



SPORTS, PAGE 7
Women’s hockey
defeated by
Superior 3-1

NEWS, PAGE 3
UW-River Falls introduces
new neuroscience major among
growing interest from students

ETCETERA, PAGE 8
“Kung Fu Panda 3”
continues
strong series



University of Wisconsin

River Falls

STUDENT VOICE

February 5, 2016

www.uwrfvoice.com

Volume 102, Issue 13

Conceal-carry bill not likely to pass this session

Ryan Odeen
Falcon News Service

A controversial bill that would allow concealed weapons to be carried in university buildings most likely will not pass this legislative session, says the Republican representative who proposed it.

But first-term State Rep. Jesse Kremer (R-Kewaskum) said that if he is re-elected in November, he will re-introduce the legislation.

Kremer introduced Assembly Bill 480 in November. The bill would allow people to conceal and carry guns inside University of Wisconsin System buildings. Currently, people can conceal and carry guns on campus, however guns are not permitted inside any campus buildings. Kremer says that this makes students walking to or from their car, class or apartment “soft targets” because criminals know they are unarmed.

“And now if you allow this on the campuses,” Kremer said, “the bad guys are not gonna know who is carrying and who is not.”

Kremer said he may have introduced the bill at a bad time. It was near the end of the session and the end of a term for the Assembly, with representatives seeking reelection. Some representatives were not interested in discussing a hot-button

topic, but would rather focus on more bipartisan issues.

The bill in November was referred to the Committee on Colleges and Universities, but has seen no action since then.

Kremer sees the benefits of this bill as twofold. First, it will provide personal protection. Second, he sees it as a preventive measure in helping stop crime before it happens.

“There are students who do not like the idea of allowing conceal and carry holders on campus, however at the same time, they say they do not feel safe here,” Kremer said. He said he proposed the bill to help fix the problem from a legislative level.

Kremer said he has met with officials and administrators at schools and police departments since he introduced the bill. The UW System President Ray Cross, all of the UW chancellors, and also the UW-Madison police department have released statements opposing the legislation.

At UW-River Falls, Student Senate after a nearly a two-thirds majority vote released a statement saying it opposes the legislation.

Christopher Morgan, Student Senate president, said he remained mostly objective through the process, trying to look at the facts to help make his decision on whether to support the bill.

“I view the lack of evidence that shows that more guns in

an environment makes that environment safer,” Morgan said. “There is no statistical evidence that shows that.”

Morgan said his decision to oppose the bill also was based on what student safety officials and people who have dedicated their lives to higher education in the state have said.

Kremer is not giving up.

“This is why I would like to get a hearing on it,” he said.

However, he likely will not get a hearing on the issue before the session ends later this month to give representatives time to campaign for reelection. But Kremer said getting a hearing on the bill is crucial to working towards compromises and changes that are needed to help the bill pass.

Kremer will be on the ballot again in what he says is generally a “red” district this coming November. He says if he is reelected, he plans to reintroduce the bill.

The bill will not be reintroduced without some opposition from Democratic members in the General Assembly. In fact, Rep. Chris Taylor (D-Madison) proposed Assembly Bill 485 that would make it a felony to possess any firearm at a public university, the exact opposite of legislation that Kremer introduced.

Kremer’s legislation is similar to Senate Bill 363, introduced by State Sen. Devin LeMahieu (R-Oostburg), which also was referred to committee but has seen no action.

New food service vendor brings change



Tori Schneider/Student Voice
UWRF students eat lunch in the University Center on Wednesday, Feb. 3. Chartwells is the new food vendor on campus this year and students’ feelings about the food they provide have been mixed.

Jacob Rogers
Falcon News Service

UW-River Falls is now in the second semester of food services on campus being provided by a new vendor, and reactions to the change are mixed.

Chartwells, part of the British company Compass Group PLC, took over the food service contract in the University Center on June 1, replacing Sodexo, a global business based in France. Chartwells had the food service contract before losing it to Sodexo.

