



**SPORTS, PAGE 6**

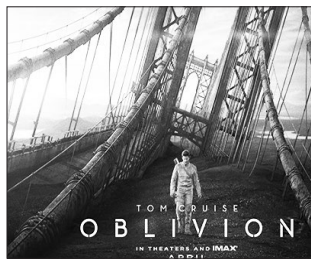
Rugby season is winding down.

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Facebook confessions page damages University's reputation.

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'Oblivion' full of sci-fi clichés.



University of Wisconsin

River Falls

# STUDENT VOICE

May 3, 2013

www.uwrfvoice.com

Volume 99, Issue 24

## Finals Fest features Phillip Phillips

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The eighth annual Finals Fest concert at UW-River Falls will feature “American Idol” winner Phillip Phillips on Friday, May 10, in the outdoor Melvin Wall Amphitheatre on campus. Refreshments begin at 5 p.m. and music starts at 8 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

Phillips was declared the winner of American Idol’s season 11 finale in 2012. On that same day, the 21-year-old singer/guitarist released “Home,” the song which most people will recognize him for. It was also his debut single and marked the highest debut on the Billboard Digital songs chart with 278,000 downloads sold.

“I’m a pretty normal guy,” Phillips said. “I love jammin’ with my guys. It’s the only time I feel free.”

At the end of 2012, Phillips saw his debut album, “The World From the Side of the Moon,” cross the half-million sold mark, making it the fastest-selling ever debut from an Idol winner, according to his website.

He described his music as “jazz and rock alternative sound,” in an article from the Hollywood Reporter.

In the last five years, Finals Fest has featured country, hip-hop, pop and indie-rock, with Jason DeRulo and the Twin Cities indie-rock band Cloud Cult headlining the last two years.

“Our hope is that during a student’s 4-5 year college experience, Finals Fest will provide the opportunity for a variety of live-concert experiences and maybe even exposure to music that is new to them,” said Karyn Wells, event coordinator from the Office of Student Life.

Student Life decided that this year it would be a priority to feature a national touring artist for free to the students and community. In the past they have charged an admission price for certain Finals Fest concerts to cover the cost of the artist, for instance, DeRulo, because nationally touring artists tend to be extremely expensive.

However, when they inquired about booking Phillips, they discovered that his booking fee was affordable and would allow them to feature a free show, so Wells said, “we knew we had to get in on his college tour.”

When Phillips comes to UWRF, it will mark the second time he has toured in Wisconsin. The other time was for his American Idol Live tour.

Phillips will perform at UW-Eau Claire, UW-Green Bay and UW-Stevens Point before making his final tour stop at UWRF. He also performed at Milwaukee’s Bradley Center last March.

“I love performing for college students,” Phillips said. “They let me know if the show was good or not.”

Due to Phillips’ growing popularity, Wells anticipated that a few thousand will attend the show.

“Phillip Phillips’ ability to touch upon a variety of genres and attract an all-ages group of fans will be noticed on May 10. He is still topping the charts and continues to sell out his college shows on this tour,” Wells said.

Both the Wall Amphitheatre and the rain site (Knowles Center) will provide

**“I love jammin’ with my guys. It’s the only time I feel free,” Phillips said.**

general seating only.

“If you want to be in a specific spot, you should arrive early,” Wells said.

However, Wells also added that students should keep in mind that “University Productions always provides an incredible sound/light experience, thus, the concert will look and sound spectacular regardless of where you’re standing.”

While Phillips is popular to most students, some students, like senior Luke Affolter, are deciding not to attend the concert. While Affolter is a guitarist like Phillips, he said his music doesn’t interest him.

“He just doesn’t play my type of music. I know it is impossible for them (Student Life) to get someone that everyone likes, but I am glad they are bringing in such a big name,” Affolter said. “It is good for our University.”

Phillips first began making music when he was 14, thanks largely to his older sister’s boyfriend (and now husband) Benjamin Neil, according to his website.

Several years later, Phillips formed an acoustic band with his sister and brother-in-law and added singing to his repertoire.

“I used to always keep my singing to myself and never let anyone hear me, but then my sister and brother-in-law caught me one night and told me I had to start singing in the band,” he said in his biography on his website.

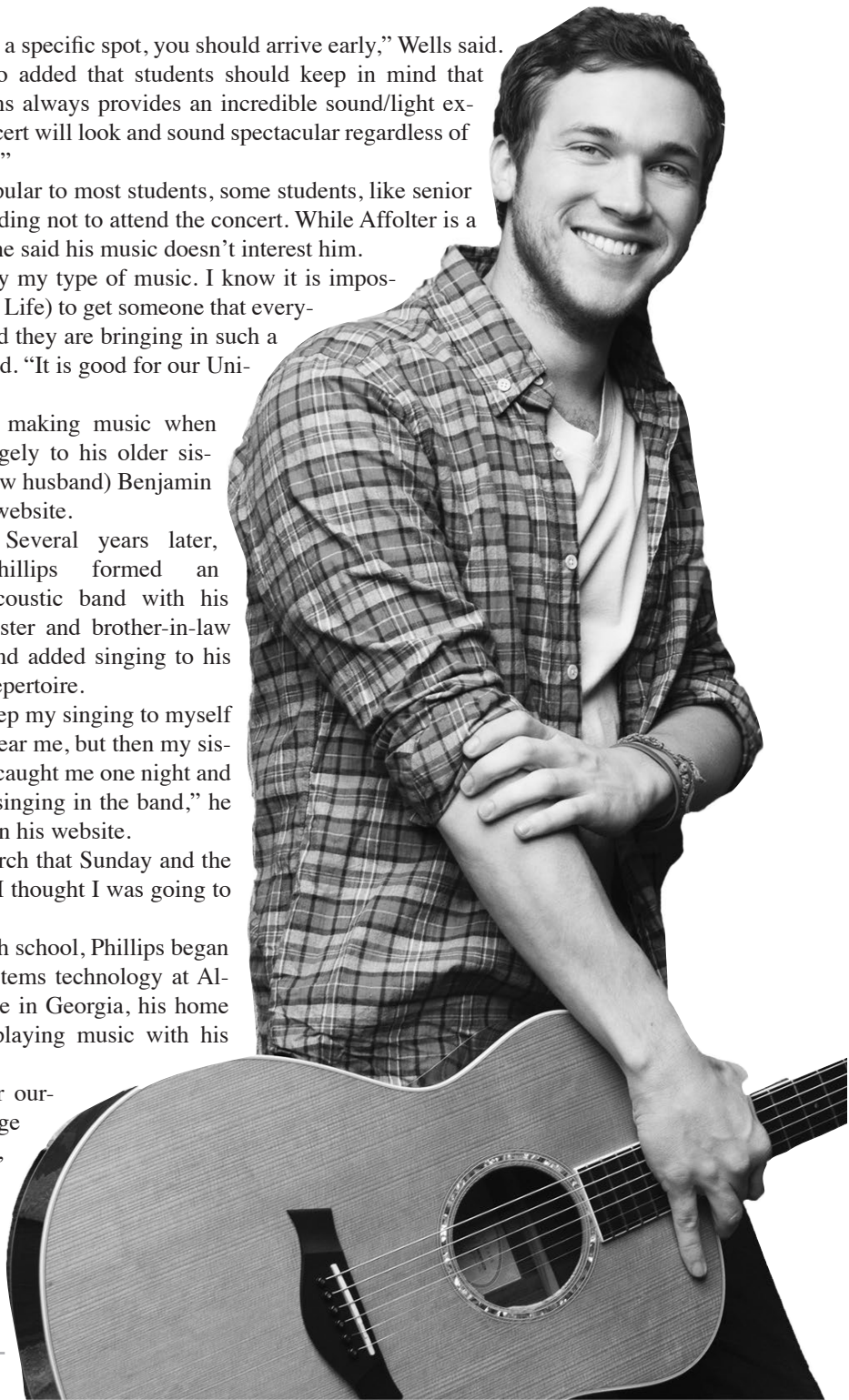
“We played at a church that Sunday and the room was packed and I thought I was going to pass out, but I did it.”

After graduating high school, Phillips began studying industrial systems technology at Albany Technical College in Georgia, his home state, and continued playing music with his brother-in-law.

“We got a name for ourselves, playing in college towns and at festivals, sometimes just playing for free or for food,” Phillips said.

With encouragement from his family

See Fest page 3



## UWRF attracting transfers

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UW-River Falls is looking to increase the number of incoming transfer students for the 2013-2014 school year.

Total enrollment for the 2012-2013 academic year came to almost 6,500 students, according to Institutional Research at UWRF.

