



HOVET, PAGE 6

Women's basketball coach content at UWRF

STYX, PAGE 5

Columnist writes rebuttal to letter to the editor

HOLIDAYS, PAGE 10

Holiday customs bring diversity



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN RIVER FALLS STUDENT VOICE

December 14, 2007

www.uwrfvoice.com

Volume 94, Issue 12

Health bill provides additional protection for students

Jenna Nelson

jenna.nelson-1@uwrf.edu

A recent health bill signed by Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle will prevent students from having to make a choice between their health and their education.

Prior to the legislation, college students were unable to take a leave of absence from their studies due to an illness, or they could possibly lose their insurance coverage. With the potential of becoming uninsured, students were faced with a dilemma: to pursue a better state of health, or to maintain a full credit load to meet the "full-time student" requirement to stay insured. In some

instances, students are unable to return to school because their money is used to pay off medical expenses, and there is little money left to pay tuition.

Now that the law has been approved, students will be given the option of taking a leave of absence from school for up to one year because of an illness. Health insurance providers will not be able to drop the student from their health coverage. The bill provides a year for students to regain their health and gives students a year to search for a different insurance provider if necessary.

According to the Wisconsin Radio Network Web site, the need for a bill regarding full time students and insurance became relevant by a UW-

Marinette student, Zach Grun. Grun had two surgeries and did not feel ready to manage classes until a later time. He was however, required to sustain his full time student status or run the risk of losing his health insurance. Lawmakers were also motivated by New Hampshire's Michelle's Law, which came into affect from the dilemma of Michelle Morse. Morse passed away from colon cancer in 2005, but also was required to take on a full course load while she faced treatment, just so she didn't lose her health insurance.

According to Alice Reilly-Myklebust, Director of Student Health Services and Counseling Services, the bill will prove to be beneficial for insured students.

"This is often an issue for students and so we are pleased about the bill and the support and protection it provides for college students. Of course, it doesn't address the issue of uninsured or underinsured students," Myklebust said.

Although the legislation is relevant to UW-River Falls students who have health insurance, uninsured or underinsured students, could face the aforementioned choice between education and their health. Lori Otto, a UWRF Student Health Nurse, says students with a lack of insurance are common in River Falls.

"Unfortunately, many of our students do not

See Health bill, page 3

Harmony brought to UWRF



Kenny Yoo/Student Voice

The conductor of the UWRF Barbershop Chorus, Scott Perau, directs his chorus during a concert Dec. 12. It took place in the Abbott Concert Hall in the Kleinpell Fine Arts building. The concert featured several types of four-part a cappella harmony. Also featured were two local a cappella quartets: After Midnight and This N' That. After Midnight has been a popular a cappella group, while This N' That was recently put together by women from UWRF.

Preparation underway for accreditation process

Josh Dahlke

joshua.dahlke@uwrf.edu

A team of seven people from the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association (HLC/NCA) will visit UW-River Falls this spring to determine if the University is meeting the criteria to be re-accredited.

UWRF received its ten-year re-accreditation in 1998, so the University is preparing for the coming year's review process.

"UW-River Falls has been continually accredited for many years, likely back into the 1930s, when such public assurance processes were being established," Chancellor Don Betz said.

Accreditation is a central component to the functionality of a respected university and has a significant impact on students.

"Although accreditation is a voluntary process, it is required for an institution to be qualified to participate in federal student financial aid programs," according to the UWRF Institutional Self-Study Web site. "Accreditation also provides an indication of institutional quality that allows students to transfer and have their credits accepted by other universities and graduate programs."

The HLC/NCA is an organization dedicated to keeping universities in the United States in check, making sure they are meeting specific standards to qualify them as an accredited institution. The Commission is composed of "more than a

thousand carefully trained educators, from all types of colleges and universities..." according to the HLC/NCA overview pamphlet.

Seven of these people will come to UWRF in April.

"What they do is make sure you're providing quality educational experiences for your students," Gorden Hedahl, professor of theatre and coordinator of the Institutional Self-Study, said.

Hedahl and over 50 other people have been working on the Institutional Self-Study since the summer of 2005. The final product of their combined efforts will be a 200-page report, summarizing how the University meets the criteria laid out by the HLC/NCA to be an accredited institution.

The Commission has specific criteria that universities must meet: mission and integrity, preparing for the future, student learning, and effective teaching, acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge and engagement and service. There are also sub-standards outlined under each of the five aforementioned criteria.

"At UWRF, many committees and task forces have been working on this document," Betz said.

Hedahl is working on the final draft of the Institutional Self-Study report, which will cite specific examples of how UWRF complies with the criteria.

"It's really to tell what you've done for the last ten years and

See Accreditation, page 3

Senioritis causes distractions, challenges for UWRF students

Stephanie Daniels

stephanie.daniels@uwrf.edu

No matter the form it takes, senioritis can make getting through the last year of college a challenge.

Tim Pearson, a biology major, will graduate from UW-River Falls in May 2008. In the meantime, Pearson struggles against a lack of motivation as he tries to complete his coursework.

"I'm looking forward to graduation a little too much," Pearson said.

Conservation major Nick Myers is also in a position to graduate next May. Myers said he frequently deals with "a feeling of wanting to get out of here as soon as possible."

His work may have suffered because of his restlessness, Myers said.

Broadfield Social Studies Professor Kurt Leichtle encounters students experiencing senioritis each semester.

"Basically, the last semester, it's just a let down," Leichtle said. "They will often get behind, and they will be frustrated."

After turning in a few assignments that get low marks, students usually realize they need to work harder to bring up their grade and change their study habits accordingly, Leichtle said.

A lot of the seniors Leichtle teaches student teach in area schools. These students tend to focus their attention on successfully getting through their first teaching experience, which

makes them less likely to succumb to the lack of motivation associated with senioritis, Leichtle said.

Leichtle said that he realizes how hard it can be for the rest of his students to stay motivated through their last semester, and he sympathizes with these students -- to a point.

"Take a deep breath. Suck it up. Do the work," Leichtle said. "You're going to be out of here soon."

Students seeking counseling for senioritis typically come in with some symptoms associated with depression or anxiety.

"They might have difficulty sleeping or concentrating," Gretchen Link, UWRF's lead personal counselor, said. "It might affect their appetite or their energy level."

Most significantly, seniors seeking counseling frequently lack confidence in their abilities, Link said.

Students Link sees who lack confidence tend to have trouble with decision-making and may worry about their ability to succeed after they graduate. Grades may be negatively impacted if their indecisiveness affects their test-taking abilities, Link said.

"I think part of the goal in talking with students with senioritis is to reassure them that the feelings, the thoughts, the issues are normal," Link said.

See Senioritis, page 3

Potential statewide smoking ban draws mixed reactions

Amy Bohrer

amy.bohrer@uwrf.edu

Imagine it is a Friday night, you enter the local bar downtown and you notice something different: no one is smoking. This situation could soon become a reality in River Falls. There is a bill in the Wisconsin legislature that could put in effect, a statewide smoking ban much like the one Minnesota introduced in October.

Senate President Fred Risser introduced the bill in April, but the bill has stalled in the Senate, according to the Wisconsin State Journal.

Gov. Doyle has been urging the legislature to pass the smoking ban.

"Our neighboring states are becoming smoke free and Legislators need to act now to make public places smoke free," Doyle said in a press release issued by the Governor's office.

The Tavern League of Wisconsin is against the ban because it will hurt business for

bars and restaurants in the state and the league will "fight a statewide smoking ban."

On their Web site, they have listed a petition and brochures against a statewide smoking ban.

"A temporary negative impact on restaurant sales was found in cases where 100 percent smoking bans (excluding the bar area) were in effect at the county level. The estimated declines in annual sales ranged from roughly 49 to 55 percent at restaurants where such bans were enacted two to three years prior to the survey," according to the Tavern League of Wisconsin Web site.

On the other side of the debate, an organization called Smoke Free Wisconsin has been working to help pass the smoking ban.

"Secondhand smoke is the third leading cause of preventable death in the U. S. Every year secondhand smoke kills 53,000 nonsmoking Americans."

They would like to prevent these deaths by enforcing a

smoking ban.

In River Falls there is currently a smoking ordinance. It was enacted in 2003, and it prohibits smoking in indoor areas of restaurants. Establishments that have a restaurant license and sales that are more than 50 percent alcohol can have smoking in its establishment.

Opinions in River Falls are mixed about having a statewide smoking ban. Lu Ann Hecht, the deputy clerk, does not know how a smoking ban would affect River Falls. "Businesses near the border of Minnesota are probably enjoying better sales because of the Minnesota smoking ban," Hecht said.

Hecht also recalls there not being a lot of controversy when the smoking ordinance was passed in River Falls a few years earlier.

A UWRF student and a server at Bo's 'N Mine Bar in River Falls supports the smoking ban. "I think a ban is good; I hate

See Smoking ban, page 3

VOICE SHORTS

Commencement ceremony announced

UW-River Falls will hold its fall commencement 2 p.m. Dec. 15 in the Robert P. Knowles Physical Education and Recreation Center, and for the first time in the University’s history the ceremony will be streamed live via the Internet. Around 291 bachelor’s and master’s degree recipients are expected to participate in the commencement ceremonies. A commencement concert by the River Falls Brass begins at 1:30 p.m. Commencement speakers include Wisconsin Secretary of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Rodney Nilsestuen and James Madsen the 2007 UWRF Distinguished Teacher. You can view the event live online at <http://www.uwrf.edu/commencement/>.

River Falls man killed in two-car crash

A two-vehicle crash in Pierce County Sunday afternoon resulted in the death of a 46-year-old River Falls man, according to the *River Falls Journal*. Gerold Neisius was killed after failing to stop at a stop sign at highways 29 and 63 in the town of Martell, according to the county sheriff’s department. Neisius, heading east in a pickup truck, was broadsided at the intersection by a southbound semi tractor on Hwy. 63 loaded with cattle and driven by Jeffrey Hurtgen, 43, Clear Lake. Chief Deputy Neil Gulbranson said there were indications that Neisius tried to stop before the crash but was unable to do so. Hurtgen received no apparent injuries. Neisius was pronounced dead at the scene. The accident is still under investigation.

Hudson Bowling Center robbed for cash

The Hudson Bowling Center in Plaza 94 was robbed at gunpoint around 2 a.m. Dec. 7., according to the *Hudson Star Observer*. The bowling alley was closed when two men wearing masks, one armed with a gun, entered the bowling alley through an unlocked door, Hudson Police Chief Eric Atkinson said. The employee inside was held at gunpoint and forced to turn over an undisclosed amount of cash.

Preparation urged for new file system

People are reminded to clean up network file space in preparation for the University’s move to FalconFile. Moving during J-term will be file and folders in the S:/Homes, P:/Courses, and T:/Oasis (student organization) file areas. Moving spring semester will be H:/Home and G:/Dept. For details on how to get ready for the big move, and to view a FalconFile video for a sneak peek, visit www.uwrf.edu/moving.

Star Prairie man charged in baby’s death

A Star Prairie man has been charged with homicide in connection with the death of a 3-month-old child last Sunday, according to the *Hudson Star Observer*. Joshua Alan Schaak made an initial appearance in St. Croix County Circuit Court Thursday afternoon on a single felony count of second-degree reckless homicide. He has been held on \$200,000 cash bail since his arrest Tuesday. The criminal complaint said St. Croix County investigators were alerted to a possible child abuse situation by an official at Children’s Hospital in St. Paul Dec. 2. A New Richmond ambulance was sent to Schaak’s Star Prairie address at 4:40 p.m. for a baby girl who had stopped breathing. The infant was taken off of life support and died at 2:30 a.m. Dec. 4, at Children’s Hospital, as a result of injuries. Ramsey County Medical Examiner Dr. Michael McGee said an autopsy revealed scattered soft tissue bruises to the face and neck and evidence of closed head trauma, including hemorrhages. She also had multiple healing rib fractures, the complaint said. Dr. McGee ruled the cause of death as child abuse and the manner of death homicide. Court records said that Schaak was the sole provider for the baby, and she was in his care the entire day Dec. 2. The mother of the child had dropped the child off at Schaak’s residence some three weeks earlier after finding out a DNA test proved he was the father.

Teen ships music to soldiers overseas

A Hudson teen has stepped up the pace at which she ships hundreds of country music CDs to soldiers overseas, according to the *Hudson Star Observer*. Beth Robbins, 19, has been mailing the CDs, T-shirts, beverage can covers and autographed posters, as well as snacks and playing cards to soldiers in Iraq, Afghanistan and Japan. Musicians, some quite prominent, have sent her 1,300 CDs alone, some of which still are setting in trunks around the house waiting for Robbins, a college student living at home, to pack and send them on their way. She said that she will keep up the pipeline of donations, likely until the troops come home. Robbins said she has several units that have “adopted” her. She shares letters with one unit of 10 soldiers, and they take those on missions so they have something from home to share. One unit has recently made a request for her to send cake mix, because they are going to have a bake sale to raise money for the Iraqi kids. One of the overseas soldiers with whom Robbins corresponds is Tom O’Brien, who is from the Ellsworth and River Falls area. Donating to the project are national recording artists such as Neal McCoy, Ray Scott, Blue County, Rockie Lynne and Charlie Daniels.

