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STUDENT VOICE

University of Wisconsin River Falls

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Interactive classroom opens on campus

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The Active Learning Center has opened in Hagestad Hall and is now providing Chemistry and Physics students at UW-River Falls with an innovative learning experience.

Completion of the Active Learning Center is part of the Pathway to Distinction, a five-year strategic plan to improve the university and is the first interactive classroom at UWRF. Many staff and faculty from Facilities Management and Planning, Division of Technology Services and Chemistry and Physics Departments helped with idea generation and development of the project.

Jamie Schneider, a chemistry professor at UWRF, originally brought forth the suggestion of creating an active learning environment at UWRF after teaching in a similar environment at the University of Minnesota.

Schneider said that the Active Learning Center gives more students a chance to participate in class and provides a space where active learning is the norm versus out of place.

Schneider described the expectation some students have in a traditional lecture

hall that they are going to listen and not have a very strong voice. The classroom has given students the opportunity to work with others and problem-solve and given Schneider the chance to see and hear student thinking.

Schneider also said that fixed seating in traditional classrooms can act as a barrier for class collaboration and participation and the new classroom opens up the possibilities for teaching and also brings a large class to a small class feeling.

Students face each other in small groups in the Active Learning Center, instead of facing the front of the room. There are 12 learning stations in the classroom, each with monitors and glass boards that facilitate group learning.

Earl Blodgett, a physics professor at UWRF, believes most students will benefit from the active learning style. He described the classroom as being a new learning experience for faculty and students alike and said he sometimes feels like a rookie teacher all over again when teaching in the new classroom.

Students familiar with lecture-style learning may feel uneasy about the new changes of the Active Learning Center. However, all types of students, even those who



Photo by Desi Danforth/Student Voice
Professor Blodgett and Arriety Lowell work to improve students learning experience during a physic lab in the newly opened Active Learning Center.

excel at traditional learning, will benefit from the new classroom style, Blodgett said.

The Active Learning Center may also provide opportunities in the future for Physics students to be paid to assist professors with new equipment and learning concepts, said Blodgett.

Before the project was completed, a group of faculty and staff from UWRF went on a trip to the University of Minnesota to observe the active learning environment.

After the idea gained support, faculty from UWRF then requested and received funding from the UW-System to create the Active Learning

Center. The funding totaled \$850,000 and included costs for construction, electricity, technology and materials.

Construction of the building was started in mid-July and completed at the end of January, according to Tim Thum, project manager of Facilities Management and Planning.

Technology installation and implementation was a major consideration when building the classroom, said Thum and Michael Stifter, executive director of Facilities Management and Planning.

Chancellor inducts officers



Desi Danforth/Student Voice
Chancellor of UW-River Falls Dean Van Galen swears in new University police officers on Tuesday, Feb. 4 in the Alumni Room of South Hall.

College of Business and Economics prepares to establish new facility

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The College of Business and Economics, in collaboration with the chancellor and the city of River Falls, is set to unveil the Center for Innovation and Business Development (CIBD) in early April.

The CIBD was established to meet the needs of the region's business community, assist economic development, encourage innovation and provide opportunities for current and future MBA students. The facility is located in the city's former power

plant, which closed on July 1, 2011.

Close proximity to the UW-River Falls campus and ample parking makes for an accessible new location for non-community members visiting the CIBD, in addition to students and faculty.

UWRF has offered its resources in the formation of the CIBD, while the city of River Falls is contributing the office space and rent free of charge. The College of Business and Economics intends to provide business feasibility studies, business and marketing plans, strategic man-

agement and the analysis and development of international markets.

The CIBD will have two primary functions. Firstly, an Economic Development Specialist will be hired to help place full-time MBA students with the region's businesses.

The students will be asked to assist with periodic projects, thus creating rare opportunities, as well as internships and potential future employment.

See CIBD page 3

Budget reduction will lead to less business services

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UW-River Falls faces a base budget reduction of \$1.7 million for the academic year 2014-2015 (FY15) and administrators are making strategic reductions to lessen impact on students.

"The budget reductions we are experiencing are impacting all of the University of Wisconsin System campuses, and it is not possible to reduce \$1.7 million from our base budget without impacting students in some way," said Chancellor Dean Van Galen.

However, Van Galen said that student learning is the most important; therefore, the budget reductions for the academic colleges is 2 percent, while reductions in areas of UWRF is much higher. For example, the business and finance area faces a reduction of 8.1 percent.

Assistant Chancellor for Business and Finance Elizabeth Frueh agreed that reductions are being made with students in mind.

"We still strive to have quality education," Frueh said. "The budget cut is significant, but it's not going to us from delivering quality education."

Frueh said that there were several changes made in different divisions to encompass the budget cut. Several divisions were able to trans-

fer positions or supplies and expense from one revenue source to another, and there is a reduction in supplies and expense in some divisions.

"They're just going to do with less," Frueh said.

Some positions within UWRF have been eliminated. Frueh said that maybe half a dozen positions, some administrative and some faculty, will not be filled for FY15. She said that the reduced faculty could show up as a larger class size or a class being offered less frequently.

Both Frueh and Van Galen

"We still strive to have quality education," said Assistant Chancellor for Business and Finance Elizabeth Frueh. "The budget cut is significant, but it's not going to us from delivering quality education."

said that business services will be reduced, such as facilities and technology services.

One solution for the budget cut is recruitment and retention, which Frueh said is a major focus of UWRF.

"We are really focusing on recruitment and retention," Frueh said. "Additional students bring additional new funding and retaining the students we have increases our

funding."

On top of the base budget cut, UWRF is currently in a tuition freeze as well as a differential tuition freeze. Therefore, the budget cut cannot be battled with any sort of tuition increase, which is raised at the UW-System level.

"Typically in the past when we have had base reductions, we have had tuition increases to try to offset that reduction," Frueh said. "So if there would not have been a tuition freeze I think there would have been several people arguing for a modest tuition increase."

The Falcon Promise differential tuition, which is also in a freeze, cannot be raised from \$130 per student to \$160 as originally planned, so some improvements planned for FY15 will not be able to be completed. These improvements include increasing the amount of tutoring available on campus and modernizing classroom equipment.

"All of it affects the student, in one way or another," Frueh said.

The \$1.7 million budget cut will continue through academic year 2015-2016 (FY16) because it is a biennial budget. Van Galen said that he does not anticipate any additional base budget cuts at this time.

News briefs

‘About Space - Contemporary Abstraction’ is Gallery 101 exhibit at UW-River Falls

An art exhibit, “About Space - Contemporary Abstraction,” opens Feb. 12 in Gallery 101 in the Kleinpell Fine Arts building at UW-River Falls. The exhibit is free and open to the public.

Minnesota artists Betsy Byers, Karen Gustafson and Zoë Shulman will exhibit their contemporary artwork at this event. Curated by UWRF Art Department faculty Jeannine Kitzhaber and Lyz Wendland, the three artists were chosen for their work because it expands the contemporary boundaries of space and abstraction.

Byers is an art professor at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minn., where she teaches printmaking and painting. With her paintings she is interested in the “relationships that embody our intimate experience with the environment in an abstract form.” Gustafson is an art professor at Normandale Community College in Bloomington, Minn., where she teaches drawing and painting. Gustafson’s works on paper are intense correlations of science and art that reveals the “underlying structures and patterns to research, reveal, and inform.” Shulman is a recent graduate of the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. Her post-modern work is both two-dimensional and three-dimensional. Shulman is interested in finding truth in how she perceives and reconstructs her world.

All three artists are prolific in their fields and utilize contemporary and formal relationships of space in their art.

A reception and gallery discussion, both free and open to the public from 4-5:30 p.m. on Feb. 27. The exhibit is open through March 2.

Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday; and 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday. For more information, contact the Art Department at 715-425-3266.

Minnesota and Wisconsin High Schools compete in Science Olympiad hosted by UW-River Falls

Approximately 800 students from 26 Minnesota and Wisconsin high schools competed in the third annual Science Olympiad Border Battle held at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls on Jan. 25.

