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**“THE AFGHAN STAR” – a takeoff on American Idol
to be shown free
FRIDAY, FEB 25, 2011 at 7p.m.
AT THE MINERAL POINT OPERA HOUSE**

A free showing of the moving and sometimes humorous film, the “Afghan Star” set in Kabul, Afghanistan will be shown Friday, February 25, at 7 p.m. at the Mineral Point Opera House. Everyone is welcome.

Winner of a Sundance Film award, the film is a documentary which tells the story of the wildly popular American Idol-style TV show “The Afghan Star.” The movie follows four young finalists – two men and two women – who hazard everything to become the nation’s favorite performers. What Americans consider frivolous entertainment is downright revolutionary – and more human – in this troubled part of the world.

After 30 years of war and Taliban rule, “pop culture” is returning to Afghanistan but not without its price. Two thousand people auditioned for the show, including three extremely brave women.

Although it often seems that Americans and Afghans have little in common, this movie proves otherwise, although when the “Afghan Star” viewers vote for their favorite contestants on their cell phones, for many of them this is their first encounter with a democratic process

This event is part of the Uplands All-Community Read project. Moderating a discussion following the film will be Sanad Shah, a Pashto Language instructor at UW-Madison.

The free showing of the film is sponsored by Grassroots Citizens of Wisconsin and the Center for South Asia at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a designated National Resource Center funded by the US Department of Education Title VI, and member institute of the Division of International Studies.

Seven area libraries, the Dodgeville Kiwanis Club, Grassroots Citizens of Wisconsin and Folklore Village are sponsoring the All-Community Read project. Greater Iowa County area residents of all ages are reading author Greg Mortenson’s Stones into Schools, his story of building over 170 schools in remote areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Area schools are also participating.

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