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# STUDENT VOICE

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## Virus should not impact annual colt sale

Alexa Hilt  
alexahilt@my.uwrf.edu

Since 1976, the University of Wisconsin River Falls has held the colts in training sale, which showcases over 43 colts that students have worked hands on with for the entire semester.

This year's colts have come from all over the country, such as Arizona and Texas, to undergo extensive training to be able to be sold for everything from a performance horse to a family trail horse.

Ashley Larson, an animal science major with an emphasis on equine management, is in the Colts in Training class this semester and is also a teacher's assistant.

"The colts in training program is a class where students are assigned an unbroken horse, usually two year olds, to care for and train during the semester," Larson said. "At the end of the semester the colts will be sold at an auction held at the school. Most of the colts are consigned, but some of them are bred at the farm."

Nathan O'Connor, an accomplished horseman and the head of the colt-in-training program, has a number of prerequisites that students are required to take before being able to take the class.

"We want to make sure everyone who takes the colt

class is safe and that their likelihood of getting hurt is minimal," O'Connor said. "Anytime you put green riders with untrained horses it can be a disaster, so we want to make sure students are prepared. Not just anyone can take the class and they need to be an accomplished rider."

By May 3, the horses will be ready to be sold and can go for prices ranging from the lowest priced horse last year being eight hundred dollars, all the way to the highest priced horse at \$30 thousand. The sales usually go very smoothly, but this year there is one concern around the Midwest that has been brought up, and that is the EVH-1 virus.

"EVH-1 is a flu virus that can affect a horse's neurological system. It is very contagious, and the treatment is expensive," Larson said. "EVH-1 is not at the lab farm, but in light of the current outbreak we have heightened our bio-security measures. The consignors put their trust in us to keep these colts healthy, and it is a responsibility that we take very seriously."

There have not been any confirmed cases of the virus in Pierce County. The last positive case was almost two weeks ago in St. Croix County, and there have been



Desi Danforth/Student Voice  
**Leah Gaudes, Sheridan Blaschke, Jane Baery and Kaitlin Finger are students in the Colts in Training course offered. Students taking this course work with these unbroken horses and care for them while training them as well.**

a couple colts in Stillwater that have tested positive for the virus and showed the neurological symptoms. All together, there are around ten positive cases between Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa.

There is restricted access at the lab farm on campus, and outside horses and riders

are not allowed in during this time. The EVH-1 virus can be spread by clothes and shoes of riders that are coming from other farms, so it is encouraged that people clean and disinfect their clothing before entering.

"The virus shouldn't have any effect on the colt sale.

What a lot of veterinarians are recommending is that horses should not travel until so many days after the last positive, some say two weeks to three weeks," O'Connor said. "Our horses have been held in the same situation for almost one hundred days at the time of the sale. There

are no new horses and we are not taking any new horses at the sale."

The sale is on May 3 and is open to the public. The preview will begin at 11:00 a.m. with lunch to follow at 12:00 p.m., followed by the auction at 2:00 p.m.

## Health Fair launches UWRF outreach campaign



Desi Danforth/Student Voice  
**Student members of the Pre-Health Society Julian Ikeri, Zach Russell, Alyssa Timmers, Laney Albertson and Nancy Rohert attended the Student Health Fair which took place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Wednesday, April 16. The group is folding bandanas to benefit the UWRF outreach campaign called Dan's Bandana Project. Dan's Bandana Project is a campaign, started by UWRF Biology Professor Besty Gerbec, that hopes to create an environment that supports those students suffering depression and anxiety through the empowerment of other students. The mission is that students tie the bandana to their backpack and pledge to listen to and understand those students who are suffering.**

## Sumnicht, Tauchen leave Senate legacy Student dies unexpectedly

Amanda White  
amanda.white@my.uwrf.edu

Move over, Clinton and Bush families: there's a new political legacy in town.

Former Student Senate President Sam Tauchen and current Senate President Tony Sumnicht have made this year a family affair. Two Thanksgivings ago, the two cousins looked at their combined leadership experience they had gained since starting at UW-River Falls and decided to run for Senate.

In the spring of 2013, Tauchen was elected president and Sumnicht was elected vice president.

When they started at UWRF, Tauchen went the Greek route while Sumnicht chose to become involved in residence life. Then, Tauchen became ethics chair of Senate when Sumnicht was on the Dining Services Committee. It was during this time that both of them started thinking about their ability to lead campus.

"Our paths really didn't cross until we found out that, man, we represent a couple different interest groups across campus and we both have developed as leaders and decided to continue on that journey," Tauchen said.

Once they were working together in a professional setting, Tauchen said it was easy to divide tasks and get things done. Sumnicht focused on state issues, especially after he became chair of UW Student Reps, and Tauchen focused on campus issues.

Senate was heavily focused on internal issues this academic year. The Student Shared Governance Modernization Act and restructuring how sport clubs and student media get funding were major focuses of Senate. Next year, Sumnicht said the Falcon Center will be one of the recurring topics Senate will

visit.

"I give a lot of credit to Sam for taking on Student Senate president," Sumnicht said. "You need to be passionate about the University to take it on, or it's not worth your time."

Sumnicht was recently elected Senate president and will now continue the legacy that he and Tauchen started those two Thanksgivings ago.

"Tony and I have both grown as leaders and it's crazy not to see him by my side anymore," Tauchen said. "He's off to carry the Senate forward."

Sam Mayberry  
samantha.mayberry@my.uwrf.edu

A UW-River Falls student died Wednesday, April 16.

First-year biology student, Alyssa Funke died in Bayport, Minn. She was 19 years old and a 2012 graduate of Stillwater Area High School in Stillwater, Minn.

Officials have yet to report a cause of death. Information about a memorial for Funke will be shared once it is available, according to

a campus-wide email sent out by Chancellor Dean Van Galen on Thursday, April 17. Van Galen said that students should be aware that Counseling Services is available for those who need assistance in room 211 Hagestad Hall. Hours for Counseling Services are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or by phone at 715-425-3886.



# News briefs:

## Annual Take Back The Night Event

The Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) is hosting their annual Take Back The Night event. The event is from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., April 24 and located outside at St. Bridget’s church 211 East Division Street River Falls.

Take Back The Night is an event to empower and support survivors, raise awareness, and let it be known that sexual violence will not be tolerated in our communities. S.A.R.T. cares for the entire St. Croix Valley and anyone and everyone in the community is invited to join in the Take Back The Night event.

Starting at 7:00 p.m. there will be a march on Main Street. All the participants of the event will join together and march down Main Street to show their support to the victims of sexual assault. From 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. there will be a candlelight vigil, where the survivors of rape can share their stories. Take Back The Night is always a powerful and moving event. Free food will be provided.

This is the third annual Take Back The Night event hosted by SART. SART’s core leaders are Erin McNiff, Client Services Coordinator, Wendy Demovsek, Administrative Assistant and Sam Duffy, Client Services Advocate. SART also partners with hospitals, police departments, campus organizations, non-profit organizations and local businesses in the community.