Since fall of 2012, nearly 500 of those students were incoming transfers.

Numbers for transfer students have been around the same in past years, around 450.

Christine Kerg, transfer coordinator at UWRF, would like to see those numbers higher. Kerg and the Admissions office are working on aiming to get around 625 transfer students for the 2013-2014 school year, 475 for fall and 150 for spring.

Kerg helps transfer students by providing them with as much information as possible to ease the transfer process.

“I try to personalize their experience so they can learn about the aspects that are important to them,” Kerg said.

Kerg also gives transfer students the option of providing them a campus tour and a departmental meeting in the major they are interested in.

In helping bring transfer students to UWRF, Kerg visits other colleges, particularly technical and community colleges to get students interested in transferring to UWRF.

Transfer students choose UWRF over other institutions for many reasons.

“Many students choose UWRF

because the tuition is affordable, the location is convenient, and the academic programs we offer,” Kerg said.

UWRF also offers a range of services through New Student and Family Programs.

The department guides new students and their families in making a successful transition to campus.

Current students also help in assisting future students, helping them ease into transitioning to the campus life.

Becky Dahlke came to UWRF because of the hospitality she felt when talking with UWRF representatives while at UW-Marathon County.

Dahlke, a junior broad field science major with an emphasis in biology, toured other campuses, but did not know if she would be welcomed or not.

Her mind changed when she saw UWRF.

“River Falls was the only campus that I really felt like I was going to be welcomed as a person, not just a number,” Dahlke said.

Hailie Schwarzauber, an elementary education major, always wanted to come to UWRF. However, her ACT scores were not good enough to get in.

She started her college career at UW-Barron County. Once she finished school there, she came to UWRF.

Schwarzauber transferred to UWRF last fall, and the one thing she loved was the dorm life.

At UW-Barron County she was not able to experience the dorm life because there were no dorms.

Since her transfer last fall, Schwarzauber enjoys staying on

campus, making new friends and enjoying the college life.

However, transitioning to a new campus can be challenging as well.

Rachel Rhyner, a junior from UW-Marathon County, found it hard to adjust to UWRF.

She has found help through the Student Support Services program, a program helping students maximize their academic potential.

However, Rhyner is still having difficulty finding the direction of who to go to and where to get help.

“I was surprised by how less helpful the institution was for a transfer student,” Rhyner said. “The direction of telling you where things are available is terrible.”

According to Kerg, many students who first transfer here take time to adjust to the campus surroundings and the resources that are available to them.

Kerg said that one thing she would like to see improve is having more time spent recruiting and getting information out to students at two-year or technical colleges.

The University is currently in the process of hiring for a new position.

This position is the Associate Vice Chancellor for Enrollment and Student Success.

The role of this new person will be to tackle mainly issues of enrollment and retention and therefore they will play a part in getting transfer students to campus in order to help increase enrollment numbers.

## New bill pushes for immigration reform

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A bill is being drafted by a group of U.S. Senators that will introduce a proposal to reform immigration policies, including undocumented immigrants in the country and border security

The Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013 will look to reform how immigrants are granted citizenship by adding a working merit system.

This system will allow immigrants to be allowed citizenship if they have family in the country and if they have working skills that the U.S finds useful.

These skills can apply to three categories: high skilled foreigners in technology and science, workers with a decent range in white collar work and low wage workers.

This bill will also provide immigrants who have been working legally for any agriculture work a fast path to citizenship.

Senators have also agreed on policies regarding undocumented immigrants now living in the U.S.

Undocumented immigrants who have been living in the U.S. who have had a steady job and have no prior criminal records against them, will be allowed a temporary work visa applicable for 10 years.

This allows them to live, work and travel throughout the country legally, but they will not be permanent residents.

If an undocumented immigrant wants to become a full citizen, he or she must wait 13 years before being allowed to start the process.

Senators say that they are enforcing this because they do not want immigrants who have been applying through legal channels and doing it by the book to have to be pushed “to the back of the line.”

“America needs to live up to its melting pot status,” said Austen Edman an English education major at UW-River Falls who has family members who immigrated to America.

Edman said that reform is needed, so that America can have stricter policies while not completely sealing out immigrants.

This bill will help an estimated 4.7 million immigrants, who have been waiting in the system, to finally be allowed access to the country within the next decade.

Marissa Amidon, an art major, completely agrees with the policy to put undocumented immigrants behind those who have been waiting legally.

“Immigrants who are following procedure have to be taken care of first,” Amidon said. “We need to use this process so that we can help weed out those who could be a benefit to America, from those who could be nothing but trouble.”

Border security will also be brought up in this coming bill. According to the Act, Homeland Security will be given \$3 billion in funding to help secure border security. Half of this funding will go toward building and maintaining more fencing.

Neil Kraus, associate professor in political science, said that he supports immigration reform, but said that the country needs to take a different stance besides just sealing the border.

See Reform page 3



# Club garden to yield sustainable food, concepts

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The first student community garden will be accessible to students and faculty during the 2013-2014 fall school year through the Student Alliance for Local and Sustainable Agriculture (S.A.L.S.A.) club.

The goal of S.A.L.S.A. is to grow ingredients within the garden to produce about 300 pints of salsa mix. Vegetables like peppers, tomatoes, garlic, onions and more will be harvested. Since this will be the first year the project is taking place, and with the weather being unpredictable, it is still being planned out.

According to Jabez Meulemans, president of S.A.L.S.A., there is approximately a 50 x 25 foot space available for the garden, and that students don't have to be part of the club in order to plant your own vegetables.

"The opportunity to get personal with your food, to be a part of the planting, caring, and harvesting is a great opportunity for all students," Meulemans said.

The student garden will be in the fenced in plant and garden area by the intramural fields on campus. Being open daily, with the exception of the weekends, the maintenance and

regulation of the food will be up to volunteers and those who chose to plant their own vegetables

The kickoff for preparing the and planting in the garden will take place in the beginning of May.

Loretta Ortiz-Ribbing, faculty advisor for the club, said with the goal of producing 300 pints of salsa, the plan is to market and advertise to faculty and students on campus to sell the fresh product.

The food and tools are being funded from the Organized Activity Fee. It's a segregated fee that is a part of tuition. S.A.L.S.A. has been given a budget to work with for the year as well as their own fundraising projects from last year like selling coupon books or selling sauerkraut plants.

"This is an enterprise for people to learn how to grow their food and make it for a local use," Meulemans said.

"I think it's an incredible idea. I think creating a community garden for students and faculty members is a good idea because it's healthy food; I don't see any downside to it as

long as it's regulated," said Division of Technology Services IT Manager Steven Meads.

When asked if he would be one of the staff members to get involved and utilize the garden, he said no, only because he already has a garden back home where he has plenty of his own vegetables to spare.

Sophomore Josh Fick said, "I think it could be a fun and unique addition to student life on campus. As long as it's well managed I think it's a great idea."

Meulemans said that the student run garden is a unique addition to campus and that is something that should be taken advantage of.

"It's a great idea, if they had a sale for their food I would for sure go and support it instead of going to a grocery store," said senior Sarah Krueger.

For more information about getting involved with the club, volunteering to help maintain, reserving your own spot within the student run garden or more information in general you can contact Ortiz-Ribbing by visiting her office in the Agriculture Science building or contact Jabez Meulemans by email.

**"This is an enterprise for people to learn how to grow their food and make it for a local use," said S.A.L.S.A. Club President Jabez Meulemans.**

## UWRF team takes top honors at national Dairy Challenge

The four-member team from UW-River Falls earned a first place award in the annual national Dairy Challenge contest held on April 4-6 in Fort Wayne, Ind.

Team members were: Jonathon Hallock of Mondovi, Wis., Riley Jolma of Marengo, Wis., Carl Lippert of Pittsville, Wis., and Elizabeth Simonis of Oconomowoc, Wis.

The team was coached by Sylvia Kehoe, associate professor of dairy science.

In addition to the recognition, each team member received a \$200 scholarship.

This was the 12th year for the contest, which involved 128 students from 32 universities.

Dairy Challenge participants put their textbook knowledge to the ultimate test – consulting for an actual dairy.

Each university fielded a four-person team that competed without the aid of coaches or the Internet.

Each team was assigned to one of four operating dairies that they were to analyze and provide recommendations to improve their profitability.

In addition to a walk-through of the assigned dairy, teams were provided with farm data, and had a question and answer session with the farm owners. Recommendations encompassed the areas of nutrition, reproduc-

tion, milking procedures, animal health, housing and financial management.