The event, organized by UWRF Physics Professor Earl Blodgett, featured 48 high school teams competing in 23 National Science Olympiad events as well as five trial events specific to Wisconsin and one trial event specific to Minnesota.

Medals were awarded to the top four finishers in both divisions in all 29 events in the tournament. In addition, team trophies were awarded to the top four teams in each division. Visit www.uwrf.edu/PHYS/olympiad/Awards.cfm for a complete list of all awards and additional information about the tournament.

The Mounds View High School Goats Team finished first overall in the tournament and first in their division. The Wayzata High School A Team finished second overall and second

in their division. The Menomonie High School Maroon Team finished third overall and third in their division. The Boyceville High School Purple Team finished fourth overall and first in their division. Boyceville High School was also presented the Spirit Award for the enthusiasm and sportsmanship exhibited by members of all three Boyceville teams. The Eastview High School A Team finished fifth overall and fourth in their division. The Medford High School Red Team placed second in their division and 7th overall. The New Richmond High School Black Team placed third in their division and 13th overall. The Shell Lake High School Gold Team placed fourth in their division and 16th overall.

In its 31st year, the Science Olympiad has become the largest team science and technology competition in North America and has been recognized as a model program in the National Science Standards by the National Research Council. Unlike many other physics, biology or chemistry competitions, Science Olympiad mixes the various science disciplines of biology, earth science, chemistry, physics and technology together in one competition. For more information about Science Olympiad, visit www.soinc.org/ or www.wisconsinso.org.

UW-River Falls a Finalist in Desire2Learn Edge Challenge Competition

The Falconers Group, a group of four students in the College of Business and Economics at UW-River Falls, has been named a finalist in the Desire2Learn Edge Challenge. The competition invites teams to design and build a prototype of an innovative app that would improve some aspect of the educational experience.

The Falconers Group is made up of Mike Haas of River Falls, Tammy Kelly of River Falls, Tyler Rasmussen of Roberts and Luke Vang of Saint Paul, Minn.

The group describes their app as a tutoring platform with a difference. This app would allow students to engage in online tutoring sessions with connected users, including students, tutors or instructors through digital whiteboards, instant messaging, group discussions and video conferencing.

Arpan Jani, associate professor of Computer Science & Information Systems at UWRF, incorporated the Edge Challenge into his class, Introduction to Systems Analysis, this past fall. Six teams from the class participated in the challenge.

“I asked students in my CSIS 423 class to work on this challenge as part of the group project component of the course,” said Jani. “They also had to integrate what they were learning in the course with how they go about developing the app, especially understanding business requirements and then creating a prototype.”

Teams from Duke University, the University of Waterloo, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison are the other three finalists. The winner will be announced Feb. 6 and will receive a cash prize of \$10,000 and a trip to Nashville, Tenn., for FUSION 2014, the Desire2Learn User’s Conference.

The Falconers Group pitch video describing their app concept can be viewed on Youtube.

The CSIS department is housed in the AACSB-accredited College of Business and Economics at UW-River Falls. The department offers state-of-the-art computer labs and classrooms with an evolving curriculum designed to prepare graduates to meet the demands of the fast-paced technology indus-

try. The department enjoys a 97 percent placement rate in the CS or IS related field with excellent employer satisfaction that supports the readiness of graduates for the workforce.

Door is Open to Semester in Europe

UW-River Falls Semester Abroad: Europe is looking for adventurous, curious, independent-minded students who want the reward of creating and carrying out their own research projects in a European country of their choice. Over 1000 students from all majors have participated in the program since it began in 1963.

Some recent projects include: dolphin monitoring in Slovenia; an exploration of the musical life of Montpellier, France; geological changes in the lagoon surrounding Venice, Italy; youth unemployment in Spain; storytelling through art in the UK; attitudes toward tourism in Berlin; and laboratory experience at a veterinary research institute in Germany. Semester Abroad: Europe participants also take advantage of a month of independent or small-group travel throughout Europe at the end of the fall semester.

Contact Dr. Charlie Rader, 2014 group leader at charles.p.rader@uwrf.edu or come to the next weekly preparatory meeting from 7 to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 11, in 103 Davee Library. The program website is www.uwrf.edu/semesterabroadeurope.

Observatory Viewings

The UW-River Falls Physics Department began its spring season of free, public observatory viewings and astronomy talks on Feb. 4. Objects to be seen in the telescopes include planets, globular clusters, open clusters, nebulae, galaxies, moons and double stars.

All observatory viewings are dependent on a clear sky. Please call 715-425-3560 after 6 p.m. or visit www.uwrf.edu/PHYS/Schedule.cfm and click on “Observatory” to verify that the sky is clear enough for viewing. The talk will go on as scheduled regardless of the weather.

A Physics Department faculty member and/or student will staff each telescope and be available to answer questions at each open telescope session. Observers are encouraged to stay and look at as many elements as possible and to request personal observing targets.

Since the dome is unheated and the observation deck is outside and open to the elements, visitors are advised to dress appropriately for the weather. The viewings and talks are suitable for all ages.

Other talks and viewings this semester include:

Tuesday, March 4, at 8 p.m., “Happy Fat Tuesday! How Astronomy Determines Easter” presented by Korenic in Room 271 Centennial Science Hall and then at 8:30 p.m. telescope viewing (waxing crescent moon) on the third floor observatory deck.

Wednesday, April 2, at 8 p.m., “Lagrange Points--Astronomy’s Balancing Act” presented by Korenic in Room 271 Centennial Science Hall and then at 8:30 p.m. telescope viewing (waxing crescent moon) on the third floor observatory deck.

Email glenn.spiczack@uwrf.edu for more information about the observatory or eileen.korenic@uwrf.edu for more information about the astronomy talks.

Crabtree to host international students

Alexa Hilt
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Beginning this summer, Crabtree Hall will be transformed into a global living and learning community that will give domestic and international students a chance to live together. Starting in August, around 150 international students, mostly from Brazil and Saudi Arabia, will be starting to make their way to UW-River Falls for a semester abroad.

The plan for the new global living and learning community is to give students the opportunity to interact with both domestic and international students on a completely different level. The new international theme for Crabtree Hall will help break down language barriers between students, as well as cultural differences.

Kenneth White, the assistant director of Residence Life, is one of the faculty members on campus who has been working on changing the theme of Crabtree into a global living and learning community.

“The new community will work on a number of different levels,” White said. “What it is entailing right now is that we are hoping to partner international students with domestic students in roommate situations so that we can help to bridge the gap between international students and domestic students.”

One of the requirements of living in Crabtree Hall once it becomes a global living and learning community is that domestic students will have to live with international students.

“The plan is to have the entire hall half international students and half domestic

students,” White said.

Although the hall will be mixed with domestic and international students, this is not the only dormitory that will house international students next school year.

Vanessa Tackman, a Resident Assistant in Crabtree, hopes to be a part of the new community and help integrate international and domestic students together.

“In my opinion, the goal of the new community would be global engagement which will enhance learning, and connect students with people of different cultures,” Tackman said. “Also, some international students learning English will have a better experience being around non-international students and will be able to pick up the English language a lot faster.”

The new global community will also be beneficial for domestic students who want to study abroad or are returning from international travel.

“I think that the changes that are being made to Crabtree will bring more international students to River Falls, which will create a more diverse campus,” Tackman said. “I’m excited about the changes, and what it will bring to the campus as a whole. I think it will build diversity and more global engagement.”

White is also excited and hopeful about the positive changes and global perspective that the new global living and learning community can bring to campus.

“There are other campuses across America who’ve done similar initiatives,” said White. “But I think we are ahead of the curve on it and I think it is a great and wonderful opportunity for this campus.”

River Falls Police/UWRF Police Department

Jan. 31

- Phillip Paul Tipp was fined \$263.50 for underage consumption at May Hall.
- Rachel Hannah Scheid was fined \$263.50 for underage consumption at May Hall.

Feb. 2

- Andre Tavarise McDonald was fined \$263.50 for underage consumption at Johnson Hall.

Editor’s note: Information for this section is taken from River Falls Police and River Falls Police Department incident reports.