For more innformation contact call Erin McNiff at (715) 410-5667 or by email at erin@stcroixvalleysart.org

## Alumna named director of New Center for Innovation, Business Development

Danielle Campeau, University of Wisconsin-River Falls alumna with an undergraduate degree in biology (2007) and an MBA degree (2012), has returned to the University as the new economic development specialist and director of the new Center for Innovation and Business Development (CIBD).

At the ribbon cutting ceremony for the CIBD on April 8, Campeau said as director, her primary duties will be to provide a new and effective way for the business community to better connect to and communicate with UWRF; and, to help place well-trained, enthusiastic MBA students in meaningful projects within regional businesses.

Prior to joining UWRF, Campeau held various management positions at a healthcare company and has experience in the areas of project management, product development, data management systems, medical education, operations and corporate training.

The CIBD at UWRF is dedicated to supporting economic growth and development in the greater St. Croix Valley by providing assistance and resources to businesses in the region.

The primary services offered to businesses by the CIBD include: connecting businesses to skilled faculty and students at UWRF who can offer assistance with resolving business problems or issues; providing businesses access to graduate students enrolled in the AACSB-accredited MBA program in order to complete a business-related project on their behalf as part of the MBA practicum requirements; working to establish strong relationships with regional businesses to support business growth and development.

“The Center for Innovation and Business

Development will make a huge difference for UWRF and for business in the St. Croix Region,” said Glenn Potts, dean of the College of Business and Economics. “Danielle will be an advocate for businesses in the community and will help to provide businesses with the resources they need to succeed.”

The Center for Innovation and Business Development is located off campus in the newly renovated east office addition of the River Falls Municipal Power Plant building at 401 S. Winter St., just blocks from campus. Parking is free.

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) offering services to entrepreneurs and small business owners under the leadership of Steve DeWald has also relocated to this new location.

For more information about the Center for Innovation and Business Development, visit <http://www.uwrf.edu/CBE/Centers/CIBD.cfm> or email [danielle.campeau@uwrf.edu](mailto:danielle.campeau@uwrf.edu).

## Dance Theatre to Host Zumbathon Fundraiser

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls Dance Theatre will host a Zumbathon charity fundraiser in the Karges Center gymnasium at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, April 23. The public is invited.

Admission is \$5 perpublic, faculty and staff, and \$3 per students at the door 15 minutes prior to the event. The event will feature a Zumba Fitness Master from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

The proceeds from this event will be given to Turningpoint, a nonprofit that helps victims of domestic and sexual violence.

UWRF Dance Theatre has been around for more than 30 years and is a modern dance company that brings artistic dance program to students who love to dance. Dance Theatre strives to provide a rich dance experiences and performances for River Falls and surrounding communities.

For more information, email [christopher.adam@my.uwrf.edu](mailto:christopher.adam@my.uwrf.edu) or call 651-734-8267.

## Annual Finals Fest Concert to feature Heiruspecs, Davina, Vagabonds, Taj Raj

The ninth annual Finals Fest Concert at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls will showcase three bands from the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. Heiruspecs, Davina and the Vagabonds and Taj Raj will play at 7 p.m. Friday, May 9, at the outdoor Melvin Wall Amphitheatre on campus. Free admission and open to the public.

The concert will cater to a wide variety of musical tastes, featuring bands from three distinct music genres. Each band’s unique sound will add dynamic energy to the Finals Fest experience. The headliner, Heiruspecs, is best known for their energetic, authentic live hip-hop performances. The opener, Davina and the Vagabonds, will feature a theatrical performance rooted in blues and jazz. The opener, Taj Raj, is influenced by a mix of pop/punk and country, while featuring guitars and vocal harmonies.

Beverages and light snacks are available for purchase during the concert. Alcohol is prohibited.

For more information about Finals Fest, visit [go.uwrf.edu/FinalsFest](http://go.uwrf.edu/FinalsFest).

In the case of inclement weather, the concert will be held in the Falcon’s Nest in the University Center. For questions or accommodation requests, call the Student Life Office at 715-425-4444.

## UWRF Small Business Development Center relocates off-campus

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls has relocated off-campus to the River Falls Municipal Power Plant building at 401 S. Winter St., just a few blocks from UWRF. The SBDC is housed in the newly renovated east office addition and is sharing that space with the new Center for Innovation and Business Development (CIBD). Free parking is available at the site.

The SBDC provides information, advising and training to Wisconsin entrepreneurs and small business owners and managers located in Pierce, Polk and St. Croix counties.

“At the SBDC, we continue to look forward to working with all the businesses in the St. Croix Valley,” said Steve DeWald, director of the Small Business Development Center.

For more information about the SBDC, email DeWald at [steven.e.dewald@uwrf.edu](mailto:steven.e.dewald@uwrf.edu) or visit <https://www.uwrf.edu/CBE/Centers/SBDC.cfm>.

## Professor appointed advisor of Professional Dairy Producers board

Steve Kelm, professor of dairy science at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, has been appointed as an advisor to the Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin (PDPW) Board of Directors. This two-year appointment was made at the annual PDPW business conference in March.

PDPW has a nine-member board of directors; all must be active dairy producers. Four advisors, appointed by the board, represent the dairy industry, academia and/or the agricultural finance sector. The board and the advisors meet regularly. The advisors can share ideas and opinions just like any board member but they do not have voting privileges.

In addition to Kelm, two current board members have an affiliation with UWRF: Brian Forrest of Stratford, and Marty Hallock of Mondovi are both alumni.

As a strategic initiative, PDPW is proactively developing relationships with companies that have significant influence within the food system. During the March board meeting, the group defined key audiences and strategies for on-going education within the industry. In 2013, PDPW offered more than 60 days of educational programming for dairy farmers.

Another major strategic initiative for PDPW is how to bring the next generation into the dairy industry. PDPW already provides activities geared toward young people with their Youth Leadership Derby program for high schools students, and strong mentorship and internship programs for college students, while continuing to advance new model initiatives to meet this need.

Kelm served as chair for the Animal and Food Science Department at UWRF for six years and is currently the associate chair for the department. In 2002, he was honored by UWRF with their highest award, the Distinguished Teacher Award. He received the National Advisor of the Year Award from the American Dairy Science Association in 2000.

Kelm is excited about his appointment with PDPW. “I believe in and enjoy what PDPW is trying to put forward,” he said. “They have a progressive culture, go out of their way to try to meet the needs of all different types of producers, and have a smart board that does a good job of keeping the big picture in mind.”

For more information, email [steven.kelm@uwrf.edu](mailto:steven.kelm@uwrf.edu) or call the UWRF Animal and Food Science Department at 715-425-3704.

## UWRF Hosts Juried Student Art Exhibition

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls Art Department announces the 2014 Juried Student Art Exhibition in Gallery 101 of the Kleinpell Fine Arts building from April 18 to May 7. Free and open to the public.

Each year students enter artwork from ceramics, computer design, drawing, fibers, glass, jewelry/metals, painting, photography and printmaking for evaluation during this juried art show. This year, juror Yvonne Kloczek of Normandale Community College, Bloomington, Minn., will select an exhibition from these entries and hold an informal discussion with the students from 3:30 to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, April 16. The exhibition not only showcases the talent of UWRF students but allows them to hear a fresh perspective about their work.

Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 2 to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

For more information, contact the UWRF Art Department at 715-425-3266.

## UWRF horse show team advances to nationals

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) Western Equestrian Team brought home the Reserve Championship from the national semi-finals competition, earning a trip to the IHSA National Championship Show in Harrisburg, Penn., May 1-4. The six-team riders and two qualified individual riders from UWRF competed against 34 other colleges from across the country in the semi-finals at West Texas A&M University in Canyon, Texas, March 29-30.

The team competition started with the Team Novice class where Kayla Mack of Chisago City, Minn., earned a third place finish. She was followed by Hannah Symbal of Stanley in the Team Intermediate class. At the end of the first day of competition UWRF was in second place.

Team Reining led off the second day of competition with Alie Leonhart of Hugo, Minn., placing third. Markie Maletzke of Cedarburg competed in the Team Advanced class and earned another third place finish, leaving UWRF tied for second place overall. Elizabeth Kieffer of Kenosha, who had never shown a horse prior to her experience in IHSA at UWRF, took first place in the Team Beginner competition. In the last class of the day, Kayla Gosz of Manitowoc placed fourth in Team Open, giving UWRF a second place finish overall, just two points behind the first place team.

Carissa Beeksma of Ashland and Mack were individual riders, and Mack advanced to Nationals by winning a Reserve Championship in Individual Novice. Leonhart is the Regional AQHA High Point Rider and automatically advances to Nationals.

The IHSA was established in 1967 by Bob Cacchione, then a sophomore in college. It was founded on the principle that any student should be able to participate in horse shows regardless of their financial status or riding level. Cacchione is now the Executive CEO of IHSA, which has 400 member colleges from 45 states and Canada. He was on hand for the event and presented the awards.

For more information, contact Janie Huot at 715-425-3342.

## River Falls Police/UWRF Police Department

- April 12**
- Alexander Richard Wrzosek was fined \$389.50 for underage Possession-2nd offense at McMillan Hall.
- April 12**
- Dylan Dakota Anderson was fined \$767.50 for underage consumption-4th offense at McMillan Hall.
- April 12**
- Dylan Dakota Anderson was fined \$452.50 for resisting/obstructing a police officer at McMillan Hall.
- April 21**
- Tiffany Marie Jahn was fined \$263.50 for underage consumption-4th offense at McMillan Hall.

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

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# Winners of 48 Hour Film Fest to be announced

Miranda Hammel  
[miranda.hammel@my.uwrf.edu](mailto:miranda.hammel@my.uwrf.edu)

The winners of the 48 hour Film Fest will be announced Friday, April 18, at the Falcon Film Festival at 7 p.m. in the Falcons Nest of the University Center.

There were 12 groups comprised of as little as four people and up to 12, which participated in the 48 hour film festival that took place March 7, and had to be submitted or uploaded to YouTube or Vimeo by 6 p.m. Sunday, March 9. With eight short films submitted to the Falcon Film Festival, there are two ways of winning. There is a panel of judges made up of former University of Wisconsin- River Falls graduates that are now working in the TV and film business. There are certain criteria to be met and each judge grades separately based on creativity, technical and directing; each

one evaluates separately so the others do not know how the others voted. It is then determined based upon their feedback in three categories: best director, best technical, and best acting.

The other award being given out is the People’s Choice award. Videos that were submitted were uploaded to the activities and events web page through the UWRF website, and for the last month a link to vote through OrgSync was accessible for a month, giving students, faculty and staff a chance to vote for their favorite film. Whichever film receives the most votes, wins the award.

“This is the second year that we have used an online forum (OrgSync) for posting videos and it’s worked out well because everyone pretty much has access to YouTube these days and DVD’s are becoming a thing of the past

now,” said Erik Johnson, assistant professor of digital film and television.

Johnson said that every year this activity seems to grow in popularity and the quality of work seems to grow exponentially. He said that one year there was a group of students that traveled to Belize with the University on the day the 48 hour Film Fest started, and a group of students shot, produced, edited and uploaded a video in time while on vacation there. Participants do not have to be digital film and television majors; it can be anyone on campus who has an interest in making a video whether it is producing, filming, acting or editing.

Choosing a genre, prop and a character with a name and occupation, had to be decided first in order for applicants to determine what type of film they would produce in five

minutes or less. This is the sixth year of the Falcon Film Fest, which originally started as an exhibition for student films and a way to showcase films without awards. Separate from the 48 Hour Film Competition, which has been around for five years. There is also a separate part of the Film Fest that has three categories of films that will be screened made by students: documentary, music video and narrative short film.

“Giving an opportunity to present shared work, and with the 48 hour Film Competition, it’s gratifying to see what can be produced in a shorter period of time,” Johnson said. “there’s no greater gratification then sharing your work with your peers and the public, it’s also a way to get your work out there.”

Ben Porten is a digital film and television major on campus who submitted a music

video about pizza to the Falcon Film Festival. As a goofy video he produced he also stared in it as well he said.

“Telling a story and using different film techniques to show things and inventing new ways to show the viewer what’s going on, being able to see the video in my head as I’m making it is really fun,” Porten said. “The best part is sitting down and editing, trying to piece together everything to make it appealing for the audience, figuring out what you have or what you need to change to make the scene better is one of my favorite things to do, it’s kind of like a puzzle.”

Sam Azazu is also a digital film and television major, but he submitted two videos into the Falcon Film Festival. A short film titled “Package” and a music video called “Medicine.” As well as a video for the 48 hour

Film Competition, “Wanted: Game Points,” that fell under the genre of adventure. Recently nominated for the Regional Midwest Student Emmy Award for his music video, by the National Academy of Arts and Sciences, Azazu seems humble and modest about the nomination.

“Personally I like films, so every time I see one, I see something done where I want to go out and do something like that too,” Azazu said. “I watch a lot of films.”

Something new this year as part of the festival is the presence of sponsors like Red Cinema and Nikon. All of the films will be screened and the winners will be announced and presented with prizes at the end on Friday the 18, from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Falcons Nest and it is free and open to the public.

# Student Senate decides to fund accumulated debt

Niki Hovatter  
[nicole.hovatter@my.uwrf.edu](mailto:nicole.hovatter@my.uwrf.edu)

Student Senate has resolved to use Senate funds to pay off nearly \$7,000 of debt accumulated from disbanded student organizations in a motion that was passed last Tuesday.

The motion stipulates that funds from the Senate funding pool will be used to cover the negative balances. Funds currently in the Senate funding pool were attained from organizations that did not spend all of their allocated balances.

The disbanded organizations include Business Association, Soccer Club, Forensics and Men’s Baseball, which all are out existence for various reasons. Of the four groups, the Business Association left the largest amount of debt: \$4,448. Some of these organizations have tried to redeem their debt through fundraising efforts, but were unsuccessful.

Student Senate Vice President Tony Sumnicht believes it is the responsibility of Stu-

dent Senate to resolve this issue.

“We are the only people who can be held accountable for this debt,” Sumnicht said.

Director of Student Life Paul Shepherd supports the motion and believes that multiple parties, including student organizations, Student Senate and Student Life should be held responsible for monitoring finances.

“I’m really happy they chose to do this. I applaud this year’s Student Senate for stepping up,” Shepherd said.