On the third day of the event, the teams presented their recommendations to the farm owners and were evaluated by a panel of five judges including dairy producers, veterinarians, farm finance specialists and industry personnel.

In addition to the contest, the event also featured a Career and Innovation Fair and presentations on the latest corporate technology.

For more information, contact Kehoe at 715-425-3704.



*Photo by University Communications*  
**The four-member team from UWRF earned first place in the 12th annual national Dairy Challenge contest. Pictured is the team and its coach. Seated are Elizabeth Simonis, Carl Lippert; standing are Riley Jolma, Sylvia Kehoe, and Jonathon Hallock.**

## New organization bridges cultures between UWRF, community



*Photo by Kathy Helgeson*  
**The SPA board of directors. From left to right: Amy Roth, John Stake, Erynn Delahousaye, Jessica Gaska, Nicholas Dolten, and Benjamin Scheele. Seated in front is advisor Juan Carlos Chaves.**

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The Spanish Professions Association (SPA) is a new organization that has just completed its first year of existence at UW-River Falls.

Originally from Argentina, Assistant Professor of Spanish Juan Carlos Chaves is the faculty advisor for the six students who are involved with the SPA. Chaves said that the SPA is like an extracurricular activity of all the Spanish courses that he teaches. He said that the association got started because they wanted to do something outside of the classroom; they wanted to do something extracurricular. He and a group of students are "very qualified to speak the language got together and decided to be an association and invite speakers on campus," Chaves said.

The purpose as well as the mission of the SPA is to serve as a cultural bridge between the students and the community. According to Chaves, the way that the SPA achieves this goal is by bringing speakers from different professional backgrounds to campus once a month. During these presentations, speakers share their daily professional lives in the workplace with the students as well as with the community.

Its seal, which is a black and red gear, represents the SPA. The black signifies authority and the red represents energy, power, strength and determination. This gear represents a symbol of constant movement. The cogs rotate which generates light to illuminate the paths of confidence, determination, growth, responsibility and success.

This year, the SPA had brought four speakers from different countries and cultural backgrounds on to the UWRF campus. The speakers were from Colombia, Mexico, Puerto Rico and Paraguay.

In addition to the array of speakers, Chaves mentioned that one of the unique things about the SPA is that all of the presentations are entirely in Spanish.

"It's like an emergence in the language, its like sitting there and attending a conference 100 percent in Spanish," Chaves said.

This is done as an opportunity for students who are majoring in Spanish to make professional connections with the presenters. Though ultimately, all presentations are delivered in Spanish in order for students to gain knowledge of what is out there in the real world.

"It went very, very well, more than what we expected. We got a line up of volunteer speakers that want to come and their daily experiences at work with the students and I think the students gained the knowledge of what's going on outside of campus," said Chaves about the first year of the SPA.

He also said that the groups of students involved with this association are very active and very enthusiastic with what they are doing. For next semester, the SPA hopes to bring in several more interesting speakers.

In addition, Chaves said that besides just being a cultural bridge between the community and the students, the association hopes to raise money. With this money, the members of the SPA will set up scholarships to give to students who will be majoring in Spanish.

## UC student, professional staff participate in roadside clean-up

On Monday, April 29, the student and professional staff of the University Center walked along County Highway E to pick up trash for the Adopt-A-Highway program.

Three times every year they clean up the section of roadway along County Highway E, just south of River Falls between Highway 29/35 and 690th Street.

This is one of many efforts of the University Center staff to promote sustainability to the

UWRF campus and River Falls community.

Find out more at: <http://www.uwrf.edu/UniversityCenter/Sustainability/Index.cfm>.

*Photo submitted by Alanna Kane*  
**Participants in the University Center Staff Adopt-A-Highway program. Three times a year the staff cleans up a section of County Highway E.**



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# Tauchen, Student Senate begin 76th session

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Sam Tauchen has been inaugurated as the new Student Senate president.

Tauchen was inaugurated on April 30, beginning the 76th session of Senate. Tauchen, along with Vice President Tony Sumnicht and the rest of the new Senate members were sworn in by outgoing president Bobbi O’Brien. Currently, there are six new senators and eight returning senators, including Tauchen.

“Many time sensitive and complex items were introduced, and I commend the newly elected senators and especially the first-year senators for actively engaging in every discussion,” Tauchen said. “Typically, motions with this magnitude are not introduced until a couple months into fall semester at the earliest.”

One of these motions, introduced to the Senate on April 30, proposed changes to the Involvement Center (IC) in the University Center. These changes would aim to make the IC more inclusive and help students get more involved on campus.

The proposed project would cost \$60,000. To fund the project, Senate will draw the money from the reserve account.

This account is the pool of money which is taken back from student organizations that were not used during the academic year.

The reserve account currently has a little more than \$100,000 in it.

The renovation to the IC would include new furniture, as well as changing the computer stations from individual desks to group oriented pods.

In the computer area, there would also be desks where up to six students could work together on one large screen, as well as plug their laptops into the screen so all group members could work together.

University Center Director Cara Rubis said that the plan for the computer area is modeled after a new computer lab at UW-Madison.

The renovated IC would also include a kiosk where students could access OrgSync to get easy access to Senate documents as well as other organizations on campus.

The plan would also include renovations to the fireplace area in the IC. Rubis informed Senate that official plans would not

be drawn up until money was actually allocated to the project.

Director of Student Life Paul Shepherd said that the project would “not just put the Involvement Center on par with other schools, it would put it above par.”

If the plan is passed by Senate on May 7, the renovations to the IC would have a tentative completion date of Aug. 31, meaning it would be done by the time fall semester begins.

Senate also introduced three motions which will be voted on next week.

## These changes would aim to make the IC more inclusive and help students get more involved on campus.

These motions include allocating a little more than \$6,000 to Kinni Outdoor Adventures to go toward the purchase of bicycles for the new bike program, a motion which would shift money from the defunct wrestling club to Rec and Sports via the reserve account, and a resolution which states that Senate is in favor of a 5.5 percent tuition cap instead of a tuition freeze.

“A tone has been set, and I am confident in the fact that the 76th Session of Student Senate will effectively face next year’s challenges and provide a positive impact on UW-River Falls,” said Tauchen.

# Reform: Border control part of proposed bill

From page 1

“Militarizing the border is not an option” Kraus said. “There is too much border to patrol and fence. Just trying to keep them out isn’t going to work.”

Senators who are working on the bill are hoping that with the new policies they have come up with, they can turn the tide from the now 75 percent of immigrants who are being allowed visas because of family ties to the country, to an equal 50 percent of immigrants being allowed visas because of family, and the other 50 percent

# Fest: Outdoor concert free, open to public

From page 1

and friends, Phillips took a break from working in his family’s pawn shop and auditioned for American Idol in summer 2011 - and on May 23, 2012, was named the winner of Idol’s 11th season.

If seeing an American Idol winner was not enough of an incentive for some students, Wells said, there were several reasons she offered on why students should attend.

“Why not? First of all, it’s a big fun party on the last day of classes. Second, there’s no admission fee. Third, students are paying for it through their segregated university fees, so they should take advantage of it,” Wells said. “I can’t think of a better way for a student to reward themselves and celebrate their accomplishments at the end of the year.”

“Life’s too short not to have fun,” added Phillips.

The Melvin Wall Amphitheatre is located along the trail behind Hathorn Hall.

In the case of inclement weather, the concert will be held in Knowles Center. With further questions or accommodation requests, contact Wells in the Office of Student Life at 715-425-4444.

**Esteban Montero (left) and Tim Emahiser (right) take part in an activity held in the University Center to promote Finals Fest. Students had the opportunity to get their picture taken jamming out next to cardboard cutouts of American Idol judges. Finals Fest will be held on Friday, May 10, at the Melvin Wall Amphitheatre. Rain site is the Knowles Center.**



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EDITORIALS

# Senate urged to continue putting needs, benefits of students first

The 76th session of Student Senate began on Tuesday, April 30.

The new Senate hit the ground running in its first meeting, introducing six motions at the meeting. Two of these motions were passed, with the other four set to be voted on at the May 7 meeting.

One of the motions to be voted on at the meeting will be a resolution which would be against a tuition freeze, and for a 5.5 percent tuition cap.

The tuition freeze is a proposed plan coming down from the state level which would keep tuition at its current number for the next two years. This plan has stemmed from the roughly \$1 billion surplus found by the state a few weeks ago.

This is an immensely important issue which, unfortunately, students probably do not know much, if anything, about. Frankly, students should inform themselves on this surplus and tuition freeze, because it will affect UW-River Falls one way or another. If the freeze takes effect, the University may have to look into other pools of money to fund certain projects, or areas on campus. But, tuition would remain the same rather than increasing.

