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University of Wisconsin

River Falls

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UWRF Check Yourself campaign receives criticism

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An educational campaign at UW-River Falls is receiving criticism as the university is being accused by some as pushing a mindset that is too politically correct.

The Check Yourself Educational Campaign, through the Center of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging, is aimed toward bringing attention to the potentially harmful words and phrases that people say. Originally called Words that Hurt and Why through Student Involvement, the campaign has been around for a few years and was recently updated to be what it is now.

Nathan Elness, the gender and sexuality outreach coordinator with Student Affairs, is one of the people working with the center. He said that the goal of the campaign is to make people understand the power that certain words can have when people say them without thinking.

“You might not mean anything derogatory or intentionally harmful when saying it,” Elness said. “You could be joking around with friends of yours and that’s just how you talk, but to someone who doesn’t know you and overhears you talking that way, they don’t know that.”

Campaign posters around the UWRF campus warn against using homophobic slurs, asking intrusive and inappropriate questions to trans individuals and using derogatory language targeting women.

Many of the comments on the posts focus on universities pushing political correctness and today’s college students being too sensitive, a sentiment that has been echoed by the rest of the country.

The campaign’s page on the university website goes more in depth, including issues like bisexual visibility and body image. However, it also includes a few items that some are struggling to find necessary, like the use of the phrase “you guys” and connecting calling someone “ugly” with a history of beauty standards rooted in white supremacy, ableism and ageism.

Criticism of the campaign was sparked recently, as at least three websites picked up on the campaign in January and posted pieces about it, including PJ Media, The New American and Heat Street. The column by Tom Knighton for PJ Media titled “College declares ‘you guys’ to be offensive” has been shared nearly 2,000 times on Facebook.

Many of the comments on the posts focus on universities pushing political correctness and today’s college students being too sensitive, a sentiment that has been echoed by the rest of the country. In 2016, 59 percent of Americans polled by the Pew Research Center said that they think people get offended too easily over the language used by others.

Heather Snyder, a UWRF senior, said she disagrees: “I personally don’t like that phrase (political correctness). I constantly hear that we’re crushing free speech,” Snyder said. “I hear that all the time, and I don’t think that’s what universities are doing. I think that we’re trying to educate and trying to make people realize that what they say and do can affect more than just themselves.”

Mateo Dietsche, a UWRF sophomore, said that he thinks colleges are indeed becoming too politically correct. He said that some of the words and phrases listed by the campaign are pushing it, including calling someone “dumb.”

“If they are below average intelligence, they are dumb,” Dietsche said. “It is not to be offensive; it is a fact.”

Another item causing confusion is the phrase “you guys,” included because it generalizes a group of people in a way that is masculine by definition. Elness said that he understands it is something people say casually and he doesn’t expect that to change overnight.

“We just want to recognize that there are individuals who struggle with their identity and might not know how they really want to define themselves at that point,” Elness said, “and so



Photo courtesy of Nathan Elness

being categorized as something that makes them uncomfortable makes them not really want to pay attention.”

For others, like Snyder, the campaign’s goal of making her think was accomplished, as she said she started considering the use of “you guys.”

“It never occurred to me that it could have been offensive, and when I read the description of why this campaign thought it could be offensive, I get it. I was like, ‘Wow, never thought of that.’ I can see it.”

Continued on Page 3

Interim dean for CEPS takes over position permanently

Ace Sauerwein
Falcon News Service

Michael Harris has dropped the word “interim” from his title and now is the dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies at UW-River Falls.

His new job title became effective Feb. 1. Harris was named interim dean in 2016 after his predecessor, Larry Solberg, retired.

Prior to his professional career, Harris graduated from UWRF in 1978 with a bachelor’s degree in communication sciences and disorders. One year later, Harris earned his master’s degree.

Harris went on to work for roughly a year and a half before returning to UWRF on a grant position. The position allowed Harris to work with at-risk kids around the age of 6 in western Wisconsin and coordinate screenings and track students’ progress. After a couple of years, he “morphed into teaching and supervising in the speech language hearing clinic on campus,” Harris said.

It was clear to Harris that teaching was his calling, so he went back to school at the University of Minnesota to receive his doctorate.

Harris served as associate dean for a couple of years prior to becoming interim dean in early July.

As associate dean, Harris said he dealt with issues such as

It was clear to Harris that teaching was his calling, so he went back to school at the University of Minnesota to receive his doctorate.

a student appealing their suspension from the university. He also handled curriculum and student complaints. Now that he has been promoted to dean of the college, he is tasked with “overseeing all the programs in the college,” Harris said. The

College of Education and Professional Studies offers majors in communication sciences and disorders, health and human performance, social work, counseling school psychology and teacher education.

The dean’s role also includes forming the college’s annual budget, which is never an easy task.

Harris and his school will be looking forward to the Higher Learning Commission’s (HLC) visit to UWRF. The HLC accredits degree-granting post-secondary educational institutions. Harris said that to prepare for the HLC, the college just needs to keep its course and make sure everything’s in order. The HLC’s visit is set for 2018.

In the long term, Harris and the college will be working to develop a strategic plan.

“The university has a strategic plan, but the college, currently, doesn’t have a strategic plan, so I would like to go through that process with faculty and staff and student representatives of the college to develop that strategic plan,” said Harris.

In the long term, Harris and the college will be working to develop a strategic plan.

The plan would basically provide a road map for the college on where to allocate its resources. It would “guide us to come up with three to five goals on what our focus would be,” said Harris.

Along with building a strategic plan, Harris acknowledged it won’t be smooth sailing and that there are obstacles and challenges awaiting.

“A big program in this college is teacher education... There’s a shortage of teachers in the state of Wisconsin, and working with our K-12 partners I think is going to be important, as well,” said Harris.

Dean’s Assistant Kay Corey said she believed Harris was the best choice to lead the college.

“He’s dedicated, he’s very thoughtful and all-around the

best candidate we had in the pool,” said Corey. “He’s very familiar with this college, he’s very familiar with each of the programs in the college, as well as the faculty and staff.”



Kathy Helgeson/University Communications

News Briefs: Falcon Athletics to host National Girls and Women in Sports Day luncheon

The UW-River Falls Athletics Department will host a National Girls and Women in Sports Day Luncheon on Wednesday, Feb. 8, at 11 a.m. at Junior’s Bar and Grill in River Falls. The event will feature keynote speaker Karyn Bye Dietz. Bye Dietz is a two-time Olympian and eight-time member of the U.S. Women’s National Team and was inducted into the United States Hockey Hall of Fame in 2014. Bye Dietz is a River Falls native and played collegiate hockey at the University of New Hampshire.

“We are very excited to introduce this annual event to celebrate girls and women in sports,” said Interim Athletic Director Crystal Lanning. “To have Karyn Bye Dietz join us for the first event is very special.”

The cost to participate is \$15 per person and includes lunch (chicken caesar wrap with mixed green salad, assorted dessert bars and ice tea). The registration deadline is Feb. 1. To register for the event, visit the registration website. Proceeds will benefit the UWRF Women’s Athletics Foundation. This event is one of more than 1,000 events taking place across the country for National Girls and Women in Sports Day. Congress has proclaimed this national day each year since 1987. The day is devoted to recognizing the progress of girls and women in sports and the benefits that sports and fitness activities can bring to the lives of all girls and women. The day is organized nationally by the NGWSD Coalition. To learn more, visit www.NGWSD.org. UWRF Athletics will continue its celebration of National Girls and Women in Sports Day that evening as the Falcon women’s basketball team hosts UW-Stout at 7 p.m. in Karges Center.

