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Media piracy causes severe consequences for UWRF students

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In a campus and nationwide effort, people who pirate media over the Internet are being targeted by the FBI, the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA).

According to FredNet Senior Systems Administrator Paul Bladl, universities across the country are being targeted, and students caught illegally downloading media at UW-River Falls face steep ramifications.



Muraski

“We [at UWRF] don’t actually seek out students pirating music,” he said. “Whoever owns the media does.”

Bladl explained that organizations that own media send letters to the University telling them which IP addresses are involved in pirating. An IP address is a unique “number” assigned to a certain computer attached to the campus network.

The University is then able to trace the IP addresses back to the student associated with them and warn them that what they are doing is illegal.

Bladl also noted that the first time a student is caught pirating media, a warning letter is sent to them. He estimates that about 30-40 letters have been sent to UWRF students so far this semester, which is “on the low end” compared to national figures.

The second time a student is caught they are stripped of on campus wired and wireless Internet privileges for 30 days. The third time being caught means no wired or wireless Internet access for the rest of their collegiate career at UWRF.

Previous to Bladl handling pirating on campus, Computer Support Services Manager

Mary-Alice Muraski was in charge for a year. She said she sent out four letters to students during that period, and noticed an increasing number of students downloading media through their wireless Internet.

“When we’re notified by the RIAA and MPAA, they simply tell us that they have tracked down media that has been shared using our Internet,” she said. “They send us a timestamp of when it happened and the IP address it was downloaded using, and then we look up the IP address and see what student and computer it is connected to.”

Muraski also said that the University is able to track pirating through wireless Internet as well because students must log in with their Falcon account. Thus, officials know who is pirating media and when it is taking place.

A UWRF senior who wishes to remain anonymous said he received a letter from the RIAA regarding pirating music last spring.

“The letter was forwarded to me as a response to a letter the University received from the RIAA regarding a violation,” he said in an e-mail interview. “It basically said that my IP address had been found to be downloading music from some server.”

The student said he wanted to make it clear that the letter he received was not just a warning letter from the RIAA that the University’s policy refers to, but was a letter sent to him from the RIAA.

“This letter was an actual notice that [a] possible lawsuit could be initiated,” he said. “So it is important to understand that the UWRF policy only refers to [a] ‘cease and desist’ letter from the RIAA, but my letter was not a ‘cease and desist’ letter—it was much more serious.”

Muraski said that the intent of the University’s letters to students is to give them more information on what could happen to them, and that the University does not share

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Scholarship art sale underway



Sally King/Student Voice

The Art Department’s annual Scholarship Art Sale began Wednesday and will run through Dec. 10 in KFA’s Gallery 101. Glass, ceramics, painting, fibers, jewelry, printmaking, photography and mixed media are available for sale. Gallery hours for the sale are 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. and 7 - 9 p.m.

UWRF to hire police officers in January

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Two new police officers will be hired on the UW-River Falls campus in early January following a formal interview process.

Candidates considered for the positions have filled out an application online and have submitted résumés. The UWRF human resources department was responsible for pre-screening and compiling the list of candidates to be interviewed.

A committee was formed to make recommendations for the final candidates that will be hired. The committee is comprised of a UWRF student, staff members and local law enforcement officials.

Sandra Scott-Duex, the

director of residence life at UWRF, headed the committee that was formed to conduct the interviews.

“I believe they had to submit a résumé or there was a questionnaire they had to fill out,” she said. “The application process is the application, the initial screening interview and then the final interview with Dick Trende.”

The interviews were scheduled for Dec. 1 and Dec. 2 with the actual hiring expected to take place in the first days of January. The committee screened each candidate and forwarded the names of the final recommended candidates to Public Safety Director Trende.

The names of the candidates and the specific questions to be used during the interviews

have been kept confidential.

Trende said that there was a minimum standard required of applicants and the process was competitive.

“There is a minimum standard established for hiring candidates,” he said. “They had to be licensed as police officers either they were grandfathered by having been a police officer or they just obtained their license.”

Scott-Duex said that it was important for the perspective police officers to have an understanding of what it means to be a police officer on a college campus as opposed to a police department.

“We’re looking for individuals who understand what it means to be a police officer on a university campus, that’s

ideal,” she said.

Trende said that he was seeking candidates who would work well on a campus and who exhibited the necessary leadership skills.

“They have to be somebody who can work in a University environment. First and foremost is they have to care about the students, they have to care about the faculty and staff and they have a strong sense of ethic, that’s huge,” he said. “They’re setting an example to the campus community and the educational institution is entitled to have that quality of a candidate where you’re going to have a professional.”

Sgt. Janis Bock of the River Falls Police Department is a

See Police officers page 3

University to launch newly designed Web site next semester

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A new design and organization of the Web site for UW-River Falls will be introduced in the spring semester of 2009.

The new UWRF Web site will be different in design, in the way it looks to its audience and how the site is organized, such as the key words that are used and the information under each area. The navigation layout of the site, which allows for travel from page to page, will also change.

Kevin Bertelsen, director of the publications office, has been working to try to make the Web site more efficient for people to move around the site and find the information they are searching for.

“How it is organized will become leaner and the navigation will be more efficient for people to make it through the site,” Bertelsen said.

The project for a new Web site started a year ago when UWRF hired an outside marketing firm called Woychick Design. According to Bertelsen, their purpose is “to help

See Web site page 3

Oracle Calendar software now available to students, staff

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UW-River Falls is promoting a new software program called Oracle Calendar to increase the number of users and improve the system for current users.

The program will allow users to upload their schedule online so that others can quickly determine when

other users are available and when they have class.

The program serves as a personal calendar and time management application that allows individuals and groups to schedule meetings and organize events, said Mary-Alice Muraski, computer support services manager of information technology systems.

According to Rebecca Vandenhoy,

a student in charge of Oracle user training, the program is very user-friendly and allows users quick, easy access to their calendar and meeting setup.

“Users do not have to have to communicate with each member verbally or through e-mail but can easily see if a user is busy or available,” she said.

The plan is to allow students to

request that their class schedule (which is on eSIS) get loaded into their calendar. One big advantage is in scheduling group or team meetings—if everyone loads their class and work schedule-selecting a time or several times would be very easy, Muraski said.

If more students and staff upload their school and work schedules, the software becomes more effective.

“The goal is to have as many people using the software as possible,” Rachel Westlund, a junior involved in marketing the project, said.

The University plans to incorporate a variety of methods to market the calendar software. A table will be setup in the University Center, posters will be placed around cam-

See Oracle page 3

VOICE SHORTS

UWRF hosts folk-inspired play

The UW-River Falls theater department will perform "Telling Tales" at 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 4 to 6 and 11 to 13 in the Blanch Davis Theatre in Kleinpell Fine Arts building. The play, directed by Gorden Hedahl, is an original production developed by the cast based on traditional folk and fairy tales from around the world. The cost is \$8 for adults and \$5 for students.

NSSLHA hosts pancake breakfast

The National Student Speech Language Hearing Association will be hosting a pancake breakfast fundraiser from 8 to 10 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 6, at the Hudson Applebees. Tickets are \$6 per person. Tickets may be purchased in advance by contacting Taryn Culp at taryn.culp@uwrf.edu; tickets will also be sold at the door. Proceeds go towards the club.

Poinsettia sale in UC

The Horticulture Society will be selling poinsettias from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Dec. 10 to 11 in the University Center , and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 12, in the Ag Science Building.

Blake Fry to lecture on torture ethics

Special Assistant to the Chancellor Blake Fry will present a lecture on the ethics of torture at 4 p.m on Wednesday, Dec. 10, in the Kinni Theatre. The presentation will focus on the hundreds of refugees who have been victims of government-sponsored torture that have fled to the Twin Cities. The event is sponsored by the Social Justice Series and the event is free.