If Senate’s proposed resolution passes on May 7, it is possible that tuition could go up the next two years, but the funds for projects and other areas on campus would probably not be affected.

This is kind of a big deal.

If you have a strong view on this, one way or another, let Senate know. Whether you come to the meeting or talk to a senator anytime before the meeting, your voice and opinion does matter and will be heard.

We do commend Senate for their actions taken toward this motion at the last meeting. The senators discussed the motion and surplus at length, gathering and exchanging information about the topic. A few senators brought up that Senate should not vote on the topic until they both have every senator understand the issue as best they can, and until they get more student input on an important issue.

This is exactly what Senate should be doing: gathering information and facts, and also input from students.

We hope this is something which Senate will continue to do.

We urge the new Senate to remember the fact that they represent the 6,000 some students at UWRF and continue having discussion and policies which benefit all of the students enrolled at the University.

After the first meeting, Senate, in our opinion, has started off on the right foot, and we hope that they can continue to work in this manner for the duration of the 76th session.

Editorial Board and are prepared by the editorial staff.

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The *Student Voice* is a student-written and managed newspaper for UW-River Falls, and is published Fridays during the regular school year.

All editorial content in the *Student Voice* is determined by the newspaper's Editorial Board. The opinions expressed in editorials and columns do not represent those of the newspaper's advisor, student population, administration, faculty or staff.

Letters to the editor must be 300 words or less, and include a first and last name and phone number. They can be submitted at 304 North Hall, River Falls, WI 54022 or to [editor@uwrfvoice.com](mailto:editor@uwrfvoice.com).

The *Student Voice* reserves the right to withhold letters. All letters, news releases, briefs, display ads and classified ads must also be submitted no later than Wednesday at noon.

Because of high production costs, UW-River Falls community members are permitted to collect one copy of the *Student Voice* per issue. A single copy of the *Student Voice* is valued at \$1, and additional copies may be requested from the editorial staff by e-mail through [editor@uwrfvoice.com](mailto:editor@uwrfvoice.com). Newspaper theft is a crime. Those who violate the single copy rule may be subject to civil and criminal prosecution.

# STUDENT VOICES

## What would you do with \$1 million?

Ryan Ingalls  
Senior



“Make sure my family would be financially secure and then travel to make things better somewhere.”

Kayla Geiss  
Senior



“I want to build a bat cave.”

Laura Charneski  
Sophomore



“Build a teleportation device to go across dimensions.”

Jon Atwell  
Junior



“Pay off my parents’ house, pay for my sister’s honeymoon and then sit on the rest of it.”

Alex Knutson  
Senior



“Pay off my student loans and more.”

Compiled by Meg Rodriguez

Letters to the editor

Students urged to be responsible birdwatchers

Nice weather is finally here, and the coming spring brings the return of many birds to campus.

It is important to remember that wild birds are not pets and need to be respected. I have observed other bird enthusiasts on campus feeding bread to ducks. Bread is not a very good source of nutrients for birds. Instead, healthy alternatives are cracked corn, barely or bird seed.

As you bird watch, remember you are an observer and

not a participant. Do not harass birds because you only will cause them stress in their quest to find nest areas. Let’s be an inclusive university and not interfere or scare birds. If I see you running at a bird or throwing something, there will be consequences.

Casey Kemper  
Student

Ag Day on campus considered a huge success

On Thursday, April 25, UW-River Falls Collegiate Farm Bureau hosted the first-ever Ag Day on campus. We could not have had great success without the help from the whole College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Science (CAFES), along with other agriculture businesses. We had 15 CAFES organizations and five agriculture businesses set up booth from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., educating our peers, campus faculty and community members about the great agriculture industry.

The Collegiate Farm Bureau is confident in saying that this event was a huge success. We gave away 15 pounds of cheese curds, 1,000 cartons of milk, 130 dirt cakes, 300 root

beer floats and 300 event T-shirts. Later in the evening we served 238 people at our hog roast dinner, which was followed by our keynote speaker: Charlie Arnot, the CEO for the Center for Food Integrity.

Thank you UWRF for your support and for helping us make this first year of Ag Day on campus astounding. We could not have pulled off this event without the student, faculty and staff participation that we received. We look forward to putting on the second annual Ag Day on campus next year, and hope you all return.

Jacki Roden, Erik Warmka, and Lynn Bartholomew  
Ag Day on campus co-chairs


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Be the first person to find the lost Freddy the Falcon Feather in this issue of the Voice and win two free movie passes to the Falls Theatre!

Congratulations to last week’s winner, Maxwell Vine.



Report the find to  
[editor@uwrfvoice.com](mailto:editor@uwrfvoice.com)  
AFTER 10 a.m. Friday.





# University crippled by confessions page

Morgan Stippel

Columnist

The UW-River Falls Confessions page on Facebook was recently shut down. On April 29, the administrator posted on the page and said it was being shut down “for the content posted in the past.” However, “content” is a euphemistic term for classifying the things that were posted on this Facebook page.

When the page was first created, it seemed harmless. Our University was simply following a trend. Many universities have these pages on Facebook or Twitter accounts that are dedicated to these student confessions.

However, it did not take long for this page to go completely sour. Students submitted confessions that used derogatory or profane language, perpetuated negative stereotypes and/or targeted specific groups on campus. In some cases, posts would even target specific people by name and absolutely rip them to pieces.

As a student, I am downright embarrassed about what was posted on this Facebook page, and I am ashamed that our University’s name is connected to this content. It is disheartening that students believe it is acceptable to say these types of things on the Internet. I guarantee that the people who posted these confessions would never say these things to the people they were talking about in person. If you would not say it to someone’s face, you should not be saying it on the Internet.

However, whether it is on the Internet or in person, people need to be careful about what they say to or about others. We are often so unaware of how the things we say impact those around us. In fact, studies have shown that human beings remember negative interactions far more clearly than they remember positive interactions. Therefore, one negative interaction with a person is far more powerful than 10 positive interactions with that same person.

In addition to the impact that our comments have on those around us, these comments also affect our reputation. The UWRF Confessions page has had a profoundly negative effect on the reputation of our University. This page can be viewed by anyone because it is available for public access. Anyone who views the page will likely assume that our campus is infested with cruel, uninviting students. To be perfectly honest, if the only interaction they had with our

University was viewing this page, I would not blame them for thinking in this manner.

Furthermore, even if you think you are posting something anonymously, you are never truly anonymous. With the technological capabilities that exist today, it takes only seconds to trace the source of content that is posted on the internet. While the content may not have your name on it directly, it is linked to your Internet Protocol (IP) address. If someone wants to find out where a comment came from, it is fairly simple to do so.

I transferred to UWRF because I loved how welcoming and accepting the community was, and I do not feel as if this confessions page is an accurate representation of our University. However, I do not doubt that the page is an accurate representation of a small group of students. The problem is, this page not only makes that small group of students look terrible, but rather, it makes our entire University look terrible.

I visited the confessions page to gather information for this piece, and I could not help but notice that there is a small push to create another confessions page for our University.

One student said, “Just

make a new page called UWRF Confessions.” This comment received 13 likes.

Another student agreed with the above comment and said, “Yeah, just make another.” This comment received one like.

Here is my message to these students: don’t do it. Creating another confessions page will only serve to further defame both your character and the character of our University as a whole.

It is extremely unfortunate that the UWRF Confessions Page has tainted the reputation of our University. However, there is a faint silver lining: we can improve our reputation by changing our behaviors. Be positive, treat others the same way you want to be treated in return, and be more cautious about what you say, both on and offline. We are adults in college, and it is time we started acting like it.

Morgan is a junior majoring in political science and minoring in professional writing. When she graduates from UW-River Falls, she wants to become a state prosecutor and specialize in domestic violence cases.



**Top: On April 29, the administrator of the UW-River Falls Confessions page announced the page was being shut down due to content that had previously been posted in the past.**  
**Bottom: The UW-River Falls Confessions page had 2,130 likes before it was shut down.**

# Agritourism helpful in promoting sustainability

Molly Breitmün

Columnist

Agritourism is a farming practice that utilizes tourism to further bolster the sustainability of a farm through diversified means. Farmers are notoriously dependant on factors that are uncontrollable, like late springs, drought and foreign imports making prices fall drastically. Creating an alternative source of income decreases a farmer’s risk to factors out of their control.

Depending on how agritourism is defined, it includes farmers’ markets and roadside stands amongst more explicit attractions like hayrides, U-pick operations and harvest festivals. As U.S. consumers become more concerned about food safety, the environmental effects of industrial farming, animal welfare and buying local, agritourism may attain worthy growth.