It has been a challenge for all parties to eliminate this debt, since there has been debate over who should be held responsible for the charges. Student organization spending was not effectively tracked in the past, which has caused unpaid balances to remain stagnant for the past several years.

“Through better financial practices, Student Senate became aware of the debt that was there,” Sumnicht said. “We didn’t want the debt to negatively reflect on the student body.”

In order to prevent student organization debt in the future, Student Senate and Student Life are working together to provide resources for student leaders to track their budgets. Student Life restructured their department, dropping certain programs and student workers. They then added a budget and operations coordinator, Kelly Hussong, who educates and assists student leaders with their budgeting. Both Student Life and Student Senate provide financial assistance for her position.

In addition to hiring a professional staff member to track finances, Student Senate and

Student Life added a financial application on OrgSync, which is a resource where student organization leaders can record their budgets and save them for future years. Student Life is also providing more options for students to effectively spend the money in their accounts.

“We always encourage student leaders to understand what charges there are,” Shepherd said. “We’ll do whatever we can to support, but whatever students do is up to them.”

Sumnicht said there has been interest in starting a Soccer Club, but the current state of the organization made it discouraging for students to reorganize the club. Interested students were informed that they would have had to fundraise to pay off the debt, only to have a balance of zero. Now that the debt has been paid off, it may encourage students to regroup these disbanded organizations.

“We were hindering students from reforming,” Sumnicht said. “We wanted a clean slate.”

Student Senate Vice President Tony Sumnicht believes it is the responsibility of Student Senate to resolve this issue.

# Admissions names director

Amanda White  
[amanda.white@my.uwrf.edu](mailto:amanda.white@my.uwrf.edu)

Sarah Egerstrom has been named interim director of Admissions and New Student Programs, a new department created by merging Admissions and New Student and Family Programs.

The decision to merge the two departments and place Egerstrom in charge came after Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Success and Enrollment Kris Anderson failed the director of Admissions search.

“When I looked at what are priorities for this position, she had a great combination,” Anderson said.

She said Egerstrom has experience because she worked for the Admissions department for five years and has director experience because of her most recent position as director of New Student and Family Programs.

After failing the director of Admissions search, Anderson said she asked herself “how can we do this differently?” She decided that a new model might accomplish enrollment and retention goals better.

“It’s becoming common to see admissions and orientation or admissions and first-year programs, because it makes the handoff for students smoother,” Anderson said.

Egerstrom agreed with Anderson and said that New Student and Family Programs had always worked in close proximity with the Admissions department.

Currently, the offices of New Student Programs are located in the Involvement Center in the University Center and the Admissions offices are located in South Hall. Anderson said that the ultimate goal is to get them in one central location.

“It would be ideal to have Admissions and New Student Programs co-located,” Egerstrom said.

International Student Services is currently located in the same location as New Student Programs, but it will be moving to Global Connections in Hagestad Hall in order to centralize international operations. Once International Student Services is moved, the relocation of New Student Programs will be that much closer to happening.

The new student programs, like Week of Welcome, will stay mostly the same, but there is already action on creating a new program for freshmen. Anderson submitted a proposal to the Strategic Plan Progress Committee for a first-year seminar class that passed the committee. There are many steps that will need to occur in order for the first-year seminar to actualize and faculty will need to be heavily consulted in the creation of the seminar, but Anderson said that such a class could only benefit UWRF.

“It’s a pretty standard high-impact practice that is used by campuses to enhance students’ success and thereby enhancing retention,” Anderson said.

Egerstrom said that the merging of the two departments would also allow greater opportunities for UWRF students who want to become involved. Tour guides for the Admissions department and Orientation and Transition Leaders (OTLs) for Week of Welcome, organized by New Student Programs, may have the ability to cross train in the other half of the department, increasing their knowledge and skill set.

Egerstrom said she is excited to be back in Admissions and continuing to work for her alma mater.

“Having the opportunity to come back here and continue to shape and influence how we introduce new students and families to the UWRF experience really excites me,” Egerstrom said.



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**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN**

# River Falls

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*Desi Danforth/Student Voice*

**Sarah Egerstrom is the new interm Director of Admissions and New Student Programs.**



EDITORIAL

# Lack of campus smoking policy enforcement sparks concern

In the November 9, 2012 editorial in the Student Voice it explains that the editorial board supports the UW-River Falls Campus Tobacco Policy. While we still support the policy, we realize that it is not being properly executed now that it is in place.

Now that the weather is warming up, having more time to enjoy the fresh air also gives more time for those who smoke, to take out a cigarette. Without any consequences, such as a fine given to those who break the smoking policy, students are less inclined to respect the policy that was put in to affect on July 1. In the past few weeks, the number of students seen on campus smoking has increased.

We understand that while the health of students and staff is important and it is their choice to smoke, those who do not smoke also do not want it blown in their faces as they walk on the sidewalks. The lack of receptacles for cigarettes to be placed in is also limited on campus, which increases the number of cigarette ends we see on the ground.

In a previous article in the Student Voice it was also said that the policy is essentially being implemented based on the honors system. If a student or staff sees a person smoking, it is encouraged for said person to remind the smoker that it is a smoke free campus. Needless to say, it is awkward and uncomfortable for students and staff to confront smokers who are not following the policy and it should not be only the responsibility of students and staff to enforce it.

With that being said, there are numerous ways that this policy could be implemented better or at least altered in a way that respects those who smoke and those who do not.

First, why not have a specific designated smoking area on campus? Not only would this give smokers a place to go to smoke but it give those who do not want to be exposed to secondhand smoke an option of avoiding the area.

A second option could be having fines given out to those students who are not complying with the smoking policy. This would create more awareness that this policy should be taken seriously.

The last option we suggest is to provide a designated smoking area for students who choose to smoke and then fine those who do smoke outside of the area.

We believe that the last option would be the best solution for this issue as it would give smokers a place to go other than off campus and it would also give those who do not smoke a place to avoid and not have to worry about having smoke surrounding them.

Editorials represent the opinion of the Student Voice

## STUDENT VOICE

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# Political science department, club thank University Center, Sodexo

The Political Science and International Studies Department and the Global Politics Club would like to thank the University Center staff and Sodexo Catering for the wonderful job in support of the annual Arrowhead Model UN Conference hosted by UW-River Falls held on April 3 through April 6. Deb Martin, Jay Plemon and their staff did a marvelous job with all of the necessary behind-the scene organization that helped to make the conference run so smoothly. Our conference guests were very impressed.

Sodexo Catering led by Erica Randgaard, also did a fine job of providing excellent service throughout the conference. Everything was handled well, and the food was delicious. Thanks to all of those associated with making the conference a big success! You are all very much appreciated.