English seniors present original work

The English department will be hosting a senior reading from 4 to 5 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 11, in the Library Breezeway. UW-River Falls seniors will present their original work. Questions can be directed to Kelly Bryant at kelly.bryant@uwrf.edu or Jenny Brantley at jennifer.s.brantley@uwrf.edu. The event is free.

UWRF holds holiday concert

The UW-River Falls music department will present "A Holiday Extravaganza: Old Fashioned Memories," at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 11, in Abbott Concert Hall of the Kleinpell Fine Arts building. Dr. Kristin Tjornehoj will conduct the UWRF Symphony Band and the St. Croix Valley Symphony Orchestra.. Narrator Michael Norman will provide readings of Charles Dickens, Garrison Keillor and memories from historical diary entries from various sources. The cost is \$5 for adults, \$3 for seniors and \$2 for students.

Sigma Alpha hosts taco feed

Sigma Alpha will sponsor an all-you-can eat taco feed from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 11, at the River Falls American Legion. All proceeds from the event will go toward Sigma Alpha's Agriculture in the Classroom project. The cost is \$7 for adults and \$4 for children

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Snow brings myriad maintenance concerns

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Snow arrives annually in Wisconsin and brings with it a technical problem: how best to remove it, and what areas to clear first. UW-River Falls has its own Grounds Maintenance crew that has five full-time employees in snow and ice control.

If an inch or more of snow is on the ground, or whenever it gets icy, the UWRF snow and ice control team take action, Manny Kenney, assistant director of Grounds Maintenance, said.

The snow and ice control has a list of priorities for what areas they address first: emergency vehicle access, main/east walks from residence halls to the University Center, main entries of academic buildings, parking lots, secondary walks, connecting routes and university farms.

Kenney sent out this priority list to 1,000 affected people, and only one responded with a concern. The concern was about handicap safety, and Kenney agreed this needed to be taken into consideration.

"Unanimously, people agreed that the

first priority was emergency vehicle access," Kenney said.

Students who live on campus are most affected by snow removal since they rely on the sidewalks to get them to the University Center.



Sally King/Student Voice

A snow removal vehicle that employs large spinning bristles is used to clear off the sidewalks around campus.

"The snow removal is decent. Not the best that it could be, but decent. They remove the top layer of snow, but there is the bottom layer that is icy and they leave, until several students have fallen,"

junior theater major Ben Tatro said.

History major Drew Buehler holds the opposite opinion.

"The snow removal seems to be pretty good. At least as long as I've been here it's been good," he said.

The other people who are most affected by the snow removal would be the faculty and UWRF employees, as they rely on the safety of the sidewalks to get them to their daily jobs.

"On-campus is fine, but off-campus on the streets is another story," UWRF theater costumer Denise Baker said.

There are 10 miles of sidewalks on the UWRF campus.

"At times you may not be able to take a secondary walk, but there will be a safe route from one end of campus to the other. Please take the safer route," Kenney said.

Another concern is whether or not students are dressing safely for winter walking. High heels and sandals are not safe. Many students have to wear

high heels for job interviews or speeches but a suggestion would be to bring the high heels along in a backpack and wear the winter boots while walking on the snow and ice.

Faculty handbook receives summer duties update

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UW-River Falls department chairs' summer duties are now explained with more detail in Chapter II of the Faculty and Academic Staff Handbook due to a motion passed by the Faculty Senate.

The previous editions of the Faculty and Academic Staff Handbook included the department chair's summer duties as simply holding "responsibility for a departmental presence at freshmen summer registration and maintaining a minimal office presence during the summer."

The recent changes to the handbook will now include "typical summer responsibilities - but may not be limited to assuring an appropriate departmental presence for new student registration, maintaining an office presence and being the primary departmental contact in the event of an emergency."

The small changes to Chapter II are significant because of the position department chairs hold at UWRF.

"I think it is a big issue. Department chairs plays such a big role in the academic field," Kristen Hendrickson, budget director and vice chancellor for administration and finance, said.

At the Faculty Senate meeting on Oct. 22, a motion from the Faculty Welfare Committee was passed that would introduce a more specific detailed description of the department chair's roles beyond the school year. The Executive Committee sent the motion to Interim Chancellor Connie Foster, which was accepted as a permanent alteration on Nov. 17.

Hamid Tabesh, department chair of economics, commented on the additional duties to the handbook.

"I am clear of what I am responsible for, basically a lot of things, but it's good that they are making it clear what I am responsible for," Tabesh said.

The additional duties added to the handbook are part of a long process that has altered and developed the recent role of department chair on campus.

"A couple years ago, as an administrator, department chairs needed more compensation for their duties," Hendrickson said. "Compensation and summer duties in the summer were issues and, with an increase in the compensation, expectations [of department chairs] were still unknown."

With a well-earned increase in compensation and duties explained in the handbook, mathematics Department Chair Robert Coffman said he is pleased.

"I do believe that this is a good description and I believe that I am compensated for these duties," he said.

The recent responsibilities added to the handbook have always been expected of the department chairs, but the duties can be seen, in writing, in the next Faculty and Academic Staff Handbook to be printed this fall.

The recent changes do clarify the expected duties of the position during the summer in a more specific manner, but the handbook still lacks complete guidance.

"I think it helped it clarify and made it more explicit," Douglas Johnson, the interim associate vice chancellor for academic affairs and director of graduate studies, said. "But it still is somewhat vague. Yet, it is difficult to write a list of responsibilities of specific duties over a wide spread of departments. They did a good job accommodating."

Department chair officials hold an important role on campus. The additional summer duties now included in the handbook are just a small portion of what the position entails throughout the year.

"I have to schedule classes for every semester, including summer semester. Summer advising is also part of my department duty. I am here to talk and answer questions about economics, classes and events such as the job fair," Tabesh said.

With the long list of specific events and requirements, the crucial role of a department chair is to lead their department in the right direction.

"I look into the future, looking for trends, and factors that will be important to the department and bring it to the attention to teach," Tabesh said. "Our role is to be proactive, instead of reactive."

Late assignments a growing occurrence on campus

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As the temperature steadily drops and the end of the semester draws near, teachers and students alike have noticed an increase in workload and academic pressures that has led to an increase in students turning in late assignments or even failing to complete homework altogether.

Professors at UW-River Falls offered a wide range of opinions regarding the recent trend.

"Yes, definitely," English professor Michelle Parkinson said when asked whether this has affected her classes. "Everyone gets tired at the end of the semester, including me. That means that students are more likely to find themselves in trouble because they are often missing class as well."

Each instructor has a different policy for accepting late work, some more tolerant than others.

"My policy is clear, but lenient," Parkinson said. "I offer a 24-hour grace period and a

one-week extension that students can use once. Most students are good about turning things in on time."

Another professor in the English department who wished to be unnamed said that her zero-tolerance policy for late work is an extremely effective way to discourage students from submitting tardy assignments. She stressed that in the real world, being irresponsible can cost people their jobs, instead of just a grade.

Economics professor Pascal Ngoboka said he also stresses the importance of turning homework in on time to his students. He said that communication between students and teachers is key.

"I have a no late assignment policy. I spend 10 minutes the first day of class emphasizing this and making it clear. An assignment here or there can make a big difference," he said. Senior Adam Kells has said he has noticed the difference in policies between teachers.

"It is easier to turn in late work with some professors more than others, but as a whole I think that most don't tolerate late work and

there are consequences," he said.

Another student, who wished to remain anonymous, said that he has repeatedly gotten away with turning in work late or not at all his entire college career. Although he maintains a GPA of over 3.0, he said that on the occasion that he does attend class, he often either sleeps or leaves early.

"I think I've been to the Library Bar more than the actual library, and I've only been to the Library Bar a few times," said the fourth-year student, who will graduate in the spring. "In four years, I've probably spent less than 50 hours total doing homework and studying."

International students at UWRF shared unique thoughts about schoolwork and class attendance, which can be attributed to the difference in academic policy between the universities in their home countries and those of UWRF.