Agritourism has been popular in Europe for centuries. The renown for French wines or the ubiquitous image of a fresh meal laid outdoors of an Italian farm villa are examples of the cultural embrace of fresh, local food straight from the much-celebrated producer. Agritourism is funded by the European Union in its agriculture policies to diversify a worldwide farming economy fraught with increasing costs with little return. E.U. policy recognizes the role of agritourism in food security as well as garnering higher prices through value-added experiences. The 2012 USDA statistical profile on Farm-Based Recreation reports that agritourism “provided income to about 52,000 U.S. farms (2.5 percent of total U.S. farms) in 2004.” According to the same report, one third of all farms in the United Kingdom earned income from agritourism. There is clearly room for growth in the U.S.

Agritourism encourages crop diversity. Tourists and neighbors become loyal consumers when they can rely on a farmer to provide a variety that satisfies their needs and interests. Though a monoculture of corn serving as a corn maze

does attract people looking for entertainment, a flourishing agritourism business will provide more than corn products to keep visitors returning. The more unique and local the product is, the better to attract loyal consumers.

The 2011 Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference on Rural Development suggests that agritourism encourages soil conservation. The higher profit margins that occur when selling a value-added product or experience put a far lower demand on the productivity of the farmland. The less land needed in intensive production, the less nutrient demand is placed on the soil. In third world countries, the higher profits of agritourism have also shown promise in decreasing farmer’s incentives for deforestation.

Agritourism can also foster ethical self-regulation. A wise business model will not air out its dirty laundry. Agritourism invites tourists to witness, participate, and be amongst the plants and animals being raised. It is hard to imagine a concentrated animal feeding operation inviting school children to visit to see the sad conditions the animals live in. Similarly, if a farm is exposing its employees to unsafe practices and conditions, how will they protect the visiting public from the same ills?

‘Wine maps’ are an example of a noncompetitive partnership that can be fostered by agritourism. Customers often come to agritourism venues with the plan to be entertained half the day or an entire weekend by agricultural related activities. Wine maps are created by a network of vineyards and wineries that cater to these customers while reducing the cost in advertising by sharing the burden. The sharing of risk is common glue in the creation of community. Instead of struggling as individual road-side stops, agritourism businesses are uniquely poised to cooperate with peers to create festivals and weekend-long entertainment. Partnerships within the community can also create increased investment amongst all community members. The flavor and pride of the community is encouraged to emerge.

The Journal for Appalachian Studies reports, “between 1997 and 2007, naturally and agriculturally based tourism was the fastest growing sector of the travel and tourism industry.” Farmers interested in following this trend might best succeed by creating an agritourism cooperative. By networking with other local farmers and producers, the shared risk is greatly decreased, while the draw from customers looking for diverse attractions may increase.

As consumers though, we have the most pleasurable responsibility. We need to visit farms, get to know our farmers, buy their products and eat the fruits of their hard labor. A good place to start for finding agritourism possibilities in the River Falls area is the Local Food Partnership’s local food directory (<http://www.localfoodpartnership.org/directory.html>). Though this is the most complete list I’ve seen of quite local food opportunities, it’s not exhaustive. Some of the best places are found by word of mouth, slowing down when you see the ‘fresh strawberries’ sign on the side of the road, and asking around at the natural food coop and farmer’s market.

I first learned about A to Z Pizza Farm of Stockholm, Wis., when I was swapping favorite agritourism farms with Amy Lloyd, the Student Life service coordinator. Next week I finally get to visit the Pizza Farm with both S.A.L.S.A. and Crops & Soils Club. A to Z has certainly taken the agritourism spirit to heart. They are a working farm and CSA (community supported agriculture) that offers a Pizza Night picnic every Tuesday from spring until fall.

Agritourism has the potential to greatly enhance American farms and aid in the creation of a sustainable American food system. I challenge anyone reading this to enjoy at least one agritourism experience this growing season.

Molly is a non-traditional student majoring in conservation with a minor in GIS. Her interest in campus sustainability was fostered by becoming an undergraduate fellow for the St. Croix Institute for Sustainability Community Development as well as by her peers in the Student Alliance for Local and Sustainable Agriculture.

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# Rugby adjusting from fall to spring

Benjamin Lamers  
benjamin.lamers@my.uwrf.edu

The UW-River Falls men’s rugby team is currently ranked No. 16 in the country in the National Small College Rugby Organization.

The rugby team won their division, the River Bluffs, in the fall while finishing second overall in the Minnesota Rugby Football Union conference. The team won five of its six games, including playoffs. Their lone loss was to St. John’s University, the eventual national champion.

In the spring semester things change for the rugby team. They play in tournaments as opposed to conference games, which are held in the fall. The way the game is played is also different.

“The way it’s been, in fall we play with 15 (players),” said president and captain of the team Casey Doten. “In the spring we are switching over to sevens rugby, like what they do in the Olympics. It is more wide open.”

Doten said that the challenges in switching to sevens rugby consist of being able to continually play well with half of the players on the field. He added that sevens is also faster action

**“If we don’t get enough people or funding we could go from being ranked No. 16 to being nonexistent,” said rugby captain Casey Doten.**

and probably more fun to watch. The team has played in two tournaments this spring.

On April 6-7 the team participated in the Battle on the Nebraska Plain Rugby Tournament which annually draws 80-90 teams. UWRF finished in third place at the tournament.

On April 13 the team played in UW-Stout’s rugby tournament which featured Stout, UWRF, UW-Eau Claire and UW-La Crosse. UWRF emerged victorious in the tournament.

Doten said that the team will play in one more tournament on May 4 at Simpson College.

He added that the winner of this tournament will qualify for the Div. III national championships. The national championships will be held early June.

On May 11 the team will play their alumni game at Hoffman Park. The alumni game is also the team’s last game of the season.

Despite the recent successes of the team, they are not guaranteed to be in existence every single year. Doten said that being a club sport does not give the club a sense of permanence.

“If we don’t get enough people or funding we could go from being ranked No. 16 to being nonexistent,” Doten said.

The rugby team received \$3,934.51 for their budget next year. This budget will cover the cost of being a member of the Minnesota Rugby Football Union conference as well as being recognized by the national rugby union. Additional



Used with permission from Lee Hoskins  
**Kody Koester, a flanker, escapes getting brought to the ground.**

money will go toward a trainer as well as goal posts. Another challenge Doten said the team faces is getting people involved with the club. The team starts practices almost immediately in the fall, which leaves them little time to find fresh faces for the team.

“We kind of go around and find people who look like they could be rugby players,” Doten said.

This year the team had 38 players on its roster. Doten also said getting fans to watch the game can sometimes be difficult because most people do not understand rugby and “people get us confused with lacrosse sometimes.”

Doten will be president and captain of the team again next year as well. He also added that he plans on continuing playing rugby after he leaves UWRF.

Doten said that there are a lot of men’s rugby teams which are always looking for players.

“As long as my body holds up, I will play as long as I can,” Doten said.

The rugby team plays its home games at the intramural fields at UWRF. More information of the team can be found on their official website, riverfallsrugby.com.



Used with permission from Lee Hoskins  
**Ethan Siem, a scrum/half player, getting his jersey pulled as he gets out of a scrum.**

# Track, softball teams coming to close on seasons

## Track and field competing in Outdoor WIAC Championships

The track and field teams will be competing in the Outdoor WIAC Championships this weekend May 3-4, at UW- La Crosse. The meet is set to start at 11:45 a.m. on Friday, May 3, and continue at 11 a.m. on Saturday, May 4.

Earlier this year the women’s track and field team finished sixth place at the Indoor WIAC Championships and the men finished eighth.

The recent athletes of the week for the women’s team are the 4x400 relay team of Sophie Lasko, Brittany Nordland, Alyssa Rasmussen and Amanda Rothbauer who competed in the Drake Relays in Iowa, the second largest track meet in the nation. They finished in 11th place out of 29 teams. Stephanie Walek had two strong meets, finishing fourth in the pole vault at Hamline University and won the javelin in the St. Mary’s open. The recent athletes of the week for the men’s team are the 4x400 relay team of Matt Shutey, Jordan Crockett, Anthony Sumnicht and Matt Griffin. They had a strong race at the Drake Relays.

## Softball heads to Eau Claire for double elimination WIAC tournament

The softball team will be playing in the double elimination WIAC tournament this weekend, May 3-5 at UW-Eau Claire. They earned the No. 6 seed in the tournament and their first game will be against the No. 1 seed UWEC at 10 a.m. on Friday, May 3. If they lose that game they will play again at 4 p.m. on May 3, and if they win they will play at 10 a.m. on May 4. The last time they played UWEC they split the series.