Connie Simpson  
Academic Department Associate

# Easter eggs represent Christian metaphor

Cristin Dempsey  
Columnist

Spring is finally here (maybe), and Easter is already this weekend. As college students eat their weight in chocolate eggs and bunnies, hide baskets and eggs and catch up with family over a big dinner, where all these Easter symbols come from is surely the least of their worries. I am particularly curious about Easter eggs. How could a three dimensional oval shape have any relevance to Easter? And how did this tradition begin? Actually, although known by many as secular, this and other symbols have represented the Easter holiday for centuries and have added to the joy of the Easter holiday by getting people of all ages involved. Surprisingly, Easter eggs, also known as Paschal eggs, actually do represent Christianity. They represent the idea of fertility and rebirth. Originally, they were meant to resemble the empty tomb of Jesus as he rose from the dead. The hardness of the egg closely resembles the stone of the tomb, and the bird that hatches from it resembles Jesus setting himself free to go to God and have eternal life. It also shows how all Christian believers will also have eternal life. Most Easter eggs (real eggs, anyway) are dyed or painted and decorated in order to resemble Easter and springtime in general. The earliest Easter eggs were simply just chicken eggs, but since their popularity took off, chocolate eggs and plastic eggs filled with candy, toys or decorations have emerged. The baskets these eggs are hidden in, typically

filled with straw, represent the bird's nest. These eggs serve as a substitute so that everyone, regardless of age, can participate in Easter celebrations. They also bring color to the holiday that reflects the brightness of spring. The actual decorating of eggshells is a practice that goes back thousands of years. During ancient and pre-Christian times dating back to 60,000 years ago, Africans decorated ostrich eggs (mainly with gold and silver) to put in the graves of Egyptians and Sumerians. However, these were not Easter eggs. The tradition of decorating Easter eggs traces back to Mesopotamia, around the time of Jesus's crucifixion. The eggs were dyed red to represent the blood of Christ, shed during the crucifixion. Soon after, this practice was adopted by the Christian church, as a symbol of resurrection. Some experts also believe that the Easter egg tradition overlaps with the observance of Lent. Because the Western Christian church formerly forbade eggs to be consumed during Lent (similar to rules against meat today), people had to consume them beforehand. This led to Fat Tuesday (or Mardi Gras), which was when all egg and dairy products were consumed preceding Lent. This could also contribute to the eggs' popularity on the actual Easter holiday. Easter eggs have long been a tradition of the holiday, tracing back to ancient times. People often think they are just another secular tradition, stealing the spotlight away from what really matters. Actually, it plays big role in focusing on a Christ-centered Easter holiday. It represents the protection from Jesus and the promise of eternal life.

Be the first person to find Freddy's lost 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](mailto:editor@uwrfvoice.com) AFTER 10 a.m. Friday wins! The winner will be announced on the Voices account on Twitter @uwrfvoice.

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Congratulations to last week's winner, Carolyn Derksen!



Do you have something to say?

Write a letter to the editor:  
[editor@uwrfvoice.com](mailto:editor@uwrfvoice.com)



# Journalism major weighs college students' academic choices, desired future professions

Natalie Howell  
Columnist

We're almost done with another year already, and in these past few weeks we as students had the tedious job of scheduling meetings with our advisors and registering for classes. No matter what point you are at in your college career, whether you're a freshman or you're prepping to graduate next year, this time of the semester always comes with a sometimes unwanted self-reflection about whether we are on the right track or not, and if we still believe that we have found the right major that will lead us to our future professions. There is no doubt that some time in your college career you have looked at the complicated schedule that you have carefully made for yourself and wondered if you are really doing what you want, or wondered if you have actually found the one thing you want to do in life. Ever since I was a little girl, I considered myself to be something of a writer and I knew that I would want to do this for the rest of my life. That later switched to journalism as I realized that I had to pick something a little more realistic than the profession of "writer", but even so, I always knew

what I wanted to do with my life. Now, I was one of the lucky ones, discovering what I was good at and being able to plan out my future at a young age. But even now, especially at this time of year, I feel the anxiety and panic of wondering whether or not my future will turn out the way I hoped and questioning whether or not I will be happy with a journalism degree in ten or twenty years from now when I'm in the work force. This follows with me taking tens to hundreds of personality quizzes online all titled something like, "What's Your Future Profession?" I've always thought that it was a little, well, unfair that we have to make such large life decisions at such a young age. Where we decide to go to school and what we decide to major in effects the rest of our lives, and we have to make them at an age when we still might be in that phase where we have streaks of a random color in our hair. We have all heard that what we do today affects our lives tomorrow, and in this

stage of our lives that has never been more true. Most of us are not even legal drinking age yet but we are trusted to pick out a single profession to pursue for the rest of our lives. I'll be the first to admit that that's just scary. As you can probably tell I could ramble on forever about how life isn't fair and how the future is scary, but I think that we all know that it won't do us any good. I guess when it comes to those key decisions in our lives all we can do is try to make the best decision possible and just jump in with both feet and hope that we chose right. Even if our new class schedule is ridiculous, even if our one "easy" class turns out to be harder than we thought, even if the teacher is somewhat of a psycho, all we can do is try our best and hope that it all works out in the end. Because, like anything in life, we'll never know if we did the right thing until we put our whole selves and everything we have into it...only then will we know if we have succeeded.

We have all heard that what we do today affects our lives tomorrow, and in this stage of our lives that has never been more true.

## STUDENT VOICES

What is your opinion on the proposed tuition freeze?

Compiled by Maggie Sanders



**Lindsay Pluger**  
Senior  
Communication Studies

"The question would be if students who are graduating or in school now will have their tuition raised, or will the new students coming into the school's tuition be raised. That's my main concern."



**Jason Hubing**  
Junior  
Biotechnology

"They need to tell me why they need the raise, where are the funds going. Why do they need it? Right now I oppose the raise."



**John Wahlstrom**  
Senior  
Teacher Education

"I'm in favor for a freeze, but I think tuition raises are inevitable."



**Tom Price**  
Senior  
Accounting

"If there is enough money to keep programs going without raising tuition then I'm for the freeze. But, if we have to cut programs then I'm for the increase."



**Meghan Seaborg**  
Senior  
TESOL

"It's not a black and white issue. It needs to be discussed. More transparency, more information. Whose going to be affected by the changes."

Check out the Student Voice online at [uwrfvoice.com](http://uwrfvoice.com).



# UWRF men’s track takes first place at home meet

Jack Tuthill  
jack.tuthill@my.uwrf.edu

The UW-River Falls men’s and women’s track and field team hosted its only outdoor meet of the 2014 season, and the men took first place by outrunning, out-throwing and out-jumping the other five teams in the competition.

The men routed second-place UW-Stout by 39 points, while the women’s team finished fifth, 53 points behind first-place UW-Stout. The home meet took place at Ramer Field on Saturday, April 12. Despite early-morning rain showers, wind gusts around 20 mph and temperatures in the 40s, the meet was quite a success.

“We did compete well and I saw a lot of good things from our distance runners,” Head Coach Matthew Cole said. “We were excited about competing at home.”

David Paynotta, a sophomore sprinter, placed first in the men’s 100- and 200-meter dashes. His 100- and 200-meter dash times are both currently placed in the top 12 in the WIAC. Paynotta and teammates Tucker Malecha, John Maillette and Daniel Raiter, also placed second in the men’s 4x100 relay.

“It was great to finally get outside and compete on our home track,” Paynotta said. “That was the first home meet in two years.”

Arranging a college-level track and field meet is no small task. A lot of planning and volunteer work goes into such an event. A number of UWRF football players were spotted lending a helping hand on Saturday by volunteering to measure jumps and rank sand on the long jumps.