Senate's last meeting of semester ends with heated debate

Lee Ann Bjerstedt
lee.bjerstedt@uwrf.edu

Strong positions concerning several motions on the table led to extensive debate Tuesday night, making Student Senate’s last meeting of the semester a lengthy one. The debate began during the discussion of a motion that, if passed, would appoint Thomas Friant, Matthew Dale and Jenifer Biss as at-large senators, to fill three positions left vacant by those graduating or not able to continue into the next semester. College of Business and Economics Representative Josh Breyer first expressed concern over the presence of alcohol at an executive board meeting during which the appointments were discussed, citing it as a reason to strike the motion from the agenda. During the discussion that ensued, amendments were passed in response to Breyer’s concern and later, it was pointed out that candidate Biss hadn’t submitted a résumé. The issue then turned to whether or not that should affect her candidacy. Breyer later rescinded his motion to strike the appointment motion from the agenda. After more discussion the amended motion appointing Friant and Biss was passed, although not unanimously. The next motion on the agenda, if passed, moved to appoint Athletic Advisory Committee Chair Krista Hasselquist as Facilities and Fees Board chair, as well as to appoint newly elected at-large senator Jenifer Biss as Student Affairs and Academic Services director. A motion was moved and passed to divide it into two motions, on which Senate would vote separately. A unanimous voice vote passed appointing Hasselquist to replace Trisha Fredricksen as Facilities and Fees Board chair beginning Dec. 21, while the debate as to whether or not Biss’ failure to present a résumé should be taken into consideration once more. It was also addressed that Biss is now studying abroad, which several senators pointed out may affect her ability to take over such a demanding position so suddenly. During the discussion, President Derek Brandt defended the

appointment, explaining the reasoning behind it. “She’s been in Senate in the past and did an excellent job,” Brandt said. “We’ve been in contact ... she knows what’s going on and can handle it.” Some still remained unconvinced, which led the motion to fail in a hand vote. Later in the meeting, a new motion was proposed. After discussion and a ten-minute recess for the executive committee, the motion was passed, appointing Biss as Student Affairs and Academic Services director, pending review by the executive board second semester, with résumés from all three candidates present. Another motion, although introductory only, sparked heavy debate among senators. It was proposed that bylaws be suspended to allow the motion, which moved to allocate money to fund a voter registration drive next semester, to be voted on immediately, despite the fact that it hadn’t been on the agenda for two weeks and did not receive approval from the Finance Committee. Some supported the motion, citing time constraints as extenuating circumstances. Others expressed concern over the idea of suspending the bylaws for any reason. The motion to temporarily suspend the bylaws was called to a vote twice during the meeting but ultimately failed, both times failing to secure the 2/3 majority required. In less controversial Senate news, motions were unanimously passed to fund an executive retreat, allocate money to attend the UW System Reps meetings and to urge the recreation committee to consider once again allowing kneepads during intramural broomball games. Despite the turbulence of their final meeting, Brandt said that overall, the entire semester was a successful one. “I think it went really well,” Brandt said. “We rolled a lot of positions, but I feel very comfortable with all those who filled them ... we look forward to the bonding of old and new [members].” Senate’s first meeting of the new semester will take place 7 p.m. Jan. 29 in the Willow River Room of the University Center.

Workshop kicks off sustainable agriculture project

Addie Carlson
addie.carlson@uwrf.edu

Sustainable Agriculture 101, a workshop taking place in January, will give faculty members at UW-River Falls an opportunity to learn about sustainable agriculture and how to incorporate it into course content. UWRF was awarded a grant for a project in sustainable agriculture, and the workshop serves as the start of the project. “It’s the kick-off event for the grant,” Outreach Coordinator Juliet Tomkins said. The workshop, as well as the sustainable agriculture project, is done in connection with Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) and Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES). The main purpose of Sustainable Agriculture 101 is primarily to provide training for faculty in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES) on current trends and production techniques in sustainable agriculture, Michael Crotser, project director, said. On the agenda for the first day is a keynote speaker, Jerry DeWitt, an executive director for the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture. He will be speaking on “Sustainable Agriculture -- Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow.” Deborah Allan, from the University of Minnesota, will speak on healthy soil characteristics. She will specifically be discussing management practices to help keep long-term soil health, and she will give an overview on how the current practices effect soil quality and sustainability. Jerry Nolte, who retired from UWRF, will give a

slideshow on projects in Paraguay, Ethiopia and Nicaragua that he was involved in. At the end of the first day, Gregg Hadley will speak on the “Economic Analysis of Grazing and Conventional Dairy and Beef Production.” His presentation will compare the economic advantages and disadvantages of dairy and beef operations with the use of conventional production systems. The second day of the workshop includes “Rotational Grazing in Beef and Dairy Operations” by Dennis Cosgrove of the plant and earth science department at UWRF and “Alternative Structures for Raising Hogs” by Gary Onan of the animal and food science department. There will also be a presentation on “Comparison of Long Term Agronomic Rotation

Systems” by Bill Stangel, who is an assistant superintendent at Arlington Agricultural Research Station. Jed Colquhoun, an assistant professor at UW-Madison will give a presentation on “Sustainable Vegetable Crop Production & Alternative Weed Control in Vegetables.” The workshop is limited to about 40 people, and first priority is given to faculty members and county ag extension agents. If students would like to attend, they can contact Michael Crotser. Students should not be discounted, he said. “We welcome anyone coming,” Tomkins said. For more information on the workshop, or to register by Jan. 15, contact Juliet Tomkins at juliet.tomkins@uwrf.edu. The workshop will take place Jan. 22-23.

Temperature changes create challenges for facilities management

Stephanie Daniels
stephanie.daniels@uwrf.edu

Facilities management faces unpredictable temperature swings and building design issues as they work to keep buildings feeling comfortable for students and staff. “The temperature change-sudden change-makes me sick,” freshman Yissell Asencio said. Asencio said she often deals with a stuffy nose and ear infections when there is an abrupt change in weather conditions. Likewise, sudden temperature changes can cause problems for the equipment controlling temperatures in campus buildings. When cooling systems run too late into fall, they may be damaged if a cold front moves in. The coils inside the big boxes known as chillers contract in cold temperatures, putting them at a high risk of breaking, Michael Stifter, director of facilities management, said. Facilities management also faces the challenge of keeping buildings consistently heated this time of year. “It’s actually a pretty automated process,” Stifter said. Normally, sensors placed around campus buildings report back to a centralized location where staff in facilities management can make sure temperatures stay somewhere around 68 degrees, the minimum temperature the state recommends public institutions to maintain in their buildings. Size, design of mechanical systems, function and layout factors that Stifter describes as “building nuances” can result in areas that are significantly cooler or warmer than the rest of the building, and sensors don’t always pick up on this, Stifter said. Matthew Vonk teaches classes in the physics department. Vonk spends most of his time on campus in Centennial Science Hall. “I’m usually comfortable,” Vonk said.

Some of his students, though, complain that one of the classrooms he teaches in is always too cold. Vonk said he gets tired of listening to complaints about the room’s temperature. “I would say, if you’re frequently cold, either write a letter to facilities management or wear a jacket or a sweater,” Vonk said. Facilities management staff look for such temperature problems, but they may not notice all of the areas affected, Stifter said. This makes it important for students and faculty members to take Vonk’s advice and alert facilities management if they discover a hot or cold pocket of air. North Hall is another concern for facilities management, though its problems are not brought on by the change of seasons. Robert Coffman, who teaches business calculus, trigonometry, statistics and college algebra, holds some of his classes in North Hall, which is also the site of his office. Coffman said that most of the year North Hall feels comfortable. However, there are a few weeks in the end of spring semester and the beginning of fall semester when the building can feel unbearably hot and humid, Coffman said. “I’d say it’s probably compromised the ability to teach at times, and it’s probably compromised the ability to learn,” Coffman said. “But keep in mind, everybody’s assessment of this is different.” Fans and opened windows help him and his students get through these warm fronts, Coffman said. Facilities management is looking into more effective ways to cool North Hall, but it’s a difficult task because of the building’s age. Cooling systems work best when they are incorporated into the building’s design during the construction process, Stifter said. North Hall was built before air conditioning technology existed. “There’s not a particular plan for North Hall,” Stifter said. “To do it well would require a complete renovation.”

See **Temperature**, page 8

RIVER FALLS POLICE/PUBLIC SAFETY

Editor's note: Information for this section is taken from River Falls Police and UW-River Falls Public Safety incident reports.

Nick Sortedahl
nicholas.sortedahl@uwrf.edu

Nov. 9
- Kurt W. Donelson, 45, was accused with misuse of a campus computer. Donelson, a UW-River Falls custodian, was accused of viewing pornographic material on a computer in the Agriculture Engineering Computer Lab. Police are still investigating the incident at this time.

Dec. 1
- Timothy John Richert, 19, was cited \$172 for underage consumption at 428 S. Main St.
- Jeffrey Robert Stone, 22, was cited \$109 for public urination at 106 N. Main St.

Dec. 2
- Jeffrey Robert Stone, 22, was cited \$172 for shoplifting. Stone was cited for leaving

the Holiday convenience store, at 302 S. Main St., with a canister of Pringles potato chips, valued at \$1.69.

Dec. 6
- Mary C. Johnson, 18, was cited \$249 for underage consumption in May Hall.

Dec. 7
- Thomas Daniel Justesen, 19, was cited \$249 for underage consumption in Crabtree Hall.
- Steven Jeffery Leclerc, 18, was cited \$249 for underage consumption in Crabtree Hall.
- Britteny Louise Kaasa, 18, was cited \$249 for underage consumption in Crabtree Hall.
- Cassandra Marie Wanna, 18, was cited \$249 for underage consumption in Hathorn Hall.
- Janet Marie Reisdorfer, 18, was cited \$249 for underage consumption in Hathorn

Hall.
- Amanda Jean Schmidt, 18, was cited \$249 for underage consumption in Hathorn Hall.

Dec. 7
- Public Safety officials confiscated a 24-inch sword from the room of Parker Hall resident Catherine Wilson. According to the Public Safety report, Wilson had threatened a roommate earlier in the semester, which led to the call to Public Safety regarding the weapon in Wilson’s room.

Parking
The parking department is requesting your assistance in vacating Ramer Field parking by 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 14. W permit holders will be allowed to park in the Q metered lot, QVP metered lot, Y lot or Q lot from 4:30 pm Friday, Dec. 14 to 6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 16. Vehicles may return to W lot anytime after 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 15.

Briefs compiled by Marta Olson

Check out the *Student Voice* online at www.uwrfvoice.com.

Lost and found:

A pair of prescription glasses with brown frames was found in the women's restroom on third floor of North Hall over two months ago and have yet to be claimed. If you believe they may be yours, come to the Journalism Department at 310 North Hall to claim them.

UWRF alum recognized for outstanding service

Derrick Knutson
derrick.knutson@uwrf.edu

For Mary Ella Jerome, UW-River Falls has been a place of relationships, connections, education and inspiration. Jerome was recently named the 2007-2008 recipient of the UWRF Outstanding Service Award. This award “recognizes the accomplishments of individuals and organizations outside of the University community that have made exemplary contributions to the University of Wisconsin-River Falls through their support of our goals and their volunteer efforts on our behalf,” according to the University Web site. Jerome was chosen for this award because she has provided UWRF with a number of scholarships, and she provided financial aid to restore some of the music department’s pianos. “I’m very honored that the University is recognizing me for this,” Jerome said. Jerome’s contributions have made a positive impact on the UWRF music department. “She’s been a tremendous help; she understands the history of the department, and she also understands the future needs of the department,” David Milne, the current chair of the UWRF music department said. “I think she bases a lot of the generous gifts to the music department on her wonderful, positive experiences in music here.” Jerome’s generous gifts go beyond the UWRF music department. She has instituted music scholarships, one named after her and two named for her twin aunts, Lila Estenson Byng and Lola Estenson Yde. She has also created an agricultural scholarship named after her late father, Wallace Henry Jerome and an education scholarship named after her late mother, Marion Estenson Jerome, according to a 2006 Falcon Features article by Brenda K. Bredhal entitled “Melodies in the Key of Life.”

Importance of Family

Jerome’s family is an integral part of her life. The business that her father started, Jerome Foods, now known as the Jennie-O Turkey Store after a merger with Hormel Foods, has enabled Jerome to give back to UWRF. “I spent approximately 17 years developing supervisors within the company,” Jerome said. Henry Wallace Jerome was a pioneer in the agricultural industry and in 1975, he received the Distinguished Agriculturalist Award from UWRF, according to the Falcon Features article. Jerome decided to honor him by naming her agriculture scholarship after him. Jerome also honored her mother by creating the Marion Estenson Jerome Education Scholarship. Jerome’s mother was a proponent of education all of her life, and she taught at New Richmond High School and Birchwood School, according to the Falcon Features article. Marion also took part in the family business by serving on the Jerome Foods Board of Directors, according to the article. Jerome honored her aunt, Lola Estenson Yde, by dedicating the Lola Estenson Yde Instrumental Music Scholarship to her. She also honored her other aunt, Lila, by naming the Lila Estneson Byng Keyboard Scholarship after her.

