Faith brings in celebration of Women’s History Month

By Cara Latham

Women’s history month kicked off last week with a reception including a performance by the band Faith. Throughout the month, events will include a series of discussions and lectures that examine the role of women in society and commemorate their achievements.

Dr. E. Graham McKinley, professor in the Communication Department, played bass guitar for the band, which performed in the Yvonne Theater in the Fine Arts Building on March 1. Other members of the band included keyboardist Jane Price, singer Judy Benner, who played tambourine, guitarist Lois Hart and singer and guitarist Annie Pantoja.

“We were very excited to play for women’s history month—it was very important for us to celebrate the changes that happened for women as a result of the Women’s Movement,” said McKinley. “It was very meaningful for us.”

Most of us are older and above 50 and when we were young, we were told, ‘You can’t do this’ because we were girls. We were always second-class citizens, and we weren’t given the resources that men had.”

“It’s a great band and Dr. McKinley rocks on the guitar,” said Rebecca Basham, assistant professor in the English Department and chair of the gender studies minor, which sponsored the event. Basham said that important movements in history are remembered throughout the month.

“The suffragist movement, and women’s hard-won right to vote, the Women’s Movement, our reproductive freedom, academic freedom and more choice and equality are among the highlights,” she said.

She also mentioned the struggles that women still face in society today, and the importance of commemorating the achievements.

“There is still sexism in the workplace, schools, athletics, churches and continued lack of equal pay for equal work,” said Basham. “Each right we’ve won has been a struggle that needs to be remembered and protected.”

A three-day lecture series includes “Legally Blonde/Illegal Intent,” a discussion about the popular movie, *Legally Blonde*, presented by Dr. Cindy Lucia, assistant English professor, that will be held on March 28 from 11:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. in room L301E in the Moore Library. At the same time and place, Dr. Ryan Nettley, assistant English professor, will present a lecture, “Queer Time,” on March 29 and Dr. Matthew Goldrie, associate English professor, will present “Sodomy in the Classroom: Men Teaching Feminism” on March 30.

Also, self-defense lessons were sponsored this week by the Women’s Center in the Daly’s Board Room.

Aramark to create labor union

The employees of Aramark, the University’s food services provider, are currently undergoing the process of creating a union.

The employees have been working with the union company, Service Workers United, for the past six weeks, according to Tim Richards, the director of food services.

However, the process to create such a union is not simple.

The company first needed to obtain permission from the University to campaign for a union. After being approved, Service Workers United then began asking workers to participate in a card process, which requires signatures of those in favor of the union to be obtained.

According to Richards, the workers are still in the process of signing the cards.

“The process is ongoing,” he said. “We will just have to wait and see what happens.”

If more than 50 percent of the workers give their signatures, the proposal to create the union will then be presented to the National Labor Relations Board. If they approve the union, the workers will participate in what Richards calls a “sales campaign for the union.”

For a 90-day period the workers will propose their ideas about the union to Aramark, the national food service company that employs them. Following the proposals, the workers will then vote on this issue. If the majority is in favor of the union, the workers will then vote on this issue. If the majority is in favor, the union will be created.

The workers are also receiving support from the Rider University Democrats, said co-president Robert Cutler.

“I believe in the idea of organized labor and ensuring that everyone has a fair say,” he said. “I want to see these people thrive and be successful.”

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