Contracts are typically seven years long, said Cara Rubis, director of the University Center and Dining Services. The major difference between Chartwells and Sodexo is the contract itself.

“The framework for how we operate for seven years is based upon the contract that we agree to,” Rubis said. “Our contract with Sodexo had different agreements in it than our contract with Chartwells.”

The process takes about a year to review the contract and make changes to the current contract. During the contract negotiation period, Rubis and Dining Services went to the students and, more specifically, the Dining Services Advisory Committee (DSAC) for feedback.

“Most of our feedback comes from DSAC, which has representation from across campus in all the residence halls, as well as students that live off campus,” Rubis said.

Lucas Schmidt is the Chair of DSAC and he said the main function of DSAC is to get feedback from students about how Chartwells does as a whole.

“They (Chartwells) will take any feedback whether it is bad feedback or good feedback,” Schmidt said. “Usually it ends up being what they can improve in Riverside Commons, but sometimes it includes the retail venues as well.”

Schmidt mentioned that the reaction of the students to Chartwells has been mixed. He said that some students say that Chartwells’ food is much better than Sodexo.

The pricing of the meal plan program that is available to all UW-River Falls students remained the same outside of one major addition: The all-access meal plan was added to the weekly meal plans and the block plans.

“The all-access meal plan allows unlimited entries into Riv-

erside Commons,” Rubis said. “We found that some students have special diets that require them to snack all day versus eating three big meals per day.”

To go along with the all-access meal plan, a full-time, registered dietician now works at UW-River Falls.

Renovations to Riverside Commons and other areas of the University Center accompanied the switch to Chartwells, as well as a new national brand made its way into the University Center.

“Over the summer, once summer registration finished, the dining facilities were torn up and put back together just in time for the 2015-2016 academic year,” Rubis said.

The coffee shop known as “Peregrine Perk” is now “Einstein Bros Bagels” and the popular submarine sandwich shop “Erberts and Gerberts” is now in an area of the University Center where it is available to patrons during more than just lunch time. Riverside Commons is more open than it was in the past, so it is easier for students to find their friends that are already eating.

Luke Bowe is a junior who lives off campus and he has a block meal plan. He said he has not noticed too many changes between Sodexo and Chartwells.

“I really didn’t notice any changes. The food seems pretty much the same to me even though they said have new items,” Bowe said. “Some of the main courses have been repetitive, so a little variety would be nice sometimes.”

Bowe also mentioned that his military benefits pay for the meal plan and that makes it convenient to eat while he is on campus.

Chartwells strives to make improvements when improvements are needed. Those improvements range from subtle changes that can be made overnight to additions that are in the making for the future.

Chartwells will be opening a retail dining facility in the new Falcon Center athletic complex.

“There will be a new food retail venue at the Falcon Center, but we still need to confirm what concept will be at the venue,” Rubis said. “We want to make sure it is a concept where the food offerings work for the different parts of the day.”

Chartwells will also be overseeing the concessions at the Falcon Center once it opens.

CAFES research projects earn grants

Sophia Koch
sophia.koch@my.uwrf.edu

A series of projects in the Plant and Earth Sciences department at UW-River Falls was awarded funding through the USDA the week of Jan. 18. In total, the three separate grants add up to over \$800,000, which was split between three different projects.

The first project will be managed by professor of horticulture Brian Smith, and will involve the development of new grape varieties. The hope is to develop grapes that are cold-hardy, high-yielding, and of superior quality such that they can compete with cranberries in the Wisconsin fruit industry.

The second will be bringing in new equipment for the Crop and Soils program. The aim is to get items that can help to support teaching activities—such as an instrument that uses near infrared technology to measure the nutritional value of forage samples—and for those items to be small enough that they can be brought out for field demonstrations.

“They can see these things now through the reports,” said Yoana Newman, UWRF assistant professor and co-proposer of the project with Assistant Professor Natasha Macnack. “But with the machine you can have it there and just say, ‘Okay, let’s compare.’”