Education and Mentors

Jerome is a 1974 graduate of UWRF with a Bachelor of Science



Submitted photo

Mary Ella Jerome was recently named the recipient of the UWRF Outstanding Service Award. Jerome was presented the award for her generosity to UWRF with scholarships and financial aid to revive the music department’s pianos.

degree in music education, with an emphasis in piano/vocal music, according to a public affairs news release. After receiving her bachelor’s at UWRF, Jerome went on to teach grades 7-12 at Blue Earth High School (Minn.). Then she received her MBA from UW-Madison, according to the news release. Jerome is quick to acknowledge the influential professors that shaped her as a musician and as a person at UWRF. “I had excellent River Falls instructors,” Jerome said. Mike Drost, a former UWRF music instructor and piano mechanic; Lillian Tan, a former UWRF music history and piano pedagogy teacher; Elliot Wold, the former UWRF concert choir director and Conrad DeJong, another former UWRF music are amongst those that Jerome acknowledges as influential professors that had an impact upon her. “I give a great deal of credit to Lillian Tan,” Jerome said. Tan was instrumental in the process of restoring the music department’s pianos. “She was my liaison and she was so helpful to me in getting this whole process started and in keeping it going,” Jerome said. Drost has also been a great help in the restoration of the pianos. Drost’s company, Three Rivers Piano Service, restored the pianos, Jerome said. Wold was a mentor who provided Jerome with invaluable hands-on experience. Jerome accompanied him in recitals during her tenure at UWRF.

“I learned from his classes, listening to him and I learned so much by just sitting on that piano bench next to him,” Jerome said. DeJong exposed Jerome to music that she had no idea even existed. “He was the person that opened my eyes and ears to twentieth century music,” Jerome said.

Jerome’s scholarships advance education

This year’s recipient of the Mary Ella Jerome Vocal/Choral Music scholarship, junior Stephanie Webster, is grateful for the opportunity it has provided her. “It’s a big deal to me,” Webster said. “I’m working hard and I’m glad people recognize that.” Webster is majoring in vocal music education. She plans to follow a similar path as Jerome. “I plan on teaching for a couple of years [after receiving a degree from UWRF], then I might go to grad school to study vocal performance or choral conducting,” Webster said. Jerome’s scholarships have provided students like Stephanie a means to pursue their interests. Jerome is an advocate of using the gifts that people possess. “God gives everyone gifts and we need to use them,” Jerome said. “Believe in yourself.”

Health bill: Legislation will be beneficial for insured students

from page 1

have insurance in which case if they have a medical expense they often will have to use their tuition money to pay the charges,” Otto said. “The bill that was passed does nothing to help these students. Health insurance is costly, and those without the means to pay for a plan with good coverage and low deductible are often faced with the same dilemma as those without insurance at all.” Otto has not experienced an instance where a student has been seriously ill and had to drop out. However, she said there have been situations where she felt a student would have benefited more from taking a semester off to take care of their health. With the threat of losing health insurance, the students chose to finish the semester. “My guess is that not only their GPA suffered but also their recovery would have taken longer because of the stress,” Otto said. UWRF students have caught wind of the passed legislation and feel that it is favorable for students. “I think that’s awesome,” UWRF senior, Jason Chorba said. “It’s about time. Students shouldn’t be punished for a serious illness. Students don’t have a lot of money and doctors are expensive. Since we are a disadvantaged demographic, there should be statutes and legislation that protects us.” Wisconsin has taken a step towards protecting its students by encouraging them to not give up on their education, but to also take care of their health if necessary. For the uninsured and underinsured, Otto has speculated the possibility of more affordable health coverage becoming available in the future.

Accreditation: University hopes to meet criteria for review process

from page 1

what you’re going to do for the next five,” Hedahl said. The report will go out at the end of January, but the third “We’ll have a real good idea after the campus visit how things are going.” Gorden Hedahl, Coordinator for Institutional Self-Study draft is available online at <http://www.uwrf.edu/nca/>. “They [the HLC/NCA] have three months to look at the publication and then they come to campus to see what’s going on,” Hedahl said. When the Commission visits its campus they will be provided with a room filled with resources, both electronic and hard copy, which back up the report. “We’ll have a real good idea after that campus visit how things are going,” Hedahl said. “We’d like that they understand we’re doing good work here, and hopefully the self-study and their visit will confirm that.” David Trechter, another member of the planning team, said he recognizes the opportunities that the process provides. “Not only will we know ourselves better after this process is complete but it tells us where our strengths and challenges lie,” Trechter said in an e-mail interview. “There is a lot of really good work going on here and high levels of achievement by both faculty and students.”

Senioritis: Final year of college can present difficulties

from page 1

Counselors typically ask students with senioritis about job experience, internships and campus involvement to help them gauge their level of preparedness for their future career. In most cases, students discover that they are better prepared for the future than they thought, Link said. Counselors also help seniors learn stress management skills and develop a positive internal dialogue. “In a way, it’s kind of like teaching them to trust and believe in themselves,” Link said. “It’s like Indiana Jones and a leap of faith.” Job-hunting presents its own challenges for seniors. Sometimes students struggle to decide on a specific career within their major, or they may decide they want to do something unrelated to their major, Link said. Either way, Link stresses the importance of having a network of family and friends for support as students begin looking for a job. “Job hunting is difficult because your self worth, self-esteem, is on the line,” Link said. For help with concerns, students can meet with someone at Career Services by calling 425-3572. Students struggling with senioritis or stress related to the job hunting process can call 425-3884 to set up an appointment to speak with a counselor.

Smoking ban: Bill in Wisconsin Legislature may restrict smokers from lighting up in public places

from page 1

people smoking in my face,” Sophomore Tara Fisher said. “I don’t think it will affect business because it is not a big deal in Minnesota.” Another employee at Bo’s and Mine does not approve of the smoking ban. “It will damper business for a lot of bars in smaller towns like River Falls and in VFW’s where people have been smoking for 60 years,” Joe Colberg said. Colberg is a smoker himself and “does not want to go out to smoke in the cold.” Monica Gartmann, a patron of Bo’s and Mine and other River Falls bars, is also against the smoking ban. “[The state] is just looking for a new way to make money. This ban has happened coincidentally after the state raised the tax on cigarettes,” Gartmann said. “The ban will essentially kill small town businesses.” UWRF has also looked at the idea of a campus-wide smoking ban. The idea was brought to the attention of the Student Senate a few weeks ago at the student association meeting. No motion has been brought forward at this time.



Kenny Yoo/Student Voice

Gov. Doyle is urging legislators to pass a smoking ban, but it is causing some controversy.

See what the *Student Voice* has to offer online at: www.uwrfvoice.com.

EDITORIAL

Holiday spirit thrives at UWRF

It’s the season of giving once again, and as usual the ever-caring corporate advertising world won’t let anyone forget it. It happens every year after Thanksgiving; our society is overly inundated with messages from retailers, jewelers, toy companies and the like that we should spend frivolously—meaning line their pockets—to get that gift that those special to us really need. If you can’t detect our sarcasm there, we apologize. The point is, we’re tired of the over commercialization of the holiday season. Christmas isn’t about buying a diamond pendant for that special someone, no matter how many times you hear it on television, the radio, or read it in the paper. This over-the-top push to lead everyone to believe that everyone should buy a gift for everyone else has become a little too much for us. As college students, we have enough to worry about during the month of December, like finals and numerous projects.

We aren’t condemning the holiday season by any means, just those that look to skew it and make a quick buck off of it. On the contrary, we think that many things done by groups and individuals on campus truly exemplify what this time of year should really be about. UW-River Falls has numerous programs that haven’t lost sight of the true spirit of the holidays. The UWRF men’s hockey team donates bikes to children in local schools, the UWRF chapter of Operation Christmas Child gives gifts to children whose lives have been affected by disease, natural disaster, poverty and war, the Greeks collect toys for Toys for Tots and Chartwells sponsored a toy drive for children of families in need. This, and spending time with family, is what the holidays should be about, not buying another gift for someone who doesn’t really need it.

“It seems simple, but the holidays, meant to be a time of peace, reflection and celebration, too often exhaust rather than uplift us,” according to the Web site for the non-profit organization The New American Dream.

“If you sometimes feel trapped by the shopping, spending, crass displays and frenzied preparations, you aren’t alone. Our national surveys consistently show that Americans feel put upon by the commercialization of the season and want more of what matters... not just more stuff.”

We at the *Student Voice* couldn’t agree more.

Editorials represent the opinion of the *Student Voice* Editorial Board and are prepared by the editorial staff.

Read this and past issues of the *Student Voice* online at:
www.uwrfvoice.com
Happy Holidays!

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN RIVER FALLS	
STUDENT VOICE	
Editor	Nick Sortedahl
Assistant Editor	Sarah Packingham
Front Page Editor	Jenna Nelson
News Editor	Josh Dahlke
Sports Editor	Lauren Bennett
Etcetera Editor	Eric Pringle
Viewpoints Editor	Katrina Styx
Photo Editor	Kenny Yoo
Assistant News Editor	Marta Olson
Assistant Photo Editor	Abby Piette
Assistant Sports Editor	Jim Jensen
Cartoonist	Stephanie Daniels
Chief Copy Editor	Addie Carlson
Proofreader	Andrew Phelps
General Manager	Kirsten Blake
Ad Manager	Megan Leoni
Circulation Manager	Kristen Goodrich
Online Manager	Phil Bock
Faculty Advisor	Andris Straumanis

Read the *Student Voice* online at
www.uwrfvoice.com

ASSOCIATED COLLEGIATE PRESS

WNA

WISCONSIN NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Senate decision shocks student

At our last Student Senate meeting there was a motion to suspend the bylaws in order to pass a motion that would give \$700 to a voter registration project targeting River Falls students and attempt to increase student voter turnout. Similar projects in the past have proven extremely effective in achieving this goal. The reason that the bylaws needed to be suspended was due to time constraints. Senators Josh Breyer, Jason Schultz, Casey Kelly, Aaron Taylor, Melody Reimer, Peter Walbolt and Patricia Fredrickson all voted against the

motion, which failed by one vote. As a student and an American that believes that increasing student voter turnout would be a good thing, I was surprised that seven of our elected representatives felt otherwise. I would encourage anyone interested in holding their senators accountable to their actions to 1) ask these student senators why they felt they should not fund voter registration when given the opportunity, and 2) to attend student senate meetings on Tuesday nights at 7 p.m. in the Willow River Room in the third floor of the University Center.

Thomas Friant
Student

Ron Paul doesn’t match the hype

I write this in response to Jon Hager’s column last week. Ron Paul is a fiscal conservative, but he is an idiosyncratic libertarian. I’m glad he is pro-life; however, his libertarian beliefs would mean it is a woman’s body, so she has ownership. Paul has, at various times, pledged to eliminate the CIA, IRS and Department of Education, and endorsed a million dollar private bounty for Bin Laden in Afghanistan. He endorses the withdrawal of troops from Iraq, regardless of consequences and a return to non-interventionist foreign poli-

Nicholas Carow
Student

Professor gives leadership tips to grads

On Saturday, a cohort of undergraduate and graduate students will walk across the Knowles Center Stage to receive their UW-River Falls diploma. Despite the variety of colleges and majors represented, my one hope is that all will prove to be effective leaders in their careers and communities. With this and my academic orientation as a lifespan psychologist in mind, I thought that I would send these students off with words of wisdom concerning leadership.

This theme is based on the notion that the human lifespan consists of seven unique stages, an idea popularized by William Shakespeare in his play “As You Like It,” act 2, scene 7.

“All the world’s a stage, And all the men and women merely players (...) And one man in his time plays many parts, His acts being seven ages. At first the infant, mewling and puking in the nurse’s arms. And then the whining schoolboy (...) creeping like snail unwillingly to school. And then the lover, sighing like furnace, with a woe-ful ballad made to his mistress’ eyebrow. Then a soldier, full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard, Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel, (...) And then the justice (...) with eyes severe and beard of formal cut (...) The sixth age shifts into the lean and slipper’d pantaloone (...) His

Brad Caskey

youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide (...) Last scene of all, That ends this strange eventful history, Is second childishness and mere oblivion, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.”

With all respect to the Bard, here is my take on this theme that I refer to as the 7 Ages of Leadership.

The Infant: What infants lack, in addition to bowel control, is a voice! One of the key traits of a leader is realizing the importance of having a voice. Interestingly, it is often the case that those who know nothing tend to speak volumes. One key to leadership is to gain confidence and knowledge and know that your contributions matter.

The Whining Schoolboy: Leaders need to always be willing to learn and realize that learning does not end with graduation. A good leader accepts responsibility to be a life-long student who strives to find more effective methods of successfully completing all of life’s ventures.

The Lover: Leaders who are sensitive to the needs of others are willing to adjust their position to bring greater satisfaction to the people they are serving. Good leaders also use protection or at least protect themselves and their constituents from harm.

The Soldier: Leaders often must make painful decisions. Leaders also need to take orders and realize that even if they are in

charge, they are members of a team. Leadership is about personal sacrifice for the common good.

The Justice: Leaders must understand and follow the rules of behavior, including laws and ethical practices. A good leader also bases moral decisions on what is best for the good of the all, not just what is best for personal gain.

The Pantalooned: A leader must understand that wearing pants or some form of clothing from the waist down is a good idea. A leader understands the importance of “fit” between people and their environments and assigns them to tasks at which they will be most effective. A leader is also only as good as the ideas and actions in which they “clothe” themselves. One good well-planned idea is worth much more than five thrown-together options.

