

# News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**July 20, 2011**

## **The Salvation Army of Augusta Kroc Center Announces Grand Opening Celebration Schedule of Special Guests and Performers**

AUGUSTA, GA – The Salvation Army of Augusta Kroc Center announced today their Grand Opening Celebration schedule of special guests and performers. The Kroc Center Grand Opening will take place at the Kroc Center at 1833 Broad St. on Saturday, August 6 from 10am to 9pm. The event will allow everyone to tour the Kroc Center, learn more about its programs, sign up for memberships, and enjoy eleven hours of excellent local and national entertainment. The entire event is free and is open to the public as our gift to the Greater Augusta community.

A full description of each of our special guests and performers and the times they will be making their appearances on August 6 is given after the bulleted list and quote below.

The August 6 Kroc Center Grand Opening will feature:

- An outdoor concert by the nationally known band Cowboy Mouth.
- A spectacular fireworks show to cap off the evening.
- An outdoor concert by top local children's musician Tara Scheyer and the Mud Puppy Band.
- An appearance by the Augusta GreenJackets where guests will not only be able to get signatures and take photos, but will be able to play pitch and catch with the players.
- A performance by The Salvation Army of Augusta Band.
- A celebrity dodgeball game pitting Team Media, co-captained by Austin Rhodes and Helen Blocker-Adams, against Team Government, captained by Commissioner Matt

Aitken. The winning team will earn the right to slide down our 28 foot high, 190 foot long outdoor/indoor water slide.

- An outdoor concert by local jazz great and founder of Candlelight Jazz, Karen Gordon.
- A pickleball demonstration by members of the USA Pickleball Association.
- Olympic Silver Medalist Swimmer and University of Georgia three time NCAA Women's Swimming Champion Kristy Kowel will be available not only for autographs, pictures, and to show off her silver medal, but will also deliver a motivational speech on being your best, teach a water safety class, and will swim in a relay race with local youth swim team members.
- A performance by the choral music ensemble, Creative Impressions.
- A futsal demonstration by a futsal veteran.
- A performance by Harrisburg neighborhood native and local folk music phenomenon Eryn Eubanks & The Family Fold.
- Miss South Carolina USA 2011 and Top 8 Finalist in Miss USA 2011, Courtney Turner, will sign autographs and pose for pictures.
- Harris III, an award-winning, master illusionist who has performed before 1 million people, will perform an hour long magic show.
- Champions Made from Adversity will provide a wheelchair basketball demonstration game and even let spectators ride in a wheelchair and play along with them.

“Our schedule of special guests and performers for the Grand Opening Celebration should give every Augustan a reason to visit the Kroc Center on August 6. Just like the programming at the Kroc Center has something for everyone, so does the lineup of talent that we have scheduled for the Grand Opening Celebration. August 6 will certainly be a historic day as Augustans enjoy all that the Kroc Center has to offer,” says Derek Dugan, Communications Director for The Salvation Army of Augusta.

## **The Salvation Army of Augusta Band**

*Performing in the Worship and Performing Arts Center at 10am*

The early Salvationists, as today, took their Gospel message to the people in their own environments, largely in the streets and markets of the towns. In 1878 Charles Fry and his three sons formed a brass quartet which played during outdoor meetings in [Salisbury](#) and immediately proved to be a success in not only calming the rowdy and sometimes hostile crowds, but helping to promote the Salvationist's message. The Army's founder, [William Booth](#), came to hear of them, and started to use them in his own campaign, recognizing the power of music - even of a secular nature. Indeed, he is said to have remarked, "Why should the Devil have all the good tunes!"

## **The Augusta GreenJackets**

*Playing catch with guests and signing autographs on the lawn just outside the Kroc Center from 10am to 2pm*

After going without a baseball team for 25 years, modern day baseball returned to Augusta in 1988 with the Augusta Pirates. In 1994, the team was renamed the GreenJackets and moved into their newly built home, Lake Olmstead Stadium, in 1995. Before the San Francisco Giants took over the club's affiliation before the 2005 season, the GreenJackets were a part of the Boston Red Sox organization. The Red Sox had previously replaced the Pittsburgh Pirates in Augusta. In October 2005, a new era of professional baseball in Augusta began when Ripken Baseball officially took over the daily operations of the Augusta GreenJackets.