Miho Kondo, a Japanese exchange student, said that her professors at UWRF were extremely lenient compared to the strict guidelines in Japanese schools.

"They are too kind," she said. "For example, in America, many people are good at negotiating due dates. But in Japan, if a teacher sets a date, it does not change."

Kondo added that she has never turned in late work, and has missed only three or four classes in her college career.

Veeko Chen, an exchange student from Taipei, Taiwan, has a similarly strong work ethic.

"I always turn in homework on time," she said. "I have not skipped once yet this year." She added that in Taiwan, there is some room for students to discuss grades and late work with their teachers.

While students go about their work in different manners, Parkinson stresses the importance of punctuality and offered an encouraging message as papers and assignments pile up.

"We're all in this together," Parkinson said. "Let's try to negotiate and be fair."

RIVER FALLS POLICE/PUBLIC SAFETY

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

November 14
- Blaze H. Swift, 19, was cited \$249 for underage consumption at Stratton Hall.
- John C. Seitz, 19, was cited \$249 for underage consumption at Stratton Hall.
- Thomas M. Harm, 20, was cited \$249 for underage consumption at Stratton Hall.

November 16
- Ninety rolls of toilet paper were discovered missing from the custodial closet at the Ramer Field toilet facility. There are no sus-

pects at this time.
- Shawn D. Overton was cited for disorderly conduct.

November 17
- Zachary P. Steeno was cited for retail theft.

November 20
- Rodney I. Sanders, 19, was arrested and cited for possession of marijuana and underage possession of alcohol.

- Nicholas P. Vignalo and Timothy B. Libra were cited for retail theft. Libra was also cited for underage consumption-second offense.

November 21
- Brian J. McDowell, 19, and Christopher M. Mueller, 18, were arrested and cited for possession of marijuana and underage possession of alcohol. McDowell was also cited for intent to deliver.

- Kristin E. Schamaun was cited for operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated.

November 23
- Three jackets collectively valued at \$550 were stolen from a N. Main St. residence during a party. There are no suspects.

November 24
- Matthew C. Botz, 20, was arrested and cited for possession of drug paraphernalia.

Pirating: Legal alternatives to file sharing include iTunes, Amazon.com

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any information with the RIAA or MPAA unless they are requested to through a subpoena.

“Our letter informs and educates as to what you should be doing to educate yourself on this issue,” she said. “There are many resources here on campus to help, including FredNet which will talk to students if they have any questions on file sharing.”

In the case of the UWRF senior, he said he thought he would be warned before more severe action was taken.

“An individual may not be warned before more serious action is taken against them,” he said. “After receiving the letter and speaking with a person on

campus, I researched the RIAA Web site and found out that this letter was, in essence, a settlement letter.”

The student ended up settling with the RIAA out of court for “a considerable amount of money.” He said he no longer believes in pirating media, and that “downloading music is not worth having to pay a fine.”

According to the RIAA Web site, “global music piracy causes \$12.5 billion of economic losses every year, 71,060 U.S. lost jobs, a loss of \$2.7 billion in worker’s earnings and a loss of \$442 million in tax revenues.”

The organization’s Web site also states that the goal of the RIAA’s anti-piracy efforts is to “protect the ability of the recording industry to invest in new

bands and new music and, in the digital space, to give legal online services a chance to flourish.”

Muraski said that there are smarter, more ethical ways to obtain music and movies.

“iTunes is far cheaper than the several thousand dollar fines students can face if they get caught,” Muraski said.

Bladl said he agreed and said there are other campus resources that can help rid computers of piracy software.

“My advice would be to just not illegally download or share media,” he said. “iTunes, Amazon.com and MySpace are good alternatives. And for students living on campus, FredNet can help set up computers and eliminate file sharing software for free.”

Police officers: Transition from public safety unit to police force to begin next semester

from page 1

member of the interview committee. She said that during the interview process, a panel of six interviewers asked each applicant a series of 19 questions.

Bock said that the UWRF campus will benefit from the formation of an eventual police force and that the faculty and students on campus will receive a higher quality of service as a result and that establishing a police force on campus would enable the University to deal with its own security and safety issues.

“The University will have more of an opportunity to be proactive,” Bock said.

Trende said that a campus police force would make tools and resources available that would help the public safety department, to be renamed University police and parking following the new hires, address the safety issues of the people on campus.

“If there is somebody that maybe is following you or something like that, a security officer can try and protect you, but they don’t have the authority to say ‘stop’ and have that person stay, whereas a police officer does have that authority,” Trende said. “We’re able to act on that ability to provide a safer environment in comparison to what we can currently.”

Web site: Student organization pages to be eliminated from new site

from page 1

develop a whole new brand for the University.” They are also assisting in the design of heavily visited pages, such as the home page.

Woychick Design will help the UWRF campus “find a way to tell its story in a clear and compelling way,” Dan Woychick, principle and creative director of Woychick Design, said.

Based on reflections, the new Web site will bring stories about what it is like to be a student at UWRF and will showcase experience that includes narratives of student and alumni life.

“We’re trying to distinguish ourselves from other universities and tell our story about who we are,” Campus Web Coordinator Michael Woolsey said.

The new Web site is due for an update and marketing for the new site started two to three years ago. According to Bertelsen, in order for a Web site to grow and attract a new audience it needs to be reconditioned from time to time.

“There is a sense that the University needs to focus its self and its messaging to its various publics,” Bertelsen said. “It’s important to make things accessible to the public in a competitive environment.”

According to Benjamin Klinkner, a UWRF student majoring in animal science, he uses the e-mail and Desire to Learn on the UWRF Web site everyday and the eSIS and Library link occasionally.

“It doesn’t surprise me that there revamping a new Web site,” Klinkner said.

Research was conducted for six months before arranging the new layout of the Web site. Members of Woychick Design asked participants in the study how they would organize the UWRF Web site. In the past it had always been what the staff of the University speculated the public wanted to see on the site.

“They need to balance it out for those people not on campus,” Woychick said.

The study asked current and perspective students, faculty and alumni what they want the University’s Web site to provide. The study collected information by using an online survey and focus groups. According to Woolsey, 300 out of 40,000 alumni were included in the random sampling.

Alyssa Eder, a UWRF student majoring in social work said the current Web site is not efficient for the items that students use the most.

“I don’t like how you have to scroll down to be able to check e-mail, it should be at the top of the Web site,” she said. “Most people use the site for e-mail.”

The surveying was done at the University Center and was conducted by eight students. Many of the students involved in the study were freshmen and did not have experience getting information from the site. A site map was produced that shows a map of what the Web site will look like and how things will be grouped together.

Woychick said the Web site is a communication tool and “allows publications to help get its message out to its audience.”

The new Web site will include 50 directories that hold web content compared to the 500 directories that currently has. Student organization pages, which consist of at least 100 folders, will be eliminated from the new site. It was decided based on the fact that these organizations come and go and the pages become outdated, old and not properly taken care of. They have also found that many organizations have been using other sources, such as Facebook and MySpace, to get out information about their organization. Having a site map that only holds 50 directories will limit the results that are relevant.

“Search ability should be more accurate for users of the site,” Woolsey said.

The new site will be rolled out in sections during the spring semester.

Oracle: Software purchased in 2003, upgraded this year

from page 1

pus and there will be screensavers on the University computers to inform students of the new software.

There will be Web sites created and workshops available the last two weeks of the semester to further inform students, Vandenhoy said.

According to Muraski, the software was originally purchased with a maintenance fee by the University in 2003 and was upgraded this year.

UWRF student Timothy Richert said he questions the University’s motives.

“I think it’s not valuable, it’s dangerous and it makes me wonder why the administration pushed so hard for a program that records and displays the whereabouts of students,” he said.

Muraski said the software can be accessed through a variety of methods. On campus students can use the program by logging in with their UWRF student identification number. Staff can use the Web interface and have access to Oracle via a desktop application as well.