First students graduate from UW-River Falls SBDC Entrepreneurial Training Program

The first cohort of 10 students graduated from the UW-River Falls Small Business Development Center’s Entrepreneurial Training Program in December. During their 30 hours of training, the entrepreneurs tested their business ideas with real life customers, causing some to retool their business approach for greater profitability. Students left the training with a completed business plan and financials that were loan ready. The program utilized local resources including guest speakers who are experts in the areas of finance, marketing, legal concerns for startup businesses and more. UWRF provided industry analysis and market research data as well as individualized one-on-one business coaching to ensure student success. The Entrepreneurial Training Program is open to individuals residing in Polk, Pierce or St. Croix counties who want to start a new business or have an existing business they want to grow. The next cohort begins March 20. For more information about the Small Business Development Center, call 715-425-0620 or visit www.uwrf.edu/sbdc.

Dupay named Bruce F. Vento Science Educator Scholarship recipient

A UW-River Falls scholarship established to honor a Minnesota legislator has been awarded to a graduate student preparing to become a physics teacher. Anna Dupay, formerly of Roseville, Minnesota, and a graduate student seeking teaching licensure at UWRF,

received \$5,000 from the Bruce F. Vento Science Educator Scholarship. The scholarship, established in 2016 to honor the memory of U.S. Representative Vento, supports students pursuing a science education degree, a cause close to Vento’s heart, according to Susan Vento, his widow. Before entering Congress, Vento was both a science and social studies teacher in a junior high school and a UWRF graduate. Dupay is enrolled in the STEMteach program at UWRF and was selected by a committee of UWRF faculty and staff based on her academic standing and demonstrated financial need. “I enjoy the STEMteach program,” Dupay said. “It’s challenging at times because it’s fast-paced, but I am happy to be in a rigorous learning environment. It’s nice to have fellow cohort members as a community for support and encouragement. It makes the whole experience much more meaningful.”

Upon completion of the program in May, Dupay said she hopes to be teaching high school physics in Minnesota or western Wisconsin. She said her dream would be to teach in another country, Japan. “I think that this program has really changed me,” Dupay said. “When I think about who I was as a person and where I was going with my life at this time last year, I feel like I am almost a different person today. I have learned and grown a lot, and I think I am a better person for it.” All STEMteach candidates in good academic standing and enrolled in the winter term of the program are eligible to receive this scholarship, which is intended to provide financial support during the apprentice teaching requirement of the program. The STEMteach graduate program began in 2015. It provides a pathway for candidates who majored in math or science as an undergraduate or have work experience in math and science fields to obtain their Wisconsin teaching license for middle or high schools in one year. The program of study includes early hands-on experience in teaching and the option to continue studies to earn a master of science in education degree. Applications are being accepted now for the third cohort of the STEMteach program that begins this summer. For more information about STEMteach or the scholarships, email pamela.bowen@uwrf.edu or visit <http://go.uwrf.edu/STEMteach>.

CHS Inc. and CHS Foundation recognized for outstanding service to UWRF

UW-River Falls presented CHS Inc. and CHS Foundation with the 2016 Outstanding Service Award during commencement on Dec. 17, 2016. CHS Inc. and CHS Foundation are valued partners of the university and generous supporters of UWRF students and programs. Over the years, CHS has provided numerous internship opportunities to UWRF students and hired many UWRF graduates into permanent positions. The CHS Foundation supports students financially through academic scholarships that reduce the burden of tuition and travel sponsorships that allow students to participate in conferences such as the Agriculture Future of America (AFA) Collegiate Leadership Conference and the College Conference on Cooperatives. UWRF classes routinely visit CHS facilities and their affiliated cooperatives where they are warmly welcomed to learn more about the cooperative model, career opportunities in the energy, grains and food sectors and the daily management and operation of cooperative service facilities. “This recognition of CHS Inc. and CHS Foundation is very deserved,” said UWRF Chancellor Dean Van Galen. “It is inspiring to see their participation in the education of UW-River Falls students by supporting high impact opportunities including research and internships. A further demonstration of the strong relationship between UWRF and CHS is the fact that CHS regularly employs our graduates in fulfilling careers.” In 2012, a generous donation from the CHS Foundation helped establish the Center for Agribusiness Management and Education (CABME) at UWRF. This investment in future agricultural leaders provides UWRF students with opportunities to participate in undergraduate research and international travel focused on examining agricultural business and production challenges, and helps to disseminate research results with the goal of improving production agriculture and agribusiness. The CHS Foundation, in conjunction with the Ralph K. Morris Foundation, was instrumental in establishing the Rod Nilsestuen Legacy Event. Each spring, the department of agricultural economics at UWRF and its student organization, the Agricultural Business and Marketing Society, organize a conference focusing on cooperatives, land use and other topics of interest to Nilsestuen. Nilsestuen was a UWRF graduate who held several leadership positions with cooperative associations and was the secretary of the Wisconsin Depart-

ment of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection at the time of his accidental death in 2010. David Trechter, professor of agricultural economics, and Don Taylor, professor of plant and earth science, nominated CHS Inc./CHS Foundation for the Outstanding Service Award. The award was established in 1983 to recognize individuals and groups who have made significant contributions to the university of personal time and energy, leadership, support and/or monetary donations.

Student Senate Update: Jan. 31

Two motions were discussed at the Jan. 31 Student Senate meeting:

It’s On Us Midwest Summit Funding Appropriation: A motion to allocate \$10,000 from the Student Government Association Student Senate Funding Pool for the purposes of holding a Midwest It’s On Us summit.

• Introductory only: Will be voted on at the Feb. 7 Student Senate meeting.

UW System Student Representatives Travel Allocation: A motion to allocate \$750 from the Student Government Association Student Senate Funding Pool to the Student Government Association Operating Budget for the purposes of travel to the monthly University of Wisconsin System Student Representatives Meetings.

• Introductory only: Will be voted on at the Feb. 7 Student Senate meeting.

Other business: Former External Relations Director James VandenBergh was confirmed as the new Student Senate vice president.

The information in this update comes from the minutes posted to the Student Senate FalconSync page every week. Student Senate meets every Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the Willow River Room of the University Center.

Campus Events Calendar:

- **Cohler Coffee Concert: 4te Trombone Quartet**
Friday, Feb. 3, noon-1 p.m.
Abbott Concert Hall, Kleinpell Fine Arts building
- **Pet Therapy**
Friday, Feb. 3, 3-4 p.m.
211 Hagestad Hall
- **Pot Luck & Vegetable Tie Dying**
Monday, Feb. 6, 5-7 p.m.
217 Agriculture Science Building
- **Education Abroad Fair**
Wednesday, Feb. 8, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Falcon’s Nest, University Center
- **Opportunity Fair**
Wednesday, Feb. 8, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
Riverview Ballroom, University Center
- **My First Resume**
Wednesday, Feb. 8, 1-2 p.m.
Wind River Room, University Center

Visit uwrf.edu for a full schedule of events

Follow the Student Voice on Twitter @uwrfvoice

Weekly UWRF Crime Report

- Monday, Jan. 16**
- Property damage was reported on Wild Rose Avenue at 7:20 p.m.
- Friday, Jan. 20**
- Vandalism was reported on the Campus Farm at 11:06 p.m.
- Saturday, Jan. 21**
- Underage alcohol was reported at the Falcon Center at 10:16 p.m.
- Sunday, Jan. 22**
- A drug complaint was reported in Grimm Hall at 10 p.m.

- Monday, Jan. 23**
- A drug complaint was reported in Grimm Hall at 10:58 p.m.
 - A drug complaint was reported in Crabtree Hall at 11:05 p.m.
- Wednesday, Jan. 25**
- Property damage was reported in the Child Center at 7:45 a.m.
- Saturday, Jan. 28**
- Underage alcohol was reported in Parker Hall at 12:58 a.m.
 - A drug complaint was reported in Parker Hall at 10:02 p.m.
- Sunday, Jan. 29**
- Theft was reported in South Fork Suites at 8 a.m.

Editor’s Note:
Information for this section is taken from the UW-River Falls Police Department incident reports.