Second Childishness and the Oblivion: A leader knows that the best way to avoid oblivion is to make effective decisions that have long-lasting positive effects. Finally, due to modern technology, today’s leader need not be “sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.” In fact, when most reach the last stage of life, you will be with teeth, with eyes, with taste—with everything!

Brad Caskey is associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and is in his third year in that position. A 1980 UWRF alumni, Dr. Caskey has received numerous awards including UWRF Distinguished Teacher (1997), UWRF Advisor of the Year (2004), and the Regents Award for Teaching Excellence for the UW System (2005).

Freshman suggests methods for handling finals stress

Congratulations freshmen, we’ve made it through our first semester as college students. I’m definitely feeling the stress that everyone has always talked about. With projects, presentations and tests it seems like we hardly have time to breathe. It’s easy for us to get carried away and forget what’s really important here: our own well-being.

We must keep in mind that stress really runs the body down—not only mentally, but physically as well. Organization is one way to cut down on stress and keep your thoughts in order. With so much to remember, it is really helpful to use those planners the school provided for us during Weeks Of Welcome. Making lists helps you visualize what you need to

do and allows you to check off tasks as you finish them, flushing them from your minds.

With assignments abounding, relaxation and fun is the last thing on some of our minds. However, it is still important for each of us to allow for some “self” time. As I sat down to write this column, my mind was stuffed with the 101 things I needed to get done between now and finals. I called my dad to vent a little. He told me to stop taking life so seriously.

“There will come a day when your boss is breathing down

your neck to get a project done, and you’ll be wishing you were back in college with your list of things to do,” he said.

After thinking about it, I decided that he was right. For me, self-time involves a large number of things, such as dancing in my dorm room when no one is watching.

Sleeping is another necessary part of our personal health. I used to roll my eyes at my teachers in high school who would tell me that college was a whole lot of late nights with a book and multiple cups of coffee, but they weren’t kidding.

Linda Abel

As I sit through class in this last week of school, I feel my eyelids fall and my head drop. But it’s okay to sleep. We all need to keep this in mind and not feel guilty for the extra hour we could have studied. Are you going to remember something you studied at 1:30 a.m. anyway?

Good luck with your last week of the semester. Keep your thoughts organized and be sure to get enough sleep. Enjoy your friends while you are still with them, and even more, enjoy your time to relax for the next month. Have a good break, Falcons, and be safe.

Linda is double-majoring in marketing communications and business communications with an emphasis in professional organization. In her free time she likes to dance, watch movies, hang out with friends and spend time with family.

Letter to the editor misses a few points

In last week’s Letters to the Editor section, Michael Defenbaugh attacks the staff of the *Student Voice* for not checking facts and as a result, completely misinforming the campus and community about a concert on Dec. 4.

I won’t deny that any newspaper is responsible for making sure that all information printed as fact is, indeed, fact. I won’t deny that the *Student Voice* erred in failing to confirm the material before printing it. I won’t even deny that such a glaring mistake reflects very poorly on all the staff at the *Voice* and goes so far as to jeopardize the legitimacy of the entire paper. After all, if one thing could be so wrong, what else could be wrong?

I would like to make a few comments however.

But before I do so, let me state that, though I am one of the editors on the *Student Voice* staff, this is not the opinion of the newspaper. What is written here this week is the sole opinion of an individual with a slightly different perspective on the issue. Let me reiterate

as well that I in no way argue that the *Voice* was at fault.

I thank Michael for calling the paper out. The campus and community does deserve to know when one of its major sources of information fails at its job. But is it really necessary to recommend, even implicitly, that students take any words printed in the *Voice* as something little more than fiction? While this mistake was one of substantial magnitude, how often does such an error occur in our pages? This is a newspaper that has won awards and continues to produce competition-winning works of journalism.

I personally take great offense to the disparaging comments about the student journalists who produce the *Voice*. Yes, we do hope to pursue careers in journalism, and we are working towards that goal. This is an environ-

ment to hone our skills—not to showcase our perfection.

Those who don’t know the process of putting out an entire newspaper, even one as small as the *Student Voice*, have absolutely no clue how much time and effort we put into this little bundle of paper and ink that appears without fail every Friday morning in newsstands around campus and in the community.

Not only does every person on staff spend hours of personal time to gather information, write stories, lay out pages and edit design and copy, but they do it knowing that whatever form of reimbursement there may be is worth far less than the amount of work they are putting in.

Another point is that not every single body that works for this paper sees every single article that gets published.



Katrina Styx

one responsible for editing the letters to the editor, I found it hilariously ironic that in a complaint that put so much light on errors in the particular article, there were, in fact, more grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors than I cared to count. In all honesty, I would like to know how someone can make it through five years of college and not know how to write even such a simple document in a manner that appears only moderately professional.

Perhaps, Michael, in your criticism of the *Voice*, you should also take into account that the very same people you are condemning as horrible excuses for journalists are the ones responsible for making sure you aren’t exposed to the entire school and city as an illiterate with no other excuse than “I’m a music major—I don’t have to know how to write.”

Katrina is a senior majoring in English with a literature emphasis and a minor in print journalism. She loves animals and travel, but her passion is working with words—either writing or reading them. She hopes to someday make a career of editing.

Lack of religion is not animosity

To me, the two most forbidden conversation topics have always been the most interesting: politics and religion. Last week, I wrote about the politics of the 2008 Presidential Election. This week, I’ll take a FOX News worthy fair and balanced look at religion—or lack thereof. What’s been frustrating me recently is what I like to refer to as “angry atheism.” I’ve noticed a trend both among people my



Joe Hager

age and the society at large of atheists becoming hateful and angry in the face of organized religion. I’m not ashamed to say that I’m an atheist and have been for several years—but the extent of spite and anger I see among other atheists is upsetting. Atheism is, by its basic definition, non-belief. It is not necessarily an order or sect of its own—it is simply the absence of belief in a higher power. What’s been happening, however, is more sinister than a simple lack of belief.

What I see happening is atheism being twisted into a philosophy of anti-religion. It’s no longer about simply choosing not to believe; it has become an organized attack on religion. Angry atheists seem to find fulfillment in disproving and discrediting major religions (mostly focused on the various forms of Christianity). Most of the time, atheists and agnostics will describe themselves as being open-minded and tolerant. This, however, seems lost when you realize how many atheists spend time and effort to offend Christians. The job of the atheist should not be to take on reli-

gion as the enemy. The job of the atheist should be to stand outside the realm of religion and become a separate being.

Now the time has come for me to admit that I used to be an angry atheist. I used to see Christianity as a terrible, tyrannical force bent on the breaking of every human being (yeah, that bad). I was convinced that it was my duty to persuade everyone I knew to question and ridicule the beliefs of the Church as I did. I realize now that I was being an immature idiotic kid. While most of my spiritual beliefs remain the same, I have blossomed into a free-thinking (and handsome) young man capable of actually allowing others to believe whatever the hell they want to. I could go on about how everyone is different, but I won’t.

I strongly believe that atheism should not revolve around becoming anti-something. It’s shameful to define yourself by something you hate. Instead, the basic foundation of atheism should be built on the ideas of free-thought. The path to becoming a free-thinker is long and arduous, and rarely will anyone be able to completely shake free the chains of prejudice. But it is worth it to try. Atheism is still looked down upon by mainstream America, and I have to say that it is most probably justified. I hope that someday atheists can re-define their attitudes and become the compassionate, tolerant free-thinkers they deserve to be.

Joe is a marketing communications major with a creative writing minor. This is his first semester writing for the *Student Voice*. He is interested in movies, religion, politics, culture and people.

Anime rises above negative stereotypes

The majority of people I meet have had a hefty helping of ignorance when it comes to the magnificence of anime. When I mention that I am a fan, the most common reaction I receive is a blank stare followed by a cold “oh, heh.”

In fact, I’m sure I lost at least half of my readers with the introduction. These individuals most likely assume that every anime is a “Dragon Ball Z” replica, with ugly animation and unrealistic plots involving weapons, creepy little creatures that talk and women with really large breasts in small, gaudy shirts.

I suppose this angst I feel towards those who reject anime might actually be more about my disgust for the narrow-mindedness of people I have chatted with about the topic.

They sit there watching reruns of “Gilmore Girls” and when I suggest popping in something new, say, “Wolf’s



Annee Mayer-Chapleau

Rain,” an abrupt “eww,” spews from their lips without hesitation.

These commoners tag anime fans along with those who are passionate about topics such as fantasy, sci-fi and anything else out of the ordinary. They presume that these subjects aren’t valuable in any way. Maybe they spit up their creativity and imagination with their Cheerios as infants.

Under any circumstance, I’m not going to respect people who refuse to give something new a try. Some haters need to be reminded that some anime, such as “Spirited Away,” have won Oscars for outstanding plot lines and striking illustrations.

Anime on television is typically of the variety marketed toward young boys. If you dig deeper, you will find that it is like any other form of entertainment, with genres for romantics, intellectuals, perverts, action-seekers and any combination of

these four and beyond. Anime can make you laugh, cry and quite possibly buy a sword just to hold one on a daily basis.

My favorite anime series, “Fruits Basket,” follows the life of a young orphan whose mother died in a car accident. Optimistic and determined to still live a rewarding life, she ends up living with a cursed family. When hugged by members of the opposite sex, the family members turn into animals of the Chinese Zodiac. This peculiar story line is presented with witty dialogue and its ending is inspiring.

You think I’m a nerd, don’t you? Nerd or not, anime and all that is quirky and unique is essential in my life—and if you’re one of those “Gilmore Girls” rerun-watching individuals or any anything of the like, I highly suggest you watch an anime series this J-term. The world would be quite dismal if everyone were as dull as you.

Annee is a junior studying creative writing. She loves astronomy and her main goal in life is to dance like David Byrne from the Talking Heads.

Study Abroad: Europe the experience of a lifetime

Flipping through the worn pages of a four month Euro-trip journal, some with metro tickets glued memorably and some stained with peach from a mishap in the satchel from the beginning of the semester, the memories make my mind race with nostalgia. Excerpts not only remind me of that time, but the feeling and the completely different state of mind I had back then.

Realistically, this semester abroad may not have been the best financial decision of my life, but it was by far the best learning and mind-blowing experience I could have ever dreamed of.

I honestly learned more in the past few months than I could have learned in a classroom. Language has been a challenge, but the most rewarding challenge thus far. Now I can say “Thank you” in seven different tongues.

As a reminder, Semester Abroad: Europe consists of a group of students that spend a week in Paris together at the beginning of the semester to get a feel of Europe before independently studying in a city of their choice for two months. After a three day mid-semester meeting in Italy, we then again go out independently to travel Europe for six weeks. I could go on to tell how much I have grown mentally by building confidence and an open mind for all things in the world, but it goes without saying.

I would much rather explain how amazing it is that someone of my age and economic status has the opportunity to have such a learning experience. Semester Abroad: Europe is a rare study abroad program, and UWRF is most fortunate to be the host. Every person I have met in Europe has continued to be impressed



Teresa Aviles

and somewhat dumfounded at the idea of the program. Yes, we are undergraduates. No, I am not rich. Yes, I am currently enrolled in a university. Yes, I am a lone woman traveler.

Of course I recommend this program to students. It gives you the chance to do an independent project on anything that interests you whilst receiving credit. Also available is the chance to meet a network of people internationally.

Not many backpackers are actually simultaneously students. I had the chance to get to know a big city quite well. Essentially, we had the chance to create a project that will most likely be the highlight of our academic careers.

One day, at a hostel in Munich, I found a map of the world plastered on the wall, complete with pinpoint of travelers’ home cities. It was fun for me to stare at and locate my home, St. Paul and my dad, from Quezon City. Ben is in Nicaragua. Anna in Adelaide. Joel in New York. I am in Germany.

I couldn’t find the words to describe the way I felt then. The way I have been feeling the past three months, the past six months and especially the past week. I felt my eyes swelling up and a silly smile that remains difficult to hide. Then it came to me—so simple—the words to describe the feeling. The world makes me happy.

Teresa is a journalism major and a geography minor. She is enrolled in the Semester Abroad: Europe program and has done research on the River Thames in London. She is currently backpacking independently across Europe.

STUDENT voices

What is the first thing you are going to do when you are done with finals?



Chelsea Kelly, sophomore

“I’d go to Hoffman Park and go sledding on a turned-over picnic table.”



Rory Martell, freshman

“I have to go back to work again.”



Jen Joines, sophomore

“Celebrate like crazy.”

Deb Schmelzer, senior



“Get a big hug from my mom and dad.”

Ryan Olsen, senior



“Go to work.”

Dell Hensch, sophomore



“Pack and get outta here. I’m going to a concert that night.”



Kenny Yoo/Student Voice
Cindy Hovet (center, standing) recorded her 100th victory as Falcon women’s head basketball coach Dec. 11. Hovet, a Minneapolis, Minn. native always knew that she wanted to be a basketball coach. She is currently in her eighth year of coahing for the Falcons. Prior to coaching for UWRF, Hovet was an assistant coach at both UW-Stout and UWRF. She was also the head coach of the tennis team. As a player, Hovet was the second leading all-time scorer in UW-Stout’s history.

