By Elizabeth Locklear

“Civil War Voices” took audiences back in history with true words and songs that moved America.

The musical, which is part of GPAC’s Broadway and More Series, was performed twice on Oct. 11. One performance was at 10 a.m. and a second at 8 p.m. Some 400 people attended the 8 p.m. performance.

Patricia Fields, GPAC executive director, said, “Civil War Voices” was chosen for this year’s series because 2011 marks the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War.

“Civil War Voices” featured stories of people who lived during the Civil War. The musical used actual words from the characters’ personal diaries, letters and other writings.

The music featured new arrangements of songs from the period.

By Samantha Langley

The “self-proclaimed Striking Viking” made a victorious appearance on Oct. 12 in the Hawk’s Nest Recreation Center.

With a professional show, she taught students many things about the game of billiards and put on a trick show to entertain students, faculty and other community members.

“We bring in a lot of different skills, the Hawk’s Nest loves the billiards and the show for that reason,” said Laurence.

The “Striking Viking” is actually Ewa Mataya Laurance, a Swedish world champion pool player.

Throughout her career Laurance has won many extraordinary awards for her pool playing, including being the current international cup trick shot champion, The Women’s Professional Billiards Association World-9 ball champion and winning the U.S. Open Challenge twice. She is also the National 18-ball champion, European Billiards Champion and the Swedish Mixed Double Champion, the Swedish 14 1-Champion and being the sixth woman to be inducted into The International Billiards Hall of Fame. Aside from her many billiards championships Laurance also contributes much to the world of women’s billiards.

She is the three-time Women’s Professional Billiards Association (WPBA) president and has won many awards for sportsmanship and being player of the year.

At UNCP Laurance taught students many tips about pool, including how to keep the stick straight while shooting and the best way to hold a player’s body in relationship to the ball.

She also impressed students by making challenging trick shots, such as making the ball jump over other balls, creating unique shots around different balls, shooting behind the back shots and more.

This is the third time Laurance has appeared at UNCP, and she said that she enjoys coming to the school.

“The people around here are always very friendly, and I enjoy showing young people more about the sport,” she said.

Laurance first began her billiards career in middle school where one of the elders for her was a billiards class.

After playing only a few games she quickly fell in love with the game and kept practicing. Although she originally grew up in Sweden, she moved to the U.S. when she was young and now lives in Myer Beach, S.C., with her husband and many pets.

Although billiards is a sport that is rarely brought to mass media attention, Laurance has made quite a splash being featured in many magazines including People Magazine, The New York Times Magazine, GQ and Playboy.

She has also been featured on many television shows, such as “The Early Show,” “Late Night with David Letterman” and “The Today Show.” She also co-hosts the show “BallBreakers” aired on the Game Show Network.

In her spare time Laurance gives much to the community by competing in charity events, such as playing pool to help The Paralyzed Veterans of America, visiting troops at Fort Bragg and raising money for Duke Children’s Hospital. She is currently on the South Carolina Board of the Make-A-Wish Foundation as well.

Overall the Striking Viking exhibition was a beneficial event that showed many students the vast area of expertise that billiards can expand to.

In order to improve their skills, Laurance suggests that students keep practicing. Her expertise was an inspiration to many students and taught them to work hard at the game.

To learn more about the Striking Viking students may visit her website at http://www.strikingviking.com.

To learn more about the WPBA visit http://www.wpba.com.

To practice your pool skills, the Hawk’s Nest lobby is open from 9 a.m. to midnight Monday through Friday, and 3 p.m. to midnight on Saturday and Sunday.

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Musical brings Civil War stories to the stage

By Elizabeth Locklear

Civil War Voices" began to bring stories from a period of war and peace. The music featured music from the period.

The show featured new and original writings. Personal diaries, letters and other writings were used to tell stories of people who lived during the Civil War.

“Civil War Voices” featured stories of people who lived during the Civil War. The musical used actual words from the characters’ personal diaries, letters and other writings.

The music featured new arrangements of songs from the period.

By Samantha Langley

Laurence was inspired to create a new musical. She decided he could combine other true stories of the war with his uncle’s diary and use music from the period to create a new musical.

Five individuals were highlighted in the musical. Those featured included Harris’ uncle who was an Alabama cotton planter, a Confederate soldier separated from his wife, a Union professor who became a war hero and a former slave who worked for Mrs. Lincoln in the White House.