The Country Music Award winning group Diamond Rio will be performing "A Diamond Rio Christmas" at the Givens Performing Arts Center Dec. 4 at 8 p.m.

Known for their country music hit songs like "Meet in the Middle," "Beautiful Mess," "You Look Like Me," and "Norma Jean Riley," Diamond Rio has released seven studio albums, two greatest hits collections and a 2007 holiday album "A Diamond Rio Christmas: A Star Still Shines." The band has won the Country Music Association's Vocal Group of the Year award four times, earned three platinum albums, and has also won the Academy of Country Music Awards Top Vocal Group of the Year award twice.

Diamond Rio debuted in 1991 with their hit single "Meet in the Middle" and became the first group in country music history to have a debut single reach No. 1. They followed that up with 32 more singles on the Billboard charts. Diamond Rio was formed in 1984 and still has the same six members since they started: Gene Johnson, Jimmy Olander, Brian Prout, Marty Roe, Dan Truman and Dana Williams.

The group recently transitioned from mainstream country music to contemporary Christian music with the release of their first contemporary Christian album, "The Reason," in 2009.

Tickets for the event are on sale and begin at $20 for the general public, $12 for a child or student, $15 for faculty and staff and $5 for UNCP students. The event is also a Military Night Special; those with a Military ID can buy one and get one free.

The award winning play, The Color Purple, will be gracing the GPAC stage on Jan. 27, 2011, at 8 p.m. The Color Purple, The Musical about Love, is based on the classic Pulitzer Prize winning novel by Alice Walker and the film by Steven Spielberg. The original Broadway musical first opened on Dec. 1, 2005.

It was nominated for 11 Tony Awards, even Best Musical. It was also nominated for best Musical during the 2007 Grammy's. It ran on Broadway for two years and it ran a national tour for three years.

The musical is produced by Phoenix Entertainment and written by Stephen Kane and Michael McFadden. It's directed by Gary Griffin with the music and lyrics by Grammy Award winning composers and lyricists Brenda Russell, Allee Willis and Stephen Bray. The choreography is by Donald Byrd. The Broadway musical was produced by Scott Sanders.

The Color Purple, The Musical about Love follows the story of Celie Harris, a woman who struggles throughout her life with trying to find her voice in her small Southern town during the early 1900s. Harris goes through the hardships of being married to an abusive man, who treats her like a slave. He has her do all the household chores in their home, and he even has her raise his children.

During the Broadway show various performers played the role of Harris, however, the most well known was 2004 American Idol winner and North Carolina native Fantasia Barrino.

Ticket prices vary from $40, $35 and $15. Students and children pay only $12 for tickets, which are now on sale at the GPAC Box Office. For more information call the Box Office at 910-521-6361 or visit GPAC online at www.uncp.edu/gpac.