The recent athletes of the week were Amber O’Connell, sophomore catcher, and Andrea Krause, junior pitcher. O’Connell was one of the team’s top hitters in four WIAC games against UWEC and UW-Superior, going 5-10 with two doubles and five RBIs. She also scored one run in the game. Krause was the team’s top pitcher with two complete game wins against UWEC and UWS. She pitched 12 innings with a 1.75 ERA and struck out three batters in the two games.

The team is 21-15 overall on the season with a 6-10 WIAC record.

# Falcon athletics holding garage sale, softball hosts ‘Hit for Lupus’

The Falcon Athletic Department will have a garage sale of slightly used athletic clothing and equipment on Tuesday, May 7 from 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. The sale will be held in the Falcon Lounge area in Hagestad Hall and there will also be several miscellaneous items available. All proceeds are returned to the teams. Contact Dori Holter in Falcon Athletics with any questions.

On Sunday, April 28, UW River Falls hosted its annual “Hit for Lupus” softball game. This was the third year the Falcon softball team has hosted this event. It first started when then softball player Dana Book came up with the idea as her mom has been affected by Lupus.

This year for the event the Lady Falcons dedicated their game versus UW-Superior to raising funds for the Lupus Foundations of Minnesota (LFM). The team donned black and purple shirts for pre-game practice and purple headbands and socks for the game itself (purple is the lupus color) The game announcer read lupus facts between innings, fans pledged money for each hit, and LFM Ambassador Chris Cronick had the honor of throwing out the first pitch. They earned over \$600 in this year’s event.



From the Lupus Foundation of Minnesota’s newsletter  
**The UWRF softball team with Lupus Foundation of Minnesota Ambassador Chris Cronick (pictured in middle) who threw out the first pitch. This is the third year they have held this event. They earned over \$600 for the cause.**

To stay updated on Falcon sports updates follow @uwrfvoicesports on Twitter. We will be live tweeting the softball games as they play at the WIAC tournament this weekend.



LIVE

FALCON BROADCASTS

UWRF SOFTBALL

FRIDAY, MAY 3RD  
WIAC TOURNAMENT  
VS  
UW-EAU CLAIRE  
10 AM

WIAC SOFTBALL  
CONFERENCE TOURNAMENT  
MAY 3 - 5  
AT  
UW-EAU CLAIRE



# 'Oblivion' passes as average sci-fi flick



Ryan Funes  
Reviewer

“Oblivion” comes to theaters with a science fiction story of identity, lies and heroism that manages to be a fairly enjoyable sci-fi flick.

Sixty years ago the world was ravaged by an alien menace which put humanity on a space station to survive. Humans still on Earth have been cleaning up the remains of their home, with two left on the planet to finish their job. These are Jack Harper and Victoria, who have worked as a team to fix robots and machinery on the planet for some time now, and have never questioned what came before their erased memories.

Jack begins to question his past when visions of a woman and the Empire State Building flash back into his memory and send him on the path to discovering his past, a group of revolutionaries and the truth of what happened

to Earth. Through it all, Jack will need to stay true to himself and find out what means truest to him, his mission or what lies beyond the lies.

I admit to not knowing much of “Oblivion” before I went to see it, other than that Tom Cruise was going to be in it, so I really didn’t know what to think of the film at first. I knew well enough that I was to expect a science fiction story, and my standards were then adjusted. After it all, I can at least say it was above average in its performance.

What “Oblivion” excels at is production and direction; the sprawling landscapes of post-invasion Earth are

**The direction is fine to a point, with good shots and camera usage to complement the special effects.**

astoundingly well rendered and all sci-fi elements in the movie are sleek and gritty in their design.

The direction is fine to a point, with good shots and camera usage to complement the special effects. The two work well together to make this into a very pretty picture to watch.

The plot, however, suffers from just being average in certain respects. While I did get some enjoyment out of

seeing character Jack fight supposed aliens and use his head in situations, his interactions with other characters like his partner Victoria can feel distant and underdeveloped at some points. It is one of the few instances where I felt that a movie could use more dialogue to help push along the characters and their relationships.

As well the general plot feels slightly off. The payoff was fairly nice, but the middle part of the movie gets somewhat bogged down in the confusing plot details and highly cliché twist that comes up later. It’s worth mentioning that the movie was meant to serve as a tribute to science fiction movies of old, and the twist will definitely feel confusing to a lot of audience members.

“Oblivion,” at the very least, succeeds at being the sci-fi film that it wanted to be. While the punch doesn’t connect in some parts, it delivers well in others that make it an experience that I can at least say was enjoyable enough. As far as it can be said, “Oblivion” is fine for those seeking to crave their sci-fi craving, but if you are wanting more out of your sci-fi experience, then this might be one film to pass up.

*Ryan is a lover of all things movie, TV video games and stories and wants to become a television writer someday. In his spare time he enjoys hanging with friends, tapping into his imagination and watching cartoons of all kinds.*



# Twenty-Five adventures to complete before graduation

Meg Rodriguez  
Columnist

For those of you not yet graduating in the next couple weeks, or even if you are, there are a few things that you should do before you graduate, as suggested from the “101 things to do before you graduate River Falls” sheet which all first-year students receive. Although there are just a few days until finals and summer vacation, there is still plenty of time to get a few in.

1. Star gaze out at the intramural fields.
- May I suggest going out as far as you can. With the recent building of the apartments behind Hathorn Hall, it has become a little difficult to see them at their fullest right now.
2. Play at a local park.
- If you head down Cascade Ave., past Dairy Queen, you will find yourself a bridge and park. There are two separate playgrounds to pick from, so go wild.
3. Run or skip across the suspension bridge.
- If you can get it to bounce, congrats. You have succeeded.
4. Check out downtown River Falls.
- Check out all the shops and restaurants you can.
5. Go for a walk on every trail on campus.
- Seriously do it. Just to clear your head, or for fun.
6. Go to the Falls Theater.
- A cheap date and good movies. Seriously, where can you go wrong?
7. Check out a book or movie from the River Falls Public Library.
- Having fun isn’t hard when you’ve got a library card. Really, it’s the cheapest form of entertainment that you can find.

For \$2 you can pick from hundreds of books and movies.

8. Play “mud volleyball” in the pouring rain.
- There is still hope for this to happen. Put on clothes that you don’t care much for and have fun with it.
9. Run clear across campus to get ice cream at Dairy Queen or Yo-Joe’s before it closes.
- It is completely OK to do this, within reason. Aim for a 15 minute window at a minimum.
10. Perfect your waffle-making skills using the Riverside Commons waffle makers.
- Do not take this lightly, it truly is an art.
11. Get help at the Writing Center in Kleinpell Fine Arts.

**9. Run clear across campus to get ice cream at Dairy Queen or Yo-Joe’s before it closes.**

With final papers fast approaching, it is important to remember that this resource is there for you. After all, it is best to have one or more people look at your paper.

12. Pet a cow at Lab Farm 2
- Take a break from your studies and drive down to see these animals.
13. Climb the rock wall at the Knowles Center.
- They have the hours posted online and around campus. If you are looking to try something new before vacation, here’s your chance.
14. Watch a movie on one of the HBO channels.
- Check our local listings and find out what’s going to be on. They are always changing and are pretty recent flicks.
15. Walk to Shopko to buy one thing, but walk out with 10.
- It’s going to happen, whether you would like it or not.
- There is always going to be something else that you “will have to have,” and after an internal battle with yourself it’s

just going to happen.

16. Visit Career Services.
- Again, this is a service there for you. They can help you with résumés, cover letters and much, much, more.
17. Spend an entire weekend in bed.
- Think of it as you time. Have a lot of work to do? Do it there, bring your computer and paperwork in bed. It’s completely OK to have a pajama day.
18. Stalk a squirrel without getting caught.
- If you can do so, great. If not, be prepared to pay \$200.
19. Lay out in the grass of the University Center Mall.
- Stay with me, it’s going to get better outside. I promise.
20. Have a late night talk with roommates, friends and neighbors.
- It’s fun, it’s a stress reliever and more importantly they’re your friends. With summer on its way take this opportunity to just talk and genuinely listen to each other.
21. Take a late night pizza trip to Steve’s Pizza.
- A no-nonsense thin crust, abundant toppings and excellent sauce. Plus, they make a killer gyro, too. Good stuff.
22. Grab a latte at the Dish and Spoon.
- Or one of their hand crafted sandwiches, or quiche. It’s all good.
23. Take a nap in the library.
- It’s OK, just make sure you don’t snore.
24. Read the Student Voice.
- You can check this one off since clearly you are reading it.
25. Learn about credit cards.
- You are at now an adult, it may be hard to accept but it’s true.