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Fresh sliced turkey breast, applewood smoked ham, provolone, and tons of lettuce, tomato, and mayo! (A very traditional, yet always exceptional classic!)

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Good luck with your finals!
~the Student Voice staff

EDITORIAL

Diversity course affects perspectives

As people drive into River Falls they pass by one of two signs, each proudly displaying the claim that River Falls is an inclusive campus and part of a diverse and inclusive community. But as students getting an education for the real world here at UW-River Falls, are we really becoming educated to understand diversity and what it takes to be inclusive?

One class that focuses on the core concepts of inclusivity is JOUR 315, "Race, Class & News." The course, taught exclusively by journalism professor Sandy Ellis, takes a broad look at the way race and class are viewed and dealt with in American society. The course focuses first on class and how Americans are taught to ignore the growing division between the haves and have-nots. Issues ranging from the shrinking middle-class to the minimum-wage trap, the idea that people working minimum wage do not make enough to escape their poverty level, are discussed.

The second half of the semester turns towards race and how minorities must struggle every day in the face of meritocracy and white privilege. The idea that whites are unintentionally ignorant about the advantages they receive is a main focus.

By the end of the semester, students are intended to have achieved a better understanding of how the lower class and minorities must struggle day after day in a rip-tide of inequality.

The class is currently directed towards the practice of reporting race and class in the field of journalism, and discusses serious, yet misunderstood and underrepresented, issues relevant to every person regardless of status and ethnicity. UWRF, a University dedicated to providing a rounded world view to its students, needs to adapt this course into a general elective; an elective mandatory for every student, regardless of major.

We have signs about being diverse, but what are we doing to promote it and teach students what diversity actually encompasses? Unfortunately, some of the global perspectives and diversity classes that fill this requirement fail to expose the ugliness of racism that Journalism 315 depicts.

Ellis' syllabus is a great template to work off of, a wrecking ball that knocks down the walls of ignorance. It is a class that forces students to examine themselves, remolds the lenses they see the world through and enhances their global perspective.

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

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN RIVER FALLS STUDENT VOICE

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Student flees from potential violence

I don't think the column's author of "Students ridiculed for weekend departure" thought up this response: What about avoiding violence on campus?

In the same paper, I read about how some one got arrested for battery and possession of brass knuckles. That just makes me want to stay on campus with the pending threat of being beaten to death by brass knuckles.

I would much rather go back to my lovely home town of Woodbury or to my uber safe apartment in Minneapolis than stay on campus with something that scary around the bend.

Needless to say, outside of

that little scary, if not thrilling, part of River Falls, for those of us who weren't so lucky as to find our BFFs at college, River Falls might as well be a dead, zero fun zone.

Amy Lippert, student

Freshman low-blows uncalled for

I have a question for you, Brad Brookins. You say you have great friends and that is why you stay on campus. Well, good for you. But what happens when you graduate (let's be generous here) in two years and find yourself alone because your friends have also? What are your options?

You can follow your

friends, make new ones, go off alone, or possibly go back home. Now why would following your friends be more acceptable than going home to your family?

If you want to go to a school where people stay on campus on the weekends you shouldn't have chosen a commuter college.

And when you speak of the flashing lights in front of Crabtree and McMillan, all I have to say is those people going home are probably freshmen, and they probably miss home, and they probably don't value the same things as you and this makes them scum, right?

I get it, as the most self-pro-fessed social person on campus you think you have authority over those that DON'T rely on their friends to rule every aspect of their

life.

You are a soon-to-be senior, so low-blows at freshman are pretty easy to deliver. Good for you, Brad. And while you're at it, why don't you toss a couple kicks at those pesky squirrels on campus? Or here's a thought, complain about something else unoriginal and overblown such as the parking issue, or lack of night-time activities in River Falls (even though the Twin Cities are 20 minutes away).

Please Brad, may I visit my boyfriend in Eau Claire this weekend? Or should I invite him over to campus and throw back a couple warm, flat beers in a dingy basement with a bunch of strangers?

Lacy Lukaszewicz, student

Suffering teaches acceptance of reality

By suffering through hard times we learn new strategies for life. Embrace a healthy OK'ness with suffering. Suffering is the only tool that leads to acceptance of reality.

People who avoid reality by running from their hard times have a tendency to present themselves as better than the rest of us, they tend towards blaming others for their own mistakes and they also become self-involved narcissists who don't mind hurting other people to protect their very shallow and frail sense of who they are.

People who do not allow themselves to suffer are inefficient. They never thrive in life, only just survive, because their energy is spent protecting themselves from feeling shame or vulnerability.



Mark Huttemier

Their thoughts are not based in reality and so they frequently overestimate their own abilities, and when they fail, blame others or the system for their shortcomings.

The wisest people have allowed themselves to suffer through the hardest of times. The lessons they have accepted through suffering have helped them to adapt and thrive in their present reality.

Their new acceptance leads to a life based in reality, a healthy sense of being present and belonging to ones experiences. Realistic hope allows us to predict our future success all the while preparing for the inevitable setbacks of life.

The challenge to people reading this is simple. Don't run from suffering or pain, go through it. Don't be a perfec-

tionist. Your performances in life are only based on your best efforts at any given moment, and the results of your performances often change, so they can never be an accurate reflection of your static and whole self.

Your static and whole self are judged only by whether you can honestly say that you really like who you are at any given moment. The end result of accepting and liking yourself is a happy and good life.

Perfection is a fool's pastime. Take calculated chances. Allow and learn from mistakes. Keep moving forward. Don't avoid pain and suffering by taking part in avoidant or addictive behaviors. Do seek support to process pain and suffering. You have everything to learn from it in the end.

Mark is a licensed Psychologist experienced in individual and group counseling, specializing in treating adjustment, depression, and anxiety issues. Mark's focus is on helping people develop and find balance between their sense of belonging, independence, mastery, and generosity.

Student input necessary for University success

Many students have qualms with the way in which the University operates. Many disagree with certain regulations, expenditures, and decisions passed, and believe that the University has been ignoring or avoiding students' opinions on decisive matters.

All too often decisions that affect students here are made without their consent, their input and sometimes without even their knowledge. Some matters that would have a significant impact on student life are open to student input in forums and meetings, but these are often announced (if

at all) in close proximity to their scheduled date and are grossly under-advertised.

In asking around, I have found students who are unaware of where they would go to speak for or against decisions in which they have a voice. The University has a responsibility to not only inform students of potential policy and budgetary decisions and allow them an appropriate opportunity in which to protest or advocate for it.

If more students were aware of what exactly their money is being spent on, they might be more likely to raise issue.

Chapters 17 and 18 of the University of Wisconsin System Administrative Code, currently a highly contested item among many UWRF students, would subject a student to University prosecution should they violate state and federal laws both on and off campus property. Essentially, the University may punish you for laws you break that are not University-related. Part of

this hotly contested document effectively removes a student's right to have a lawyer present to speak on their behalf.

If the thought on the potential enactment of such a regulation upsets you, and you wish to fight against it, many students and select student organizations feels the same way. I encourage you to get involved and inform the appropriate people of your opinions and thoughts.



Katie Heimer

Economy’s recession may hinder Santa’s gift giving

Each year, a generous, portly figure from up north voyages southward and, within the time constraints of Christmas Eve, delivers presents to all the deserving boys and girls of the world.

This altruistic philanthropists name is Santa Claus, and he stands as a shining beacon of selflessness and generosity in a violent world ruled by greed and egotism. Indeed, Santa rewards kindness and excellent behavior with this annual act of charity.