The Student Voice is hiring for this semester!

Available positions:
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Staff Photographer

If you are interested, email editor@uwrfvoice.com.

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North Hall celebrates century as part of UWRF

Ben Lamers
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The second oldest building on the UW-River Falls campus is turning 100-years-old this year.

North Hall was finished being built on June 12, 1914, according to the University’s website, and affirmed that UWRF, then the River Falls Normal School, was here to stay.

Throughout the past 100 years, many things have changed about North Hall, from changes to the building itself to which departments have called the building home.

Originally, the building was home to the University’s

basketball court, the economics department, biology department and math department. All three departments moved out when the Agriculture Science Building was finished in 1966, according to the University Archives. The math department have since moved back into North Hall.

In 1927, a \$150,000 addition was built onto the building, which included a swimming pool in the basement of the building, according to a Student Voice story in 1979.

The basement would be home to both the pool and the basketball court until 1963, when the court became two lecture halls, and a floor was put over the swimming pool and the space became used

by the drama department, according to University Archives.

In 1968, the on-campus radio station, WRFW made the basement of North Hall its home, something which was far from a match made in heaven.

“It was a poor place for a radio station. Every summer the place would flood with rains, and in the winter there was no heat,” said Lorin Robinson, chairman of the journalism department in 1979, to the Student Voice at the time.

“It wasn’t uncommon to see news readers reading copy with mittens on.”

WRFW would eventually move to its current home on the third floor of the building

in 1976.

Between 1975 and 1980 more departments left the confines of North Hall when the Centennial Science building was completed.

Despite all of the movement of departments, as well as the changing of the building itself, some things have remained the same in North Hall for the past 100 years.

One notable constant is the invasion of wasps in the fall and the spring. Facilities Planning and Management Executive Director Mike Stifter said that the wasps continue to descend upon the building, especially when spring comes early, like it did in two years ago.

UWRF alumnus Doug Ricci

also remembers the wasps quite well.

“I remember that the bees always seemed to take my focus away from what was being taught –or at least that is what I used as an excuse,” Ricci said.

On Tuesday, Feb. 4, the University held an event celebrating 100 years of North Hall in the buildings auditorium. Those attending the event could see the history of the building laid out on different posters created by the University Archives.

Ironically, the auditorium where the event was held, will be the next thing in the building to change.

The auditorium will be redone in the coming months.

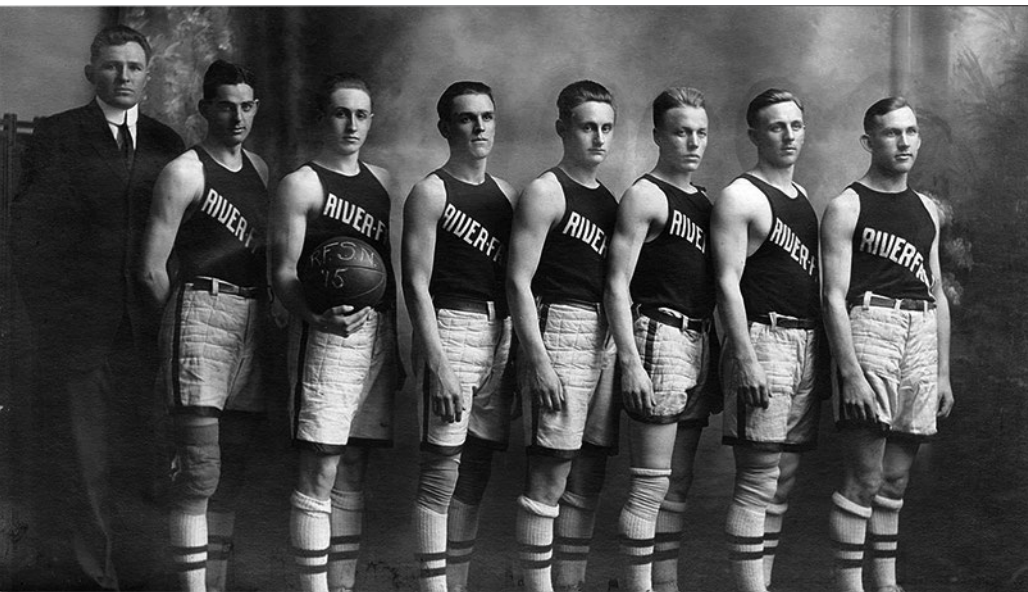
Stifter said that the project was hoped to be done by this spring, but due to some delays, the new target date is in late summer or the fall semester.

As a part of the Rodli Hall renovation, more changes will be coming to North Hall as well. When the Rodli project is complete the Financial Aid Office and the Registrar’s Office will leave North Hall for Rodli Hall.

Changes are a part of history that is simply woven into the fabric of North Hall. But at the end of the day, the more things change, the more they stay the same.



Student Voice
1979 Student Voice photographer captures contractors filling in the North Hall east wing pool to allow for construction of classrooms.



University Archives
Above: Ivy and Awnings photo of North Hall taken from the 1935 UW-River Falls Yearbook.
Left: 1914-15 Mens Basketball team. This team was the first team to play in the North Hall gymnasium, which was referred to as a “crackerbox gym” because of the seating that overlooked the gym.



University Archives
Above: Ivy and Awnings photo of North Hall taken from the 1935 UW-River Falls Yearbook.
Left: 1914-15 Mens Basketball team. This team was the first team to play in the North Hall gymnasium, which was referred to as a “crackerbox gym” because of the seating that overlooked the gym.

CIBD: New facility to promote economic development

From page 1

The students will be asked to assist with periodic projects, thus creating rare opportunities, as well as internships and potential future employment.

The Economic Development Specialist would also assist with regional Economic Development Corporations. Ideally, the specialist would help retain and grow business in the city of River Falls, as well as attract new business.

Once an Economic Development Specialist is hired,

they will be required to become acquainted with the members of the business community, starting with the residents of River Falls and students in the MBA program.

Currently, the CIBD is being remodeled because the facility has not been renovated in over 30 years.

“It’s a nice space, but it needs some updating,” said Glenn Potts, dean of the College of Business and Economics. The building’s restoration will include new walls, ceiling tiles, carpeting and

paint.

The second function of the CIBD will be the relocation of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), currently located at 128 South Hall.

The SBDC provides information, advising and training to western Wisconsin entrepreneurs and small business owners. But, the SBDC happens to be problematically located for those unfamiliar with the UWRF campus.

“From outside the community it is hard to find,” Potts said.

Presently, not only do outsiders need to find the campus, but they must locate free parking, the correct building and the right room.

“It can be intimidating,” Potts said.

Potts fully expects the CIBD to create new jobs within the region, including MBA students who gain experience at the facility. When the facility is finally primped and polished it is also likely to attract future potential MBA students to gravitate towards the university.

In two years, the CIBD

could become home to a brand new Food Product Development and Business Incubator, which would collaborate with the stout Wisconsin food processing industry. The incubator would help expand product lines and develop new products.

The original idea for the CIBD is still relatively fresh.

“The Chancellor and I have been talking about this for six to nine months, going back to last spring,” Potts said.

In fact, Potts has been on the planning committee since day one. He has also helped

lead an effort for a federal grant for the future incubator.

Potts is enthusiastic about his students finding work at the CIBD.

“These are young, talented people with a significant amount of training and expertise,” Potts said.

One of the university’s slogans is “Global. Innovative. Excellent.” With the unveiling of the CIBD, the College of Business and Economics appears to be doing their part on behalf of the university.

McNair Scholars Program presents often overlooked opportunities to UWRF students

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There is more than meets the eye to the McNair Scholars Program on the UW-River Falls campus, with many opportunities that more students should be taking advantage of.

Designed as a two-year program, at the start of the participant’s junior year, it is geared towards undergraduate students studying fields in science, math and technology; the program is meant for students who are interested in pursuing a master’s degree and even a doctoral degree. With 16 students currently involved in the program, there is plenty of room for more students to join.