UWRF Check Yourself campaign receives criticism

Continued from Page 1

Snyder added that, after thinking about it, she sees how the phrase cannot be argued as gender neutral: “I can’t walk into a group of people and say, ‘Hey ladies.’ People get offended. You can’t walk into a group of people and say that, but you can walk into a group of people and say, ‘Hey guys.’”

Regarding the connection between “ugly” and white supremacy, ableism and ageism, Elness said that it has to do with societal beauty standards and the view of beauty that puts emphasis on being white as being beautiful.

“We see how that plays out across the world, people with darker skin in foreign countries bleaching it to make their skin look whiter and lighter, because that is the standard of beauty that we have currently,” Elness said. “You have to understand the perspective of which you’re coming from in that conversa-

tion.”

Other students, like Casey Machajewski, said that the campaign sounds like a good idea on paper but may be hard to implement in reality.

“To say that everyone’s going to stop saying it, I don’t see it happening,” Machajewski said.

However, Elness said that limiting people’s speech is not the goal of the campaign. Instead, he said it is about education and awareness. He said that educating people about the power of language is something he sees as a way of doing his job well, and that the criticism is inevitable but not necessarily harmful.

“That also causes people to stop and think about their feelings on that subject and makes them kind of reevaluate for themselves how they feel about that,” Elness said. “They have to take time to look at the website or look at the poster and

read through it and understand what it’s been talking about and kind of formulate their own opinions.”

“I can’t walk into a group of people and say, ‘Hey ladies.’ People get offended,” Heather Snyder said. “You can’t walk into a group and say that, but you can walk into a group of people and say, ‘Hey guys.’”

More information about the Check Yourself campaign and other campaigns and events through the Center of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging can be found at <https://www.uwrf.edu/Inclusivity/>.

UWRF psychology professor honored with diversity award

Sophia Koch

Falcon News Service

In recognition of her outstanding efforts to promote inclusivity on university campuses, UW-River Falls Psychology Professor Cyndi Kernahan has been honored with a 2017 Board of Regents Diversity Award.

According to a press release from the UW System, the award is given to individuals and teams that “foster access and success for students who are members of historically underrepresented populations.” Kernahan is one of two individuals in the UW System to be given this recognition, and the award includes \$5,000 that can be put towards the recipient’s future work.

Kernahan also is the assistant dean for teaching and learning in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Brad Caskey, dean of the college, was heavily involved in the process to get Kernahan nominated for the award. Having known her since she began working at UWRF in 1999, he is familiar with the wide range of efforts she has made over the years to promote inclusion and diversity on campus. He and several other of Kernahan’s colleagues wrote letters of recommendation, which were sent to Madison along with a portfolio of her work. About a month ago, officials told Kernahan that she had won the award.

“Sometimes there are awards where a person has done something very specific, and you nominate them because they

did X,” Caskey said. “But this isn’t that case. When Cyndi’s name came up, it was really me thinking of a kind of a lifetime achievement award.”

Kernahan has served on a number of campus committees, including the Bias Incident Response Team and the Diversity and Inclusivity Committee. She has numerous publications on the topics of diversity and inclusivity, gives workshops on the subject across the UW System, and teaches the courses “Psychology of Prejudice and Racism” and “Introduction to Ethnic Studies” at UWRF. The audience for her work encompasses both students and instructors, and she puts a lot of focus on how best to provide a welcoming campus for students and faculty from minority groups.

“What I do is I look at the science,” Kernahan said. “I try to translate that for other instructors and translate that for people on campus so that we can create policies that have a chance of being helpful. I’m a big believer in using evidence to make decisions like that, and also I try to convey as much of that in my teaching and my workshops as possible.”

Promoting an inclusive campus is especially important, Kernahan said, because the demographics of River Falls are shifting. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the white population of the city of River Falls dropped to 94.8 percent in 2010, compared to 96.6 percent in 2000. The five-year American Community Survey estimates that the white population dropped even further in 2015, to 86.5 percent.

Ethnicity, however, is not the only demographic Kernahan

looks at. First generation students, she said, must be taken into account when trying to promote diversity on a campus. Her work in the past has also touched on topics such as gender, sexual orientation and veteran status, and how these factors play into how comfortable and successful a person is on campus.

“What I do is I look at the science,” Professor Cyndi Kernahan said. “I try to translate that for other instructors and translate that for people on campus so that we can create policies that have a chance of being helpful.”

“If we want to maintain our enrollment,” Kernahan said, “and we want to stay relevant as a university, we have to serve all these populations, and we have to serve them well so that they’re retained and successful.”

This is the ninth year that the Diversity Awards have been presented by the Board of Regents. Kernahan and the other winners will be honored during the Feb. 3 Board of Regents meetings in Madison.

Alumni Spotlight: Nora Koch

Christopher Jurewitsch

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Nora Koch has an extensive background in the field of art, showing her creativity over the years through illustrations ranging from book covers to magazines.

Koch is an academic associate for the Department of Communications and Media Studies at UW-River Falls, helping support the department and the university. Her experience at River Falls is unique, as is her career as an artist. She shows great passion for her artwork along with her faith and her service to the community, and she is very open about sharing these values to others.

Koch’s first experience at River Falls was when she was two years old, when her uncle ran the barn on campus which later became the location for the Agricultural Science building. Having grown up on a farm in central Wisconsin, she thought it was bizarre that there was a barn in the middle of the town.

Although Koch’s sister attended UWRF, she decided to attend UW-Stout instead, not wanting to attend school with her sibling. While she had a positive experience at Stout, she left college after two years and got married shortly after.

After taking a break from school, she decided to attend UWRF for personal enrichment. Initially not intending on getting a degree, she wanted to expand her artistic knowledge on weaving and photography. While she never took any courses regarding either of those topics, she would eventually make the dean’s list every semester and graduate with honors in 1980, majoring in art education.

Koch’s time as an undergraduate student occurred during difficult circumstances, as she was going through a divorce. To her, school was a coping mechanism.

“The school was stability, and it was a place where I did really well,” she said.

What Koch said she finds unique about UWRF is the Kinnickinnic River which runs through the town, the agricultural significance of the school and the unique people that have come and gone over the years. During her time as a student, one person she found unique in her own aspects was Professor Mary Berrett.

“She was very generous, and if you worked hard, she was very generous,” Koch explained.

Koch’s opportunity to work with Berrett introduced her to



Natalie Howell/Student Voice

the craft of printmaking, which she fell in love with. She said she remembers spending her time creating book covers in the back of what is now South Hall, and eventually explored her skills in printmaking in her graduate studies at the University of Iowa in Iowa City.

Her skills as a printmaker have paid off significantly, having shown her work at private displays and art competitions, and working with well-known organizations such as Coffee House Press, Park Nicollet, Graywolf Press, The University of Wisconsin Press, the Minnesota Historical Society and many other organizations. She has done book cover designs both as a freelance and a full time illustrator. Her last position before taking on her current position at UWRF was coordinating the Arts and Illustrations program at Como Park Zoo and Conservatory in Saint Paul, developing a zoological art program at the park.

In addition to being passionate about her artwork, another topic that is dear to her heart is her faith in God. A devout Catholic, Koch found comfort in her religious beliefs during the strenuous time of her divorce. It all started when an older gentleman began to talk to her outside the art gallery one day.

“It was pivotal,” she recalled. “He just started talking to me about Jesus, and that was the end of that.”

She didn’t take much from that experience, having the impression that the man was a “Jesus freak,” but she later changed that mindset when she had a conversation with a friend about faith.

“He asked me, ‘What about Jesus?’” Koch recalled. “And I couldn’t answer him.”

Today, she says that the biggest impact that was given to her as a student was her faith, and she continues her expression by volunteering as a Catholic Worker. While she doesn’t feel the need to push her faith to others, she said she feels it’s an expression of herself that defines who she is.

One of the biggest pieces of advice that she gives to students is to focus on being who they are. She said that the most important reason students should attend school is to learn to think for themselves and to find out what they value.

