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Dance reflects new view of the winter

By NAOMI SMOOT
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

CHARLES TOWN — Residents got a unique look at winter this weekend, as the Goose Route Arts Collaborative presented an indoor/outdoor performance at the National Conservation Training Center.

Audience members sat in a circle in a darkened room as they prepared for dancers to enter. In the center a series of blue stones were placed.

Shortly after 3 p.m., dancers Kitty Clark, Eva Olsson, Colleen Tracey, and Raymond Shaw entered the circle as well. They stood swaying and breathing as they entered into their third performance that day of a program entitled "Breath."

As the program continued, each of the four dancers took a turn examining one of the stones placed in the center of the room. Later, each of them took one of the stones and placed them on a ledge in front of a window which looked out at trees, and a series of blue robes that hung outside.

The dancers filed out, and soon could be seen placing the robes over their heads. Audience members followed short-

ly thereafter, and took their post on a pedestrian bridge over a dry stream bed where the dancers now stood, chanting winter related words like "crisp" and "stillness." As they stood on the snow covered grass and swayed, light breezes blew and the leafless trees that surrounded them waved back and forth as well.

The performance was the second which Goose Route has put on at the National Conservation Training Center, said dancer and choreographer, Kitty Clark. In 2007, she said, they put on a performance known as "Remember."

"It was so much fun, we decided to do another," she said.

Members had wanted to return to the venue because of its beauty, but had initially thought about performing in May, or another warmer month, Clark stated.

Then, Clark said, they were struck with a different sort of idea. They thought about how unique it would be to perform in January. They were intrigued by the prospect of creating an indoor/outdoor performance in the midst of winter, she said.

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In winter, she said, people tend to be more introspective, and try to stay indoors. This gave them a chance to enjoy the art of dance outside.

The group also added other ideas along the way, she stat-

ed. Clark said she is intrigued by the concept of community, and suggested a portion of the performance that would incorporate this. As audience members prepared to return indoors, all were told to hold

hands and participate in the dance.

Once they had returned, they danced in the center of the circle of chairs indoors. And then another member's idea came in to play. The performance ended with audience members participating in a chant, something which Clark said the performance's composer, Cam Millar, had been interested in.

The group put on three per-

formances of "Breath" on Saturday, all of which were free for the community. The outdoor portion of several of the performances took on different tones however as the weather turned more overcast throughout the day, Clark said.

— Staff writer Naomi Smoot can be reached at (304) 725-6581, or nsmoot@journal-news.net