Each year, students who

are accepted into the program are matched up with a faculty member on campus who will be their mentor and help guide the McNair scholar in their research. These students then conduct research and attend professional and academic conferences to present their research. Each month there are seminars these students attend, set up by the McNair program to help shape them in many different areas, like preparing for the GRE examination to get accepted into graduate school and the application process.

Louis Porter II, director of the McNair Scholars Program said that there are many four-year institutions that have this program, including several in Wisconsin. The program is not a scholarship,

but the financial advantages the McNair scholars have laid out for them are hard to pass up. These advantages include receiving a stipend, tuition for the academic credits earned from the internship and assistance with room and board. There are also long-term financial advantages, such as paying for the GRE and graduate school application fees.

“This is an amazing opportunity for anyone who is interested in a career in research and to really get experience and assistance in getting into graduate school,” Porter said.

Senior biology major Blake Klocke is finishing up his last semester of the two-year program this year, and is coming away with more than just the

monthly seminars and mentored advice. Coming in as a freshman in college almost four years ago, Klocke knew he was interested in preserving amphibians and their way of life, but he never would have expected to experienced all that he has within the last two years, thanks to the McNair Scholars Program.

Klocke had applied for a research program that kept amphibians in captivity in Panama the spring of 2013; he was later accepted and expected to fly out the same summer. Among other scholarships and grants he applied for, he also applied to the McNair Scholars program after being accepted. When he was accepted into the McNair program they helped to fund half of the total cost of him

going to Panama for two and a half months to do research in his field of study last summer.

“The McNair Scholars Program really opened the doors for me and let me experience lots of opportunities,” Klocke said.

There is a preliminary application to fill out, as well as eligibility requirements that have to be met, including maintaining a cumulative G.P.A of 3.0 or higher, having a sophomore or junior standing, first-generation student and coming from a family that qualifies as low income. As a program that offers so much and can help students reach their full potential, the program is highly unrecognized or just not known about on the UW- River Falls cam-

pus.

“The people who are seniors and graduated and applying to graduate school, they provide a big benefit to the sophomores and juniors in telling them about their experiences and how to prepare,” Klocke said. “The peer to peer connection is really great and you can’t beat this program on campus, it’s an amazing opportunity.”

For more information on eligibility, program services, benefits or the application process contact Porter at (715) 425-3528 or louis.porter@uwrf.edu.

Student Senate makes positive changes to its governing structure

While most UW-River Falls students enjoyed their break from school over J-term, Student Senate spent their time reformatting the entire structure of how Senate is run.

We want to first commend those on Senate who spent a significant amount of time going over the previous structure and finding a way to help make things run more efficiently by gearing Senate more towards the students of UWRF.

The Student Shared Governance Modernization Act was approved Tuesday evening at the Senate meeting by over two-thirds majority vote. A brand new Senate means streamlining the structure by consolidating committees and reducing repetition. It also means a better use of students’ money.

In previous years of Senate, they have worked hard to make UWRF an exceptional campus and this year of Senate is going above and beyond to make our campus even more efficient and open.

It is nice to see Senate encouraging students to get more involved on campus and initiating different tactics to make it easier to get involved as well. By making three new committees on Senate to be responsive to the needs of students will take getting students involved to a whole new level.

Senate has also expressed interested in extending their involvement with the city of River Falls and is currently working on a Town and Gown Association as a part of the Student Shared Governance Modernization Act.

Allocable Fees Appropriation Board has also worked hard this year to manage the budget and wisely use the single event funding. They are currently working on approving budgets for the 2014-2015 academic year and have shown dedication and commitment to best utilize the funds that are available.

Senate is concerned with representing the campus population fairly and has worked hard throughout the school year to improve campus. They have reached out to student media as well as different organizations across campus showing interest in their needs and concerns. It is reassuring to know that Senate is taking such long strides to switch their focus on being easily accessible to students.

Senate wasted no time this year to get important changes made and to make themselves more visible than they have been in previous years which was one of their goals stepping into office. The positivity and encouragement from Senate radiates campus wide and that certainly displays their success. Senate has made their eagerness to increase involvement shown by attending campus functions such as the meet and greet at the Phillip Phillips concert last semester to being more available in the Senate office.

Senate has continuously made an effort to reach out to students, especially with the Student Shared Governance Modernization Act. A video explaining it is available on Senate’s OrgSync page, which makes the information easier to understand. Students should take advantage of the information made available by Senate.

Students are welcome to attend Senate meetings every Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the Willow River Room in the University Center.

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

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

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.

The *Student Voice* reserves the right to edit any material for content, libel or space. It also 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.

Newspaper theft is a crime. Those who violate the single copy rule may be subject to civil and criminal prosecution.



FocusOnU offers chance to gain TV experience

Matthew Ford	UW-River Falls has a lot of exciting clubs, groups and fraternities. But I’ll bet you didn’t know that UWRF has its own television show called Focus on U, I know I did not.
Columnist	So you can imagine how surprised I felt, one procrastination-filled evening while casually flipping through channels, when I came across the image of a familiar face on the screen. I quickly clicked back to see if I had made a mistake.

But no, I knew that face. I saw a fellow classmate on the television screen. Maybe this local UWRF student had come into something big, won a talent contest or caught the eye of a Hollywood producer.

My interest piqued, I decided to look into how this student who seemed so normal, whom I passed nearly every day in the halls, got on television. After some hard-edged internet investigation, I found out the down low on Focus on U.

It started about 20 years ago and has remained an unknown, to me anyway, staple of the university for all that time. Not only did I discover that, but I also found episodes from the past several seasons on the official Focus on U YouTube channel: FocusOnUTelevision.

A few hours later I felt thoroughly educated. Focus on U has an interesting concept, they follow a late night show format with a host, announcer, a couple of guests for those mandatory interviews that one might expect in this type of show, a segment which covers the latest news, an assortment of short pre-filmed segments covering almost any kind of topic and a musical act to close off the show, all clocking in with a run time of about forty minutes.

It didn’t seem like all that much while watching, but after writing that I’ve concluded that they really know how to pack in the content.

Senate Corner: Q

Senate works to connect with campus, students, community

Sam Tauchen	UW-River Falls means something different to each and every student.
President	Some say UWRF is a home away from home while others define their college journey by their experiences. Regardless

of our individual experiences, we are a part of a campus community that cares, challenges, and supports each other.

Every single day, students can seek services from a variety of different areas including career, health, academic and professional. Departments from across the University work together to continually create a better environment for the people who attend, work and visit our campus.

We can choose to focus on the difficult times that lie ahead as the cost of higher education increases and the uncertainty of the job market, or focus our efforts to continually better our campus and the people around us.

The students of Student Senate believe in making a difference on our campus. They are reminded from time to time that life is not always easy, and they realize why their position is so important. Student Senate is said to be the voice of the student body, but that is only half of the story.

A voice is only as effective as the action that follows. Student Senate’s commitment to the students of UWRF is not taken lightly, and every issue and solution begins with first listening to our peers.

This past semester, Senate has worked hard to improve campus life and represent the needs of the students. Creating more inclusivity across campus has been a major goal for the year. During the summer, we made many changes in the University Center Involvement Center to create a more collaborative and inclusive space.

Recent changes during the break have been made to that space to further promote student involvement on campus. These changes include updated collaborative furniture, new banners that represent all student organizations and the addition of collaborative work stations. Also included in the renovation was an “Events This Month” calendar and a “Share Your Thoughts” board.

The purpose of the Involvement Center update was to make the space more appealing to students and to transform

The true novelty of the show, however, comes from seeing our very own campus featured on television, seeing familiar faces talk about local events, ways to get more involved on campus, opportunities for success in college life and more. All of this is wrapped up in a light-hearted atmosphere that encourages us to not take ourselves too seriously.

Those positive aspects aside, the show probably will not have you running out on that handful of professional late night hosts you hold so near and dear to your heart. The likes of Jimmy Fallon and Conan O’Brien get exorbitant amounts of green presidential pulp to bring a highly polished product to the eager masses. Focus on U, on the other hand, has to rely by and large on full-time college students to bring it to life, college students most likely relying on Ramen Noodles and various assortments of carbonated sugar waters to keep them from breaking down and going into a weeklong coma induced by lack of sleep. So you’ll have to forgive the show for its hit and miss overtly referential humor and bathroom jokes.