“Don’t try to impress people; find out who you are and be that with all your heart.”

Follow the Student Voice on Twitter @uwrfvoice

Make sure to look for Freddy’s feather in every issue of the Student Voice!

EDITORIAL

Effects of CAS budget cut can still be felt a year later, but we’re still kicking

It has been almost a year since the UW-River Falls College of Arts and Sciences had to suddenly cut nearly \$1.5 million from its budget, and we’re still feeling the impact.

In the wake of the budget cut, course sizes were increased, instructional academic staff faced contracts that were not renewed and some faculty resigned or retired early to save their departments.

Ultimately, a lot of the courses were saved, and departments that were feared to be cut entirely were able to remain in part through other methods. Courses in Chinese, for example, are being taught through UW-Eau Claire and have not been eliminated entirely.

Still, the change is noticeable to those who have been attending UWRF for a few years. Some students who are now nearing graduation have been eyeing up electives to take once all of their requirements were finished, only to find that those courses are no longer offered. The literature courses offered through English, for example, are now limited as faculty and adjuncts have had to focus on staffing general education sections. Other students are taking general education courses as electives just to fill the 120 credit requirement and finding larger class sizes than they’ve ever seen at UWRF.

That being said, we do have many professors who deserve recognition for persevering through these difficult financial times in higher education. Two professors, Jennifer Willis-Rivera and Grace Coggio, are carrying the bulk of the courses offered in Communication Studies above the general education speech class level. Stage and Screen Arts Chair Robin Murray fought hard to make a timely and interesting special topics course available this semester, a class that focuses entirely on the hit musical “Hamilton.”

These are just a few examples of the fantastic things being done by the educators on our campus, and it’s important for us to realize that they do genuinely care. They are working so hard to make sure that we can still receive the education we deserve, despite the UW System’s budgetary struggles. While we may worry that no one cares about the arts, that’s clearly not the case here.

Yes, times are hard. We’re seeing the changes across the entire state, not just within the College of Arts and Sciences or at UWRF alone. However, things are not looking nearly as grim as they were when we returned from spring break last year, and we have a lot of dedicated people to thank for that.

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 email through editor@uwrfvoice.com.

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

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

In this political turmoil, the time to stand up for the environment is now

Dear Editor,

PBS recently aired a moving documentary on Rachel Carson, who almost single-handedly launched the modern environmental movement with the publication of her book “Silent Spring” in 1962.

Carson exposed the environmental and health dangers of DDT and other pesticides widely used during and after World War II. Predictably, the pesticide industry tried to smear and discredit her in a way very much resembled our present fossil fuel industry’s attempts to discredit the warnings of climate scientists.

Luckily for Carson and the rest of us, Congress paid attention and, with the support of President Kennedy, banned DDT. We can credit Carson’s heroism for the bald eagle’s return to Wisconsin and other places where pesticides had disrupted birds’ reproductive cycles.

If only our current president and legislators could respond with similar wisdom to the present global threats to our environment.

Instead, President Trump has put up a proponent of big oil,

Scott Pruitt, to head the Environmental Protection Agency. Pruitt, a well-known climate change denier, has a record of attacking the agency he has been recruited to lead.

Early signs point to a radical dismantling of the EPA and gutting of regulations protecting public and environmental health. The incoming administration has already eliminated information on climate change from the agency’s website and imposed a gag order forbidding EPA scientists to publicly share information that may contradict Trump’s anti-science agenda.

Clearly the natural world doesn’t figure into the President’s balance sheet. He is poised to do lasting damage for short-term gain.

Citizens who care about the future of our planet must steadfastly defend the governmental structures put in place to protect us. We must let our legislators know that we will fight to return to its senses a government that, for the moment, appears to be sliding into destructive lunacy.

Thomas R. Smith

Ask Colleen: Negativity in friendship

Colleen Brown

Advice Columnist

Dear Colleen,

I’m really stuck and need some advice. I am friends with this girl that I have known since freshmen year, and now we are seniors. I feel like our friendship has gotten really bad over the last couple of months. Not only do we live together, but we work together too. I just feel like I am always walking on eggshells with her and constantly being taken advantage of because she knows me so well. I don’t want to lose a friend from freshmen year, but I also don’t want to be around all this negativity. What do I do? Doesn’t want to lose a friend

Dear Doesn’t want to lose a friend,

This is a really important question to ask and one that everyone can relate to. No matter what point you are in your life, friends will come and go. Personally, I think sometimes we hold on to friendships that were meant to end earlier, but because of the longevity of the relationship it’s hard to let go. How can it not be? Once a friendship becomes consistent, that person becomes a part of your life, and to kick someone out of your life is not easy.

However, just because a friendship has lasted many years doesn’t mean it’s a healthy relationship. When you think you’ve finally reached a breaking point, the good memories you had with them always come back and the cycle continues. From what you are saying, it seems that this person isn’t being a friend to you in the way you deserve. The only way you are going to get rid of the negativity is to either talk it out or end the friendship.

I’ve been faced with friends coming and going since elementary school. This is nothing to be ashamed of; people change and we change as individuals. I once read somewhere that if a friendship last more than seven years, it will last a lifetime. As I started to get older I really believed this.

Facebook should be seen as valid exposure to issues and debate

Lauren A. Simenson

Columnist

At its inception, Facebook was strictly a collegiate venture. It was originally created with a malicious intent in mind when people were asked to compare two photos and choose which one was more attractive.

These days, Facebook is used primarily as a social networking tool, but it now has an even bigger job than just connecting friends and family online. Facebook is now being used as a mobilizing tool used to start and maintain movements and resistances and as a medium through which people can advocate for change to a wide audience.

This particular social media site, I believe, has moved past being a place to post vacation pictures or badly-lit photos of your homemade dinner. Facebook is no longer another place you flood with your memories, your special events and your day-to-day life. Who you are as a person is reflected by who you are online and is there for everyone to see. And these days, what everyone is seeing online is a lot of people who are livid at what is happening to the people of our world.

Facebook is increasingly filled with politics and news content, which is easily shared and viewed online since people are not relying on television and traditional newspapers as their main source for information. The recent and unsettling events in our government have turned Facebook into an endless scroll of politics.

My news feed is bursting with firsthand accounts of protests, emotional posts written by senators calling people to action and comments of support to organizations such as Planned Parenthood and the ACLU. I will not hide the fact that I am delighted that Facebook is being used as a tool to

spread messages, posts and information that have helped connect and mobilize people to fight for what they believe. What I am not delighted by, however, is people who are complaining about this evolution of Facebook.

It is more important than ever to not close our eyes and ignore that there is a big problem with the United States today. It is more important than ever to not be annoyed by seeing one too many political posts because you are tired of it all. It is more important than ever to see all of these political posts, add to them and actually do something to help. Complacency and thinking that issues do not matter to us personally is the kind of attitude that has been the nation’s undoing.

In the grand scheme of things, being a prolific, political poster may not have the same kind of effect as being on the front line of a march or volunteering for a cause. I agree, but I also say that changing the attitudes of people can best be done with continuous exposure to real information and to real people impacted by the recent deterioration of our society.

Facebook is a needed component in continuing that kind of constant exposure. To those complaining who want the old Facebook atmosphere back, so does everyone else! The problem is, no one will get old Facebook back if there are still people who continue to bury their heads in the sand and ignore that Facebook is an effective method to communicate that problems exist and that a solution requires everyone to be involved, even if it is just one post at a time.

Lauren Simenson is a junior majoring in journalism and communication studies. Her interests include eating dark chocolate, online window shopping and reading anything she can get her hands on. While not at work, at school, taking naps or doing homework, she likes to cook, canoe, fish and write.

The Student Voice is looking for a circulation manager!

