Luncheon on the Grass Combines Art Activities, Live Entertainment June 2 at Lions Park

NORMAN – Luncheon on the Grass, Norman’s annual arts picnic in the park, is scheduled from 4 to 6:30 p.m. Sunday, June 2, in Lions Park. Art activities, live entertainment and free snow cones are just a few of this year’s offerings. At 7 p.m., Austin band The Gourds takes center stage to kick off the Summer Breeze series.

The fourth annual picnic is a collaboration between the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art, Firehouse Art Center, Jacobson House Native Art Center, Norman Arts Council, Norman Public Arts Board and Performing Arts Studio.

Lions Park is located at 450 S. Flood Ave., next to the Firehouse Art Center. The event is open to the public with no admission charge.

“The Firehouse Art Center is excited to participate in the fourth annual Luncheon on the Grass event,” said Douglas Elder, executive director of the Firehouse. “This is a fantastic occasion to build upon our established partnership with so many Norman arts organizations.”

Visitors are encouraged to bring picnic blankets, food and drinks. The collaborating organizations will provide hands-on art activities, Native American performances, music and snow cones.
“Norman is home to many great arts institutions,” said Ghislain d’Humières, director of the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art. “Luncheon on the Grass is a great opportunity to represent this collective vision each year. We are excited to see community involvement grow each year during Luncheon on the Grass.”

Artists of all ages also can participate in making *gyotaku*, or Japanese fish prints, with FJJMA staff by applying ink to realistic fish replicas made of rubber. Firehouse faculty will assist children who wish to create their own painting on the Children’s Art Wall in Lions Park.

The Norman Public Arts Board and the Norman Arts Council will be inviting visitors to participate in a temporary, public art recycle installation. The goal is to make a tree from recycled soda bottles that will be lighted and remain in the park through the evening’s concert.

The Jacobson House will provide Native American flute music, storytelling and powwow singers and drummers, as well as a reading by children’s book author and OU student Josh Bartolo. Additionally, the Native art center is planning a live art demonstration.

“The Jacobson House Native Art Center is pleased to be participating in the fourth year of the Luncheon on the Grass,” said Dan Brackett, chair of the Board of Trustees for the Jacobson Foundation. “It is our sincere hope that the entire Norman community takes advantage of this opportunity to enjoy and participate in the outreach activities and programs of our outstanding local art organizations.”

As in past years, DJ Nexus will provide musical entertainment throughout the event.

Luncheon on the Grass will be followed by a complimentary live concert by The Gourds, presented by Summer Breeze. Since 1994, the Austin-based alternative country band has performed nationally and internationally. With a dozen albums recorded, their songs have been included in such TV series as *Friday Night Lights*, *My Name is Earl* and the HBO documentary, *Unknown Soldier: Searching for a Father*. The five-piece also was featured on *Austin City Limits* in 2006.

“The Performing Arts Studio welcomes the opportunity to add to this wonderful community event and partnership with Norman’s premier arts organizations,” said Mark McClellan, Summer Breeze chair. “It truly represents what is so special about our city.”
Erinn Gavaghan, executive director of the Norman Arts Council, said she was glad to see so many organizations sharing missions common to the NAC.

“The Norman Arts Council is very excited to participate in the Luncheon on the Grass series,” she said. “Collaboration between Norman’s amazing arts organizations is at the heart of the NAC’s mission, and this event is an excellent example of the great work we all do.”

The Firehouse’s website is www.normanfirehouse.com; the Jacobson House’s website is www.jacobsonhouse.com; the Norman Arts Council’s website is www.normanarts.org; the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art’s website is www.ou.edu/fjjma; and the Performing Arts Studio’s website is www.pasnorman.org. Information about the Norman Public Arts Board can be found on the Norman Arts Council's website.

Information and accommodations on the basis of disability are available by calling (405) 325-4938.

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**PHOTO CUTLINE**

Norman families paint on the Children’s Art Wall in Lions Park at last year’s Luncheon on the Grass. The annual arts picnic is scheduled for Sunday, June 2, and includes a free concert by Austin alternative country band The Gourds.