But the thing that excites me the most about Focus on U is the seemingly open nature of the production. Just about anyone on campus could get featured on the show. Even if they only want to talk about how they’ve got some really nifty yodeling skills that they’d like to demonstrate, or how they got a cute pet turtle and or armadillo that absolutely demand media attention because of their astounding cuteness.

Episodes from the last fall’s season currently air 9 a.m., 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. daily on Channel 119. The first episode of the new season should start airing Feb. 14. It will become available on FocusOnUTelevision, the show’s YouTube channel, shortly after that.

the area into a central location where students are able to get involved or inquire about getting involved in on-campus clubs and organizations. This space is also an informative area for campus events. The space will be further improved in order to promote student involvement through ongoing changes this semester.

In addition, a greater working relationship with the city of River Falls has been established to provide students with more opportunities to get involved within the River Falls community.

Over the winter break, student senators met with city officials to develop a greater working relationship, and the group identified ways to partner with current and future programs. One topic of discussion is creating a single place online to search for volunteer opportunities within the River Falls community. Throughout the spring semester, the Senate plans to continue to offer suggestions and establish a greater connection with the city of River Falls for years to come.

Furthermore, Senate has been trying to find the best way to represent and serve the students. A motion was recently passed on the floor called the “Student Shared Governance Modernization Act”, and this motion will restructure the operations of Student Senate.

The act will consolidate committees, define policy review of matters regarding academic and budgetary concerns and more effectively represent the students of UWRF. For more information, please watch the YouTube video titled “UWRF Student Senate Student Shared Governance Modernization Act.”

Additionally, please visit the Student Senate OrgSync Page for more detailed information and stay up-to-date with what is happening by liking our Facebook page at facebook.com/UWRF.Senate.

As a fellow student and President of the Student Senate, I wish you the best with your next semester, and I challenge you to get involved with the time you have left. Collectively we can make changes to better our campus community for the current and future generations, and Student Senate welcomes your help in doing so. UWRF is truly a home away from home for me, and I could not be more proud to represent the students of the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

Be the first person to find the lost falcon feather in this issue of the Voice and win two free movie passes to the Falls Theater! (105 S. Main St.)

The first person to report the find to editor@uwrfvoice.com AFTER 10 a.m. Friday wins! The winner will be announced on the Voice’s account on Twitter @uwrfvoice

Playing Feb. 7-13
“The Lego Movie”
7 p.m. & 9 p.m. daily
(Sat. & Sun. 2 p.m.)

Eco-Village reduces footprint

Molly Breitmün

Columnist

This past fall, I volunteered along with other UWRF Destination service trip leaders and interns at the St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity. Working beside a sorority and a few community members, we put in insulation, hung drywall, and painted trim.

The highlight of the day for me was touring a nearly complete home. We met one of the future homeowners and her family doing a final cleaning and paint job before moving in.

The walls were in warm, cheerful tones and the skillfully tiled floor was spotless. The laughter and good humor in the air allowed me to envision the future of the bare studs and concrete of the house I spent most of the day in.

Since it was founded in 1995, St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity has built 58 homes in St. Croix and Pierce Counties. Seven of these homes were just completed in 2013 for the Habitat Eco-Village on the Westside of River Falls.

An Eco-Village is a community of people who intentionally make life choices to reduce their ecological footprint. The design and building process of the community’s homes, to function in harmony with this aim, is critical. Construction waste for the planned 18 homes is recycled. And though it is invisible under the current snow, rain gardens, community gardens, edible landscaping, and paths connecting the Eco-Village to the larger neighborhood are all in progress.

Some of the homes at the Habitat Eco-Village were built as duplexes with shared walls to increase heating and cooling energy efficiency. Radiant floor heat systems also help lower the heating bills and reduce draw on natural resources.

Protection of our local watershed is also an element of the community’s design. Drive-ways are built with pavers to create a perme-

able surface that allows water to infiltrate into the soil instead of becoming harmful runoff.

One of more to come, a rainwater collection system was installed to gather rainwater from gutters to fill a 2,500 gallon cistern. This gray water system is for outdoor lawn, car washing, and gardening uses.

SCV Habitat is also nearing completion of the infrastructure necessary for storm water and erosion management.

Possibly most noticeable at a glance though, are the extensive solar Photovoltaic (PV) and thermal installations on the homes’ rooftops. Through an in-kind contribution of MAMAC Systems, SCV Habitat is able to monitor real-time energy performance in one of the green homes.

In September, they reported that solar energy filled 90% of hot water needs and solar PV produced 33% more electricity than it consumed in the home.

The Eco-Village homes are awaiting their final ratings from the U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certification. They have preliminarily been rated Platinum, the highest LEED ranking possible.

UW-River Falls’ relationship with the Eco-Village grew through Dr. Kelly Cain and the St. Croix Institute for Sustainable Community Development’s expansive networking and outreach capabilities.

The Eco-Village’s distinctive success has garnered attention and visitors from other Habitat affiliates and private developers as far as Tacoma, Washington. Our local Habitat affiliate is known nationally as a trailblazer in this capacity.

SCV Habitat’s conventional role had been as a homebuilder. The Eco-Village’s vision shifted the organization into the role of a developer. With former Mayor Don Richard’s vision, the city of River Falls donated the land the Eco-Village occupies.

This required special considerations, since SCV Habitat had to put in a road and work

closely with the city in a different capacity.

One concern with Habitat acting as a developer and building green housing was that the upfront cost to build the homes would be more expensive. SCV Habitat Executive Director, Dave Engstrom, sees a trend though that the current and future homeowners realize the long-term value of the way their homes are being built.

Beyond the fact that energy bills and future costs will be greatly decreased, Engstrom said, “That’s the way houses should be built. Poor people shouldn’t be excluded from sustainable housing. St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity’s mission is to provide safe, decent, affordable, and sustainable housing for everybody.”

Donations of innovative technology, efficient home fixtures, and the skilled labor of professionals has greatly reduced the cost of the homes. Steiner Plumbing, Electric & Heating Inc., Andersen Windows, Werner Electric, CalStar and Uponsor are among the generous contributors that are too numerous to list.

All 18 homes planned for the Eco-Village have been assigned. Engstrom emphasized that, like all Habitat homes, the Eco-Village homes are not simply given away. Habitat for Humanity finances the homes and sells them to qualifying families or individuals with a zero-interest loan.

The applicants have to demonstrate that they currently do not have acceptable housing and that they would be able to make the monthly payments. The mortgage payments average between \$400 to \$600 per month. Each adult applicant must also agree to commit to at least 250 hours of “sweat equity” to be considered.

The Board and staff also grappled with whether or not they were attending to the rest of their service area while creating this exceptional example here in River Falls.

Their solution to the wider community’s need is “A Brush With Kindness.” Like Habitat’s home building program, “A Brush

With Kindness” offers low-cost services at a zero-interest loan, but focuses on rehabbing homes for current homeowners.

Projects will begin this spring and could include energy improvements, new exterior paint jobs, or weatherizing for existing homes.

Students and the wider community have multiple opportunities to participate with SCV Habitat. The UWRF Habitat for Humanity club volunteers their time once a month on a Saturday.

Club meetings are every other Tuesday in KFA 360. Their next meeting is on Tuesday, February 11th. Log on to OrgSync or contact club president, Abby Kubichek, at abigail.kubichek@my.uwrf.edu for more information.

SCV Habitat for Humanity is also recruiting for an AmeriCorps VISTA position. The full-year AmeriCorps position starts this April and will focus on resource development. The VISTA volunteer will most likely share time between the River Falls office and the ReStore in New Richmond, WI.

They are looking for someone interested in marketing, public relations, recruiting donations, and increasing ReStore sales through creative advertising.

The New Richmond ReStore is a building materials and home furnishings thrift store. Students and community members are both encouraged to donate building materials and furniture as well as shop for the same at low prices. Furniture pick-ups can be arranged by appointment.