The third and largest of the grants will be funding a project that is the result of the collaboration of assistant professors Jill Coleman-Wasik, Jarod Blades, and Veronica Justen. It is called ‘From Seed to Seed’, and aims to get communities thinking about the balance between land usage and land conservation.

The plan is to offer a new transdisciplinary course at UWRF through the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES), hire new student research interns, partner with the Science Museum of Minnesota and the Carpenter Nature Center, and bring together various stakeholders in the Kinnickinnic watershed in discussions on land management.

The project will be building on another, smaller project—called the Kinni Watershed Consortium—which was funded back in 2014 by a smaller grant. A “pilot” run, as Coleman-Wasik put it. Applying for this new grant was made easier for having built off a smaller grant, using the Kinni Watershed Consortium as a way to prove that the ideas involved have merit.

The grant program, according to Administrative Programs Manager Laura Walsh, “is designed to help campuses like ours build up their infrastructure and capacity to do more research and better educate the students who will be going directly into the workforce.”

The funding of these projects will be of benefit not only to the Plant and Earth Sciences department, to which the money is directly going, but also to CAFES as a whole.

The funding of these projects will be of benefit not only to the Plant and Earth Sciences department, to which the money is directly going, but also to CAFES as a whole.

“Lots of CAFES majors take crops or soils courses even if they are an animal science major or an agriculture business major,” said Walsh. “They need to learn about the crops necessary to feed animals, or in the case of agriculture business students, there are a lot of crop/grain companies in this region, so they would want to have the background technical info offered by an agronomy course to better prepare them for potential careers with those companies.”

CAFES has seen a three percent decrease in enrollment overall since fall of 2011, and UWRF as a whole has seen a roughly 12 percent decrease. The hope, with these grants, is to attract new students to the program. “The more active we are,” said Walsh. “The more word gets out and the more opportunities we can offer to prospective students and current students.”

News briefs:

Graduate studies scholarship recipients named at UW-River Falls

A University of Wisconsin-River Falls scholarship established to honor a Minnesota legislator has been awarded for the first time. Mike Collins of St. Paul, Minn. and Chelsey Turner of Spring Valley, both graduate students seeking teaching licensure at UW-River Falls, each received \$5,000 from the Bruce F. Vento Science Educator Scholarship.

The scholarship, which was established last year to honor the memory of U.S. Representative Vento, is targeted to support 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 UW-River Falls graduate.

The scholarship recipients, both enrolled in the STEMteach program at UW-River Falls, were selected based upon academic standings and demonstrated financial need.

Turner said she was grateful to the Vento family for establishing the scholarship. Having worked several jobs to support her undergraduate education at UWRF, Turner said the scholarship enables her to focus solely on her graduate degree. “I’ve always been scrambling to get enough money to get through school,” Turner said. “When I learned I got the scholarship, I breathed a huge sigh of relief.”

In addition to the Vento scholarship, several other STEMteach students were awarded \$3,000 scholarships funded by the National Science Foundation grant awarded to UW-River Falls in 2014 to establish the STEMteach program. These recipients are Nichelle Wollberg of Colfax, Erica Frear of Burnsville, Minn., Stephen Klebs of Hastings, Minn., Sheri White of Stillwater, Minn., and Alex Jones of Inver Grove Heights, Minn.

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 last June. 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 second cohort of the STEMteach program that begins this summer. For more information about STEMteach or the scholarships, email diane.bennett@uwrf.edu or visit <http://go.uwrf.edu/STEMteach>.

University’s Montessori program receives state grant

Several Milwaukee-area Montessori schools will soon get professional training thanks to a state grant to the University of Wisconsin-River Falls Montessori Program.