UWRF coach is right where she wants to be

Nick Carpenter
nicholas.carpenter@uwrf.edu

As a young girl growing up on the South side of Minneapolis, Cindy Hovet had a fairly concrete idea of what she wanted to be when she grew up.

“I always knew I wanted to be a basketball coach,” Hovet said.

For the last eight years, Hovet has been living that dream every time she steps on the floor as the head coach of the UW-River Falls women’s basketball team.

Hovet’s head coaching tenure at UWRF began in 2000 when she led the Falcons to a wining season (18-8) and in the process earned WIAC conference Coach of the Year honors.

Through her first seven years, Hovet has coached her share of winning and losing teams, compiling an overall record of 97 wins and 84 losses. This year’s team is off to a rough start with a 2-5 overall record including no wins in three WIAC conference games.

Despite the record, Hovet sees bright spots in her team.

“We have a lot of potential, but we need to do a better job on the details of the game if were going to win,” Hovet said. “Once we commit to the details, we’ll be good.”

Although winning games is the ultimate goal when it comes to collegiate athletics, Hovet’s job as head coach goes far beyond that. There is a process to building a program and a team, which begins with attracting the right players.

“Recruiting is the whole foundation of a college athletic team,” Hovet said. “[The assistant coaches and I] spend our summers watching basketball and finding kids.”

Hovet does the majority of her recruiting in and around the Twin Cities metro area. She is persistently working the phones and attends, at the very least, two games every week in search of players that fit her criteria.

“I want kids that are competitive and have a good feel for the game,” Hovet said. “Good fundamentals are important”.

Despite the long hours, Hovet recognizes the challenges she faces when it comes to recruiting athletes to play basketball at UWRF.

“Recruiting here is a definite uphill battle because of our facilities,” Hovet said.

For that reason, Hovet relies on her team to sell the program to the

young players.

“The best recruiters are the current players,” Hovet said. “The biggest impression (the recruits) get is from them.”

While the players’ have there part in recruiting, perhaps the strongest selling point is Hovet herself. At least, she was the cherry on top, so-to-speak, when it came to sophomore guard Kelli Hilt’s decision.

“I felt that River Falls was a good fit for me because the coaching style was similar to what I was used to,” Hilt said. “Cindy and my old coach both were not just about basketball, but also teaching you life lessons.”

Hovet’s coaching style is a reflection of her personality, which she acknowledges is the opposite of the cheering type.

“I’m a firm believer you have to coach within your personality,” Hovet said. “I try to do what fits my personality and what fits our team.”

Although she is not viewed as the command-style drill sergeant type, Hovet expects her players to give their best effort at all times.

“(Hovet) is a hard coach to play for if you’re not willing to give it your all,” Hilt said. “If you don’t want to be pushed you won’t want to play for her, but if you want to be pushed she will teach you a lot.”

Over the years, Hovet said it’s possible she has mellowed a little bit. She also has come to the realization that you have to let the players play and feel ownership of the program and their decisions. That however can be challenging at times.

“It’s getting harder and harder getting kids to listen and commit to the success of the team,” Hovet said. “Everybody is interested in their own playing time.”

Still, Hovet strives in practice to teach her players fundamental basketball and prepare them for upcoming games.

“(Hovet) expects us to come ready to every practice and game and if you are not performing to your best she will let you know,” freshman forward Sarah Schoeneck said. “She gives you all the tools to become the best player you can be and it’s up to the player if they want to use them.”

Whatever Hovet is teaching seems to paying off for some players who have seen drastic improvements in their basketball skills and knowledge of the game.

“[Hovet] has taught me more than I ever thought I could learn in my life,” Hilt said. “I have become 10 times the player I was in high school ... now I am more disciplined and more of a team player.”

Besides seeing her players make strides on the basketball court, Hovet relishes the opportunity to aid in the personal development of her players.

“Sometimes, I don’t think kids understand how much control they have over their own success,” Hovet said. “I like seeing [players] mature and start to really commit to reaching their potential.”

Before she was head coach

Hovet’s love for basketball started in the third grade when she first started playing.

She played point guard, a position known for requiring great basketball awareness and often viewed as the coach on the floor.

After elementary school, Hovet went on to attend Theodore Roosevelt High School where she excelled on the women’s basketball team.

While at Roosevelt, Hovet played for Frank Hentges, a coach that would have a lasting impact on her life.

“He told me all the time that I was a coach on the floor,” Hovet said. “He solidified [the idea] that I definitely wanted to be a basketball coach.”

Hovet’s playing career continued after high school at the UW-Stout, where she stared on the court as the team’s shooting guard.

A three-time all-WWIAC selection and the 1994 WWIAC Player of the Year, she still holds UW-Stout records for career three-pointers with 82, single-game points with 39, single-game steals with 11, and shares the mark for most career games played with 107, according to UW-Stout’s Web site. Hovet also ranks second in career points on Stout’s all-time scoring list and had her number 21 Blue Devils jersey retired in 1998.

After her playing career Hovet served as an assistant at both UW-Stout and UWRF. During her time as an assistant at UWRF, she also served as the head coach of the tennis team.

Orton ready to ‘Party Like a Rockstar’ at the Dome

I was jumping on the Internet and there was a headline that grabbed my attention on MSN.com. It was a headline that gave the Bears a huge blow in their credibility and really was a head scratcher. A 5-year-old descendant of Davey Crockett killed a bear. The child was a 10th generation grandchild of Davey Crockett. It was kind of a culture shock to be honest as I thought Davey Crockett was a tall tale figure such as Paul Bunyan. Meanwhile some other Bears had their share of problems last week.

The Chicago Bears lost quarterback Rex Grossman for the season after he suffered a sprained ligament in his knee on Thursday night. Bears head coach Lovie Smith had a couple of options to go with when he named his starting quarterback for Monday night’s game against the Minnesota Vikings.

There was Brian Griese, who has failed everywhere he’s played. Then there was Kyle Orton who has a winning record as a starter. Smith went with his third string quarterback and the Bears unveiled their secret weapon.

Orton is a farm kid from Iowa and wound up going to Purdue where he was a decent quarterback. Orton wound up getting drafted in the fourth round in the 2005 draft and started the season as the Bears second-string quarterback. Then, in the final preseason game in 2005

against the St. Louis Rams, Grossman broke his ankle and it was believed that he would be out for the season. Orton took over and led the Bears to a NFC North title, but let’s break his season down a little bit.

Orton started 15 games for the Bears, 14 of them mattered as the Minnesota Vikings found a way to get eliminated on Christmas day that season adding another chapter to their futility. Orton meanwhile, set his own standards in that regard.

Orton would only complete 51 percent of his passes and threw for nine touchdowns and 13 interceptions. The offense was awful with the exception of running back Thomas Jones. The Bears defense was so good that Orton didn’t need to be the second coming of Peyton Manning, so he sucked and got away with it. So why would Orton be such a “secret weapon?” That would be because Kyle Orton is a beast in the social scene of Chicago. Try this.

Go to the Web site drunkathlete.com and look on the left side of the page.

There are pictures of your favorite athletes including David Ortiz, Daisuke Matsuzaka (AKA Dice-K), Matt Flynn, Greg Oden and Kenny

Rogers to name a few. (Sorry, Packer fans, no Brett Favre.)

Most of the athletes have a couple pictures, nothing too bad. Yet, we’re talking about KYLE ORTON here!

To quote wrestling legend Ric Flair, Orton is always “stylin’ and profilin’”. If you haven’t seen these pictures yet, I strongly encourage this.

There’s the picture of Orton flipping off a fan for taking his picture in a bar. Then, there’s the picture of Orton dancing with some blonde bombshell. Another one is the typical, “I’m wasted and wearing gigantic aviators” picture.

Then it shows him taking the blonde bombshell home with a coke in one hand and a bottle of Jack Daniels in the other.

Then, there is my personal favorite, Orton puking with that Jack Bottle in his one hand and a Jack and Coke in the other.

Orton is an Internet legend, and he hasn’t even played since 2005. This has to be the best way for an NFL quarterback to spend his time out of the limelight. It’s certainly more entertaining



Chris Schad

than seeing Ryan Leaf sell mops for a living. It was so entertaining that myself, a Packer fan and a Lions fans saw it and all started laughing and we forgot that we hated each other. (Hey, Christmas is a time for peace, right?)

The bottom line is that the Bears have decided to whip out their secret weapon at the right time. The Bears are 5-8 and are about to flat-line in the NFC Playoff Picture.

The Minnesota Vikings come in like a house on fire after winning their last four games after being embarrassed by the Green Bay Packers a month ago.

Hopefully, a party won’t break out on this game because then Orton might do his best Davey Crockett impression and kill something with his bare hands. So if I was Lovie Smith, I’d put a keg on the sideline, some bombshells in the front row behind the Bears bench, and instead of Gatorade, pour some Captain Cokes.

It’s party time at 7:30 p.m. Monday at the Metrodome.

Chris is a 21-year-old junior majoring in journalism. He is also the sports director for 88.7 FM WRFW and is the play-by-play voice for the Falcon Football and Hockey teams.

SPORTS WRAP

Hovet gets 100th career win

The Falcons helped coach Cindy Hovet gain her 100th career win in a 67-54 victory at Martin Luther Tuesday night.

The top scorers for the Falcons were Sarah Schoeneck with 17 points and Tess Lardie with 13, both were career highs. The team had 43 total rebounds while Caitlin Hunstock led UWRF with eight. The Falcons were 24-62 in total field goals and 17-33 in free throws. They were also 2-12 in three pointers.

Nicole Lehman scored first points of the game with a jump shot for the Knights. Martin Luther would take an early lead at 4-2 and would continue to keep the game close for the first half. There were eight ties in the first half. The Falcons led at halftime, 31-27 after Schoeneck scored on a lay up and Krystal Parr hit a jumper in the last 1:08 of the half.

Lehman would also score first in the second half after being fouled. But the Falcons surged back and took the lead, which they held for the rest of the game. UWRF’s biggest lead was 62-43, it came with 7:44 to play when Tessa Rohl scored on a lay up.

The Knights leading scorers were Katherine Kogler with 14 points and Nicole Lehman with 12. The Knights were 18-62 from the field and 16-28 from the line. They were also 2-12 in three pointers.

The Falcons, now 3-5 overall, play Macalester at 7 p.m. Thursday at the Kages Gymnasium.

LeBlanc named NCHA Player of the Week

Forward Cassie LeBlanc helped the Falcons to two NCHA wins last weekend at Hunt Arena and has been named the NCHA Player of the Week, according to league Sports Information Director, Layne Pitt.

LeBalnc scored three goals including two crucial goals against Lake Forest on Friday. She scored the team’s second goal of the game at 6:19 of the third period to give UWRF a 2-0 lead. Lake Forest then scored twice to tie the game, 2-2. LeBlanc came back to score the game winner at 1:13 of overtime to give the Falcons to a 3-2 win. Saturday, in a 6-3 win over Concordia, she scored her fifth goal of the season at 15:37 of the second period and it proved to be the game winner.

“Cassie was the best forward in the rink both days,” said Falcon Coach Joe Cranston. She is third on the team in scoring with six points and has two game-winning goals.

The Falcons host UW-Eau Claire at 7 p.m. Saturday.

Men’s hockey team loses battle with Norbert

The River Falls Falcons top-line combines for six points, but falls short to powerhouse St. Norbert Green Knights at the Cornerstone Community Center in Green Bay. The Green Knights, 9-1-1, jump two points ahead of the Falcons, 8-2-3, in the NCHA standings with tonight’s victory.

The expected tight match-up proved to be true in the first period. UWRF had eight shots on goal and SNC had ten. Falcons’ goalie Tyler Owens and St. Norbert goalie Kyle Jones both looked sharp after the first frame, but the second was a completely different story.

The Green Knights hit the Falcons with three goals, just 3:53 apart from each other. Scoring on the SNC goals were Dustin Dubas, Nick Tabisz and Taylor Langford.

UWRF gained some momentum back when Pat Borgestad put in his first of two goals on the night. Borgestad was set up by his line-mates TJ Dahl and Derek Hansberry. This line leads the NCHA with a combination of 69 points.

Marc Belanger of the Green Knights adds another second period goal, his tenth of the season.

In the third period SNC adds their fifth goal of the game. Assisting on Ryan Petersen’s second goal of the year was Scott Pulak and Dubas. Petersen and Dubas record three points apiece, while Dubas has a two-point night for the Green Knights.

Ten minutes later Borgestad adds his fourteenth goal of the season, topping the NCHA.

The St. Norbert power play clicks for three goals on five chances, while the River Falls power-play struggles producing on only one goal on five opportunities.

The Falcons next game is Jan. 4, when they host on Marian. The game is at will start at 7:05 p.m.

Falkons lose heartbreaker at UWP, 67-66

UW-River Falls led for almost all of Saturday’s game at UW-Platteville but the Pioneers went on a 10-3 run in the final minute to beat the Falcons, 67-66.

The first half of Saturday’s game was an offensive struggle as UWP took a one-point lead into the locker room.

UWRF led 10-7 until the 5:49 mark of the first half when junior guard DiJon Reese made two free throws to push the lead to 12-7. After senior guard Courtney Davis added two free throws, and sophomore forward Nate Robertson hit a free throw, the UWRF lead stood at 15-7.