“We wouldn’t be able to do it without Coach Walker and the football team,” Matthew Cole said. “It takes a lot of work to set up an outdoor meet. The biggest issue is setting up the facility—it takes a lot of people.”

Windsor Molnar, a sophomore jumper, had a historic day as he set a new school record in the men’s pole vault with a jump of 14-10 1/4, narrowly breaking the previous record of 14-10 set by Mycola Kamper in 2006 and Carl Calabrese in 2011. Molnar placed second in the event.

“I didn’t get to see the jump, but I was told Windsor did a great job,” Cole said. “I’m very happy for him to now hold the school record. Carl (Calabrese) was there to see it, and he also was happy for him.”

Another highlight of the afternoon was senior thrower Ben Tykwinski’s first-place finish in the men’s hammer throw, who won with a distance of 182-10. The throw was good



*Kathy M Helgeson/University Communications*  
**Freshman, Michael Liddell, finishes up his event at the Falcon Invitational that was held on Saturday, April 12 at Ramer Field. The men’s team finished first out of the six track teams that participated in the invitational.**

enough to land Tykwinski in fourth place in the WIAC. Tykwinski also placed fourth in the discus throw with a distance of 139-08.

Senior thrower and jumper Stephanie Walek placed first in the women’s javelin throw with a distance of 125-3, which was good for second place in the WIAC. Walek also placed third in the pole vault with a jump of 10-6.

The typically cold western Wisconsin weather has not been friendly to the track and field team, who practiced outside for the first time this season on Monday. Ramer Field was covered in snow a week prior to the track meet. Friday’s meet in La Crosse, Wis., will go on as scheduled, regardless of low temperatures or chances of precipitation.

“We can’t afford to take a week off because the conference meet is around the corner,” Cole said. “The outdoor season is very short.”

Hosting a track meet can be very beneficial on and off the field for all student-athletes. Student-athletes are accustomed to traveling across state lines, but it can become quite demanding because of educational expectations. For others, hosting a track meet is a great chance to compete in front of friends and family.

“It was great to finally have friendly faces in the crowd,” Paynotta said. “Our team had a great start to the season, and having opportunities like this could not only help build our team but our university as well.”

# Women’s golf, women’s tennis hit off spring sports

Ben Lamers  
benjamin.lamers@my.uwrf.edu

Softball, along with track and field, receive the main portion of the billing as the primary spring sports at UW-River Falls.

However, they are not the only varsity spring sports that take place on campus in the spring.

Both women’s tennis and women’s golf play a spring season in addition to their fall seasons. Tennis Head Coach Michele Bailey said that the team is fortunate to be able to play two seasons.

“It’s our non-traditional season, and there are a few other sports that get them,” Bailey said.

The tennis team has five matches in the spring over a period of about a month. It

wrapped up its spring season this week with matches at St. Catherine University (Minn.) on Wednesday and at UW-Eau Claire on Friday.

While the season is only five matches long, Bailey said that it is very beneficial to the team.

“From my perspective, it’s a way for the team to stay motivated and have a bit more structured practice time,” Bailey said. “It’s an opportunity to get more experience especially since we are such a young team. I thought it was important to get a handful of matches in so we didn’t go nine months without playing.”

Additionally, Bailey said that one of her goals is to almost double the length of the spring season, and have a chance to play in the national tournament at some point down

the line.

“It’s one of those rare sports that gets two seasons, and I think it’s important to take advantage of it. I feel like the program is so young and we need to grow so we can be more competitive for the fall, and the spring is a great place to start,” Bailey said. “I’d love to see at least 10 matches in.”

The top two teams in the WIAC are eligible for the national tournament in the spring season.

“There is a spring competition and you have to qualify, the top two teams in the WIAC get to move on. Obviously that would be a huge goal in the future, and an extra motivator to get into those top two spots.”

As the tennis season comes to a close, the spring golf season will begin to heat up. The women’s golf team opened up its spring sea-

son on Friday, and will continue it on Saturday as a part of the Royal Match at Bethel University.

The spring golf season is considered the “non-traditional” season, according to Head Coach Matt Cranston.

“Spring is about a third or fourth of the fall,” Cranston said.

The national tournament for golf takes places in the spring, but qualifying for the tournament is at the end of the fall. However, individual golfers can still use to the spring to lower their score and qualify. It also provides teams that qualify the chance to continue to play before the tournament.

The golf team has two tournaments slated for the spring: the Royal Match, April 18 and 19, and the Blugold Spring Invitational, May 3 and 4.



*Kathy M Helgeson/University Communications*  
**Junior, Hannah Klimek, plays a home game against St. Norbert College in Aug. 2013.**



*Kathy M Helgeson/University Communications*  
**Lauren Schweppe plans strategy against UW-Stout and Augsburg College in 2012.**



# Softball team looks to finish season strong

Jack Tuthill  
jack.tuthill@my.uwrf.edu

The UW-River Falls softball team heads into the final two weeks of the regular season with a 15-14 record, and a whopping WIAC-best 30 home runs.

The Falcons entered this week in fifth place in the WIAC with a 2-4 record, and 10 conference games remaining. The Falcons look to improve upon a sixth place finish in the WIAC last season, and a strong finish would accomplish that goal.

“We’ve played some really good softball, but we’ve been inconsistent,” said Faye Perkins, head softball coach. “We need to focus on playing consistent, good ball.”

A highly productive offense has won the Falcons a handful of games this spring as they are not only first in home runs, but also third in runs and hits, and second in doubles and runs batted in. The team is batting an astounding .316 on the season.

“Our offense is just on fire,” Perkins said. “We’re hitting .410 in the last six games.”

In fact, hitting is contagious in the WIAC this season. Six teams are batting over .300 and have hit at least 10 homeruns.

“Hitting has really changed,” Perkins said. “We have 30 home runs and our season isn’t even over. When I first started coaching, if we hit five, six or seven home runs in a year we would be happy.”

Junior pitcher and designated hitter Abbie Morris has clubbed 10 of the 30 Falcon homeruns this season, and is hitting a team-leading .407. Meanwhile, senior third baseman Sarah Bohlen is hitting .404 with five homeruns and 26 RBI’s; she always leads the Falcons in hits, doubles, walks and runs. Junior leadoff-hitting catcher Amber O’Connell also has five homeruns and is batting .359.

O’Connell had a particularly good afternoon on Sunday against Hamline University, where she belted two homeruns in one game. She homered in the team’s first at bat, then smashed one over the fence to put the Falcons in front for good in the fifth inning. The day before, the Falcons defeated UW-Superior,

players are underclassmen, including eight freshman. “There’s such a transition between high school and college ball,” Perkins said. “I don’t think people realize how such a transition can be. Part of the freshmen’s progress is just being a part of it, and seeing what college ball is about.”

Possibly another reason for the high team ERA could be the fact that Ashley Bertrand, fourth-year pitching coach, is on paternity leave. “That has had an impact, I’m not a pitching coach,” Perkins said with a smile. “That why I hire a pitching coach.”

home on Wednesday against UW-Eau Claire and two on Friday at UW-Whitewater, are in jeopardy of being rescheduled as low temperatures, possible rain and snow, and high wind gusts are expected on both game days. Perkins said she starts worrying about injuries when temperatures fall into the forties.