## **Team Media vs. Team Government Celebrity Dodgeball Game**

*Game takes place in the Gymnasium at 11am*

Team Media, led by Captain Austin Rhodes and Co-Captain Helen Blocker-Adams, takes on Team Government, led by Captain Commissioner Matt Aitken in an historic best two out of three series of dodgeball games. Pent up frustrations will be released and good times will be had when these two epic teams meet on the brand new hardwood of the Kroc Center Gymnasium.

## **Inaugural Ride Down the Slide**

*Takes place in the Aquatics Center immediately following the Celebrity Dodgeball Game*

First down the slide, and in full uniform no less, will be Captain Todd Mason, the Kroc Center Administrator. Salvation Army of Augusta Board Co-Chair and District Attorney Ashley Wright will be the second person down the slide. Finally, the winning team members and captains of the Team Media vs. Team Government Celebrity Dodgeball Game will have the privilege to ride down the slide.

## **Karen Gordon**

*Performing jazz on the lawn just outside the Kroc Center*

Karen Gordon founded Garden City Jazz in 2003, while still a member of quietSTORM (smooth jazz band), with the purpose of presenting jazz in non-traditional settings. Since then, Gordon has formed relationships with musicians, educators, festival coordinators, and organizations; all with the goal of supporting jazz in the CSRA. Gordon works with the City of Augusta to present the Candlelight Jazz Concert Series – 18 low-cost concerts (showcasing different jazz bands/styles) in a family-friendly, smoke-free setting at beautiful Riverwalk Augusta. Prior to the collaboration, the event featured a single band.

## **Pickleball Demonstration**

*Demonstration takes place in the Gymnasium at noon*

Pickleball is a racquet sport which combines elements of badminton, tennis, and table tennis. The sport is played on a court with the same dimensions as a doubles badminton court. The net is similar to a tennis net, but is mounted two inches lower. The game is played with a hard paddle and a polymer wiffle ball. Originally invented as a backyard pastime, pickleball is now an organized sport represented by national and international governing bodies. We will have a member of the USA Pickleball Association on hand to demonstrate this fascinating and increasingly popular sport.

## **Kristina Kowal, Olympic Silver Medalist Swimmer**

*Delivering a motivational speech in the Worship and Performing Arts Center at 1pm*

*Signing autographs and displaying her silver medal in the Aquatics Center from 2pm to 4pm and 5pm to 6pm*

*Teaching a water safety lesson in the Aquatics Center at 4pm*

*Swimming in a relay race with local swim team participants in the Aquatics Center immediately after the safety lesson*

Kristina ("Kristy") Ann Kowal (born on October 9, 1978 in Reading, Pennsylvania) won the silver medal in the 200m breaststroke at the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney. She is also a 2 time World Champion (1998) in the 100 Meter breaststroke and on the 400 medley relay. Kristy competed for the United States National Team from 1995-2004.

Kowal helped her college, the University of Georgia (UGA), to three NCAA Women's Swimming and Diving Championships. She was an 8 time NCAA Champion and 9 time US National Champion. Kristy broke 8 American Records and 1 World record during her career. In 2000, she was named NCAA Woman of the Year and she was recipient of the Today's Top VIII Award as a member of the Class of 2001, which honors eight senior student-athletes each year. She graduated from UGA in 2002 with a Bachelor of Science in Education (B.S.Ed). She was a 1996 graduate of Wilson High School, located in West Lawn, PA.

Kowal retired from swimming after being named a captain to the 2004 World Championship Team. She is now an elementary teacher at her alma-mater, Wilson school district, in West Lawn, Pennsylvania.

## **Creative Impressions**

*Singing in the Worship and Performance Center at 1:30pm*

Organized in 1996 to perform for one special occasion, Creative Impressions, has developed into a choral music ensemble of excellence which is making an impact on the lives of those it touches. Creative Impressions instills pride and esthetic appreciation; promotes positive work habits and responsible behavior; educates, empowers and expands cultural awareness. The vision of its participants is raised as the youth advance to seek higher educational goals and other positive life experiences. This after school, non-profit organization of approximately fifty teenagers of diverse backgrounds is led by a local music education professional who is assisted by parents and other professionals and community leaders. Through weekly training sessions, a focus on excellence, a belief in youth development, community support, hard work, and committed leadership, the organization is turning visions of possibilities into exciting realities.