For more information, email the editor at natalie.howell@my.uwrf.edu

Criticizing politicians is fair game, children are off-limits

Reo Ford
Columnist

I, like many other people not just in the United States but around the world, am not the biggest fan of our new president, Donald Trump. I don't think that it's necessary to dive into great detail about why I am not a true supporter of him, because my recent concern isn't about him, it's about his son. The Twitter world is something that is not uncommon when thinking or talking about Donald Trump. It's safe to say that a lot of the communication that he does is through the social networking site. However, the latest gossip surrounding the website doesn't have to do with Donald, it pertains to the way the site has acted as a platform for

people to bully his 10-year old son, Barron. As I previously mentioned, I unfortunately do not care for our president or anything relating to him. Aside from skimming through random news articles, I have never really taken an interest in his wife Melania or his children. With that being said, in light of the negativity surrounding Barron, I have gained something that I didn't ever think that I would, and that is sympathy for a member of the Trump family. The latest story surrounding Barron is one that was published by Minnesota Public Radio, "Suspended 'Saturday Night Live' writer apologizes for tweet about Barron Trump." This story stood out to me, because the negative comments were made by someone who is in the professional spotlight: a writer for the television show "Saturday Night Live." Throughout the past few days I have read articles about "regular people" posting taste-

less comments about the kid, but I think it's worse when someone who potentially has a large following does it. I mean, if they are doing it, it might send the message to others that it's OK for them to do it, too. Unfortunately, the story doesn't give details about what she specifically said, but I don't think the specifics are important. What's important is that a child is catching flak most likely because of who is father is. There is one thing about the whole entire situation that I find to be admirable, and that is a tweet that was posted by Hilary Clinton's daughter, Chelsea. According to the article on January 22, she tweeted, "Barron Trump deserves the chance every child does – to be a kid. Standing up for every kid also means opposing @POTUS policies that hurt kids." While I think that child bullying is incredibly important to address with all situations,

I think it's remarkably big of Chelsea to stand up for a part of a family that defeated her mother in the presidential election. She could've sat quietly and ignored the hate that Barron has been receiving, but she didn't. In conclusion, this whole situation makes me nauseous, because I can't fathom why adults would be so negative to a child. I don't care if Barron's dad was Hitler, poking fun at a child should be off limits. In regards to Chelsea, everyone can benefit by her actions by realizing that sometimes it's essential to set aside differences to stand up for what is right. *Reo Ford is a journalism student. She loves hiking with her dog, but when the weather doesn't permit it she enjoys binging on Netflix, writing and taking naps with her cats.*

Citizens need to fight for their beliefs to create change

Christopher Jurewitsch
Columnist

Multiple events happened over the break that both galvanized and inspired me, dissecting yet reassuring my faith in humanity. First, I attended a rally in support for the survivors of sexual assault at the University of Minnesota, standing up for the survivor and condemning the actions of the football players involved. I then watched as the now former president Barack Obama gave his farewell address in the city of Chicago, highlighting our nation's achievements when he was in office and persuading the American people to press onward for change. The week after, I attended an event to celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., giving a reflection of the progress that has been made and still needed today in the name of civil rights. It was a series of events that would eventually be concluded with the inauguration of Donald Trump as President of the United States. I won't lie; I did avoid the inauguration, but I'm not the type to openly protest my opposition either. Sure, I believe people should have the right to protest this election, but shouldn't we do more than express our discomfort? As disappointed as I am, we as Americans have to show some level of respect the new commander-in-chief, no matter how vile his agenda is. However, that doesn't mean we have to give up our values and stop fighting for what's right. Outside of the White House, we as citizens have enormous power that can change the world we live in. In addition to

voting, we can educate people on certain issues, create solutions to striking problems and make individual choices that can create a huge dent in opinion and change. But anything that we do as citizens can only be achieved if we have the urge to unite and organize together. As divided as this country may be today, we have to realize that taking divisive sides on conflicting issues will only take us further away from solving it. Based on my personal opinion, I believe that there are only two real sides that exist with these issues: the side that wants to continue to divide, and the side that wants to find a solution. People might argue whether "black" or "all" lives matter, whether climate change is caused by human activity or how regulations are beneficial or destructive to our economy. But are they really solving the conflict? You could have an endless argument with someone for hours on Facebook or Twitter, defending how either's opinion isn't racist or why college should be free. But at the end of the day, no matter how much you argue, the problem still exists. I'm no expert on problem solving, but we don't have to settle for this anymore. We don't need to build walls to divide us, safe spaces to comfort us or tougher arguments to spit out. We need bridges to connect us together. We then need facts, evidence and reason to show what works best. When we finally find an acceptable solution, we need to enact it. This isn't a radical new idea; this is an approach everyone knows we should be taking. But because we're divided, we're not. Washington has had this problem throughout the last decade, and despite the new administration, the whole picture doesn't look like it's getting better. However, if we ever want the hope that our leaders and politicians will unite and go toward the right direction, we as citizens have to unite and take that step first.

Of course, you might ask yourself, "What can I do to make my world better? I don't have any power over the world, and I'm not a politician, so what can I really do?" A lot actually. As Obama said in his Farewell Address, "If you're tired of arguing with strangers on the Internet, try talking with one of them in real life. If something needs fixing, then lace up your shoes and do some organizing. If you're disappointed by your elected officials, grab a clipboard, get some signatures and run for office yourself." Ironically speaking, a lot of those events that I mentioned earlier were great examples of people who, as citizens, changed the world around them. The petition that was started by a handful of University of Minnesota students quickly gained momentum, and eventually became a success after the university took action against the football teams coach. Dr. King's dream of racial equality led to organizing one of the most successful nonviolent struggles, eventually leading to a momentum of civil rights legislation throughout the country. Even Obama was a great example of a citizen taking action, starting his career as a young community organizer helping improve the lives of those on the south side of Chicago. So the facts are simple: If we want to change the world we live in, we must unite and organize to take action. We can't afford to keep arguing, dividing ourselves and not accepting the facts. There should be only two sides to any troubling issues: those who want to continue to divide, and those who want to solve the problem. As the late Minnesota Senator Paul Wellstone said, "If we don't fight hard enough for the things we stand for, at some point we have to recognize that we don't really stand for them."

Christopher Jurewitsch is a junior majoring in geography with a passion for journalism. He enjoys playing guitar and writing articles for the Student Voice.

STUDENT voices

Compiled by Samantha Decker

What is your goal for spring semester?



Alex Bourdeau
Sophomore
"Work and study more!"



Bryana Kohnke
Sophomore
"Get better grades, work harder and study more."



Gina Strzyzewski
Sophomore
"Be more balanced between work, school and extracurricular activities."



Morgan Teske
Senior
"3.5 or better GPA."



Raelyn Hansen
Sophomore
"Be consistent."

New fitness center sees strong response from UWRF community

Destrey Zarfos
Falcon News Service

A new fitness center, part of the still-under-construction Falcon Center, opened its doors just in time for the start of spring semester at UW-River Falls.

Work on the fitness center began in 2015 and was completed in the fall. The center is connected to the Strength and Conditioning Center, neighboring the new Karges Gym, and includes three new multipurpose rooms that vary in size.

While the project has remained within budget, construction crews and Recreation and Sports Facilities staff have had to rise above adversity. Minor issues such as floods and natural gas leaks slowed progress at some points, but construction of the Falcon Center is ahead of schedule and the opening of the fitness center reflects that.

Over the past 30 years or so, students have not had an adequate place to work out, said Steve Stocker, director of Recreation and Sports Facilities and a UWRF alumnus. In the past, student athletes have dominated the smaller fitness areas on campus, especially during convenient afternoon hours. The new fitness center gives both students and faculty an opportunity to use the facility at more appropriate times rather than the late night sessions to which some had grown accustomed.

“What this has done, it has opened up a place for students to come and recreate between those hours of 2 to 7 p.m. and that’s what’s really cool,” Stocker said.

UWRF faculty and staff members have steadily been purchasing memberships and using the fitness center along with the students, which is something the campus has never seen, Stocker noted.