But this year, Santa may find himself in a thorny position. The recent stock market crash—one of the biggest in the history of our nation—has undoubtedly put Santa’s massive manufacturing operation on the tightest budget in years. Unfortunately for St. Nick, Santa’s proficient force of diminutive subordinates—the elves—have slowly become aware of their indentured status and have recently begun demanding more than just candy canes and



Joe Hager

gingerbread cookies as payment for their perennial service. You see, the economy doesn’t affect just human beings—elves, or whatever species they actually are, have families to support and gas to buy like the rest of us. Sugary holiday treats will no longer cut it and Santa had better realize it quickly and introduce some kind of profit-sharing or pension plan to the North Pole before his pint-sized production crew walks out.

I suppose profit-sharing wouldn’t work—Santa doesn’t even make a profit besides a few crummy cookies, some lukewarm milk and the feelings of fulfillment that come to him naturally as the world’s jolliest humanitarian. Oh, if only we could all work for such a wage. But if we’ve learned anything in 2008, it’s that a drastic change might be necessary to solve these complex economic problems. I suggest to Santa that he may want to think

about charging for presents this year. I know it sounds a little harsh, but have you seen the numbers on kids’ allowances these days? While the rest of us working, stressed-out adults are scrounging and saving every penny, snot-stained, candy-smearing 12 year olds from across the country are seeing their earnings rise and rise continually. It’s similar to the gap between rich and poor—we seem to be getting poorer while our damn kids are finding themselves needing bigger piggy banks. Santa, it’s all right to skim a little off these kids, isn’t it? Perhaps this year, St. Nick should send out a form letter to every child on earth, letting them know that some cold, hard cash is expected in return for that hot Fisher-Price digital camera or that Giddyup N’ Go Pony (now with snorting and galloping sound effects!). By

the way, what happened to regular-ass Legos? I say 20 bucks. Twenty bucks from every kid on earth should ease Santa’s budgetary pressures and should also provide a nice reward for those elves, who have been slaving away for our portly hero since the dawn of time. This will also teach our children that things are not free. Sometimes to get something good, you’ve got to sacrifice a little, and far too few people know how to do that. Myself included. Kids: start saving. And put an ice cube in the milk this year, Santa knows that crusty, tepid stuff isn’t nearly refreshing enough to wash down your mother’s terrible cookies. Merry Christmas!

Joe is a marketing communications major with a creative writing minor.

Second offenders to be met with punishment of servitude

Welcome back, ladies and gentleman. I was reading the latest issue of The Student Voice and I came across a very interesting letter to the editor. Actually, if I recall correctly, it was the only letter to the editor. Anyhoo ...

So there I was, lounging in my apartment listening to the sweet sounds of Tommy Emmanuel’s “Guitar Boogie” when I read this letter adverting attention to the notorious Public Safety reports section of The Student Voice. I’ll admit right this second that when I am not featured in this paper, I always motion directly for these often monotonous student disciplinary write-ups. So our friend wrote to the editor complaining about how brash we are in reporting our fellow students. Agreed, sir, agreed. We should not judge each other behind the mask of this mass media. I feel that first offenses should be completely omitted from the paper because, c’mon, everyone deserves a second chance, or everyone makes mistakes, or everyone has the right to be a complete idiot every once in a while. Give ‘em a break!

It happens, I understand, you just had to run that red light, or you just had to reach for the glove compartment for your insurance card only to have your entire drug paraphernalia collection spill out in plain sight of the arresting officer’s seven foot Maglite. If I were to write a letter to the editor right now, it would read like this:

Dear Student Voice, I appreciate your concern for the student population’s well being, and for giving me a very easy method to strike con-

versation with girls in passing under all circumstances, but give the first offenses a break, please. Sincerely, Brad Brookins

Now that we have that taken care of, let’s move on to bigger and better things: The second offenders. What’s up with that? Third offenses? FOURTH OFFENSE drinking tickets in the dorms? That’s unbelievable. Last year I read about a seventeen year old in Crabtree Hall who was cited a third drinking ticket. Are you kidding me? Since he was only seventeen and legally not considered an adult, I’ll leave him outta this. It’s the fourth and fifth offenders I want a crack at. I’m sorry, but it’s time to take a stand. Freshmen who come into the dorms and strike up a tally with Public Safety obviously are not in it out of stupidity. They’re proud of it, so it’s time to break the pride. I’m happy to report that I

have not received a single request to leave campus, so I’m retiring my title as Commander and Chief of all Off-Campus Travel. This week I’m instating myself as Public Humiliation Master Gunnery Sergeant. Anyone who’s charged with a second offense of anything will become my personal butler. For example: should you find yourself at the ass end of a failed underage breathalyzer test anywhere on campus, you can rest assured there will be a personally handwritten letter



Brad Brookins

under your door the following morning. You’ll be required to report to my place of residence at the mere snap of my fingers. For one week you will perform measly duties for me, such as cleaning my room, driving me around town at your expense and even writing my columns for the voice. I’ll save my particular favorite task for the weak, stubborn and especially proud group of multiple offenders—and for this I’ll need two people. I’ll need one offender as my salter, and one for my pepperer. At the snap of my fingers you both must salt and pepper whatever’s on my plate. I’m a picky eater, so if you think of yourself as a potential candidate for the Public Safety section of the paper, it would be best for you to practice your salting and peppering. Truth be told, I don’t even like pepper, but I’ll still need you to pepper my meal, so you better find a way to mask the taste. Some of you might be wondering, “but Brad, what have you got to threaten us with?” Should you not show up for roll call the immediate morning after your second drinking ticket, there’ll be hell to pay. I’ll write the Public Safety report section myself with gratuitous detail of each and every offender; mostly the description of the crime, what was said, how it was said, in what tone of voice things were said, side comments made by bystanders and passerby’s, details of the location of the crime, and, of course, a list of the offenders relatives and their contact information. I can’t wait.

This week I’m instating myself as Public Humiliation Master Gunnery Sergeant.

Brad is a senior double majoring in digital film & television and creative writing.

Christmas season becomes overwhelming

Christmas is coming, although our looming assignment deadlines and final exams can make it seem much farther away than it really is. I’ll spend some time with my family, watch my brother and cousins open their gifts, and probably watch a few Christmas specials on TV. Like most of us, I still look forward to, and participate in, the holiday. But I observe it mainly because I enjoy giving and receiving presents, and because of what it stands for: positive feelings, cooperation and renewed appreciation of family and friends.

But there are some things about the season that are not so exciting, things I could personally do without. You may be wondering why I wrote a column about Christmas this week, instead of next week. There are two reasons for that: one, because no other topic occurred to my exhausted brain; and two, to illustrate that almost everything about Christmas seems to start too early these days. It drives me nuts. Department stores are stocking their holiday merchandise as early as Halloween, trying to sell as much of it as possible by Christmas Day (almost two months later). That’s good for them, but not so good for consumers like me who are already annoyed with the rampant commercialism in this country. And what about the kind of merchandise the stores are selling? Fake trees, fake wreaths, fake snowmen, Christmas lights, elaborate yard displays, way too much candy

and company logos and mascots on ornaments. Stuff that many of us do not want and none of us need. And don’t forget the Christmas songs on the store speakers and all over the radio. You can’t escape them. These were good songs that actually had meaning at the time they were written, but have been driven into our heads so much over the years that now it’s hard to pay attention. And all of this combines—the shilling,

the artifice, the visual and aural repetition—into a monotonous blur that distracts us from what’s really important about the holiday. The result is that a lot of people are sick and tired of Christmas before it even comes. It’s a trend that seems to be getting worse, not better. So what is really important about Dec. 25? We all know that one: it’s allegedly the birthday of Jesus Christ the Savior, the Son of God, born in a manger to Joseph and Mary, etc. Having attended a Catholic school in my youth, I became all too familiar with the story. But truth be told, that’s another part of Christmas that bothers me.

