "Circle of Friends," a feat unmatched by any other

artist in any musical genre. Point of Grace has won 13 prestigious Dove Awards, including three in 2011: Recorded Song of the Year for "There Is Nothing Greater than Grace," Country Album of the Year for "No Chargin' Us" and Christmas Album of the Year for "Home for the Holidays."

"The presence of these alumni, who have done so well in the music world, will be a reminder that our mission as a university is to graduate students who are competent, compassionate and committed to Christ," Cosh said.

The program will include performances by students in the vocal, instrumental and theatre programs as well as dance students. Ensembles performing include Concert Choir, Ouachita Sounds and the Festival of Christmas Band.

"We wanted to do something special for the 125th year of Ouachita, so the show will be a little bit of us and a little bit of Point of Grace," said Dr. Gary Gerber, Division of Music chair.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.obu.edu/boxoffice or call the box office at 870-245-5563 from 1-5 p.m. weekdays. ■



CALLIE STEPHENS/Archive

MEMBERS OF the Concert Choir perform during last year's Festival of Christmas.

English department to offer Film Studies discussion course as half hour elective

By MARY CASTLEMAN
Signal Writer

As part of a continued effort to update curriculum and offer students a wide variety of relevant class choices, Ouachita will offer a class in Film Studies as part of the Spring 2012 schedule. The class is being offered through the English department, but department chair, Dr. Doug Sonheim, has extended an invitation to all students who might be interested in the subject. Film Studies will count as one half-hour of elective credit. Sonheim will teach the class with help from several other faculty members in the English and communications departments. Sonheim said Dr. Jeff Root, dean of the School of Humanities, Dr. Dave Ozmun, professor of communications, and Dr. Mary Beth Long, assistant professor of English, contributed to the creation of the class.

Class meetings are planned for twice a month on Monday nights. Due to time constraints, students will likely watch the films outside of class; clips will be shown during class time to aid in discussion, which will be the main focus of the group time. It is being offered pass/fail and at the same credit hour as a practicum class so that students will be better able to accommodate the class in their busy schedules. The films studied will be those considered to have had a significant cultural

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Then & Now: Campus dining expands, creates food options

By SAM CUSHMAN
Signal Writer

It was not until 2001 that Ouachita saw the opening of the Commons, Chick-fil-A and Starbucks. Given the history of Ouachita and how long the college has been around, these places are still pretty new, especially for many faculty and staff members.

"We had a cafeteria — that's all there was," said Dr. Joe Jeffers, dean of the Patterson School of Natural Sciences. "We didn't have a Chick-fil-A and no Starbucks, only Birkett Williams Cafeteria; nor did we have the amount of choice there is today. We could choose to eat what was there or not to eat at all."

Jeffers attended Ouachita from the fall of 1962 to the spring of 1966. He returned in January of 1972 and has been here ever since.

"When I returned in January of '72, we had more but still nothing like we have now," he said. "And over the years the food has progressively gotten better with more variety. Opening up the Commons was an overnight sea of change in terms of what was available. All of a sudden we had pizzas, a new salad bar, a burger grill and, of course, the regular main line. I don't think the international line came until later."

Only recently has the cafeteria been open on Sunday evenings, so students who wanted to eat dinner on Sundays had to go someplace else.

We didn't have ... the amount of choice there is today. We could choose to eat what was there or not to eat at all.

— Dr. Joe Jeffers

"We had a place called Connie's located near 10th and Caddo Streets that we'd regular," said Bill Vining, former Ouachita head basketball coach and athletic director. "But back in those days you didn't go out and eat very much because most of us didn't have cars and there weren't many places you could walk to. The thing about Connie's was that he had the best chicken fried steak that I've ever had up to this day."

Vining graduated from Ouachita in 1951. After serving in Korea and being awarded a Purple Heart he came back to Ouachita and served as the head basketball coach and the assistant football coach. In 1956 he became athletic director in addition to coaching. He eventually retired in 1989 from his coaching position and remained as the athletic director from which he retired in 1996.

"I came from a family where whatever they put on the plate was what you ate," he said. "You didn't have a choice nor the chance to say 'I don't like this.' So what little they had was fine to me with one exception: the slimy okra."

Vining said one of the benefits of being in football or basketball was that you had tables already set up for you and a student waiter at each of those tables.

"They'd have the food already out and you'd pass it around the table family style," he said. "I

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DECORATING FOR CHRISTMAS?

The Signal Online wants pictures of your dorm room or apartment decorations. E-mail them to signal@obu.edu or Twitpic them to @OBUSignal and they may appear on our website, www.obusignal.com.

Photo courtesy of William Brawley.