Groups and individuals are welcome to volunteer on the job site. Although no experience is necessary and safety equipment is provided, it is important to wear appropriate clothing.

Call ahead at 715-425-5623 or login as a volunteer on SCVHabitat.org to make sure the daily onsite manager will be expecting you.

STUDENT VOICES

What class are you most excited for this semester?

Compiled by Desi Danforth



Katie Gamble
Sophomore

“Agricultural accounting.”



Erin Sorge
Sophomore

“Applied feeds and feeding class.”



Louis Musser
Sophomore

“Bio statistics.”



Tucker Sullivan
Sophomore

“O.S. programming.”



Anna Langer
Senior

“Geological destinies of nations.”

McDonald arrives for second chance

Ryan Tibbitts
ryan.tibbitts@my.uwrf.edu

A former Division I athlete has made UW-River Falls his new home this semester, with hopes of a second chance. He plans on joining the football team as well as the basketball team next fall semester. That player is former University of Minnesota Golden Gopher Andre McDonald. McDonald played eight games his freshman season but was suspended due to drug-related issues shortly before the bowl game in 2012. He left that spring to seek rehab and was set to return in the 2013 season before getting suspended once again for drugs, but this time for the whole season.

“I ran into some trouble and off the field issues and I just kind of let it consume me,” McDonald said. With UWRF being a smaller campus and the football team making strides to create a positive impact on and off the field, McDonald feels that UWRF would be a great place to get a fresh start. However, there has been a small bump in the road for McDonald. This past weekend he was issued a citation for underage consumption of alcohol. On Sunday, Feb. 2 at 1:42 a.m. campus police received a call about an intoxicated male with an ACL injury in the Johnson Hall lobby who was later identified as McDonald, according to an incident report from the UWRF police.

UWRF Athletics officials had yet to determine how the underage citation will affect McDonald’s eligibility to play football. McDonald was one of the nation’s top recruited receivers coming out of Hopkins High School in 2012. He was a four star recruit and was sought after by Ohio State, UCLA, Michigan State, Vanderbilt and Minnesota, according to ESPN.com’s national college football recruiting page from 2012. McDonald has known Falcon linebacker Cory Clark for years and said that Clark was a big reason he decided to come to UWRF and attempt a fresh start this semester.

“Cory is like an older brother to me. He texted me asking me what my plans were and I told him I wanted to go back to school and play again,” McDonald said. “He told me if I came here he would be here for support and that Coach Walker and the teammates were great.” Head football Coach Matt Walker said in an email interview that when he first sat down and started talking to McDonald that they talked about more than just football. They talked about life, education and how UWRF could fit into that equation. McDonald is going to UWRF for elementary education and said he hopes to make a difference in children’s lives someday.

“Andre clearly has had some issues in his past. We have talked at length about this and his future. He has been up front and owns his mistakes. He knows this is a second chance and he knows that he is going to have to continue to work very hard to stay on the right path,” Walker said. McDonald has said he does plan on playing basketball at UWRF as well, but has not met with head coach Jeff Berkhof about those plans. While the underage is a setback for McDonald’s plans, he says he is excited about the support system he has forming in UWRF.

“I really feel at home already and I have only been here a week. My teammates are helping me and I feel like I have known some of them forever already,” McDonald said. McDonald said he does plan to play basketball at UWRF as well but that he has not met with head coach Jeff Berkhof about that yet. While the underage is a setback for McDonald’s plans he said is excited about the support system he has forming at UWRF. “I really feel at home already and I have only been here a week. My teammates are helping me and I feel like I have known some of them forever already,” said McDonald.

Winter Olympics cause for international celebration

Crisitin Dempsey
Columnist

Every two years, the summer and winter Olympics takes place, providing a source of entertainment for some, and a source of competition for others. Whether it is the summer or the winter games, it is an international celebration, a way to show pride for one’s country and connect with others around the globe. This week, athletes from around the world will travel to the 21st games in Sochi, Russia in hopes of coming out victorious and representing their country. I know I feel a sense of pride during the Olympics, so it is always fun to watch fellow Americans take home the gold medal. The first winter Olympics were held in 1924 in Charmonix, France, approximately 20 years after the summer Olympics debuted. The winter Olympics was created due to the immense success that the summer Olympics had in the past. When it started, the winter Olympics only had seven sports: alpine and cross-country skiing, figure skating, speed skating, Nordic combined, ice hockey, and ski jumping. Since then, several sports have been added to the schedule, such as luge and snowboarding. The rapid rise of television in the 1950’s helped the Olympics grow in popularity, attracting over one million viewers. This also increased profits due to broadcasting and advertising costs. The winter Olympics, like the summer Olympics, has had its fair share of scandals and controversies. World War II was among the first global issues to stand in the way of the Olympics, creating an eight year hiatus. The games resumed in 1948. There have also been issues involving performance enhancing

drugs and political boycotts of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), likely due to conflicting governments, especially concerning Communists during the Cold War. However, the IOC also notes that the winter Olympics is a way for other countries to show off their political superiority. Everyone has their favorite Olympic memory. Mine is from the 2008 summer Olympics in Beijing when Michael Phelps’s swimming relay pushed ahead to win the gold medal. During the winter Olympics, several Americans can agree how exciting it was to watch the United States pull a hockey victory over the Soviet Union in Lake Placid, NY in 1980, under the coaching of the great Herb Brooks, a Minnesota native. The victorious game is dubbed the “Miracle on Ice,” as the Americans won the gold medal against an obvious rival country. History has come a long way to be able to finally host the games in Russia. Another memorable moment includes the singing of “God Bless America” at the 2002 Salt Lake City opening ceremonies, remembering the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. This year, many Americans will be sad not to see skier Lindsey Vonn competing due to injuries, but we can look forward to up-and-comer Lindsey Van and snowboarder Shaun White, among others. Do not forget to tune in to the 2014 Sochi Olympics starting on Thursday, February 6 and ending on Sunday, February 23 on NBC. Make sure to look up when your favorite events air so you do not miss any part of the action.

UW-River Falls Men’s Hockey team plays Gustavus Adolphus College at 7:05p.m. Friday, Feb. 7 in Hunt arena



Kathy M Helgeson
Hockey player William Hess skates across the ice at a previous game. The men’s hockey team is currently 5-3 in the WIAC and 12-6-2 overall.

UW- River Falls athletic teams upcoming events

Men’s Basketball

The Falcons were barely defeated 63-64, 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 5, at Karges. They play 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 8, at home in Karges vs. UW-Eau Claire. The Falcons will take on UW-Stevens Point 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 15, at home in Karges.

Women’s Basketball

The Falcons were defeated by UW-Lacrosse 53-64 Feb. 5. They will play 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 8, in Eau Claire and 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 11, at Martin Luther College.

Men’s Hockey

The Falcons defeated UW-Superior Friday, Jan. 31, in Superior. They lost to UW-Superior Saturday, Feb. 1, in Superior. The Falcons will take on Gustavus Adolphus College at 7:05 p.m. Friday, Feb. 14, in Hunt Arena.

Women’s Hockey

The Falcons defeated UW-Superior 4-1 on Feb. 1. They will play UW-Superior at 2:05 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 8, in Hunt Arena. The Falcons will take on UW-Eau Claire at 2:05 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 15, in Hunt Arena.

Men’s Track and Field

The Falcons competed on Saturday, Feb. 1, at the Wartburg Select meet in Waverly, Iowa. They recieved fifth place. They will compete at 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 8, in Hunt Arena in the UW-River Falls Invitational.

Women’s Track and Field

The Falcons competed on Saturday, Feb. 1, at the Wartburg Select meet in Waverly, Iowa. They recieved fifth place. They will compete at 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 8, in Hunt Arena in the UW-River Falls Invitational.