UWP then went on an 8-0 run to more than double its point total for the day and tie the game at 15-15. UWP’s Eric Wall started the run with a tip-in basket and Mike Shaw followed with back-to-back three pointers. The UWP run ended a 6:32 scoring drought from the Pioneers.

Shaw hit a pair of free throws and a jumper to help the Pioneers finish the half with the lead 21-20. Senior guard Willie Wright and Reese both scored at the end of the half to help the Falcons keep pace.

The first half showcased poor play from both teams. UWP turned the ball over 13 times and UWRF nine. The Falcons shot just under 28 percent from the field and the Pioneers shot 31 percent.

Reese led the Falcons in the first half with six points.

Senior forward Scott Kelly hit two three-pointers at the beginning of the second half that help UWRF take the lead back. After freshman guard Brady Hannigan lay-up UWRF led 33-25, its largest lead of the day, with 16:13 left in the game.

After seeing their lead be trimmed to six by UWP’s Curt Hanson, the Falcons got back-to-back threes by Wright and Hannigan to push their lead to 12 with 10:42 left in the game.

UWP cut the lead to five by going on an 8-2 thanks in part to four free throws from Hanson, but UWRF responded with two lay-ups from Robertson that helped maintain its lead and was sitting on top by nine, 55-46, with 4:38 left in the contest.

But UWP stayed alive when Shaw hit back-to-back three pointers in the next 33 seconds that cut the lead down to three, 55-52, with 4:05 left.

UWP’s Hanson hit two three pointers separated by a Kelly lay-up that made it a one possession game at 63-60 with UWRF still leading with 43 seconds left.

Those three pointers proved to be the beginning of a 10-3 run that spanned the final 43 seconds and gave the Pioneers the victory. With 11 seconds left UWP’s Hanson drilled a three-pointer that put the Pioneers ahead at 65-63, for the first time since the first half and for good. UWP’s Josh Langenfelf nailed two free throws in the final second that proved to be big as Wright followed by hitting a three pointer for the Falcons at the buzzer but it was not enough as UWRF came up one point short.

The Falcons, now 3-5 (1-2 WIAC), will host Crown in a non-conference match up. Game time is set for 7 p.m., Wednesday at the Karges Center.

Sports Wrap courtesy of UW-River Falls Sports Information



Left and center: Jim Henkemeyer celebrates scoring a goal against Eau Claire. TJ Dahl and Patrick Borgestad rejoice after scoring a goal against St. Mary’s Nov. 20. Right, top to bottom: seniors Jason Usher, Wade Harstad and Jim Jensen are looking to leave their mark on Falcon hockey by seasons end.

Up close with the Falcon seniors

Megan Leoni
megan.leoni@uwrf.edu

Fall brings many beautiful things; changing leaves, warm breezes and most importantly to the Falcon hockey team, screaming fans. You can tell it’s hockey season by the cheers coming from Hunt Arena. Every year at the end of October the men’s Falcon hockey team suits up for opening weekend. They never know if they’re going to win or lose but one thing is always the same: the deafening crowd. This season seven men’s hockey players will be hearing those raucous crowd for the last time.

Defensive captain Jim Henkemeyer, is from St. Cloud, Minn. He is the son of Mike and Pat and has two older sisters, Katie and Abby. Henkemeyer is a marketing communications major with a speech communications minor and will be graduating in May of 2008. Although he is undecided in a career, Jim said he would like to work with people. After graduation he would like to try to play professional hockey.

Henkemeyer has really enjoyed meeting new people at River Falls and notes his greatest hockey accomplishment as making the All-American team last year. For his last year, Henkemeyer hopes to win the NCHA championship and try for the playoffs and the frozen four this season.

“Henkemeyer has come a long way. He runs the power play and shoots really well,” Ritzer said.

Jason Usher is from Eden Prairie, Minn. Jason and his sister Amanda are Dave and Randi’s only children. At River Falls, Jason is double majoring in psychology and business administration. He chose UWRF because of the hockey program and the psychology professors he met when he visited campus. He notes one of his best memories here as having the opportunity to experience Europe with the International Traveling Classroom during spring semester 2007.

“My greatest hockey accomplishment would have to be balancing hockey and school,” Usher said.

After graduation in May 2008, Usher plans to go to graduate school to study law or psychology. His ultimate goal is to “have financial freedom and stability to travel the world.”

“Usher is a talented defenseman who moves the puck,” Ritzer said.

Jim Jensen, is an aggressive defenseman. His parents, Dianne and Jim have three sons, Jim, Tom and Robby. Jensen, a journalism major and film studies minor. After this year, Jensen hopes to continue to play hockey. In the future, he would like to have a career making Hollywood movies. He notes his greatest off ice accomplishment as being a role model for his brothers.

He also has high hopes for the Falcons this year.

“Obviously, I’d like to see us playing at the end of the season,” he said.

Jensen came to River Falls after playing two years of Div. I hockey. One at Ferris State and the other at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. He credits fellow senior, Pat Borgestad, and the coaching staff for his decision to transfer.

Ritzer said, “Jensen in a hardnosed, gritty defenseman with tons of experience.”

Wade Harstad, son of Mark and Carla, has two brothers. Harstad is from Moorhead, Minn. He is a bio-medical science major.

Coach Ritzer made the comment that, “Harstad is one of the

fastest player in the NCHA.”

Fairbanks, Alaska native Chad Georgell is the son of Gary and Nancy Georgell and has two brothers, Scott and Chris. Georgell is a health and human performance major with a minor in business administration. After graduation this spring, Georgell would like to go to graduate school for kinesiology or business management.

This season is Georgell’s second season with the Falcons, though not consecutively. After spending his whole hockey career in Alaska, Georgell decided he wanted to “get out and see the world.” He started his collegiate hockey career at Michigan Tech after which he played his first year with the Falcons and then spent a year at Augsburg College.

Georgell notes his greatest non-hockey accomplishment as making the dean’s list. His ultimate goals include “being successful in a career, having a good family and being able to support my parents when they retire.” In the future, Georgell would like to own his own company and maybe coach college hockey.

“Georgell is a great defensive player and student,” said Ritzer.

Falcon captain TJ Dahl is the oldest of Todd and Nancy Dahl’s three sons, Brady and Brett round out the Dahl family. Dahl is originally from Apple Valley, Minn. He is a business administration major with an emphasis in finance and will graduate in May of 2008. He is unsure of his plans for after graduation but would like to pursue hockey or start a career.

Dahl’s greatest non-hockey accomplishment has been making the dean’s list his first couple years of college, after being out of school, playing junior hockey for two years. Dahl notes his greatest achievement playing for River Falls has been being named captain.

“I’ve never been that go to guy before,” he said. “It’s awesome. I want to take advantage of it and live up to it.”

In the future, he would like to settle down in the suburbs, maybe work for his dad and take his kid(s) to hockey games.

“Family is valued number one,” Dahl said.

“Dahl is a very talented player. He loves the game,” Ritzer said.

Pat Borgestad is the son of Becky and Bob and has two brothers, one sister and a son, Brady. He is from St. Paul, Minn. Borgestad is a health and human performance major. Borgestad is trying to get a medical red shirt for next year to make up for his absence freshman year due to his knee surgery. If it goes through he will be eligible to play next year.

For the senior Falcons, this is the last year they will experience the roar of the crowd as they fight for the league championship and battle their way towards the national title. At the end of this season seven men will hang up their Falcon jerseys for the last time.

When asked what the seniors mean to the team Coach Steve Freeman said, “Their experience means a lot. They set examples for the younger players, which makes coaching easier.”

“The senior guys are probably the blood and guts of the operation,” Ritzer said. “The seniors are not only looked up to by the team but they are also respected by the league. It takes a very good player to make it all four years. They’ve done well with school and athletics.”

Coach Freeman thinks it will be pretty hard to replace such valuable players but it optimistic that some of the younger guys will step up to the plate.

“We’ll have to bring in quite a few new guys,” Freeman said.

Pat Borgestad and Wade Harstad were not available for comment.

Four football players on region team

Lauren Bennett
lauren.bennett@uwrf.edu

For the past two years, sports information directors from each region around the nation (north, south, east, west) along with D3football.com staff vote for who they feel should be on an region team.

While all the Division one teams out there have bowls and trophies that highlight their talent, but division three athletes do not receive nearly as much attention or acclamations. D3football.com gives 300 athletes the chance to be recognized and play in regional teams, and four of UW-River Falls’ athletes were given this honor.

Offensive tackle Jordan Miller, wide receiver Michael Zweifel, defensive end Gregg Neumann and Running back Nathan Anderson were named the West All-Region Team.

On the second offensive team, Miller has



Jordan Miller

started all ten games at tackle for the past two seasons for the Falcons. Miller was also named to the All-WIAC team in November.

Zweifel was named to the second team after a tremendous freshman season. This season Zweifel had 97 receptions for 1,056 yards and nine touchdowns, leading the WIAC. Zweifel caught 18 receptions Nov. 3 to claim the record for the most receptions in a single game. Zweifel was named offensive player of the week three times as well as an All-WIAC team member.

Next on the second team defense is Neumann. He led the WIAC in sacks with 12 and his total of 23 is fourth in UWRF history. He also holds the record for most sacks in one game with four. Neumann was defensive player of the week



Michael Zweifel



Gregg Neumann

twice and also named to the All-WIAC team in 2006 and 2007.

Finally named to the third offensive team is Anderson. He has set the career rushing record for UWRF with 4,220 yards. He set a single season record for carries with 321 and added to his career for 960 set yet another career record. Anderson received the honor of being the WIAC offensive player of the week in September, and the offensive player of the week for the Falcons five times. In 2005 he was named to the All-WIAC team and the second All-WIAC team this year. In 2005 he was the team MVP and Offensive Player of the Year.

All four players have received the honor because of their fantastic efforts this season. Even though not everyone can be a division one athlete and play in a bowl game, but at least the athletes across the country are able to be honored just as much as the other athletes.



Nathan Anderson

Students and alumna prepare for figure skating show

Sarah Packingham
sarah.packingham@uwrf.edu

Junior Julie Erickson has been figure skating for as long as she can remember, and she has been competing competitively since she was in the fifth grade.

Erickson, from Plymouth, Minn., has also been coaching at the Hunt Arena Skating School (HASS).

Now Erickson, along with three other UW-River Falls students and one former student, are working together to put on the annual skating show.

Leah Flanagan, a 2006 UWRF graduate, is working with Erickson and students Eric Pringle, Katie Bauer and Stacy Asp to put the show together.

This year the show is entitled, “American Idol on Ice.” Each routine will be skated to a song that was either on an “American Idol” show or from a CD.

In the past few years there have been other themes such as Broadway, Holidays on Ice and Disney, Erickson said.

“This is an event that we have been doing annually for seven years,” Flanagan said. “It is an absolute blast for all the skaters involved in the skating school because it gives them a chance to show off their skills in front of their friends and family.”

The show will showcase members of the school from skaters as young as four years old to adults. Also, the five coaches will be skating their own routine at the end of the show.

Erickson said that one of the hardest parts of putting the show together is choreographing three routines.

“We have to come up with a variety of moves for all ages,” she said.

She also said it was difficult to get everything into the practices that are scheduled each week. Coaches worked on their routine at 6 a.m. on Thursdays; while practices with the skaters are Sundays from 4:30 to 8 p.m. and Mondays from 7:30 to 9 p.m.

Putting the show together takes hours of behind the scenes work that the audience may not realize.

“We usually start brainstorming themes for the next show the minute we finish a show. We start putting hard work into it as soon as our fall session starts in October,” Flanagan said. “As far as music selection, costume design, choreography for programs, practice, prop-making and script writing, these are our most time consuming ingredients that takes months to prepare. Our coaching staff does a great job of getting these things done as efficiently as possible.”