Melina Papadimitriou, the Montessori Program coordinator for UWRF’s College of Education and Professional Studies, said the \$124,933 grant will fund highly interactive, hands-on workshops that models the Montessori philosophy and pedagogy. The grant will enable teachers in schools serving a high-need population — Lloyd Barbee Montessori, Craig Montessori, Highland Community School and MacDowell Montessori — to learn and practice new skills and techniques for addressing areas in math and literacy. The city of Milwaukee has the most public Montessori schools in the nation.

Beginning in April, 40 teachers, under the guidance of ten

university instructors and eight specially trained mentors, will work to develop skills in Montessori teaching methods, with an emphasis on literacy and mathematics. The mentors will support the teachers throughout the year as they work to implement the new teaching strategies into their classrooms.

“Our goal is to impact education in Wisconsin and beyond in a significant way,” Papadimitriou said. “Helping such large schools can serve as the beginning of us going into other school districts and supporting them.”

The Montessori method is based on the research of Italian educator, anthropologist and physician Maria Montessori in the early 20th century. She developed her methods after observing children in learning environments.

Funding for the workshops was awarded through the Wisconsin ESEA Improving Teacher Quality Program in a competitive application process. The program has the potential to receive a total of \$323,000 over a three-year period.

The Montessori graduate program is supported through the Office of Outreach and Continuing Education.

For more information, contact Papadimitriou in the UW-River Falls College of Education and Professional Studies at 715-425-0601 or melina.papa@uwrf.edu.

UW-River Falls Crop and Soil Science student graduates on the fast track

Joseph Markgraf came to the University of Wisconsin-River Falls (UWRF) from his hometown of Antigo in August 2013, and left in December 2015 with his diploma in hand and a full-time position. Markgraf is one of only five students in the past 15 years who entered UW-River Falls with fewer than 10 credits and graduated in 2.5 years or less.

Markgraf first connected with UWRF at World Dairy Expo in 2012, when he stopped by the UWRF booth staffed by the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES). He ultimately chose to major in Crop and Soil Science with an emphasis in crop science.

It wasn’t until his second semester at UWRF that he thought he might be able to graduate in less than four years. In order to pay for college, Markgraf had to work full-time, which left him with little time to himself. This difficult situation motivated him to complete his degree as soon as he could.

“Keep focused and stay determined,” was his constant reminder to himself when his goal didn’t seem possible.

His last semester at UWRF may have been his most challenging, he said. In August, he accepted a position with DuPont Pioneer, to partner with Cropping Central LLC, to be a sales agronomist based in Antigo. While completing his last 23 credits of coursework this past fall, Markgraf headed home every weekend to handle his new responsibilities, which included serving as a crop consultant and selling seed and crop insurance.

Despite spending less time at UWRF than most students, Markgraf said, “It opened my eyes to many different backgrounds, and with that different views and opinions.”

“Joe was not only a hard-working and dedicated student, he was also a pleasure to have in class,” said Don Taylor, UWRF professor of crop science and Markgraf’s academic adviser. “He was more willing than most to question ideas and to find practical applications to the course materials. His comments and questions increased the interest for students and instructor.”

Although he now has more control over his time, don’t expect Markgraf to slow down too much. He intends to devote significant time to growing his business and also plans to be very active in the Antigo FFA Alumni and county Farm Bureau organizations. In addition, last May, Markgraf took another unusual step for someone so young when he purchased a home just north of Antigo.

Markgraf noted how the connections he made at UWRF are already showing up in his career.

“I believe I will run into many of the friends I made at UWRF quite often in the years to come,” he said.

For more information, email laura.walsh@uwrf.edu or call 715-425-3535.

University plays host to science olympiad

More than 900 students representing 34 high schools from Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota competed in the fifth annual Science Olympiad competition at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls on Jan. 23.

The event featured 61 teams competing in all 23 National Science Olympiad events as well as five trial events specific to Wisconsin. Team trophies were awarded to the top four teams in both the large and small school division (based on school size).

A team from Menomonie High School took top honors in the large team competition with teams from Mounds View (Minn.) High School, Wayzata (Minn.) High School and Eden Prairie (Minn.) High School placing second, third and fourth, respectively.