“The first day numbers were completely staggering,” Stocker said. A total of 1,062 students, faculty and community members checked in and swiped their identification cards on the first day the fitness center was open. Last year on the first day of spring semester just 62 students and faculty took advantage of the fitness areas on campus.

One section of the fitness center features an array of weight benches and racks, resistance bands, medicine balls, kettlebells, a section of monkey bars and floor mats. Another section fulfills the needs of those looking for a cardiovascular

workout. Rows and rows of treadmills, ellipticals, stair climbers and four different kinds of bikes fill part of the overall 15,000 square foot space. The walls are filled with flat screen TVs and towering athlete portraits, while three large fans circulate the air overhead. The easternmost wall of the facility features floor to ceiling windows allowing natural light. Lockers and cubbies are available to use for free, while renting a locker monthly is also an option.

Classes, ranging from yoga to guided fitness courses such as “Butts and Guts,” are held in the three different multipurpose rooms and have seen steady numbers despite the semester just beginning. Some classes have needed to relocate to the largest space available to accommodate the growing numbers. These classes are free to students taking eight or more credits. The new facility also features a fitness consultation office. Once it is staffed, patrons will be able have their questions answered regarding equipment and their workout.

Erika Woodruff, a member of the Recreational Services staff and captain of the club lacrosse team, said she is looking forward to taking advantage of the opportunities the new fitness center provides.

“I am really excited to get our team in to weight train. That is something we weren’t able to do,” she said. “We’ll be able to get all of our athletes on the team in and show them how to correctly lift.”

Woodruff and her teammates found it difficult to accomplish such tasks using the facilities in the old Karges Center gym.

Another section of the fitness center was designed to meet the needs of student-athletes. A separate area with weight racks, benches and other machines gives student-athletes the space they need to work out as a team. While student-athletes are not in session or working with strength and conditioning staff, large glass doors will be lifted and that area will be open for all to use.

For students with fewer than eight credits, UWRF faculty and staff or emeriti, a monthly membership fee of \$30 is required. Family and community memberships are also available to purchase and in some cases discounts are available for senior citizens, veterans and UWRF alumni.



Samantha Decker/Student Voice

The fitness center in the newly-constructed Falcon Center has seen a large turnout from students, faculty, staff and community members since opening for the spring 2017 semester.

Falcon men’s basketball shatters consecutive win record versus UWSP

Zach Dwyer
zachary.dwyer@my.uwrf.edu

The UW-River Falls men’s basketball team eclipsed its program record of 16 consecutive wins on Saturday, knocking off UW-Stevens Point 67-51.

The 18-1 Falcons have been on an incredible run since a November loss to Hope College. The winning streak has pushed the team to a program-high No. 4 overall in the d3hoops.com poll and has given it an 8-0 start to conference play in the WIAC.

The team was only picked to finish fifth in the conference in the preseason, but expectations have steadily risen as the team’s success has grown.

“I had high expectations coming in this season. We’ve definitely met them, but we can still play a lot better than we have,” sophomore guard Clay Seifert said.

With a new mix of transfers and freshman stepping up, the Falcons have consistently improved in a variety of ways since the opening weeks of the season.

“We’ve been getting better defensively each week as we finish the conference season. I’ve also been impressed with this new team’s ability to gel offensively and play well together,” Head Coach Jeff Berkhof said.

Alex Herink has made the most immediate impact for the Falcons, averaging about 17 points per game and leading the team in minutes, field goal percentage and blocks. Herink’s two game-winning shots have also helped the Falcons sneak past Eau Claire and Stevens Point at home.

“I didn’t expect Alex to be doing the things he’s doing for us right now. He’s been clutch for us in the big moments, and he’s consistent by bringing it every night and working hard,” junior guard Devin Buckley said.

But to say this team’s turnaround has been led by one player wouldn’t give the depth of the team credit. Berkhof routinely goes about 11 or 12 players deep in his rotation and said he feels comfortable with basically anyone on his bench.

“The ability to play more guys keeps us fresh as we hope to have a long season. It will also help not wear our starters down as much by the end of the year,” Berkhof said.

Berkhof also said the strategy has been effective due to the team’s ability to really buy into playing team basketball. They’ve been effective at accepting their roles and being in it together.

But even more important than buying in is the impact team chemistry has had for UWRF. Seifert said he believes it has had a significant impact on the team.

“We have a lot of good guys you want to be around on the team, and that helped us in getting close early. Everybody’s having fun and working together for one goal,” Seifert said.

The winning streak has brought a lot of attention to the men’s team that has usually been reserved for other successful winter sports on the UWRF campus. But inside the program, not much has changed.

“It’s obviously great to be on this streak record-wise, but we haven’t played our best basketball yet. The

guys realize it’s cool what they’re doing, but we are only focused on the next game,” Berkhof said.

Multiple games in the WIAC have been close this season, but the Falcons have still managed to prevail. Being highly ranked has brought attention to the team, but in the end it doesn’t really mean much. UWRF players and coaches continue to be more focused on improving towards the WIAC tournament than breaking records at this stage in the season.

“We thought it would be cool to break the streak, but the focus is still winning the conference. We’re just trying to win each game and not get too high or too low. Nobody was really worried about the 16-game streak,” Buckley said.

That streak was especially tested last Wednesday night when the team looked to tie the streak at 15 in front of a packed and anxious Karges Center crowd. UWRF struggled throughout the first half, giving up second chance points in the paint and failing to knock down shots.

“Our defense was solid for the most part, despite a breakdown or two in the first half. Offensively we played faster in the second half and increased the tempo to have better possessions in the half-court offense,” Berkhof said.

The Falcons managed to hold on to a 70-58 victory with four of the five Falcon starters scoring in double figures. This was another occasion where a balanced effort led to a WIAC victory.

The Falcons look to continue their winning streak one game at a time on Saturday, when they host UW-Oshkosh. Tipoff is set for 5 p.m.

Falcon Athlete of the Week: David Paynotta



Kathy Helgeson/University Communications

Zach Dwyer
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David Paynotta, a senior sprinter from Finlayson, Minnesota, earned a big victory at the Falcon Winter Classic this past weekend. Paynotta took first in the men’s 55m with a time of 6.48, which currently ranks first in the WIAC and second nationally this season. Paynotta currently holds indoor program records for the 55m (6.42), 60m (6.82), and 200m (22.26) for UWRF. He also took fourth in the NCAA Div. III Indoor Track and Field National Championships in the 60m dash last year.

The Falcons dominated at their home indoor track and field meet on Saturday, taking first with 204 points compared to Hamline’s 82 points in second place.

The Student Voice sat down with Paynotta to discuss the beginning of the indoor season and his training and preparation to make another attempt at a National Championship appearance.

Q: How many seasons have you been with the team? Indoor and outdoor?

A: This is my fourth season of indoor and I’m going to run my fourth season of outdoor in the spring.

Q: Now that you’ve been with the team for a few seasons, what is your biggest focus as a senior?

A: The biggest focus is trying to get all the new freshman to feel more comfortable and ready. I probably won’t be around with the team next year, so I’m trying to get them ready while I’m here.

Q: Are you considered a fast starter or do you usually make up for it in closing acceleration?

A: I think I have a good start because that’s a key to the 60m dash.

Q: Other than a quick start, what is important for succeeding in indoor races like the 55 and 60m dashes?

A: Focusing on your drive phase, which is when you come out of an angle to your top speed so you don’t stand up right away. You want to make sure your drive phase is at least 20 meters so you can get up to your top speed. Also, the weight room was big for me once I started getting stronger.

Q: What race do you consider your strongest: The 60m or the 200m? Why?

A: I think the 60m is my stronger race, and I prefer the 60. When I tend to get with bigger competition at nationals, my form starts to break down and there’s less time for that to happen in the 60. I think there’s a huge difference between the 200 indoor and outdoor due to the corners. I don’t really care for the indoor 200 but I love the outdoor (200m).