**After hitting a homerun, sophomore Abby Veloske makes her way to home plate where the team is waiting to celebrate her successful hit. The doubleheader games were at UWRF on Saturday, April 12 against UW-Superior. Falcons won the first game but lost the scnd.**

Maggie Sanders/Student Voice

13-12, with Morris and O’Connell both crushing three-run home runs in the sixth inning to erase a five-run deficit.

“Morris, Bohlen and O’Connell have been team leaders,” Perkins said. “Abbie (Morris) has 10 home runs, which is pretty phenomenal.”

The Falcons have a very young squad this season—13 of the 18

Youth and inexperience may be one of the reasons the Falcons are giving up nearly an entire run more than in 2013, but with 10 WIAC games left in the season there is no need to panic.

“In high school you have more time to field the ball, more time to throw the ball,” Perkins said. “The college game is a fast game.”

The cold weather is not helping the pitching staff either, as it has become extremely difficult for the Falcons to get warm before games and stay warm.

“The weather is uncontrollable, you have to prepare for it,” Perkins said. “We have hand warmers for everyone to use.”

All four games this week, two at

The softball team will host its annual “Hit for Lupus” event on Saturday, April 26, when the Falcons host UW-Platteville at Ramer Field. A 50/50 raffle will be held, with half of the money going towards the Lupus Foundation of Minnesota. Sara Otto, the vice president of the Lupus Foundation of Minnesota, will throw out the first pitch.

# Donations make First National Bank of River Falls Field reality

Ryan Tibbitts  
ryan.tibbitts@my.uwrf.edu

What started as a dream was made possible thanks to support from at least 82 local businesses, countless hours of volunteer labor and the love of baseball.

That dream is the First National Bank of River Falls Field, a million-dollar lighted city stadium-style ballpark located at Hoffman Park East. The whole project was almost entirely funded through the citizens and businesses of River Falls.

“There is not anywhere else that could do a project like this entirely funded through the community,” River Falls Baseball Council (RFBC) President Josh Eidem said. “All the labor was done entirely from volunteers in the community. River Falls is the perfect size town and has people who are financially comfortable to help with a project like this and it is small enough where everyone seems to know each other and are always willing to pitch in and help.”

The community members have been able to donate by buying donor bricks, seat plaques and could even donate a popcorn or nacho machine to have those foods named after the donor on the concession stand menu.

Eidem said the field will be able to give back to the community by keeping people here on the weekends, “People who might not have cared about baseball before will come out to see what their friends and neighbors helped get started from the ground up.”

The field will be used at the start for River Falls Fighting Fish men’s amateur baseball team, River Falls American Legion baseball team and the River Falls High School varsity team. While there is a baseball field at the high school it is not lighted, does not have the accommodations to bring in as many fans as this new field will and does not provide the same opportunities. The Fighting Fish currently have 100-150 people that attend their games but with the new field hope to get that number up closer to 300 at every home game. In the future Eidam said the new field could be a place where events are hosted such as concerts and River Falls Days activities.

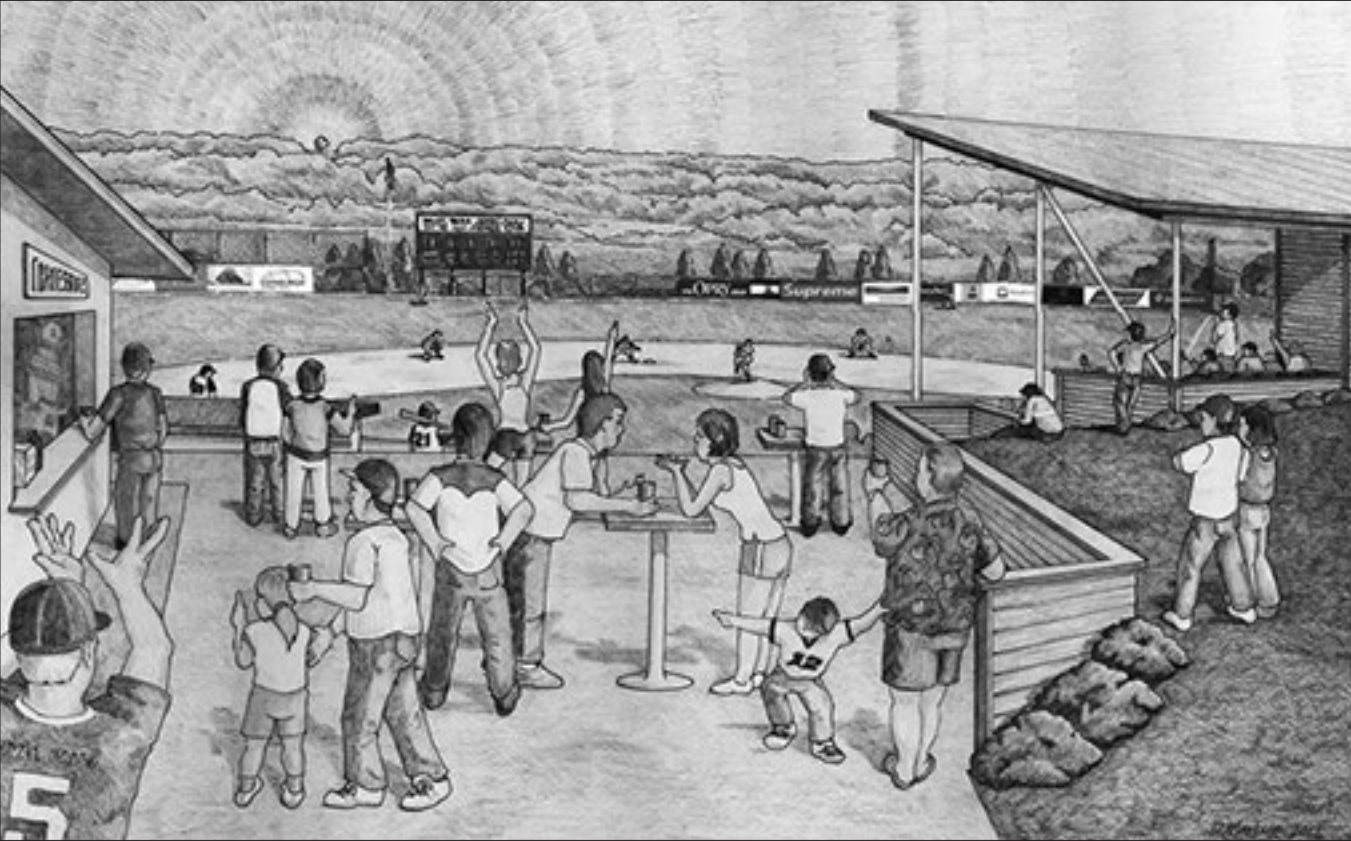
As far as what the field will bring to UWRF students, Eidem, a former UWRF student, said it will provide students who stay in the summer something to do on the weekends and that it is providing another connection to the community and the students. The RFBC has already started building relationships with marketing students at UWRF and hope to provide summer internship opportunities to one or two students.