*Meg is a senior majoring in journalism. She is currently working as the Etc. page editor at the Student Voice. After graduation she will be working in Squamish, British Columbia.*

# Month of May filled with worldwide, local traditions, events



Cristin Dempsey  
Columnist

Despite the weather outside, we have finally reached the last month of the 2013 spring semester: May.

Internationally, May is a month that recognizes several holidays, such as Mother’s Day and Memorial Day, days of awareness, and different symbols, such as “May flowers.” Here in River Falls, May means warmer weather (hopefully), Finals Fest and final exams and of course, summer break. With final papers and projects in nearly every class, it is a stressful time for many students. Though when it is all over in only a few short weeks, there will be a lot to look forward to.

On the Gregorian and Julian calendars, May means autumn for the southern hemisphere and spring for the northern hemisphere. The seasonal change in the southern hemisphere is the equivalent to November here in the northern hemisphere. While no month begins or ends on the same day of the week as May in any year, January in the following year begins and ends on the same day as May in the current year.

The month itself is said to be named after the Greek goddess Maia, similar in comparison to the Roman era goddess

of fertility because her festival was held during the month.

The zodiac signs for May are Taurus (the bull), through May 20, and Gemini (the twins), starting on May 21 and extending into June. This, however, is just before the constellations are visible in the night sky. The zodiac signs and constellations do not directly correlate with one another.

The birthstone for May is the emerald. This birthstone generally means love or success.

One of the birth flowers is the Lily of the Valley, which is a poisonous woodland flowering plant, typically lavender in color. This flower is usually found in Asia, Europe and the southern Appalachian Mountains. The other birth flower is the Crataegus monogyna, a species of Hawthorn plants found in Europe, northwest Africa and western Asia.

There are many holidays celebrated around the world during May. These include May Day, Cinco de Mayo, Mother’s Day and Memorial Day, among others. May Day is a Gaelic holiday that originated from the medieval era. It is most common to deliver a basket to a friend’s house and run away after ringing the doorbell, but it is also a day known for art and skits.

It is a common misconception that Cinco de Mayo is Mexico’s Independence Day. The day is actually for celebrating a triumphant victory in the Battle of Puebla during the

**Here in River Falls, May means warmer weather (hopefully), Finals Fest and final exams and of course, summer break.**

Mexican-American War. Mexicans use the day to celebrate their Mexican heritage and pride. In addition, several other countries celebrate Cinco de Mayo, especially the United States.

River Falls is also looking forward to an exciting May as the school year wraps up. One event that many students are looking forward to is Finals Fest 2013, featuring Phillip Phillips. He is stopping in River Falls as a part of his 2013 tour. The Georgia native is best known for his win on the 11th season of “American Idol,” but since then, he has begun to make his mark in the music industry. He released his first album, “The World from the Side of the Moon,” on Nov. 19, 2012. This was shortly after his single, “Home,” went viral. This is the song he sang upon his American Idol win, but the song really became popular during the 2012 Summer Olympic Games in London. It was used as the theme song for the U.S. women’s gymnastics team before showing the gymnastics coverage. “Home” was also nominated last year for a Teen Choice Award. His second single, “Gone, Gone, Gone” (my personal favorite), was released this past February.

May is a stressful time as the semester wraps up and students are loaded with work to do. The comforting thought is knowing only two weeks lie between us and summer break, which is definitely reason for motivation. Hopefully soon we will see the flowers bloom and trees bud and be able to enjoy May like it is supposed to be.

*Cristin is an English major and music minor from Eagan, Minn. She enjoys writing, playing the flute and swimming. After college, she would like to pursue a career as an editor.*

Follow the Student Voice Etc on Twitter @uwrfvoiceEtc



# Emergency text alerts not reaching students

Rory Linnane

Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism

In the wake of campus shootings the past five years, police throughout the nation are using text alerts to deliver warnings and advice to students in emergency situations. The concise messages are delivered to all students, faculty and staff - except, at many campuses, for those who haven't signed up. UW-River Falls is no exception.

More than 80 percent of students, faculty and staff at UWRF are not even signed up to receive emergency alerts, according to the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism.

However, this doesn't alarm Blake Fry, the special assistant to the chancellor at UWRF, because he sees text messaging as just one of the tools that UWRF uses to alert students.

"Text messaging is not the end all be all. We have the website, email, social media and a public address system that can be announced over the entire campus," Fry said.

He added that UWRF used the campus-wide PA system when a suspicious package (which later turned out to be an art project) was found in the Kleinpell Fine Arts building two years ago.

Only three of the UW System's 13 four-year campuses - Platteville, Stevens Point and Parkside - have more than half of students, faculty and staff signed up to receive text alerts, according to a review by the Center.

The overall participation rate for all 13 campuses is about 32 percent, the Center found, based on data from each campus. Some campuses provided exact counts, while others only had estimates.

UW-Platteville achieves nearly total participation through automatic enrollment. Students cough up their cell phone numbers when they apply and register for classes. Later they're notified that they can "opt out." UW-Stevens Point recently implemented the same method, and now boasts a participation rate of 88 percent.

Other UW System campuses, including UWRF, rely on students, faculty and staff to "opt in" by independently entering their numbers in the text alert system.

The emergency response team at UWRF will be discussing changing the option from opt-in to opt-out. However, Fry said UWRF has been hesitant to force students to sign up for the text messages because of the charges associated with some data plans, but UWRF does plan on talking to the four-year schools that have opt-out plans (Platteville, Parkside and Stevens Point) to see how they handle those concerns.

At the state campuses using the opt-in approach, the highest participation rate, 65 percent, is on the Parkside campus. UWRF meanwhile, has 19 percent with its opt-in system. In contrast, the Whitewater campus has no text alert system.

**Power of text:**

University officials like Fry point out that text messages are just one tool in their emergency toolbox.

"When planning for emergencies, we don't put all our eggs in one basket," said UW System spokesman David Giroux.

But in some instances - for a student on the move - a text might be the only message to connect with the target.

Even in class, students often look at their phones. Students surveyed at the University of New Hampshire said they checked their cell phones an average of one to five times per class.

"The best way to respond (to an emergency) is to have the most instantaneous message delivery on a college campus, and that by far is text messaging," said Michael Hanley, director of the Ball State University Institute for Mobile Media Research.

In a 2012 survey by the Division of Information Technology, 35 percent of UW-Madison students said they use a cell phone that does not have Internet access, which means they may get text alerts but not emails. UW-Madison text alerts can reach phones quickly, within two or three minutes of being sent, campus Police Capt. Michael Newton said.

"Generally, any system that automatically puts everyone on a campus in a database is better, and then you have to opt out," said Anne Glavin, president of the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators.

**Sparked by shootings:**

In 2007 and 2008, troubled students shot themselves after killing 37 people and wounding dozens more at Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois universities.

Just 10 percent of NIU's students were signed up for text alerts in 2008, when a gunman shot 21 people in a lecture hall, killing five. In response to student concerns, the school currently is switching to an opt-out system. Although it's not fully implemented, 66 percent of students are receiving the alerts.

"You just look around the country and see what happens, and anything you can do to be somewhat prepared is important," said Erickson, from UW-Platteville. "Shootings are the big one that really made a lot of people stop and think that wow, that can happen here."

At UW-Parkside, the text alert system is promoted vigorously with emails and campus presentations. The school's voluntary sign-up rate of 65 percent is highest among the state's campuses using opt-in text alert systems.

From there, the rates take a dive. Coming in next is UW-La Crosse, at 43 percent, then UW-Green Bay, at 33. Three schools have participation rates in the 20s and three are in the teens, including UWRF.

Matt Kiederlen, chief of police for UW-Whitewater, which has no text alert system, has considered implementing one,

and would like it to be mandatory if it did.

"Otherwise, it becomes rather nonsensical," Kiederlen said. "If you do a voluntary sign-up, are you really reaching the volume of people you need to in a real emergency?"

At UW-Green Bay, emergency management coordinator Joe Rozum would like to increase the participation rate. "In case of emergency, that would give us much more access to everybody, especially if it's an ongoing incident," he said.

The easiest way to have every student receive text alerts would be to make participation mandatory. Although officials at every campus said they have discussed moving to a mandatory system, so far most haven't budged.

"That would have to come from a higher entity, someone like the chancellor," Rozum said.