Q: What kind of training changes when preparing for those two races?

A: I don’t think we really train much different other than when we go outside we practice with that one curve (in the 200m). Inside, we’re always running around the curves and we get the practice that we need.

Q: After breaking several records last season, is there still a goal to further set your own records this season?

A: For sure, because I think it’s going to take faster times to win nationals this year. Hopefully [faster times] will happen this weekend.

Q: Was there extra motivation in the offseason to reach the stage of the National Championship in the 60m dash again?

A: Yes, because a lot of the kids who were All-Americans came back. I didn’t win it last year and I’m sure they’re getting better, too.

Q: What are your goals for the team this indoor season, other than gaining experience?

A: I would like to place higher as a team at the WIAC conference meet. That’s the biggest one.

Q: What will you remember most about your time as a Falcon?

A: The great teammates who have helped us get through all the coaching changes.

Former River Falls Motel site could become future site of restaurants, apartment buildings

Lisa Erickson
Falcon News Service

The vacant lot at 1300 S. Main St., south of downtown River Falls, could look very different a year from now.

In the last couple months, the city of River Falls has had numerous people come forward with different ideas for the lot where the River Falls Motel used to be. The buildings were torn down in December.

Now that the lot is clear, residents and city officials think it will be easier to find someone to build on the site.

“It took five years to get this thing down,” said Buddy Lucero, River Falls community development director. Trying to get someone interested in the piece of land was difficult, because the buildings were in such rough shape. It was hard for people to envision what could be there, added Lucero.

City officials have long-term plans for the south side of town.

“Goal on the south side of the city is to bring in more commercial sites,” said Lucero.

According to the city’s official zoning map, the property is zoned B-3 Highway Commercial.

Some developers who are interested in high commercial or high residential (for example, multi-unit housing like apartments, townhomes or condominiums) have inquired with plans that fit the model for future development of the site, said Lucero.

“I am very excited to see what will go in that spot,” Doug Rinehart, owner of Dick’s Fresh Market, said in a telephone interview.

Rinehart grew up in River Falls.

“The motel was very nice back in the day,” he said. “The hotel was used a lot because of the university. It was well run, until more hotels came in north of town, then things seemed

to go downhill.”

Lucero agreed: “There was no way to re-develop the site. The buildings were falling apart.”

The city did not issue a building permit to the previous owner who was a former city council member, Pete Anderson. When Anderson died, his wife, Bonnie Anderson, took over responsibility for the property, said Lucero.

The former owner of Dick’s Fresh Market, Dick Rinehart (Doug’s father), said he had spoken with Anderson before he died about his plans for the site.

“He wanted to build a bunch of little cottages for students to live in. It was a nice idea, but those buildings were in rough shape,” he said.

The buildings eventually became a public nuisance and a razing permit was issued to tear down the buildings.

The City of River Falls recently conducted a study for the south corridor. The city wants development to be similar to the north side of town and to complement what UW-River Falls has done with the new Falcon Center, said Lucero.

Dick Rinehart said he had been approached by the city to buy the property, but declined because of his age.

“A few years back I tried to get some fast food restaurants to come,” he said. He said he spoke with Applebee’s Neighborhood Bar and Grill, Chipotle Mexican Grill and Culver’s, but each had reasons as to why River Falls was not a good fit. “Maybe things have changed now?”

Dick Rinehart said he thinks Culver’s would be a nice fit in River Falls. He investigated extensively about buying a franchise, but the company has a stipulation that the restaurant must be owner run and, Rinehart said,



Natalie Howell/Student Voice
The former River Falls Motel, now a vacant lot south of downtown River Falls, is being considered for many different plans to contribute to the community.

that was too much work for him at the time.

“The traffic is very good. There are over 19,000 cars that drive past that site everyday,” said Dick Rinehart.

“One plan that came to us was for commercial units with an Arby’s fast food restaurant attached,” said Lucero.

A survey of college students found that the No. 1 choice would be a Chipotle restaurant. Lucero said he has spoken with both Chipotle and Culver’s and both are now interested.

Another popular idea for the vacant spot is apartments. Apartment plans for college students or for senior citizens have been inquired

about, but no one has come forward yet, said Lucero.

“I believe duplexes or nice apartments would be perfect — something more upscale,” added Doug Rinehart.

According to Lucero, the water and sewer lines still need to be removed, but otherwise the property is ready for something new.

The lot is 1.6 acres and, according to Pierce County property tax records, last year had an estimated fair market value of \$238,600. The property is listed for sale with WESTconsin Realty LLC for \$500,000.

Stillwater high school ranks highest in sending new freshmen to UW-River Falls

Matthew Clark
Falcon News Service

New data show River Falls High School isn’t in the top three feeder high schools for UW-River Falls.

“Feeder school” is a label given to high schools and technical colleges that contribute a significant amount of students to universities. According to UWRF’s admissions office, River Falls High School is ranked No. 4 in a recent list of the top 12 high schools contributing students to the university’s 2016-2017 freshman class. Only 17 students from the high school’s 2016 graduating class enrolled in UWRF while other high schools in the region provided the university with higher numbers of students.

Sarah Egerstrom, UWRF’s executive director of Admissions & New Student and Family Programs, said she is not surprised by the data.

“I think there’s a variety of reasons,” Egerstrom said. “I think we still have a strong reputation in the community but there’s some students that want to get away for college. They don’t want to continue their education in their hometown.”

The No. 1 feeder high school for the university is Stillwater Area High School in Stillwater, Minnesota, which contributed 29 students to the current freshman class. Hudson High School in Hudson came close to first place with 25 students attending UWRF. New Richmond High School in New Richmond, Wisconsin, rounds out the top three with 20 students.

“It just so happens that many of our students like that a university is close to home, and UWRF has programs many of our stu-

dents want to pursue such as animal science or agriculture,” said Shannon Bartlett, a school counselor at New Richmond High School.

According to Egerstrom, the university is always looking to improve the number of students it recruits from area high schools.

“The institution always has an eye on growing the size of the freshman class. Our goal is to always strengthen both the number of students coming from high schools as well as the quality of those students,” Egerstrom said.

Every year, the university’s admission counselors visit close to 200 high schools in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Despite all of their efforts to recruit as many students as they can from each school, high school counselors try to provide several options for students.

“We focus more on what our students are looking for in post-secondary education,” Bartlett said. “Our counseling department does quite a bit of academic and career planning with our students and if UWRF fits what they are looking for, we absolutely encourage them to take a look.”

Besides high schools, the university also directs attention to students looking to transfer from another institution. In the fall of 2016, the university saw 76 students transfer into the university from Century College in White Bear Lake, Minnesota, and 40 students from Inver Hills Community College in Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota.

“We are visiting those campuses, working with our academic departments on campus for transfer policies and agreements to try and make it easier for students to transfer their credits to UWRF,” Egerstrom said.

Last year, the university enrolled students from over 430 high schools.

Career program offers field trips for UWRF students to visit area businesses

Rebecca Meidl
Falcon News Service

This semester marks the second one that Career Treks has helped students at UW-River Falls get a better understanding of what they want to do after college.

Career Services has partnered with the College of Business and Economics to create the program that allows students to explore different job opportunities and help market themselves to employers. The program takes students to businesses in Wisconsin and Minnesota. One Friday a month students get on a bus to visit one or several area businesses. There students get a chance to explore how these companies are run.

“I was hoping to see the different ways that a company can be run and how each approach is a bit different, yet they all lead to the same mass goal,” said business administration student Rachel Anderson.

“We are going to different organizations and the organizations are such that they would hire all the majors within the College of Business. So while the program is new, we didn’t want to be focus on just accounting firms. We wanted it to be more holistic,” said McKenna Pfeiffer, assistant director of Career Services.