Medford Area Senior High School won the small team competition, followed by teams from Boyceville, Delano (Minn.), and Orono (Minn.) high schools, respectively.

Medals were awarded to the top four finishers in both divisions in all 28 events in the tournament.

Have something to say?

Write a letter to the editor.

Email your thoughts to editor@uwrfvoice.com

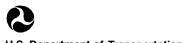



The “It’s Only Another Beer”
Black and Tan

8 oz. pilsner lager
8 oz. stout lager
1 frosty mug
1 icy road
1 pick-up truck
1 10-hour day
1 tired worker
A few rounds with the guys

Mix ingredients.
Add 1 totalled vehicle.

Never underestimate ‘just a few.’
Buzzed driving is drunk driving.



River Falls Police/UWRF Police Department

Monday, Jan. 18

- Property damage from a motor vehicle accident was reported at 650 S. Third Street around 3 a.m.

Thursday, Jan. 21

- Property damage from a motor vehicle accident was reported at 321 E. Cascade Ave around 11 a.m.
- An accident was reported at the UW-River Falls Speech & Hearing Center around 11 a.m. No damage was reported.

Saturday, Jan. 23

- A welfare check was requested at Hathorn Hall around 2 a.m.

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

UNIVERSITY VILLAGE

1BR Apts from \$520-\$545/mo. & 2BR Apts from \$595-\$610/mo.

State Street near Ramer Field
Tenant pays electric/heat

715-246-3145
www.applegateproperties.com



So far, Safe Ride Home program is successful, says UWRF Student Senate

Natalie Howell
Falcon News Service

With the Safe Ride Home Program starting back up again after J-term, Student Senate leaders at UW-River Falls see the first month of use as a success.

The Safe Ride Home Program was passed at Student Senate’s Oct. 20 meeting, designating \$5,400 from the Senate funding pool to support a trial run of the program that would start in November and end in March. The program utilizes one taxi from the River Falls Taxi Service and offers students a free ride back to campus or back to their off-campus housing from anywhere in River Falls. The service is currently available from 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. Thursday through Saturday and is scheduled to run for 15 weeks, ending in late March.

During the first month of use in December, the program has taken on 139 riders, with 52 of them being students at UW-River Falls, according to Senate Vice President James VandenBergh.

“We really wanted it to take off, which we think it has,” said VandenBergh. “It’s been doing great things so far.”

The taxi during the hours of the Safe Ride Home Program is available for anyone to use, said Korene Burke, manager at River Falls Taxi Service. The only difference is that UWRF students can ride for free with their student IDs during the Safe Ride Home hours, whereas non-students have to pay the usual rate of \$2.75 per person.

Burke said that the Safe Ride Home taxi is available to the general public along with UWRF students between 11 p.m. and 3 a.m. because it wouldn’t be right to turn away those who need a ride or people who are with students. Burke gave the example of a group of women at a fraternity house, three of whom weren’t UWRF students.

“What are you supposed to say, tell the

three girls they gotta walk or pay? Or tell them walk because it’s only for college students?” said Burke. “We can’t really do that.”

Burke said that there haven’t been any problems with the program so far, with all riders being respectful to the driver and thankful for the free ride.

“In fact, if anything they just talk and talk and talk and talk,” said Burke.

Burke said that the program has been going really well and is a good addition to River Falls, but she believes that Safe Ride Home could be advertised more.

“Because we get a lot of college kids that didn’t even really realize it, it’s kind of going by word of mouth,” said Burke. “I think if some better advertising maybe was out there, we’d get a lot more kids.”

Senate members promoted the program in the University Center when it began, giving out cards with information and a space where students could write their address to give to the taxi driver. Posters advertising the program have also been distributed to residence halls, academic buildings, different restaurants and bars in River Falls, and Greek Life. According to VandenBergh, Senate has no plans to further advertise the Safe Ride Home Program.