## **Futsal Demonstration**

*Demonstration takes place in the Gymnasium at 2pm*

Futsal is a variation of indoor soccer played between two teams each with five players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. Unlimited substitutes per team are permitted which makes for a high energy game. Unlike some other forms of indoor soccer, the game is played on a hard court surface; walls or boards are not used. Futsal is also played with a smaller ball with less bounce than a regular soccer ball. The rules create an emphasis on improvisation, creativity and technique as well as ball control and passing in small spaces.

## **Eryn Eubanks & The Family Fold**

*Performing in the Worship and Performing Arts Center at 2:30pm*

Eryn Eubanks & The Family Fold of Augusta, Georgia perform bluegrass, gospel, classic country, celtic, folk, old-time, and assorted genres of music. At 23, Eryn sings, composes songs, and plays numerous instruments that include: mandolin, resonator (slide) mandolin, acoustic guitar, resonator guitar, open-back banjo, 12-string guitar, electric guitar, mountain dulcimer, dobro, lap steel guitar, upright bass, electric bass, bouzouki, fiddle, autoharp, and ukulele.

Members of The Family Fold are Eryn's father, Patrick Eubanks, playing various percussion and old-time instruments such as spoons, washboards, and wooden boxes; and Eryn's mother, Ricie Eubanks, singing harmony vocals and playing upright bass, penny whistle, and flute. Jim Jewell and Mike Merritt (guitar and vocals) are regular members of the backing band. Eryn was voted "Augusta's Favorite Female Musician" in 2004, 2005, and 2007; and "Augusta's Favorite Misc. Instrumentalist" in 2007 in an area wide balloting by the Lokal Loudness music organization. Readers of the Augusta Magazine awarded Eryn as "Best Female Vocalist" and "Best Performing Artist" in 2004.

## **Courtney Turner, Miss South Carolina USA 2011**

*Signing autographs in the Party Rooms from 2:30pm to 4:30pm*

Courtney Turner is the reigning Miss South Carolina USA 2011. She attends the University of South Carolina earning a degree in Communications and Business. She has worked for the past 3 years with the Golden Harvest Food Bank, conducts motivational speaking sessions to schools, and does Self-improvement consulting.

Her goal is to be a provisional sponsor for organizations that help stop the sex slavery industry, human trafficking. She has been working with History Starts Now in promoting the cause by creating awareness and raising funds.

Courtney was awarded with the Coin of Excellence from Fort Gordon's military base for outstanding volunteerism and communications. She also received the Leadership award from the Governor of SC.

## **Harris III, Master Illusionist**

*Performing in the Worship and Performing Arts Center at 4:30pm*

Today, at the age of 27, Harris III is a classically trained, award-winning, master illusionist, and an expert in the art of deception. He has performed before 1 million people in more than twelve nations on five continents. Harris' performances not only amaze his audiences, but also awaken them to the lure of deception, the power of the senses, and the secret of living life based on deeper realities. While Harris has earned respect as an artist to many, ultimately, he's an equally respected communicator. Whether telling a story, speaking from his heart, or performing magic, his ultimate goal is to inspire and challenge people, initiating change and transformation.

## **Champions Made From Adversity Wheelchair Basketball Game**

*Game takes place in the Gymnasium at 5pm*

Champions Made From Adversity (CMFA) was founded in Evans, Georgia in August of 2007 by three US military veterans and three non-veterans. CMFA was founded to assist those with physical disabilities in finding sports and leisure activities in this area. The CMFA founders were introduced to adapted sports through US Paralympic Committee's military program. When they returned home they noticed that there were limited services in their local area (i.e. sport opportunities, social activities, etc.) for those who were disabled. CMFA attempted to work with established organizations in area to continue with the sports they were introduced to and found that the only established program was through Walton Foundation which only had a very limited scope. Even the Augusta Veterans Administration Medical Center had no on going out patient recreational programs. It appeared that the local community and the Veterans Administration were not working together to encourage the disabled population here. When CMFA approached local organizations about establishing recreational programs for the disabled they met resistance because of the perceived small population of participants. CMFA decided to strike out on its own and held its first sports clinic in November 2007 which introduced hand cycling to 27 disabled persons to include 18 persons with spinal cord injury or disease.