Businesses are chosen based on networking and connections. Most of the places that Career Treks visits are businesses that have a large amount of UWRF alumni, are interested in developing in River Falls or have had success in connecting to the community.

Another way that businesses are chosen for the program is based on where students would like to visit. All of the businesses that Career Treks visits are looking for students in entry level jobs or internships. To help students get

a better understanding of the businesses they are visiting, Career Treks takes them to the corporate headquarters.

Any student can register to join a Career Treks field trip. Some business classes reach out to students to join the program. Anderson said she heard about the program through one of her business courses.

If students choose to participate in Career Treks and miss classes because of it, they will not get penalized for it; it is considered a University-sanctioned event. Students can register online. The College of Business and Economics provides the bus to and from the business they are visiting.

Although this is only the second semester of Career Treks, it has been successful. In November, 48 UWRF students visited the corporate headquarters of Kwik Trip convenience stores in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Anderson went on the Kwik Trip visit and said the program was a great way to market herself. Students got to meet with different division leaders and hear about open positions. When the company is hiring, students will learn what they need to do before they graduate to be applicable for that position.

This semester, Career Treks plans to visit Knoke’s Chocolates and JETPUBS Inc. in Hudson, as well as Best Maid Cookie Co. in River Falls, on Feb. 24. On March 24, Career Treks will visit American Family Insurance in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. The final visit of the semester is April 21 to Andersen Windows in Bayport, Minnesota. Students can register online for any of these trips.

Further information about the Career Treks program is available online at bit.ly/2kiaaMa.

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'La La Land' shines with magical performances

Wesley Sigsworth

Reviewer

A good movie should at least entertain the viewer for the two or so hours they sit and watch it. A great movie makes the viewer forget they paid eight dollars to see it. A phenomenal movie makes the viewer want to walk out of the theater after the credits and walk right into the next showing and see it again. “La La Land” does this and much more.

“La La Land” is a musical/drama/comedy written and directed by Damien Chazelle and starring Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling. The movie focuses on Mia, a struggling actress trying to make it big in Hollywood, and Sebastian, a jazz musician trying to open his own jazz club. Both characters meet after bumping into each other a few different times and eventually fall in love. However, both must make sacrifices to pursue their own dreams.

What makes this film so great isn’t its plot, but rather its impeccable executwion. Everything from the choreography, set design, performances and of course the music is done so incredibly well and in a way that fits the movie perfectly. If I had to describe the film in one word it would be “magic.” When everything comes together, it creates a distinct feeling of elation and excitement that screams “Hollywood.”

The musical numbers in this aren’t too over the top. In fact, two of the biggest ones



happen right at the beginning. After this most of the musical parts of the film focus almost exclusively on Mia and Sebastian. These performances range from the two

dancing in a park to both of them sitting at a piano and singing the film’s main theme “City of Stars.” This song is what ties the entire movie together and it makes its appear-

ance in almost every major scene, sometimes in a very subtle way.

One aspect of the film that I found very authentic was the singing by both Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling. Both actors did their musical performances on set rather than lip syncing to a track. And while some may complain that their voices aren’t professional enough, I think that is what brings the film down to earth. They are like people who sing in the shower, but they do it other places, too. These characters are just normal people trying to make it big in Hollywood, not professional singers and dancers acting on a stage.

If you do see this and are not entertained by the music, dancing and acting then you should at least have a few laughs. Callback jokes are very prevalent here, and to me that is an excellent type of comedy because it rewards the viewer for paying attention. Adding this comedic layer really gives just about any viewer something to love in this movie.

All in all, “La La Land” is something very special. I’m not really a fan of musicals, but this goes beyond that. It’s a movie that entertained me every second it was on the screen and made me laugh and cry at moments that are truly unforgettable. There is no doubt that this film will be grabbing awards hand over fist in the next year, and it deserves every one of them.

Wesley Sigsworth is a junior journalism major. He enjoys watching and reviewing movies.

'Silence' offers provoking, realistic look at religion

Nicholas Weninger

Reviewer

“Silence” tells the story of two Christian missionaries (Andrew Garfield and Adam Driver) who face the ultimate test of faith when they travel to Japan in search of their missing mentor (Liam Neeson) at a time when Christianity is outlawed and their presence forbidden.

Martin Scorsese, one of the most renowned writers and directors throughout the last several decades, has once again created an absolute masterpiece. For those of you unaware of his work, he has given us movies such as “Taxi Driver,” “Raging Bull,” “Goodfellas,” “The Aviator,” “The Departed,” “Shutter Island,” “Wolf of Wall Street,” and so many other fantastic films. The man is a genius and

he has not lost his touch with “Silence.” “Silence” is a film that Scorsese has wanted to make for decades now. I am so happy that he did. Not very often does a movie challenge you so much emotionally and mentally. A lot of people will see the 161 minute runtime and run away screaming at the thought of seeing such a long movie about missionaries. I am telling you that it is worth it.

While, yes, this movie is very long, it never lost my attention. That is because of how good the writing and directing is by Scorsese. He makes this movie look absolutely stunning and so vividly realistic and gritty. He is able to do this because he had the help of his cinematographer Rodrigo Prieto, who he team up with in the “Wolf of Wall Street.” They make each frame and each scene having meaning. It is truly an artistic experience to view this film.

These scenes are acted out by the very

talented Andrew Garfield (who delivered an incredible performance in this year’s “Hack-saw Ridge,” as well), Adam Driver and Liam Neeson (small but very impactful role). Each one of them is phenomenal and quite possibly give their best performances to date.

What makes them so great is the material that they are given and how they are able to own it and make it their own. This film deals with the complex emotions of struggling with one’s faith in God, man and his own inner strength to stand up for what one believes.

For those who are on the fence of wanting to go see a religious movie, don’t be turned away by this. Yes, this has religious themes and plot points, but it rides the fine line perfectly. It doesn’t glorify martyrs and it doesn’t demonize the men responsible for their persecution. It simply shows both sides and, quite honestly, how wasteful it all is. I love this because it really allows the audi-

ence to question what they would do, what they would think and how true they would stand in their beliefs no matter the hardships and consequences.

“Silence” will not be for everyone. A lot of people will walk out hating it and some people might even get some good naps in. However, this is one of the most realistic and honest portrayals of Christianity and religion that I have ever seen on film. Scorsese delivers another masterpiece, Garfield and Driver further establish themselves as some of the best actors of this generation and Neeson adds another notch into his belt of great films.

Nicholas Weninger is a fifth year broad field social studies major and has hopes to be a high school history teacher. He has a passion for movies, video games and being outdoors. If your enjoy his reviews, check out his movie review website on Facebook called The Average Man Review.

Last Week’s Answers

Puzzle of the Week

Christmas Lyrics

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Books you probably read in high school

1

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6

10

12

3

7

8

9

11

5

- ACROSS
- 4

Books are burned rather than read in "_____ 451"
- 6

Author of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn"
- 7

He's told to "stay gold" in "The Outsiders"
- 10

The East and West cities in "The Great Gatsby"
- 11

Finch's first name in "To Kill a Mockingbird"
- 12

Schoolboys try to survive on an island after a plane crash in "Lord of the ____"

DOWN

1

Who George tells to look at the rabbits in "Of Mice and Men"

2

Author of "The Catcher in the Rye"

3

He's always watching in Orwell's "1984" (2 words)

5

The last name of the family in "The Grapes of Wrath"

8

Homer's epic poem about the story of Odysseus

9

The color of the "A" worn by Hester Prynne

Puzzle created at [puzzle-maker.com](#)

Find Freddy’s lost feather in this issue of the Voice and win two free movie passes to the Falls Theatre!

The first person to report the find to natalie.howell@my.uwrf.edu AFTER 10 a.m. Friday wins!

Now Playing: Hidden Figures

The winner will be announced on the Voice’s Twitter and Facebook accounts: [@uwrfvoice](#) and [facebook.com/Uwrfstudentvoice](#)