

# Glenn Miller Orchestra to bring big band music to FEC

One of the most popular and sought after bands today, the Glenn Miller Orchestra is considered by many to be one of the greatest bands of all time. The current band began playing together in 1956 and has remained touring ever since. On Friday, March 18, SEAcost and the FEC will open the dance floor so that audience members can truly enjoy the cabaret-style concert the way big band music was intended.

The legendary Glenn Miller was one of the most successful of all dance bandleaders back in the era of Swing during the 1930s and 1940s. Miller's band was unmatched in its string of hits. Miller disbanded the orchestra in 1942 at the height of its popularity to volunteer to serve his country. It was while in the military that he organized and led the famous Glenn Miller Air Force Band. It traveled Europe entertaining servicemen and performing numerous live and radio shows. His most popular orchestrations

include "In the Mood," "Moonlight Serenade," "Chattanooga Choo Choo," "A String of Pearls," and "Pennsylvania 6-5000."

On Dec. 15, 1944, Major Glenn Miller disappeared into the English Channel in a single-engine plane and was never seen again.

The release of the movie *The Glenn Miller Story* starring Jimmy Stewart and June Allyson in 1954 renewed interest and demand for the return of the Glenn Miller Orchestra. In June 6, 1956, under the direction of drummer Ray McKinley, the reformed orchestra performed its first concert and has remained on the road ever since, traveling the globe.

Today, the 18-member ensemble continues to play many of the original Miller arrangements from both the civilian band and Air Force Band

archives. It also plays some more modern selections arranged and performed in the Miller style and sound.

The March 18 concert will take place at 7 p.m. Tickets range in price from \$10

to \$30.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call the FEC at 541-997-1994 or visit [www.eventcenter.org](http://www.eventcenter.org).



# CROW rehearsals begin for spring production of Shrek the Musical, Jr.

In a faraway kingdom, the green ogre, Shrek, finds his swamp invaded by banished fairytale misfits, runaways who've been cast off by Lord Farquaad, a tiny terror with big ambitions. When Shrek sets off with a wise-cracking donkey to confront Farquaad, he's handed a task: if

he rescues feisty Princess Fiona from the Dragon-guarded tower, his swamp will be returned to him.

But, a fairy tale wouldn't be complete without unexpected twists and turns along the way. Part romance and part twisted fairy tale, "Shrek The Musical, Jr.," is

an irreverently fun musical comedy with lyrics by David Lindsay-Abaire, and music by Jeanine Tesori.

This marks CROW's fifth mainstage production at the Florence Events Center.

The show will be performed April 15, 16 and 17, and for invited school audiences

on April 14. Local audiences may recall that last spring, CROW produced a main stage production of "Once Upon A Mattress," which dazzled and delighted local audiences. CROW is a Florence-based nonprofit organization dedicated to giving back to the community by providing quality performing arts experiences to local youth.

Artistic director Melanie Heard is a credentialed teacher, and founder of the program. "We are not your 'typical' children's theatre organization," says Heard. "There is no charge to participate in a CROW mainstage musical, and this differentiates us from 95 percent of all other youth theatre organizations in the nation."

"It's much more than just theatre. It's an opportunity to hone crucial life skills such as teamwork, motivation, dedication and self-esteem," says Heard. "We hope that these things will serve our kids well, no matter what life path they may select."

In addition to providing a very professional work environment for the cast members, CROW utilizes the highest caliber costumes, sets, lighting design, choreography, music, sound, stage makeup and more.

"Just wait till you see this year's fire breathing dragon," says Heard.