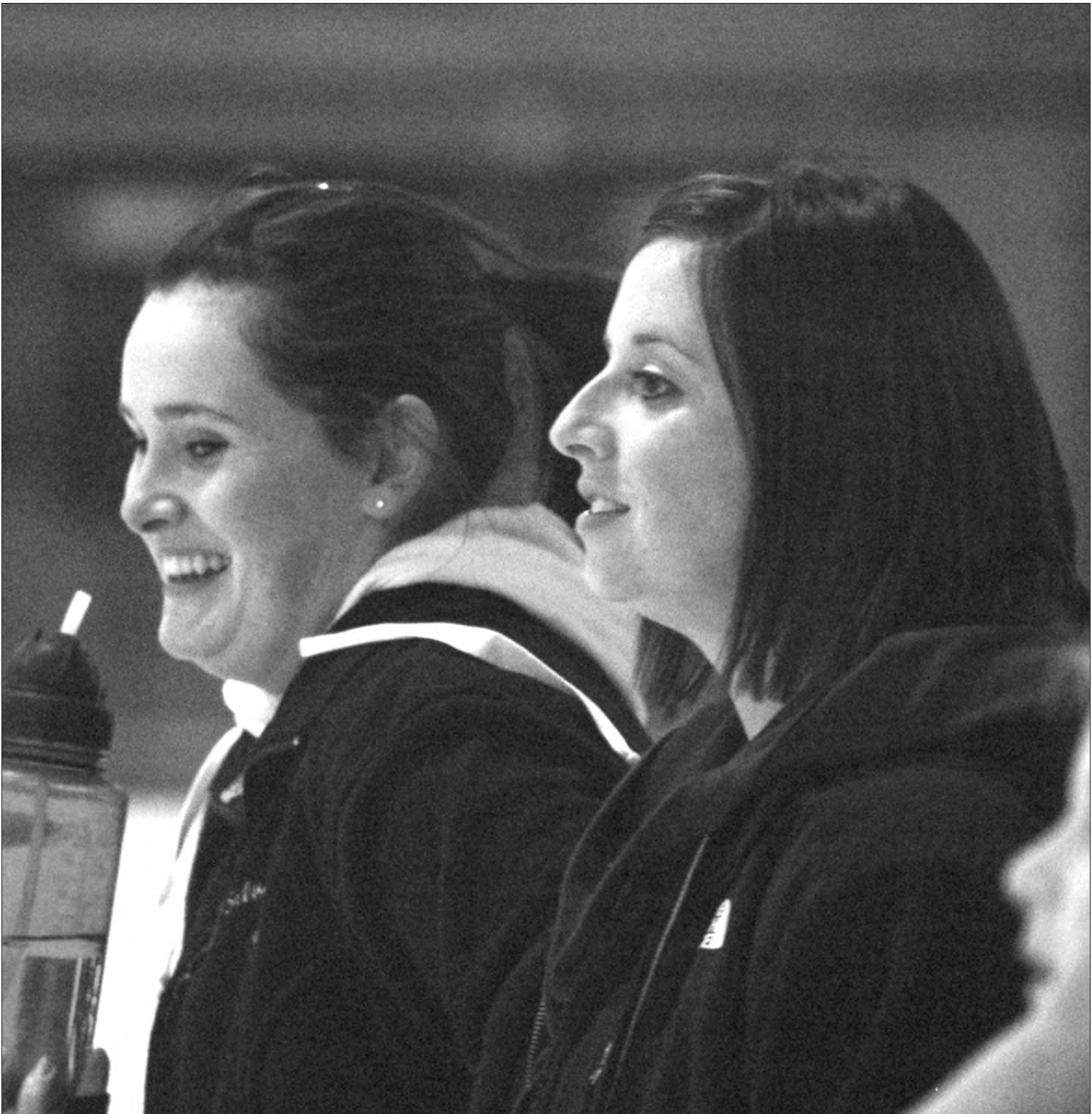
Skaters from the school will showcase their skills and a few skaters from the area will take part as well.

“We have a synchronized skating duo from Cottage Grove,” Erickson said.

The coaches get great satisfaction from watching their skaters succeed on the day of the show.

“[I love] seeing the excitement on the skaters faces the day of the show, watching the proud parents smiling in the audience, and most of all knowing that all of our hard work brings these wonderful moments of glory,” Flanagan said.

The show will be at 3 p.m. Dec. 16 at Hunt Arena.



Kenny Yoo/Student Voice

UWRF junior Julie Erickson and 2006 graduate Leah Flanagan oversee practice for the Dec. 16. show at Hunt Arena.

Student Voice staff says goodbye to fall semester



Rose Rongitsch

Left to right, top to bottom: Eric Pringle, Lauren Bennett, Kirsten Blake, Addie Carlson, Andrew Phelps, Nicholas Sortedahl, Megan Leoni, Josh Dahlke, Jenna Nelson, Sarah Packingham, Kenny Yoo and Katrina Styx. Not pictured: Phil Bock.

Temperature: Staff looks for solutions

from page 2

All systems in the building from plumbing to heating and cooling would need to be upgraded because of their close interplay, and all would have to be tailored to the specific design of North Hall. Students and staff will probably have to

wait 10 years or more to see these changes, Stifter said.

For now, facilities management and other groups on campus are studying temporary solutions, such as air conditioners for individual classrooms and repairs of ones already installed around North Hall.

Preparations being made for changes to Wisconsin Highway 35

Amy Bohrer
amy.bohrer@uwrf.edu

There is a planned makeover for that long, winding, somewhat bumpy road that leads into River Falls from Interstate 94. That road is Wisconsin Highway 35, and it will become a freeway.

Highway 35 will become safer with interchanges only instead of intersections, said Terry Peterson, the project manager of the freeway conversion.

In other words, the highway will look like Interstate 94. There will be on and off-ramps instead of having intersections.

“In March 2005, WisDOT began holding public information meetings in the River Falls area to gather public input on their proposal to convert the STH-Wisconsin Highway 35 expressway between River Falls and I-94/US-12 at Hudson to a fully controlled-access freeway,” according to the Wisconsin Highways Web site, www.wisconsinhighways.org. “The expressway project completed in 1998 makes upgrading this portion of the highway to freeway standards a matter of simply closing certain private access, building a few overpasses and the like. No timetable has been established for this project.”

Plans are underway for installing an interchange for Radio Road in the year 2013.

The conversion plan is rather complicated, Peterson said, because the planners have to finish alternative access routes for drivers and residents while construction is underway on

Highway 35.

The plan is only in the pre-design phase because more studies need to be completed, such as an environmental impact study. There is not yet an estimated cost for the project.

Peterson plans to begin the project in about 10 to 15 years.

The conversion plan has had some mixed reviews from students on campus.

“I use 35 all the time; it would expedite the trip, it would be awesome and it would be in better condition,” Derek Brandt, Student Senate president, said.

Other students were not so receptive of the idea of Highway 35 becoming a freeway. Mary Zoubek, a senior at UW-River Falls, is against the conversion.

“It is going to cause urban sprawl,” Zoubek said. “I don’t want River Falls to become a city. We should stay small.”

Professor Tracey Gladstone-Sovell from the political science department remembers when Highway 35 was an undivided two-lane road.

“It was very scary to drive on in the winter,” Gladstone said.

Gladstone remarked that the conversion is being done for safety reasons, and even if Highway 35 remained a highway, “it would not hinder growth” in River Falls.

When an area grows, changes are made to accommodate the growth, such as expanding roadways. River Falls has seen its share of changes in the past and it will see many more in the future.

Pure WRFW 88.7 FM

This upcoming semester many of the DJ slots are available for the entire UW-River Falls student body, regardless of major or minor. No experience necessary. All you have to do is pick up an application outside 306 North Hall. The application deadline is Feb. 1. All music genre's are allowed.

The next WRFW sponsored dance is Feb. 8, the style will be Salsa.

CLASSIFIEDS

To learn more about classified or display ad rates, contact the business office at (715) 425-3624. You can also view them online at www.uwrfvoice.com

Student Voice Business Office
410 S. Third Street, 304 North Hall
River Falls, WI 54022
Phone: (715) 425-3624 Email: advertising@uwrfvoice.com

Employment	Employment
Spring Break 2008	HAVE A HEART INC.
Sell Trips, Earn Cash and Go Free. Call for group discounts. Best Deals Guaranteed! Jamaica, Cancun, Acapulco, Bahamas, S. Padre, Florida. (800) 648-4849 or www.ststravel.com	We currently have positions open in our weekend respite program and our homecare division working with children with disabilities. If you are reliable and hard working, please contact Amber for more information. (715) 425-7754
Student Voice	FOUND
Do you want to meet new people? Do you want to make your own hours? Apply now for our advertising representative position. E-mail: manager@uwrfvoice.com	A nice earring was found along the sidewalk on the 200 block of North Third St. If you think it may be yours please call Marge Stokke at (715) 425-5141.

YOU BUY, WE FLY

IT'S A

WIN-WIN

YUM-YUM

KINDA THING

FREAKY FAST!

JIMMY JOHN'S
Since 1983
GOURMET SANDWICHES

FREAKY GOOD!

AMERICA'S #1 SANDWICH DELIVERY!

TO FIND THE LOCATION NEAREST YOU
VISIT JIMMYJOHNS.COM

JIMMYJOHNS.COM

©2007 JIMMY JOHN'S FRANCHISE, LLC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Columnist wishes for reunited bands this holiday season



Joe Eggers

Usually my column consists of a rant about a hot topic which has gotten me riled up and I use my column as an avenue to vent my frustrations. However, because this is the holiday season and this is my last column of the semester, I’ve decided to tone it down a bit. Inspired by the recent reunion of Led Zeppelin and my recent trip to see Modest

Mouse in Minneapolis, I’ve decided to compile a list of some musical acts which I loved and would like to see reunite. In order to make it on my list, all the band members must still be alive. I just want to hear my favorite broken up bands play again, not raise the dead.

Ben Folds Five

Yes, I realize that Ben Folds continues to tour by himself. I’ve seen him a few times and I enjoyed every concert I’ve seen but something seems lacking. Ben’s new music doesn’t really carry the same weight of a lot of his older music and he seems to have gotten a little sappier. Maybe Ben needs Robert and

Darren to re-ignite the magic of his younger days.

The Spin Doctors

I will concede that since I was five my musical tastes have changed significantly, and many of the songs I loved seventeen years ago are terrible, but there was something golden about the Spin Doctors. I had forgotten about them until a couple weeks ago when they were on one of the trailer discs at my job at Blockbuster. It was like love all over again. I think the Spin Doctors are one of those bands who I remember liking them but nothing else. Honestly, I can’t even remember one of their songs.

Tyrannosaurus Rex

Awesome. That pretty much sums up this band. Any band that has two songs with ‘boogie’ in the title on their greatest hits album deserves some note. T. Rex was very much a product of their times, but their music still is catchy to me now. I can only imagine the music they would come out with now if only they got the respect they deserved. I know their songs; I just don’t know what any of them mean.

Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers

Are they broken up? I don’t

even know. I know Tom Petty is lending his voice to King of the Hill. Good for Tom Petty, bad for everyone else. His voice is much more suited to serenading me, not being the hick boyfriend of Hank’s niece. Tom Petty is like the opposite of the Spin Doctors; every time I listen to one of his albums, I’m astounded by the number of songs I knew but didn’t know were his.

I could’ve included more bands. There are a lot of bands that had one good song and left before reaching full potential. Come to think of it, the Spin Doctors might have been one of those bands; I really don’t remember. I’ll make an excep-

tion for them. Okay, they might have been a stretch. I think its important to note my first column was about the state of emergency in Pakistan and Musharraf. Now I’m writing about the Spin Doctors. There probably aren’t too many articles in the *Voice* which reference the global war on terrorism and the Spin Doctors in the same article, much less the same paragraph.

Joe is a fifth year senior from Appleton, WI. He is a political science and international studies major. With any luck Joe will be graduating this coming May. He has been involved in several organizations on campus including a stint as last year’s Student Senate president.

A look back at the best albums of the year



Matt Loosbrock

2007 has been a host to a variety of great music. To make it easier, here’s a list of ten albums that you can’t afford to miss.

10. Gogol Bordello - *Super Taranta!*: You won’t know what to make of Gogol Bordello at first, but then you’ll love them. Their gypsy-punk style brings less electric guitar and more accordion, but they’re louder than anything that came out this year. But underneath their quirky songs are messages of acceptance and a reminder that past borderlines, we’re all related through a deeper tribal connection.

9. Smashing Pumpkins - *Zeitgeist*: The Pumpkins return with a disc that hasn’t rocked this hard since “Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness.” While there are only two of them (Billy Corgan and Jimmy Chamberlin), they played every instrument and vocal part themselves, and it paid off. The Smashing Pumpkins are back.

8. The White Stripes - *Icky Thump*: Jack and Meg experiment further, tackling immigration, bagpipes and even a guitar vs. trumpet battle on a cover of Patti Page’s “Conquest.” They remain deceiving in nature (both still pretend they’re brother and sister), but underneath their music is just damn good blues.

7. LCD Soundsystem - *Sound of Silver*: James Murphy brings more jives to his sophomore effort. Proving to be the funk/house album of the year, it might fool you to think it’s nothing more than quick beats and dance floor tunes. But underlying it are the frustrations of living in New York and being looked upon as “North American Scum.”

6. Rilo Kiley - *Under the Blacklight*: Fueling the sound of Fleetwood Mac, Rilo Kiley have never sounded better. Jenny Lewis is as playful as ever, yet the band’s maturity has evolved: almost half the songs are about sex (gasp!) The fact is Rilo Kiley has never pushed themselves as far and it paid off immensely.

5. Wilco - *Sky Blue Sky*: The boys from Chicago return to familiar alt-country sounds, but their song craft jumped in light years. Delicate sunshine and long walks may be more prominent than some would prefer, but no one can deny the genius and fragility on “Impossible Germany.”

4. Kings of Leon - *Because of the Times*: Southern rock never sounded so good. They’re messy, distorted, and singer Caleb Followill sounds like nails on a chalkboard, but the Kings are rock in its finest form: careless attitudes, wailing drums and a hell of a lot of guitar.

3. Kanye West - *Graduation*: More of a rock star than a rap star, Kanye West has made his most consistent and important album in his career. Evolving rap into more than catchy beats, *Graduation* is West’s proof that he is as good as he says.

2. Bruce Springsteen - *Magic*: Bruce Springsteen remains one of the prominent voices in American music. *Magic* has him returning to his roots, bringing more rock (and saxophone) to his music. The E Street Band has rarely been in less top form than here, and Springsteen’s lyrics are as heart striking as ever.

1. M.I.A. - *Kala*: No album is as jagged, hardened or horrifying than *Kala*. Whether she threatens to knock on the door of your hummer, or showing life from Africa, she never strays from pushing the hip-hop genre to the max.