For one thing, it probably was not his actual birthday. Early Christians supposedly chose that date because it coincided with a “Pagan” holiday celebrated by the

Romans. We have some archaeological evidence that a man called Jesus lived and died in the Middle East a long time ago, but beyond that it’s mostly speculation and faith. Because so little concrete information exists to validate Christmas in the first place, I have to question whether he really was the Son of God, how a god could have a human child, whether God exists in the first place and so on. And because the Bible is rarely cited as a valid historical source except by those who have already chosen to believe what it says, that doesn’t help me very much either. But I won’t go too far into that business. I

refer to myself as a journalism major and a “perpetual miscreant,” so that gives you a clear enough idea of my position. Despite all this annoyance and uncertainty, though, I can still say that Christmas means a lot to me. Corporations may obsessively milk it for all it’s worth, and it may have been based on a creed I no longer identify with. But I can appreciate the company of my family, the food, the gifts and the fact that this holiday still positively affects us in 2008. But whether you appreciate everything, something, or nothing about Christmas—or don’t celebrate it at all—I send you good vibes and wish you (in advance) a very merry End of Finals Week. The knowledge that another semester of school is finally over can make the eggnog taste a little sweeter.

Nathan is a journalism major, free thinker and perpetual miscreant.



Nathan Sparks

... the shilling, the artifice, the visual and aural repetition—[is combined] into a monotonous blur that distracts us from what’s really important about the holiday.

STUDENT Voices

What are your holiday traditions?

Courtney Miller, freshman

“Make Christmas cookies, we decorate the tree and the house, and we always have Italian food.”



Melissa Uline, senior

“Going to a christmas movie.”



Kelsey Anderson, junior

“Drive around to see all my relatives.”



Joseph Moore, senior

“Fight, drink, pass out, open gifts and have extended family over for dinner.”



Sam Powell, sophomore

“For Christmas eve, go to grandma’s house and exchange gifts among the extended family.”



Michael Ugan, junior

“Big ham dinner for Christmas with just the immediate family.”



Student Voices compiled by Sarah Schneider.

Basketball teams jump into new season



Sally King/Student Voice

Members of the Falcon women’s basketball team practice in the Karges Center. The team has been looking for a new attitude in its 2008-09 season. Head Coach Cindy Hovet says she is excited about the team’s current record of 4-1.

Women’s basketball acquires new attitude in 08-09 season

Paul Stanton
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After finishing 8-18 last season, the UW-River Falls women’s basketball team looks for its talented young players and a new sense of attitude to help them become contenders in the 2008-09 WIAC.

Already off to a fast start, the Falcons are currently 4-1 with wins against Northwestern College, North Central College, St. Mary’s and Grinnell. Their sole loss came at the hands of Judson University, where the Falcons lost a close game 53-49.

With the 4-1 start to the season, head coach Cindy Hovet said she is excited for her team.

“Obviously I’m happy that we’re off to a good start. We’ve been playing hard and competing in practice and in games. Having competitive sharp practices is the key to playing competitive sharp games,” Hovet said.

On Nov. 9, the Falcons kicked off the 2008-09 season as they traveled to the Kohl Center in Madison, Wis. where they played the Wisconsin Badgers in an exhibition game.

Though the Badgers were able to handle the Falcons easily, the team was able to walk away with a helpful learning experience.

In his third year as play-by-play voice for Falcon women’s basketball, Steven Linzmeier said he believes the Falcons will be able to turn a blowout loss into a positive.

“Madison was a great opportunity for the team. They got a chance to see their weaknesses exploited by a much better team,” Linzmeier said.

“Also to play in arena as beautiful as that, with Barry Alvarez sitting courtside, it was a

lot of fun.”

The Falcons come into the season losing three of their top scorers from a year ago, but with young, talented freshmen coming into the Falcons system, Linzmeier said he believes the Falcons will be much improved from a year ago.

“Taylor House and Tiffany Gregorich are two freshmen that are extremely fun to watch and I think they will have great careers as Falcons,” he said.

The Falcons were able to claim two impressive victories in front of their home crowd over Thanksgiving break.

On Nov. 25 the Falcons defeated St. Mary’s 67-49. Sophomore guard Tess Lardie’s 18 points and six rebounds paved the way for the Falcons 18-point victory.

Following up the St. Mary’s win, the Falcons played host to Grinnell College this past Saturday. With tough defense and hot shooting, the Falcons were able to beat Grinnell 97-37. Gregorich led all scorers with a career high of 24 points.

With five more games before winter break and conference play right around the corner, coach Hovet expects the competition to pick up.

“We are just now getting into a tougher part of our schedule, so the next five games before Christmas will be much tougher than the last five have been,” she said. “Also, UW-Whitewater is ranked No. 1 in the nation right now, and we always have a number of teams that break into the top 25. Our conference is tough every game.”

The Falcons begin conference play at home against UW-Oshkosh on Dec. 6.

Men’s basketball evens out record with back-to-back wins

Caleb Stevens
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After a rough start, the UW-River Falls men’s basketball team evened its record to 3-3 with back-to-back wins over Sioux Falls and Viterbo as they head into their conference schedule Saturday against UW-Oshkosh.

“I think we all know we maybe should have won another game or two in there, but we are what we are,” Head Coach Jeff Berkhof said. “Winning tonight gives us some good confidence going into [Saturday].”

The Falcons, who lost their top four scorers from last year’s 9-16 team, have to replace 37 points per game. But according to Berkhof, the real challenge for his young team is on the other side of the ball.

“We have some new players that are picking up some of those points, like a Wade Guerin or Jake Voeltz who both played limited minutes last year,” Berkhof said. “You only play five guys, scoring hasn’t been a problem for us in the past, it’s being able to defend.”

“This is a new group, and they have to learn how to win together.”
Jeff Berkhof,
head basketball coach

Forwards Guerin and Voeltz led the Falcons in their win against Viterbo Wednesday night by scoring 15 points each. Guerin, who led the Falcons with nine rebounds Wednesday, and Voeltz are two of the 12 underclassmen on the team.

Voeltz is one of three sophomore captains, along with guards Brady Hannigan and Jontae Koonkaew, who join senior guard Jesse Elling as the team’s leaders. The transition from incoming freshman to team leader is a big step, but one that instills confidence in the captains and the team.

“It’s different,” Hannigan said. “It gives you a lot more confidence that your teammates have confidence in you to vote you as a captain. It makes it almost easier, because you know you have the confidence of your teammates.”

Now after winning two straight contests to post a .500 non-conference record, the relatively inexperienced Falcons, who are “still feeling each other out” according to Hannigan, venture into one of the toughest

conferences in Division III basketball. The WIAC currently contains three of the top seven teams in the nation according to D3hoops.com, presenting an unforgiving road for a young team trying to establish its identity.

“This is a new group, and they have to learn how to win together,” Berkhof said. “I’m not sure that we knew how to do that those first two games, but we came back against Sioux Falls and did do that, so I hope that carries over to the rest of the season.”

The Falcons will have a good idea how they match up against the rest of the WAIC after three home conference games in the next ten days.

The highlight of the home stand will be the Dec. 13 matchup with the number five UW-Platteville Pioneers. Berkhof knows the road is tough and has realistic expectations for the team.

“It’ll be hard to crack the top three. But after that anyone can finish anywhere four through nine,” Berkhof said. “The top six of the nine teams make the conference tournament, so our immediate goal would be to make sure we’re



Sally King/Student Voice

The Falcons practice in Karges Center. The team has a 3-3 record after two consecutive wins.

in those top six teams.”

Berkhof said this team has a bright future for the next few years with a young team being able to grow together, and the three young captains are an integral piece to the puzzle of moving up in the WIAC.

Alaska native women’s hockey goalie excels with hometown teammate

Justin Magill
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If UW-River Falls freshman goalie, Melissa Deardorff, drove from her hometown of Anchorage, Alaska, it would take her more than two days to make the 3,202 mile trip to the UW-River Falls campus.

For the Falcons and UWRF Head Coach Joe Cranston, they have been miles well traveled, as Dearforff has teamed up with another Anchorage native goaltender, Cassi Campbell, to become one of the best goalie combinations in the NCHA.