LIVE

FALCON BROADCASTS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7TH
MEN’S HOCKEY
HOME VS GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS
7:05 PM

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH
WOMEN’S HOCKEY
HOME VS SUPERIOR
2:05 PM

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL
AWAY AT EAU CLAIRE
7 PM

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH
WOMEN’S BASKETBALL
AWAY AT MARTIN LUTHER
7 PM

Football team anticipates 2014 season

Ryan Tibbitts
ryan.tibbitts@my.uwrf.edu

Six football transfers are now attending UW-River Falls this spring, with plans of joining the team which returns four All-WIAC players. The falcons will only be losing seven seniors next fall.

The team is looking to improve this offseason after going 0-10 in the 2013 season.

“It has been an incredible off-season to this point. I am so proud of our guys for the continued buy-in to what we are trying to do here,” said head football coach Matt Walker.

The transfers joining the team are Stuart Burns from the University of St. Thomas, Michael Diggins from the University of St. Johns, Otis Gaye from the University of Dubuque, Josh Olayiwola from Luther College, Spencer Urban from Bemidji State College and Andre Mc-

Donald from the University of Minnesota.

Burns is a linebacker who played one season at St. Thomas. He graduated from Hudson High School.

Diggins played one season at St. Johns University as a running back, where he had five rushes for 20 yards. He graduated from Centennial High School and played in the Minnesota All-Star game in high school.

Gaye plays defensive back and is from Robbinsdale Armstrong High School.

Olayiwola who is also a defensive back, is from Columbia Heights High School.

Urban will be a sophomore next season. He plays quarterback and started three seasons at Superior high school where he won all conference honors his junior and senior seasons.

McDonald played wide receiver at Hopkins High

School and was a four star recruit coming out of high school. He played eight games for Minnesota and recorded 10 receptions for 121 yards.

“All of these spring transfers can play at a high level and we cannot wait for spring ball to begin,” Walker said.

While UWRF is still looking for success on the field they have had a lot of success and improvement off the field under Walker.

“We are very proud of the strides we have made academically. My first semester here we only had 16 players over a 3.0 and our team GPA was around a 2.3. This past semester we had 43 guys over a 3.0, 17 over a 3.75, and four with a 4.0 while our team GPA is up over a 2.8,” Walker said.

The football team has also been a part of many off the field service projects the past

couple of years. The team has taken part in the local Relay for Life event. They also helped the athletic department raise over \$4,000 for Special Olympics last year. Most recently they had every player on the team walk a mile in high heels for a domestic abuse awareness campaign. This season the football team also teamed up with the soccer and volleyball teams to raise over \$2,000 for the Coaches vs. Cancer events held this past fall. Stories on all these events can be found on uwrfsports.com under the archived stories link.

“We are all frustrated with what happened last year and we all knew that it was going to be a long frustrating off-season of having to answer to the outside world that only looks at our record and does not see all the accomplishments and strides we have made,” Walker said.



Kathy M Helgeson/University Communications
Head football coach Matt Walker talks to players.



Kathy M Helgeson/University Communications
UWRF football players smile on the field. There are six transfer students who will be playing football for UWRF next season, including a Div. 1 recruit from the University of Minnesota.

See where your UWRF Falcons winter sports teams rank in WIAC standings

Men’s Basketball

School	WIAC	Overall
UW- Stevens Point	11-1	20-1
UW- Whitewater	9-3	18-3
UW- Platteville	7-4	12-8
UW- La Crosse	6-5	12-8
UW- Stout	6-5	11-9
UW- Oshkosh	5-6	10-10
UW- Superior	3-8	6-14
UW- River Falls	2-9	7-13
UW- Eau Claire	2-10	9-12

Women’s Basketball

School	WIAC	Overall
UW- Whitewater	12-0	18-3
UW- Oshkosh	9-2	18-2
UW- Stevens Point	8-4	15-6
UW- Superior	5-6	12-8
UW- Platteville	4-7	10-10
UW- La Crosse	4-8	10-11
UW- Eau Claire	4-8	6-15
UW- Stout	3-8	7-13
UW- River Falls	3-9	4-16

Men’s Hockey

School	WIAC	Overall
UW- River Falls	5-3	12-6-2
UW- Stevens Point	3-2-1	15-2-2
UW- Eau Claire	3-2-1	14-4-1
UW- Superior	2-4-2	7-11-3
UW- Stout	2-4	6-13

Women’s Hockey

School	WIAC	Overall
UW- Stevens Point	6-2-1	14-4-2
UW- River Falls	5-2-2	14-4-3
UW- Superior	4-3-2	14-3-4
UW- Eau Claire	0-8-1	4-15-2

Current WIAC standings as of Wednesday, Feb. 5

‘Nut Job’ lacks laughs, depth



Ryan Funes

Reviewer

The month of February has not kicked off to a good start for movies here in River Falls, as “The Nut Job” limps its way to theaters to remind you of why pun centric humor is not funny.

Surly Squirrel is his own squirrel, and only relies on himself to survive. He, along with his friend Buddy, has been a thorn in the paws of the local park creatures for too long, as they are trying to scavenge food for the winter. But when he accidentally causes an event that destroys the food supply, Surly is banished to across the street to fend for himself.

When all seems lost, Surly finds the mother load: a nut store that could set him and the park animals for life. He then plots with and against the animals of the park for this life-setting treasure, and in the end will need to find out where his loyalties lie, and if greed is really the final end in life.

I dreaded seeing this movie. I took one look at this work, put in a medium I love, and I immediately knew this wasn’t going to turn out well. As I walked to the theater, I was hoping for there to be a long enough line so I could turn back. I was hoping for it to be sold out, for I would have faced the chilling winds on the way back to my dorm as an alternative to seeing The Nut Job. But no, I had to chin up and take my medicine, and it was a grisly and oily taste that was left in my mouth after my fears were realized in that theater.

My first problem with The Nut Job I saw even in the trailers for it. The production on the film is very low quality for a theatrically released film. The textures on the animal characters were very poor and the environments looked lifeless. The animation overall looks like it should have been a straight to DVD released film.

However, the sub-par animation pales in comparison to the film’s script, which is just about the least inspired thing I have seen in recent years. The plot is something we’ve seen done countless times before, where the protagonist gets in trouble, gets a big plan, redeems himself, defeats the obvious bad guy and saves the day. Hollywood has done this plot to death and I’m sure no one today even wants to see this done again.

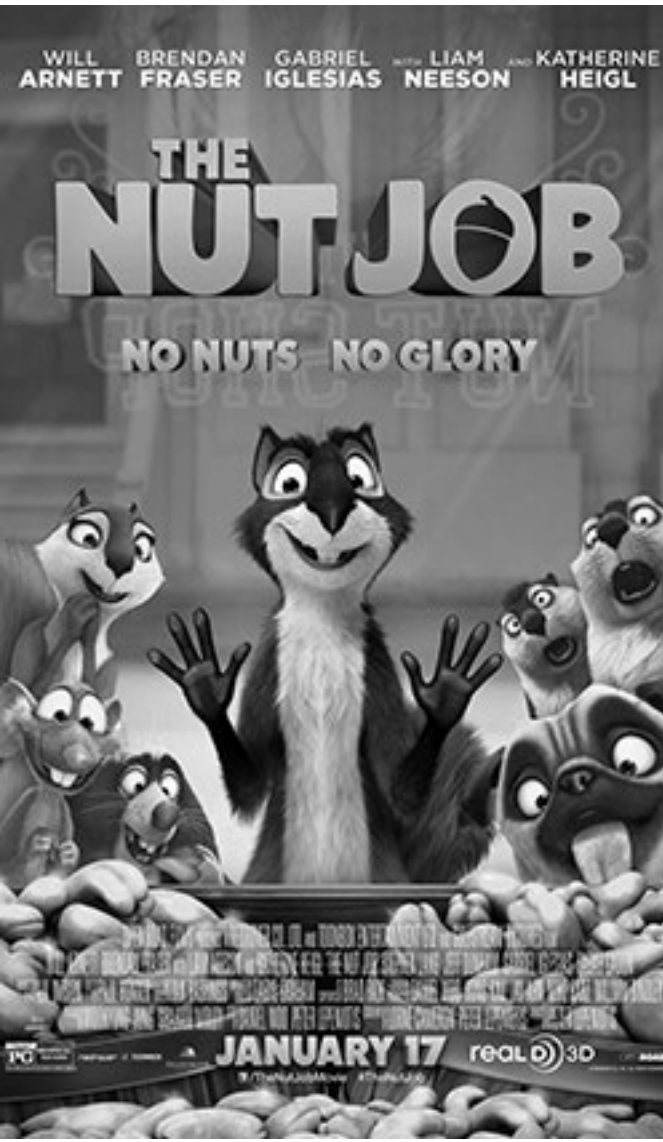
Surly Squirrel is a very unlikeable main character, constantly abusing his buddy and not even being able to make up for it with any other qualities, which he lacks significantly. That goes to say for all of the very forgettable characters in this film.