Currently CMFA runs multiple sports programs for over 100 participants with over 400 volunteers. With 60,000 disabled persons in the CSRA, CMFA is growing fast.

## **Tara Scheyer and the Mud Puppy Band**

*Performing in the Park at approximately 6pm*

Everything changed when Tara and her husband Kevin, a drummer, had a baby. “We were sick of performing at night,” she says, “and tired of smelling like smoke.” So, the couple moved from Nashville’s thriving music scene to Kevin’s hometown of Augusta. Though they had given up music professionally, they wanted to expose their son Felix to good music, not “mind-numbing children’s tunes.”

In 2004, Tara, Kevin and two other musicians formed a band and recorded a children’s album, Hi-Fi Felix, Volume 1. Tara Scheyer and The Mud Puppy Band perform at kid concerts, birthday parties and events. Tara plays the accordion, guitar, mandolin, banjo, strum stick and toy piano, and she makes the children part of the rock star experience. “We encourage parents to let their kids be kids,” she says. “We invite the kids into the ‘mini mosh pit’ to jump, clap, sing, wiggle and shake.” [Source: [www.augusta.skirt.com](http://www.augusta.skirt.com)]

## **Cowboy Mouth**

*Performing in the Park at approximately 7:30pm*

The term 'Cowboy Mouth' has been used in the poetry of Shakespeare and Bob Dylan as well as a play by Patti Smith and Sam Shepard. Usually meaning “One with a loud and raucous voice,” it describes the band well. With over 2500 concerts under their belt and many years of reviews lauding their live show, there is still one quote which best captures their show..... "...on a bad night they'll tear the roof off the joint and on a good night, they'll save your soul," says *Cake Magazine*. A few of Cowboy Mouth’s most popular hits include “Jenny Says,” “Man on the Run,” and “This Much Fun.”

Cowboy Mouth is New Orleans rock n' roll. Annually presenting roughly 150 shows, releasing nearly a dozen records, and featured on TV shows and radio stations everywhere, Cowboy Mouth has been seen and heard by millions of fans worldwide. For more than 15 years, the members of Cowboy Mouth have preached and shouted at the top of their lungs the joys of being alive and the joys of being in and from New Orleans, sharing a slice of Mardi Gras heaven with fans around the world. As frontman Fred LeBlanc has said, "If The Neville Brothers and The Clash had a baby, it would be Cowboy Mouth."

The band's 11 album releases include two records on MCA, one on Atlantic and several on their own Cowboy Mouth Records label. So far, the band has enjoyed domestic sales of over 500,000 units. But the album sales pale in comparison to the number of tickets the band sells to their live events. Cowboy Mouth shows are legendary, and have been witnessed by more than 9 million fans to date.

### **Fireworks by Southeastern Pyrotechnics**

*Can be seen in the Park at approximately 9pm*

A fireworks display by Southeastern Pyrotechnics at the conclusion of Cowboy Mouth's performance will close the day's festivities. All those on the Park and in the vicinity of the Kroc Center will be able to enjoy this final celebratory event on this historic day.

For more information about this event or The Salvation Army of Augusta, contact Anthony Esposito, Public Relations Coordinator, at 706-421-3047.

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### **About the Salvation Army Kroc Center of Augusta**

The Salvation Army Kroc Corps Community Center is a 17-acre, 100,000 sq-ft Arts, Education, Recreation and Worship Campus located in the Harrisburg neighborhood. The main structure of the Corps Community Center will offer over 77,000 square feet of space to include a 400-seat Performing Arts Theater and Worship Hall, a 280-seat community hall, an indoor aquatics center, a senior citizens lounge as well as classrooms for arts, music, education and recreational programming. It was made available through the gift of Joan Kroc, who left \$1.7 billion to The Salvation Army to build and endow "Kroc Centers" across the nation. For more information, go to [www.krocaugusta.org](http://www.krocaugusta.org). You can also follow the Kroc Center on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/krocaugusta>, on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/kroccenteraugusta](http://www.facebook.com/kroccenteraugusta), and on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/RJKROC](http://www.twitter.com/RJKROC).