Campbell said she was never on the same team as Deardorff, being a year older than her, but said the two talked about being on the same team when they went to college.

“It’s funny because we talked about it all the time, but mostly as a joke,” she said. “Now here we are together on the same team, splitting time, just the way we talked about it earlier.”

Sharing the net is exactly what Campbell and Deardorff are doing now, as opposed to playing against each other like they did in their junior levels.

“It’s nice to know this year we have two goalies that can go anytime,” Cranston said. “Last year we started Campbell 99 percent of the time.”

Last season, Campbell played in all 28 games for the Falcons, starting 27 of them. She had a 1.74 goals against, a .931 save percentage and compiled a 16-9-2 record.

In her first collegiate game, Deardorff shut out Augsburg College (Minn.) with a 22 save effort and a 7-0 victory for the Falcons.

“I was really excited, but nervous,” Deardorff said. “It was my first college game. After warm ups I was set to go.”

Deardorff said she fell in love with the city and her future teammates after one campus visit to UWRF.

“[River Falls] was a perfect fit for me,” she said. “I met some of the girls on the team and knew this was going to be



Sarah Schneider/Student Voice

Alaska native women’s hockey goalie Melissa Deardorff teams up with hometown friend Cassi Campbell on the Falcons’ roster. The two goalies were opponents in junior college, but seem to compliment each other well on the Falcon team.

the school I was going to come to.”

Coming from a smaller town, Deardorff said River Falls feels closer to home, but she also likes having Minneapolis and St. Paul close by if she needs to escape for a while.

“I’m from Alaska, so going from there to a big city would be hard,” she said. “River Falls is perfect, while I still have the opportunity to go to a big city nearby.”

With two games in the books for her, Deardorff has shown she has settled into the college game. A 94.6 save percentage and only two goals allowed is evidence of that.

“The one thing I thought I was going to have to adjust to the most was the speed of the college game,” Deardorff said. “It has not been that hard for me.”

In her high school career, Deardorff played for the Anchorage North Stars and, as mentioned before, never was teammates with Campbell.

“We lived in the same town, knew each other really well and are good friends,” Campbell said. “It is nice to have a friend on your side.”

Campbell gave insight to why Cranston might have two goalies from Alaska on his roster.

“Must have liked what he saw from the first one,” she said with a laugh, referring to her play last season.

One problem Deardorff comes to grips with is she does not see her family as often, especially during the holidays. She has grandparents that live in Hayward, Wis., but it is her parents that she did not see during Thanksgiving, and will only be able to see them for a short time during winter break.

“It’s hard with the travel,” she said. “But most of us teammates will be in town for Thanksgiving, so we will hang out together.”

Through seven games, Deardorff has played in two, allowed two goals and has saved 35 shots. She and Campbell have combined for the NCHA second best goals against per game at 1.5 goals a game and both rank

Taylor Swift hits charts, numerous demographics



Alayne Hockman

Taylor Swift fans can thank Joe Jonas for being part of the inspiration behind her new album, “Fearless,” released Nov. 11. From your first love to the “one that got away,” Taylor Swift hits home and has the power to heal a broken heart. A new face to the country music scene, Swift has climbed the charts, crossing over to the popular music genre on the radio. Even for those who do not appreciate country music, Swift seems to reach any music fan with her catchy melodies and heartfelt lyrics.

While her voice is not necessarily impressive or jaw dropping, the passion and sincerity in her lyrics are enough to leave you with goose bumps. In fact, you may not realize her songs are stuck in your head until you find yourself humming the tune on the way to class. The first track, “Fearless” conveys the feeling of falling in love when you aren’t expecting it. Like most of the other tracks on Swift’s new album, this one is particularly catchy. The second track, “Fifteen,” is about the naivety of being young and impressionable. The song tells the story of how Swift met her best friend, Abigail, and how they made it through their high school years together. Swift sings about her first date, first kiss and first love and how much her feelings have changed since then. “Love Story” is a sort of fairytale song-a Cinderella story, if you will.

In this slow ballad Swift is Juliet while her beau is Romeo. The couple has to sneak out to spend time together and plans to run away, but she gets anxious waiting for him. At the end of the song, the boy says all the things Prince Charming should tell his princess and asks her to marry him. “Hey Stephen” is probably one of the catchiest songs on the entire album. It begins with Swift humming the melody line and continues with her expressive lyrics. She sings about a crush and how she simply can’t help falling for him and wanting to be with him. The song is basically a guidebook on what to tell your crush if you want anything to come of it. Track five, “White Horse,” is a complete contradiction from “Love Story.” This track is about the disap-

pointment that comes with being hurt and broken hearted. Believing and trusting the boy she loved has brought her to the realization that real life is nothing like a fairytale; she didn’t realize how this guy just isn’t right for her until now. “You Belong With Me” can be described as an anthem for ladies everywhere who have that guy friend who doesn’t notice her the way she wants him to. Swift is singing to this guy she hangs out with, but he has a girlfriend. She wants him to see her romantically and understand they are perfect for each other. In addition to its all too commonly understood feeling, this song is also pretty catchy, with a tempo that is a bit faster than most of the other tracks. One of the most notable tracks, “Breathe,” is a slow, heartfelt ballad about being brokenhearted. Swift

can’t breathe without the person she has to live without, but she knows she has to. This song is perfect for anyone who has suffered a recent breakup. The tenth track, “The Way I Loved You” is a nice follow-up to “Breathe.” This ballad is about finding someone new but still missing that old flame that got away. It’s not that you don’t love the new person; it’s just not the same intensity of love with this other person. “The Best Day” is song is about being thankful for everything you had growing up and everything your parents have done for you. Swift is writing about her mother, which is not clear until the end of the song. Musically, “Fearless” is a step-up from Swift’s self-titled album, which was released in 2006. The new songs are catchier and speak to a wider demographic of music listeners.

Band supplies listeners with originality, locality



Erik Wood

As the music industry plunges into digital consumerism and online piracy, it becomes more difficult each forthcoming week to review a new artist. Artists nowadays are so incredibly paranoid about their work being pirated that they have been known to release the album via an

undercover name. For example, the Iowa nonet (9 person) psychedelic metal band Slipknot released their fourth studio album “All Hope Is Gone” under the band name, “Rusty Cage” to prevent early leaks onto the Internet. With that said, I truly cannot find any big name releases worth reviewing. In lieu of the lackluster music selection, I’ve decided to review a group out of our very own backyard, Minneapolis, Minn. The band is Weaver at the Loom and the album is “I Was Searching and I Found.” If you’ve already formed a negative opinion before taking a listen, I understand. Whenever I hear the word local, I am immediately forced into a pity listen. Playing an

endless lineup of the Twin Cities club circuit does not exactly scream “talent,” nor does it shout out “success.” But, for only being together about two years and only dropping a five song EP, this band will not remain a secret for long. They are a diamond in the rough. The debut EP, “I Was Searching and I Found,” is almost a mini concept album, one in which the listener is thoroughly pleased with each ongoing second. It’s not the type of album that you listen to once and shove to the side in search of another artist. This album begs you to click repeat and let yourself go into the soothing euphoria that is Weaver at the Loom (WATL). Although each song is uniquely written, they flow

seamlessly into a saga. Each track is overwhelming with emotion and engages the listener with mindless melodies and breathtaking choruses along with epic guitar work. The album brings an almost scholarly approach to its listeners. WATL makes it widely known that a majority of the members are developed and skilled musical students. It’s pretty obvious, most EPs touch the surface of what a band has to offer and gets a listener ready for the real deal, but WATL is just too impressive with their debut. Each song has a ballpark average of about six minutes and, before you know it, you’re onto the next track wondering how many times you’ve listened to the album. My personal favorite

track of the debut, “You Can’t Enjoy Life Before and After,” is almost a clash between a more composed Death Cab tune comfortably woven with your favorite Straylight Run track. The acoustic guitar and piano melodies flow interwoven calmly through your tympanic membrane producing sheer musical beauty. I’m sad I discovered such an incredible band so late, but am absolutely ecstatic for future releases. If there is any album you buy this year, disc and all, not that digital media crap, it’s “I Was Searching and I Found”. I recommend this to all listeners, enjoy as I have, please.