The film could not even elicit a decent laugh from me or the audience. It was so inept at setting up even a single joke that many fell flat and generated no humor. For an animated comedy, they were scraping well past the bottom of the barrel and into the dirt beneath it.

This was all on top of a gangster subplot that could have been taken out, a dated pop-culture reference, inconsistent scenes and weird voice actor choices, not that telling you Will Arnett voiced the main character would have made the movie sound any better.

The Nut Job truly represented a good image of everything that makes animated movies bad: promoting the ideal that bare-minimum joke writing and unimpressive animation is all your kid deserves. The film is not funny or entertaining for adults, but may generate a few laughs from a kid, although you could give a child as much entertainment by jingling your keys in front of them. At least it wouldn’t cost you five dollars and 90 minutes of your life.

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.



Top 10 films of 2013 display great filmmaking

Jack Tuthill

Columnist

Now that Christmas break and J-Term are a thing of the past, it is time to unveil the ten best films of 2013.

Everyone has their own taste in movies, so this list may not appeal to all demographics because film, like many other things in life, are a matter of opinion. However, that is an aspect that makes them so fun to discuss.

2013, much like 2012, was a great year for the American cinema. Now... shall we begin?

10. Star Trek into Darkness – I was not a true admirer of the first reboot, but the addition of Benedict Cumberbatch (“Sherlock”) as the villain, “Khan,” was ingenious. Older fans of the television series or the countless William Shatner films should certainly recognize the name “Khan.” The film is funny, exciting, entertaining and offers some of the year’s best special effects.

9. The Kings of Summer – Hands down the best “indie” film of 2013, and a true coming-of-age story that is relatable to most. Many of you probably know Nick Offerman as Ron Swanson from NBC’s “Parks and Recreation,” and his hilarious performance as a recently-widowed father of two is worth the price of admission.

8. Dallas Buyers Club – Matthew McConaughey is an actor that continues to surprise me. The days of “Fool’s Gold”

and “Failure to Launch” are so far in the rear-view mirror that I am beginning to forgive him for all those terrible roles he took over the past 10 years. Jared Leto (“Requiem for a Dream”) and McConaughey combine to make an unlikely comedic and heart-wrenching duo in “Dallas Buyers Club,” a true story about a man and his battle with AIDS.

7. American Hustle – What prevented this hilarious, well-written and terrifically-acted film from popping into the top five was the opening 30 minutes. But what starts out sappy, silly and slow becomes fun, swift and extremely funny. Jennifer Lawrence and Bradley Cooper, as usual, are on top of their game. An overweight and balding Christian Bale is another reason to seek out David O. Russell’s (“Silver Linings Playbook”) latest film about American greed.

6. Prisoners – Admittedly, bumping “Prisoners” to six hurts a little. Jake Gyllenhaal is a revelation as a twitchy, lonely cop looking for two missing girls. Hugh Jackman sheds his Wolverine fame and turns in a gut-wrenching performance as well.

5. The Hunger Games: Catching Fire – Easily the best blockbuster of 2013. “Catching Fire” outdoes 2012’s table-setter in all the right places. The performances are meaty; the set design, special effects and costumes are mind-numbingly good. In my opinion, “Catching Fire” is the best of the three books, and the film will likely go down as the best as well. “Mockingjay: Part 1” is due on Nov. 21.

4. 12 Years a Slave – I could easily make a best picture

case for “12 Years a Slave;” all the elements are there. The direction, acting, screenplay, cinematography and score are all extraordinary. This is not a film for the faint of heart—it will tear at your soul. Onlookers in the theater were gasping for breath, while others were openly crying. Watching a dark part of our nation’s history is not a rewarding experience, but a necessary one.

3. Her – A couple awkward early scenes kept this futuristic Spike Jonze (“Where the Wild Things Are”) film from taking home 2013’s best film. Joaquin Phoenix (“Walk the Line”) is nothing short of amazing; talking to an automated voice for the entire film proves his true talent. Falling in love with a “computer” sounds ridiculous on the surface, but Jonze gracefully pulls it off. The final scene of “Her” was the best motion picture experience of 2013.

2. Inside Llewyn Davis – I am a sucker for a good Coen brothers’ film. I am also a sucker for oddball musicals, such as “Nightmare Before Christmas” or “Once.” Oscar Issac (“Drive”) proves his acting worth as the title character, but what makes his performance all the more remarkable is his musical talent. Issac is a breath of fresh air and a revelation.

1. The Place Beyond the Pines – I fell in love with this film from the get go. What makes it unique is the story’s timeline and the multiple character perspectives. Ryan Gosling, Bradley Cooper and Dane DeHaan (“Chronicle”) all share the spotlight in this epic tale of family and the consequences of our actions.

Recalling fond memories with friends by lakeside cabin

Al Waisley

Columnist

He Came From Across the Lake: a short story.

Old wood boards creaked and bowed as I shifted in the sun. My sweater hung loose, and sweat rolled down my chest and sides. I sketched lily pads that lolled on the gentle waves of the lake. Some were in full bloom, their white, soft flowers stretching toward the same sun that made me squirm. Peering up, I saw a silhouette across the lake, a black mass that looked like charcoal in the golden flame the sun made reflecting off the rippling water. I set down my sketch pad on the bench, and walked to the edge of the dock. As the silhouette approached I could make out the outline of my friends Colin and Buddy rowing a wide fishing boat. Buddy stood at the head of the boat, pointing his finger toward the dock as if he were a triumphant captain returning from battle. Colin’s back arched and his head sagged as he fought the oars, hair drooping off his forehead. As they approached the dock I crouched

down to help the boat sidle up against the metal poles that supported the boardwalk, its dull gray sides pinging as they made contact.

Buddy looked toward the dock and laughed, jumping into the water instead. His long coat floated behind him as he walked next to me, peering up from the waist deep water. “It’s good to be back,” he said. I responded with a nod as he continued, “Remember the first time we came here, and we smoked out the cabin every time we tried to make a fire in the stove?” I laughed, “I’m glad we get another weekend here.” Buddy waded through the lily pads, picking a flower off of one and holding it in his palm. “We could barely see each other, fanning the doors like maniacs.” Pushing himself up onto the dock, Buddy’s coat dripped and sounded like firecrackers against the dry, weathered wood of the dock. Looking out to the trail cutting up the hill toward the cabin – with grayed two-by fours laid like punctuations along it – Buddy cocked his head back toward me and said, “After this I’m going to be leaving again.” The wind blew, rustling the aspen leaves that cast shadows onto the water. I glanced

over to Colin, who was looking out across the lake, his pale, bare chest reflecting the hidden shades of pink and green in the sun. Buddy made his way down the dock, shoes slapping and gushing water, leaving dark stains on the wood. Turning, Buddy walked backwards and cupped his hands around his mouth, “I’ll see you up there.”

I nodded and stood to follow him, but as I stood my pen fell out of my sweater and bounced into the lake. Rolling up my sleeve, I fell prone against the dock, reaching into the clear water. As I fished for the pen I heard Buddy call out again. “It is good to be back.” I was just able to grab the pen with my fingertips, kicking up a dark cloud of silty mud. As I pulled my hand out of the water I winced as my bicep raked against the edge of the dock. A row of red scratches bloomed on my arm. I could feel the marks writhing as if tendrils of flame licked at the flesh. I rolled my sleeve down and tucked the pen into my pocket, turning to respond to Buddy, but he had already disappeared behind the hill.

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