

Spring dance concert to inspire movement

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — Jenni Bowker tried to stay true to herself as she choreographed, "Where the Wind Goes," to be performed at Western Oregon University's Spring Dance concert.

The annual concert opens Thursday at 7:30 p.m. and runs through Saturday at Rice Auditorium.

This is Bowker's second time choreographing a piece for the show — something most WOU dance students don't get a chance to do. Usually, the show is someone's senior project, so they graduate after the show, said Deborah Jones, dance professor.

Bowker said last year she tried to use her dancers' abilities and styles in her piece.

"I got a little bit lost in staying true to my own dance aesthetic as a whole," she said. "This year, I was able to utilize my dancers while staying true to my own movement and choreographic style."

This attitude has helped her use her dancers' strengths while expanding their dance horizons, Bowker said.

"My dancers have taught me to listen and to also let go of control and trust them with my vision, because they are helping bring the piece to life," she said. "In return, they trust me to help them look their best on stage."



Photo courtesy of DEBORAH JONES
Western Oregon University's 2015 Spring Dance Concert is sure to make a splash with dances from guest choreographer Lauren Edson as well as students and faculty.

Being her second time at the dance concert has helped increase her confidence — helping her know what to expect along the way.

The concert is a culmination of a year's worth of choreography courses, Jones said.

This year marks Jones' final year mentoring dance students for the Spring Dance concert, as she will be retiring from Western in June.

"I've been teaching for 30

years, 23 years (at WOU), and just decided to do something different," Jones said.

Her favorite thing about the concert is seeing the students' work come to life.

"You never know what somebody is going to create," she said. "It all comes from imagination, translates to form and movement. It can be a story; it can be abstract."

Jones helps students bring their ideas to fruition. "I help guide their process

and give them their tools," Jones said. "I see the pride that they have when they perform. It's huge. That's always been my focus. It's very satisfying to watch them succeed."

Naomi Olson was inspired for her piece by the quote: "Nothing haunts us like the things we don't say."

The piece she choreographed, "Left Unsaid," is a modern-based dance, and is the first time Olson has created something to be performed onstage.

Be Inspired

What: Western Oregon University 2015 Spring Dance Concert.

Where: Rice Auditorium, WOU campus.

When: 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday.

Admission: General \$12; seniors \$10; students \$7.

For tickets or more information: 503-838-8463.

"I'm very nervous and excited all at once," she said. "This is an amazing opportunity and I love being a part of it."

Dance is a universal language, Olson said.

"We can all speak with our bodies when words fall short or fail us," she said. "That is also what I love about choreographing; it gives you the freedom to express your thoughts without speaking."

The Spring Dance concert will feature pieces by faculty and students, as well as one by guest choreographer Lauren Edson.

One piece will feature new technology incorporating selfies and texts collected from the audience.

"We're all excited to see how the selfies turn out," Jones said. "The pieces can't really pull together and know what it's going to do until you get in the theater."

MINET leaders say company is stable

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH/INDEPENDENCE — Monmouth-Independence Networks (MINET) is stable, but not growing at a rate that will make it profitable and able to make its debt payments.

That was the news the MINET board of directors heard from Chief Financial Officer Mark Thoenes and General Manager Don Patten at the board's Thursday meeting.

"MINET is between 60 and 65 percent of the size it must be to fund all annual debt service, capital expense requirements and continue to fully fund its operating costs," Patten told the board. "Even if we penetrated 80 percent of this market, we're still going to come up short."

Patten said MINET needs to "think out of the box" and find new revenue streams, including possibly providing citywide WiFi, selling wholesale services or finding more tenant customers.

MINET has been trying everything it can to gain customers — particularly when it comes to data plans, MINET's most profitable service — but now Patten said he needs clear direction from the board of directors to know what its goals for the company are and how long the timeline for those

goals is.

"If we know the rules by which we must play, because it's agreed upon by the board, we will set the plan and timeline and do our gosh darnedest to achieve it," Patten said. "We'll make sure we're reporting (back to the board), especially when we're not (achieving the goals) to make sure we're altering the plan and get back on track."

Board Chairman and Independence City Manager David Clyne said he was not ready to respond to the request for direction, suggesting the revised business plan go first to the finance committee, which was not re-established at Thursday's meeting.

Thoenes said getting directions from the board of directors was not something

a finance committee was needed for.

"We are not, by any stretch of the imagination, suggesting we cannot grow the company at least flat line to our debt, but we need to know, ... we need direction to say where do we put our focus," he said. "Any company that's an invested-in company gets that from their board, and we need it from ours."

Board Vice-Chairman and Monmouth City Manager Scott McClure asked Patten to bring a goal to the board, and then board members could weigh in.

Patten said he would bring back two to four scenarios outlining MINET's future for the board to consider at its May meeting.

In other business:

A new charter for the finance committee had not been completed by Thursday's meeting, so the advisory group was not reinstated at Thursday's meeting. How members of the group were chosen was discussed.

Clyne said each city can look to target who they want on the committee. McClure

suggested advertising for members at-large, because the finance committee should be a generic committee.

"My vision is for each city to have a resident (on the committee)," Clyne noted.

McClure said if that was the case, membership should be equally dispersed between the two cities.

DEADLINES

NEWS DEADLINES

For inclusion in the Wednesday edition of the Itemizer-Observer:

Social news (weddings, engagements, anniversaries, births, milestones) — 5 p.m. on Thursday.

Community events — Noon on Friday for both the Community Notebook and Community Calendar.

Letters to the editor — 10 a.m. on Monday.

Obituaries — 4 p.m. on Monday.

ADVERTISING DEADLINES

Retail display ads — 3 p.m. Friday.

Classified display ads — 11 a.m. on Monday.

Classified line ads — Noon on Monday. Classified ads are updated daily on www.polkio.com.

Public notices — Noon on Friday.

CORRECTIONS

A story headlined "LVCS student help clean park" on page 16A of the April 22 edition of the *Itemizer-Observer* should have stated grant funding for the project also came from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board. The *I-O* regrets the error.

WEBSITE

The *Polk County Itemizer-Observer* website, www.polkio.com, is updated each week by Wednesday afternoon. There, you will find nearly every story that appears in the print version of the newspaper, as well as some items that do not appear in print due. The *Itemizer-Observer* is also on Facebook and Twitter. Watch for breaking news, links to stories, sports scores updates and more.

WEATHER

RECORDED	HIGH	LOW	RAIN
April 28.....	65	43	.02
April 29.....	65	38	.00
April 30.....	70	39	.00
May 1.....	74	45	.00
May 2.....	70	44	.00
May 3.....	75	40	.00
May 4.....	65	42	.00

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Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

TWO LOCATIONS!

Polk County Bounty Market

MONMOUTH

Tuesdays
May - October
10:00am - 3:00pm
at Main Street Park
120 Main St E, Monmouth

Polk County Bounty Market

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at Academy Lawn
182 SW Academy St, Dallas

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Polk County

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Publish: July 1st

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SUMMERFEST
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HOP & HERITAGE FESTIVAL
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