“I was a student at River Falls and I remember never having anything to do on the weekends in the summer,” Eidem said.

Eidem was part of the last ever baseball team that was cut in 2001 and is now a teacher at River Falls High School. He said while the University has had its hands full with fundraising for the Falcon Center it still contributed to the ballpark project in different ways.

“The University helped out in a lot of different ways behind the scenes that people do not know about,” Eidem said.

Eidem said UWRF Athletic Director Roger Ternes came out and talked about different things to think about with the project such as how to fundraise and when to break ground. Michael Stifter, executive director of facilities planning and management, helped with an idea on funding the restrooms



**Drawing predicts look of First National Bank of River Falls Field while in action, located at Hoffman Park East.**

Photo courtesy of RFBC



**Field while under construction in Oct. 2013.**

Photo courtesy of RFBC



**Donated stadium seating being installed at field in Nov. 2013.**

Photo courtesy of RFBC

out by the ballpark that Eidem said has helped save a lot of money in planning the project.


To completely hit the goal and be able to do everything needed for the ballpark the RFBC still needs about \$15,000. There will be a final push event at Kilkarney Hills Golf

Course Saturday, May 10. After years of hard work this event is a way to help the RFBC finally cross home plate on this project and give the community of River Falls a baseball field that will be here for generations to come.

For more information on the project go to <http://www.riverfallsbaseball.org/>.



# New ‘Captain America’ film packs patriotic punch



Ryan Funes

Reviewer

Marvel Studios has managed to outdo themselves again with the all-American Captain wonderfully handled in “Captain America: The Winter Soldier.”

Steve Rogers is growing more and more accustomed to the modern world, though his skills as a super soldier are not getting old. After a mission that has caused him to question the modern methods of war and espionage, his boss, S.H.I.E.L.D. Director Nick Fury, digs up some dirt that will change the organization forever.

With the two of them, along with Agent Black Widow, having uncovered a conspiracy that runs deep into the American government, they come face to face with the right hand of the conspiracy, the Winter Soldier, who goes on a spree of terror and destruction that may end everyone’s trust in S.H.I.E.L.D. Captain America will need to muster up every skill he has honed in order to face this new

threat, which hides an evil face he may be familiar with.

While I was not exactly jumping for joy at the thought of another “Captain America” film, I sort of knew from the start this was going to be a good movie. The problem I find with reviewing any kind of Marvel film is that it is almost inevitably going to be action filled, humor laden and well directed. This time, though, I will try to pick a new aspect to discuss of when talking about how great of a superhero movie I thought “Captain America: The Winter Soldier” was.

The new “Captain America” film has a big difference from the first: Captain America is now fighting the good fight in modern times as opposed to World War II. Given this, the film uses this setup very well. A big focus in the film is the Captain’s conflicting feelings about spy work, shady dealings and all cloak-and-dagger situations. He finds that his greatest generation way of fighting and sense of duty is challenged by the new threats he is facing, that he will need to change his ways



to fit this new war of conspiracies and secrets.

I found those moments discussing the Captain’s methods to be highly fascinating, along with the political commentary that was injected into the rest of the film. For a “Captain America” film the directors were kind of obligated to discuss American issues in it, and even that is handled in a well-mannered way. The film does not get too preachy as other superhero films like “Man of Steel” have, but it injects just enough commentary on weapons of mass destruction, fear as a weapon against nations and national security to make the movie mean something else underneath all the action.

For a superhero movie, that is about what you should expect from it today; tons of good, well-directed action set against an intriguing plot that has underlying messages and tones that will help the film stand the test of time.

That is the exact effect “Captain America: The Winter Soldier” had on me. It was well acted, directed, written and had just enough of an underlying message to help me appreciate it more.

Plus, it is funny. The film perked my funny bone a bit more than previous Marvel films; maybe it was that one extremely well-placed “Pulp Fiction” reference in a movie that had Samuel L. Jackson, but I like to think that others will get a kick out of all the humor like I did. So go out and see “Captain America: The Winter Soldier” today if you are in the mood for fights, espionage, superheroes and twists and turns around every shadowy corner.

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

# Columnist shares cultural experiences from visiting Japan

Rachel Molitor

Columnist

struck me about Japan but the one interesting thing is the contrasting sights of the country. All countries have contrasting views. Ocean and desert, city and countryside, modern and ancient. But Japan has one that is unique.

Japan is paradoxically one of the oldest civilizations in the world and one of the most modern countries in the world. The older buildings of Japan have traditionally been built with wood, a material which struggles to survive the ravages of time but is easier to rebuild with than other materials. While many of the historic buildings may not be old, having been rebuilt several times due to fire damage, they feel old. You look at the large stone block that is half your height and know that it has been around a lot longer than you. The buildings were designed in an age far past. Then, going to Kyoto, you find out that the city was the capital of Japan for over a thousand years. Feel young yet, America?

The contrasting elements to Japan’s ancient structures are two parts. First is the technology. While Japan is hardly a Star Trek-like place, it seemed a bit unworldly. Automatic doors, doors that slid open when you pressed the handle, shiny trains and an abundance of technology worked to paint the image of a technologically-advanced society.

The second contrast in Japan is harder to put into concise words. Japan’s native

religion is Shinotism, a faith based on nature and its forces. Many of the old buildings and shrines almost seem part of their surroundings. The path to the Meiji Shrine is outlined with tall trees that lean inwards. Large wooden gates mark various points on the way to the shrine. A different shrine, on the famous Miyajima Island, is built on stilts so when the tide comes in, both the tori/gate and the shrine look like they are floating.

These natural-looking old buildings contrast with the style of modern Japan. Many of the clothes and artistic styles I saw were girly or childish. Although the prominent color of clothing was neutral, a majority of the females wore dresses or skirts. I’m not talking simply business clothes but fashionable jackets that were the same length as the dresses. Even on the two days that I as a person from the Midwest deemed cold, many females were still in their cold girly clothes and high heels.

It was not just the average female clothing that gave the contrasting image to the natural religious buildings, but also the not normal clothing. I saw several people in cosplay, which is a form of dress-up. One girl in particular was wandering down the street dressed as a pink and white fluffy Little Bo Peep. The stores too had many pink and white clothing that if I didn’t know better, would have said were for children. While wandering in Shinjuku, an entertainment district in Tokyo, my group and I discovered a Hello Kitty shop. Pink, fluffy and sparkly were the themes of that shop. I noticed that people who were no longer young were peering the products there. So it is not just the young people who are into this style.



Photo submitted by Rachel Molitor

**Japanese history is shown throughout the country with varieties of architecture.**

Putting the clothing and stores aside, there were also purple buildings, adult advertisements that seemed to be designed for children, and cartoon characters for just about every shop we saw. Did I mention that one mall we went to had all their employees, even the guys, wear bunny ears? One teacher of mine suggested that the reason behind the seemingly, to my American eyes, childish-

ness of Japan is the manga/anime culture. It is an important aspect of Japanese culture but who can tell how much the anime culture was a part in the different visual aspects of Japan.

Either way, Japan is a country for all the senses and for contrasting visual elements. More to come!

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