‘Australia’ evokes disagreement amongst reviewers



A.J. Hakari

It’s never a good sign when the projectionist tells you to pack a lunch before watching a movie. This happened to me when I went to go see “Australia,” a big slice of epic pie from “Moulin Rouge!” director Baz Luhrmann. I took my friend’s words with a grain of salt, since I dug Luhrmann’s crazy revisionist musical and assumed the man would employ similarly stylistic flair to his latest project. Unfortunately, a rude awakening awaited me as “Australia’s” beginning credits rolled. What begins as a plucky tribute to the sweeping epics of yore soon sours up and turns into a bloated example of melodramatic storytelling at its most taxing. “Australia” starts off in the early days of World War II. Feisty socialite Sarah Ashley (Nicole Kidman) has had enough of her absentee husband, making the lengthy trek from England to Darwin, Australia to check on the cattle ranch he’s become so engrossed in. But not only has Sarah’s husband bit the big one, but local baron King Carney (Bryan Brown) is hell-bent on claiming the ranch and completing his stranglehold on the Australian beef market. Of course, Sarah isn’t going to take this sitting down, so after recruiting a rugged cat-

tle driver known as Drover (Hugh Jackman), she makes the perilous journey to move her herd from the ranch to Darwin. Time, the elements, and Carney’s lackeys are all working against Sarah, but she tries her hardest to persevere in spite of it all, even falling hopelessly in love with the dashing Drover in the process. I understand perfectly what “Australia” is going for. It’s a modern-day ode to classic Hollywood epics that focused on the indomitability of the human spirit, even in the harshest of conditions. As it turns out, the indomitability of the human spirit is about as interesting as watching cheese age, or at least that’s how it is in this endeavor. The trouble is that the movie overestimates its own strength and depends way too much on the story’s backdrop to carry it to the finish line. Luhrmann focuses most of his energy on playing up the film’s spectacle angle, which ends up making “Australia” look fantastic, but ultimately feel semotionally hollow. The absence of a tongue-in-cheek spirit only confirms the fact that Luhrmann unwisely took this project on with the straightest of faces, resulting in a dour, molasses-like pacing that hinders the film’s last couple of acts. On a visual front, though, “Australia” has it made, with some of the most gorgeous cinematography you’ll ever see in a film this year. Luhrmann does a fantastic job of capturing the beauty of the Australian wilderness (too bad nothing interesting happens in it). Plus, despite the hokey material, Kidman

and Jackman each deliver crackerjack turns, with the latter doing an especially solid job of playing the picture’s rough-and-tumble protagonist. Had the story not been so flavorless and the characterizations so one-dimensional, there would have been potential for a big, burly and bustling adventure out of this premise. Instead, the most “Australia” will inspire viewers to experience the down under themselves is in cracking open a can of Foster’s.

A.J. is a senior journalism student who has been reviewing movies for almost 10 years. He digs horror movies and documentaries the most.



Ken Weigend

Early on in “Australia,” as Nicole Kidman is shuttled across the Outback for the first time, she spies a kangaroo racing alongside her jeep. Immediately taken with its grace and poise, Kidman sees herself in the creature: majesty, sprinkled with duty, driven by instinct. It is a moment of inward reflection cut short only by a bullet, and Kidman’s piercing scream that follows. The scene sets the tone for Baz Luhrmann’s sweeping

spectacle; there is great beauty to be found in Australia, but this curious sense of intrigue masks a near poetic brutality. The project is a pure labor of love for Luhrmann, who has crafted an ode to his homeland of Australia, never shying away from letting his patriotism paint the picture, colors running down the screen in rivulets of nationalism and pride. But the movie goes beyond simple love-letting, tapping into the almost elemental human desire of romance for romance’s sake. “Australia” is a tour-de-force of cinematic nostalgia, a picture that resonates with the loving scope and grandiose experimentation of past epics, and is powered by the same blood and energy as “Gone with the Wind” or “Ben-Hur.” Size may not matter, but it sure helps, and “Australia” can’t help but get carried away in the wake of its powerful imagery, beautiful scenery and grassroots storytelling. Lady Sarah Ashley (Kidman) travels down under in the footsteps of her aristocratic husband, attempting to salvage or sell their failing cattle ranch, only to find herself widowed by the tip of a glass-edged spear. Taking the reins, Ashley hires the services of a stock man (Hugh Jackman) called only the Drover, a purposefully ambiguous name for the cryptic embodiment of tall, dark and handsome. As the pair try to herd 2,000 head across an unforgiving landscape, they become spiritually entwined with the plight of the Lost Generation, the outcast cast of mixed-eth-

nicity children stolen into government work camps. And if minor social deconstruction mixed in with the old-fashioned excitement of epic chase scenes, espionage and mystery isn’t enough to inch you to the edge of your seat, all of this is back dropped by the Japanese invasion of Australia in World War II. The script, co-penned by Luhrmann, quickly bites off almost more than it can chew, weaving a multitude of subplots in, around and throughout the central narrative. The story, manifestly an exploration of romantic and familial love, trips one too many times over a messy secondary story involving the mystic practices and culture of the country’s Aborigines. But even this sloppy seconds is topped with a brilliant investigation and dissection of cultural identity crisis, seen in the tortured musings of Nullah, the confused “creamy” Ashley tries adopting. Altogether “Australia” is a colorful melting pot of everything that Luhrmann loved about Hollywood as a boy. He stirs all his favorite elements from the classics into a frenzy, whipping up a cinematic feast plagued by a few bitter tastes. But even the hokiest moments of the film are safeguarded by a vibrant pomposity and a stubborn devotion to the pure magic of movies. Luhrmann infuses himself in the film, imbuing it with his same eccentric charm and extravagance. At times this may be shameless entertainment, a melodrama that is simultaneously preposterous and overblown. But damn it is entertaining!

Ken is a senior journalism major with a film studies minor. He has aspirations to write film reviews as a career. His favorite genres are drama and comedy.



Ken Weigend
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There is something to be said for school spirit. But for Richard and Grace Swensen, that spirit runs far deeper than a school sweatshirt and subscription to the alumni newsletter. The couple has dedicated their lives to serving UW-River Falls, as well as the surrounding city, and seeing their six children graduate from the University.

Upon their return, Grace began taking classes again to finish her degree. In 1964, she graduated with a degree in medical technology, a major no longer offered on campus.

“The award is the highest honor that this University can bestow upon one of its educators,” Dan McGinty, the head of the Office of University Advancement, said.

While in River Falls, the Swensens focused their time on projects that directly affected the University. In 1961, Dick and Grace contracted with the local theater and started a



Dick and Grace Swensen pose in their home in Arden Hills.

“And they all performed right in KFA,” Grace said. “Can you imagine that? Some of the grandest acts in the world, people that perform in

The Swensens' oldest, David, graduated in 1975 with a degree in economics. He completed his doctorate at Yale, and went on to work on Wall Street, where he created a



The sundial on the Kleinpell Fine Arts building is named after Dick Swensen

The Swensens' next, Stephen, graduated in 1976 with a pre-med degree. He went on to get his medical degree at UW-Madison. He achieved his post-degree at

For more about the Swensens, read the full article on-line at www.uwrvoice.com.



\$Scholarship applications for 2009-2010 are now available visit: www.uwrf.edu/financial-assistance

\$Scholarships are awarded based on: major, community involvement, GPA, and the list goes on!

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\$For more information contact Logan Spindler in the UWRF Foundation office at 715-425-3505 or logan.m.spindler@uwrf.edu