Matt is a senior double majoring in music and creative writing who likes lots of music types, old and new (save for modern country, which is not his thing).

Letterdoku

		F		E				D
D		A	H		C	I		
	E			I			G	F
		C			I		B	E
F			A		H	G		
I	D			B			H	C
		H		A			C	
E		I			D	B		
G			F		B			A

Submitted

Difficulty: Medium

Rules for Letterdoku: Fill all of the empty squares so that the letters A to I appear once in each row, column and 3 x 3 box. Solution for Letterdoku appears at www.uwrvoice.com.

Controversial ‘Golden Compass’ a mediocre adaptation of children’s book



A.J. Hakari

Much ado has been made in recent weeks about “The Golden Compass,” specifically its alleged, not-so-pleasant overtones regarding Christianity. I’ve never read the Philip Pullman book the film’s based upon or any of the others in the series, so I can’t say for sure whether Pullman is an unjustly-targeted patsy or some atheist commie hell-bent on giving Jesus a roundhouse kick to the face.

But having seen “The Golden Compass,” you can rest assured that the flick has about as much a chance of doing great damage to organized religion as Uwe Boll has of turning out a three-star movie in anyone’s lifetime.

“The Golden Compass” takes place in a world very similar yet existing parallel to ours. This is a place in which our souls stride alongside us in the form of animal companions, polar bears reign supreme in the Arctic and a shady organization called the Magisterium seeks to stamp out mankind’s free will for good. The key to accomplishing their nefarious goals lies with Lyra (Dakota Blue Richards), a spunky young girl who’s entrusted with the last “alethiometer,” a golden compass that has the ability to reveal the truth about anything. With the Magisterium, led by the beautiful but diabolical Mrs. Coulter (Nicole Kidman), hot on her trail, Lyra goes on the run, setting out on a quest to free a group of children kidnapped by the Magisterium for

their own foul purposes and learn more about a mysterious, dust-like substance that binds all beings in all universes.

“The Golden Compass” is fueled more by the dollar signs in the eyes of the executives who gave it the green light more than by any heretical agenda. New Line seems dead-set on this film being the start of another mega-successful franchise in the “Lord of the Rings” vein, although there’s numerous moments where they come across as almost too confident in moviegoers demanding further chapters in this burgeoning saga.

So many plot twists and supporting characters are introduced before, like a five-year-old with the vegetables on his dinner plate, barely touching upon them before the ending credits roll, “The Golden Compass” sort of backs you into a position where you have no choice but to want a sequel just so all these raised questions can be answered.

... Richards turns in a solid performance as our young heroine ...

As far as story goes, the film serves up the typical genre fodder (good versus evil, young kid with a destiny to fulfill, etc.),

although it’s fodder that is easy on the eyes and pleasantly plotted-out. The cinematography is crisp, the production design is rather handsome, those computer-generated bears are kinda cool (especially when one’s voiced by Ian McKellen), and Richards turns in a solid performance as our young heroine, one with enough energy and moxie to overshadow Kidman’s ice-cold villainess and Daniel Craig’s ten-minute extended cameo as Lyra’s uncle.

It may not be as ideal as a return trip to Middle-

Earth, but “The Golden Compass” at least puts forth a little more effort and imagination than most of the quickie fantasy cash-ins currently crowding multiplexes.

A.J. is a senior year journalism student. He enjoys all genres, but he digs horror and documentaries the most.



Ken Weigend



Ratings for movies are based on a scale from one to five. A film that scores five stars is worth seeing at least once. A film that scores one star is horribly acted or directed, with no substance.



The Golden Compass” has already earned economic and commercial success as yet another in a slew of big budget fantasy novel rip-offs. Thanks to an avalanche of adaptations, the film is just another flight-of-fancy, a CGI-enhanced romp through mystical realms of talking animals and painted vistas. But what separates “Compass” is the frenzied congregation of parents and religious zealots denouncing the movie for the amoral and atheistic implications of the book. Director/Writer Chris Weitz has remained fairly accurate to author Phil Pullman’s source material. The film houses many of the virtues of a faithful film

adaptation, but atheists will be quick to point out the film is missing the insidiously dark metaphor of a twisted overlord institution: the Church. There is still a bevy of symbolism, but viewers will be hard-pressed to find the doctrine of a false God that has wrought so much controversy unto the novel. Set against a sprawling multi-verse containing a multitude of mirror-image realities, “Compass” centers around the world of young Lyra Belacqua (Dakota Blue Richards), a place wherein a human’s soul is not an idea but a tangible Daemon-familiar that travels alongside a person in the form of an animal. The scholars at her mock-Oxford school speculate Lyra to be a girl of prophecy. Given a pensive little object called an alethiometer, a golden compass looking toy that reveals the truth, Lyra is thrust into an adventure that will decide the fate of all reality. Though “Compass” shies away from religious undertones, it does still weave out a cautious warning personified by its all-powerful

Magisterium, a collection of totalitarian bureaucrats that seek to usurp free-will and choice -- more a slight against powerful governments than church.

This notion of free will is at the heart of “Compass” and is given voice within the Daemons scurrying about each frame. These furry representations of man’s ability to choose are given life by the cinemas own God of choice: CGI. Sadly, “Compass” prays at that alter a bit too much, leaving barely any breathing room for its real actors.

This overabundance of animation is compounded by too

Even the acting in the film teeter-totters.

many useless asides. A thrilling segment in the ice-bear kingdom

becomes a product-placement distraction as viewers expect the all too familiar looking polar bears to offer out frosty Coca-Colas, and the fortuitous presence of witch’s in the climactic battle appears to have been conjured up from the covens of the deus ex machina. Even the acting in the film teeter-totters. Nicole Kidman glides across the screen a milky-white goddess of treachery, almost glowing in her wickedness as she attempts to pervert poor Lyra. Young Richards, however, lurches across the screen, proving she was rushed into too much lime-light too quickly. Released five years ago “Compass” could have been a creative pioneer, but it is released now amidst a stale sea of mediocre fantasy farce. It caters to too many clichés of the genre and has its noticeable flaws, but there is still enough intrigue in the subtext to keep most viewers interested at least once.

Ken is a junior journalism major with a minor in film studies. He is an aspiring film critic and an avid DVD collector.

Students reflect on the holiday season

Samantha Wenwoi
samantha.wenwoi@uwrf.edu

According to the popular Christmas song, the holiday season lays claim to being “the most wonderful time of the year.”

And with the results of a March Newsweek poll showing that 82 percent of Americans identify as Christian, Dec. 25 holds a special significance in our nation’s psyche.

The proliferation of front yard nativity scenes and gingerbread men cookies can make it easy to forget that this sentiment is not universal.

For four UW-River Falls students, the sanctity ascribed to Christmas does not mesh with their religious beliefs. But whether it means celebrating a completely different holiday or skipping the festivities altogether, each brings a unique perspective to the holiday season.

Festival of lights

Sophomore Josh Greenberg, who is Jewish, didn’t have a Christmas tree in his home while growing up. Unlike the majority of his peers in Poplar, Wis., who waited in anticipation for Santa Claus to come down the chimney on Christmas Eve, the instrumental music education major looked forward to lighting the first candle of the Hanukkah menorah with his family.

Hebrew for “dedication” or “consecration,” the eight-day celebration commemorates the 165 BC rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem after its defilement by Greek-Syrian invaders.

According to Jewish history, when it came time to relight the rededicated Temple’s menorah, there was only enough oil to keep the candles burning for one day.

Amazingly, the menorah went on to burn for eight days.

It is from this miracle that Hanukkah gained its nickname as “the Festival of Lights.”

A candle on the Hanukkah menorah is lit every evening at sundown. By the end of the holiday eight candles are aflame.

“The tradition is to light the menorah from right to left,” Greenberg said. “It’s the same as you read Hebrew.”

The nightly lighting of the Hanukkah menorah is a family affair. Blessings accompany the ceremony, as well as the sharing of Jewish folk tales. Food is also consumed; according to Greenberg, this usually consists of potato pancakes called latkes and gefilte fish, which is stuffed walleye or pike.

“For students of different religions, you’d think that school would be more understanding about allowing them days off. But in most cases, that is not so.”

Josh Greenberg,
UWRF sophomore

The 20-year-old said gifts are exchanged, but the opportunity to spend time with loved ones is more important.

“We get presents but it’s not a big shindig,” he said. “We try to focus on the family meaning of being together instead of presents.”

Based on the Jewish calendar, Hanukkah’s dates alternate every year, but always fall within the



Left: A brightly lit Christmas tree adorns the window of Brite Idea Photography on Main Street in downtown River Falls. Right: An array of snowflakes cast a glow over the parked cars on Main Street. Although Christmas is popular for UW-River Falls students, there are also some who celebrate other holidays this time of year, or even nothing at all.



Kenny Yoo/Student Voice

November-December holiday season.

This year’s Hanukkah celebration of Dec. 4-11 meant that Greenberg, who is over two hours away from his family, had to forgo the holiday.

“For students of different religions, you’d think that schools would be more understanding about allowing them days off,” he said. “But in most cases, that is not so.”

Residence hall rules prohibiting candle lighting, as well as the lack of a Jewish presence in River Falls, were also contributing factors, Greenberg said.

“If you’re not home and you’re not in a religious community, you can’t celebrate,” he said. The sophomore said he had the option of heading to a synagogue in the Twin Cities to commemorate Hanukkah, but that it would have cost money to participate in the festivities.

“Depending on where you go, it can be pretty expensive,” he said.

Just another day

Junior Muriel Montgomery is very opinionated when it comes to the topic of religion.

“I believe that religion should be eradicated from the earth,” she said.

The English major grew up celebrating Christmas with her family, but decided to become an atheist at the age of 11. She cited “rationality, reason and common sense” as the reasons behind her decision.

“I looked around, saw no God, and decided there must not be a God,” she said.

Therefore, the mother of two said she does not buy into the holiday season craze

“On December 25th, I wake up, check the calendar and realize that all of the stores are closed. It’s a good day for catching up on laundry and chores.”

Muriel Montgomery,
Atheist

“On December 25th, I wake up, check the calendar and realize that all of the stores are closed,” she said. “It’s a good day for catching up on laundry and chores.”

Montgomery said that her attitude toward Christmas is uncommon even among fellow atheists; many of whom she said still celebrate the holiday even though they do not believe in God.

“Although it’s not even popular among atheists, I am an atheist who believes that Christmas is founded on religious ceremony and hoopla,” she said. “And I don’t particularly think that’s a good thing for my family.”

Muhammad and Santa Claus

Sophomores Sanaa Jaman and Qurina Khan were raised in the Muslim faith. Their fathers are from Kuwait and Pakistan, respectively. But their mothers happen to be Minnesota-bred Catholics.

As a result, although both Jaman and Khan received an Islamic upbringing, they both have Dec. 25 circled on their calendars.

“Even though our family is Muslim, we still celebrate Christmas,” Jaman, a chemical engineering major, said. “We thought it would be interesting to do even though we don’t necessarily believe in the entire concept.”

“As a Muslim, we’re not supposed to celebrate holidays that are not Muslim,” Khan, an English major, said. “Because my mom’s a white Christian, me and my sister still celebrate Christmas.”

For Jaman, the adoption of Christmas into her holiday repertoire occurred upon her emigration to the United States from Kuwait during her senior year of high school.

Being surrounded by her mother’s family and her new Christian friends prompted her to start decking the halls.

“Everybody does it here, so we might as well expose ourselves and see how it is,” she said. She also mentioned a desire to learn more about Christianity as a reason for joining in the Christmas spirit.

“I like to expand my horizons and expose myself to different things,” she said. “It shapes me as a person.”

The 21-year-old said celebrating Christmas allows her to become closer to her friends.

“It’s something that they celebrated all their lives and I like sharing,” she said. “You’ve got to be open to other people’s religions so they’re open to yours.”

Khan, a Stillwater, Minn., native, grew up straddling the Islamic and Christian divide. She said that Christmas was celebrated in her household as a way of strengthening the ties to her mother’s family.

“We didn’t want our family to be alienated,” she said.

The 19-year-old said instead of commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, she revels in the social trappings of the holiday, such as Santa Claus, decorated Christmas trees and time with her loved ones.

“We celebrate the more cultural aspects instead of the religious,” she said. “To me, it’s just a time for giving, for family and friends.”

Both Jaman and Khan mentioned that an Islamic counterpart to Christmas does exist. Called Eid, this three-day celebration occurs at the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, during which Muslims fast every day until sundown. Eid breaks the month-long fast, and is a time for exchanging presents and giving to charity.

Because Islamic holidays are based on the Arabic calendar, the start of Ramadan moves back 10 days every year, Khan said. Sept. 13 marked the first day of Ramadan this year. But occasionally, Ramadan and Eid coincide with the traditional holiday season. Khan said she is looking forward to this happening in the future.

“It’d be cool because everybody in my family would be celebrating at the same time,” she said. “Everybody’s in that giving time of mood.”



Submitted Photo

A Hanukkah celebration at the Miller Hill Mall in Duluth, Minn. UWRF sophomore Josh Greenberg is pictured in the background playing his soprano saxophone. Greenberg was part of the local klezmer band that played holiday music in front of the eight-foot tall menorah.