Officials are frequently concerned about invading student privacy by asking for phone numbers. Several also noted students could have to pay for the messages they get, depending upon their phone plans, whether they want them or not.

Others find these concerns less significant.

"I guess our main goal is to reach as many students as possible and if they're inconvenienced by an extra text message, if it's 10 cents that could save a life somewhere, that's a trade-off we take," UW-Platteville spokesman Erickson said.

UW-Stevens Point business analyst David Dumke, who led implementation of the school's new opt-out system, said he imagines the campus like a bell curve. A few students want the alerts enough to sign up, he hypothesized, and a few will opt out. The rest will go with the flow.

"They're not going to sign up, but they're not going to complain if they get them," Dumke said.

UW-Madison last reviewed its text alert system in 2011, Newton said. At that time, students, faculty and staff said they preferred a voluntary system. He thinks it may be time to do a new survey.

Ilya Yakovlev, who joined UW-Parkside in June as the chief information officer, said he plans to propose making the switch to a mandatory system. In his previous post at St. Cloud State University, he said he helped the school transition to an opt-out system and got positive feedback from students.

"We know there may be a cost to the recipient, and I've observed us being very judicious about when we use the system," Yakovlev said of UW-Parkside's alerts. "To me it's well worth knowing not to come to school because it's not safe."

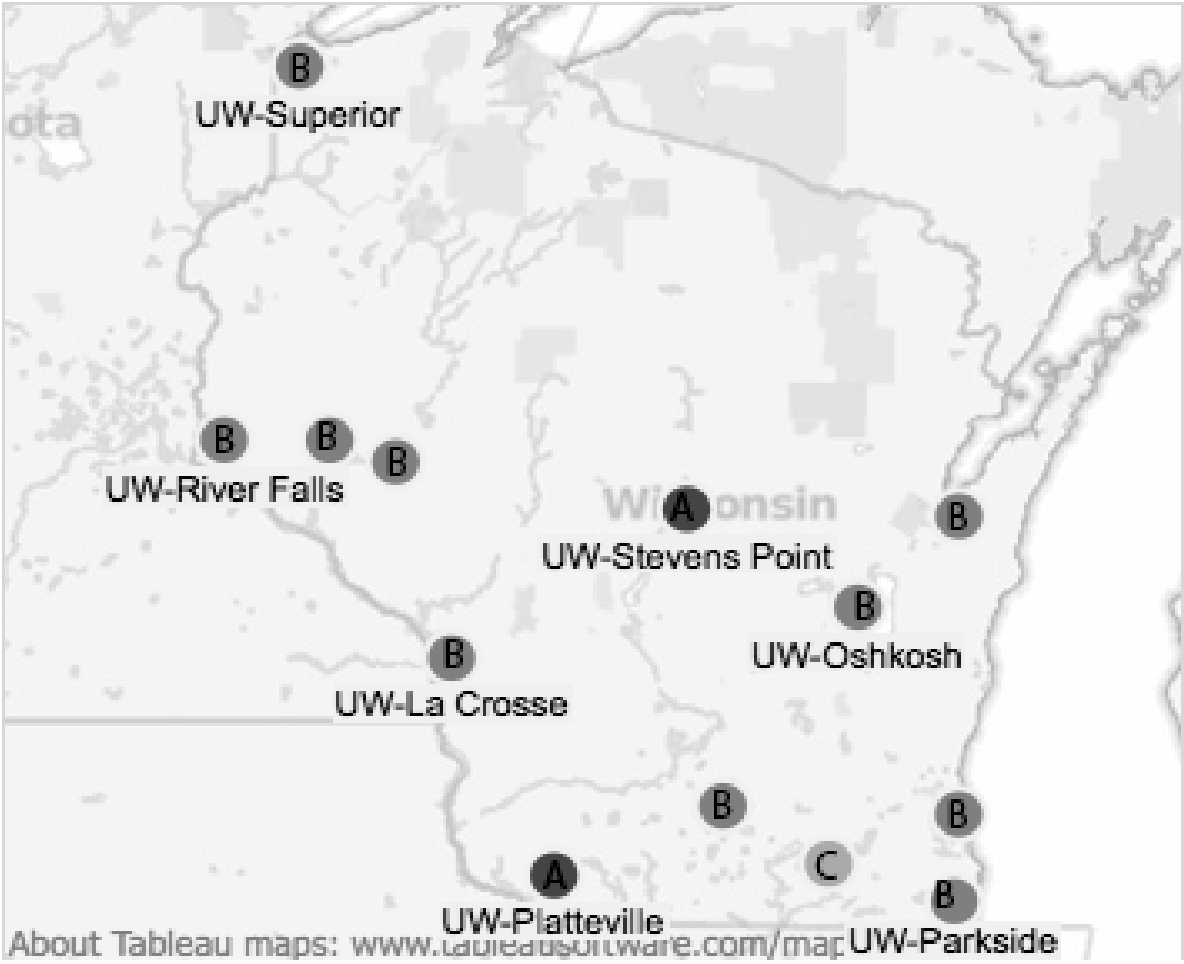
At UW-Madison, Newton said every effort is made to keep alerts to a minimum - about six per year, he estimated.

Ashley Goettl contributed to this story.

## They're not opting in

### Most campus emergency alert systems are opt-in -- and include less than half the campus population.

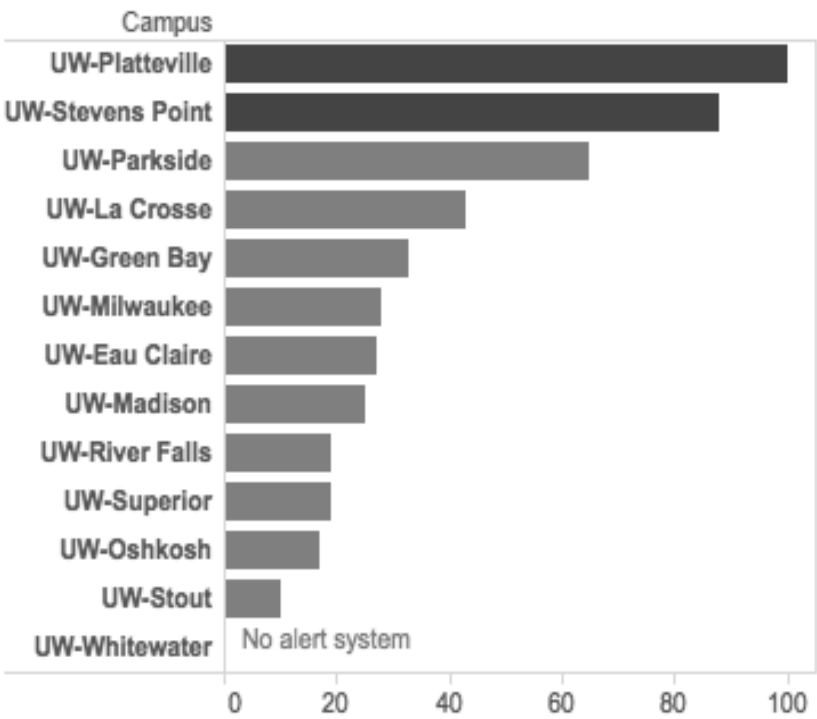
- Opt in or opt out?
- Opt out (A)
  - Opt in (B)
  - No text alerts (C)



## UW-River Falls

Blake Fry, special assistant to the chancellor at UW-River Falls, said the university does not use text alerts for weather because of the information already available through the National Weather Service, and has only had to use the system once in 2009 when Gov. Doyle ordered most UW campuses to close due to snow.

## Percentage enrolled



**About this data**

Percentages were obtained from the universities or calculated from the number of phone numbers enrolled compared to the campus population of students, faculty and staff. Some universities provided estimates, not exact counts.

**Credits**

Reporting: Rory Linnane.  
Visualization: Kate Golden,  
Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism.

Charts provided by WisconsinWatch.org

Above is a map of the Wisconsin campuses and their choices for the emergency alert systems. The alerts are sent through texts to students to inform them about UW campus closings due to weather, safety and other important notifications. More than 80 percent of students, faculty and staff at UWRF are not even signed up to receive emergency alerts, according to the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism. However, this doesn't alarm Blake Fry, the special assistant to the chancellor at UWRF, because he sees text messaging as just one of the tools that UWRF uses to alert students.

"Text messaging is not the end all be all. We have the website, email, social media and a public address system that can be announced over the entire campus," Fry said.

Charts provided by WisconsinWatch.org

To the left is the percentage of schools enrolled into the system currently. The overall participation rate for all 13 campuses is about 32 percent, the Center found, based on data from each campus. Some campuses provided exact counts, while others only had estimates.