Burke also said that she would be in favor of the program expanding to a year-round service, including J-term and summer break. She said that students will always needs a safe ride home, and the consistency of having the program being available throughout the year would help make it a more well-known option for students.

VandenBergh said that Senate will re-evaluate the pilot of the program after the 15 weeks and determine whether it should continue into the next year.

“It’s really done what we’ve hoped it to do and hopefully in the future we can have this program continue,” said VandenBergh.

UWRF launches neuroscience major to address growing interest

Katie Galarno
Falcon News Service

A new undergraduate program in neuroscience will begin this fall at UW-River Falls. The UW System Board of Regents approved the addition of the degree in December.

The program will start accepting students a year earlier than originally anticipated. Travis Tubré, chair of the psychology department, said that this is possible because the program will add just one new course, utilizing already existing classes from a variety of departments.

Psychology Assistant Professor James Cortright will be the coordinator for the program, advising students and teaching the new course, Introduction to Neuroscience (Neuroscience 111). He said that the program will allow for a lot of cross-department collaboration as the students study many different topics.

“It’s an interdisciplinary field combining aspects of psychology, biology, chemistry,” Cortright said, “so, in large part, it’s looking at behavior and different components of behavior and a lot of the biological, chemical components that underlie those different types of behavior.”

Studying biological processes has always been important to psychology, but the methods to study them haven’t always existed. Tubré said that recent advances in technology and an increased understanding of the brain have allowed neuroscience to become a growing field.

“There’s a lot of research and interest and support for neuroscience,” Tubré said. “More people are living longer and dealing with age-related changes in cognitive function.”

According to the World Health Organization, up to 1 billion people worldwide had

neurological disorders in 2007, including epilepsy and brain injuries.

Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences Bradley Caskey said that this new program will give students interested in neuroscience a chance to study a field at UWRF that they’ve previously only been able to sample.

“Right now we have a psych program where students can dabble in that a little bit in biology and chemistry,” Caskey said. “But this gives a specific undergraduate degree, which was critical for people who are thinking about going into graduate school and beyond in neuroscience.”

Animal science major Jasmine Houska said that even though she personally isn’t interested in the program, it still sounds like a good opportunity for the university.

“It’s cool for the school to have that new option available to students,” Houska said.

Tubré said that UWRF’s neuroscience program will differ from the program at UW-Madison because Madison’s program is more of a neurobiology program, while UWRF’s program will be rooted in psychology.

“The ideas will be more focused on the behavioral end of the spectrum, so basically understanding the behavior from the context of the structure and biological processes,” Tubré said. “So they’re very similar, but theirs is a biologically-oriented program in the biology department.”

Tubré said that he doesn’t expect a large number of students to begin the neuroscience program the first semester, because a lot of recruitment has already taken place and many graduating high school students have already made decisions. However, current UWRF students will have the option to add or switch to a neuroscience degree, and new students who have already been accepted into different programs may decide to switch as well.

River Falls hit by heavy snow; classes canceled



Tori Schneider/Student Voice
The Grounds Maintenance Department is responsible for clearing snow from the 10 miles of sidewalks and 22.5 acres of parking lots on campus.



Tori Schneider/Student Voice
McKayla Teunissen walks through the snow that fell in River Falls on Tuesday, Feb. 2 as the Grounds Maintenance Department clears the sidewalk behind her.

‘Cold Hands Warm Hearts’ makes use of snow



Tori Schneider/Student Voice
Junior Mara Naffzinger, left, and sophomore Kelsey Odella, right, sled down the hill outside of the University Center during the Cold Hands Warm Hearts event on Thursday, Jan. 28.



Tori Schneider/Student Voice
Kaitlin Rodewald, sophomore, sleds down the hill outside of the University Center during Cold Hands Warm Hearts which was coordinated by Falcon Outdoor Adventures and Student Involvement.

EDITORIAL

Politics can be discussed respectfully, doesn't have to be controversial topic

Politics seems to be the focus of everybody’s lives right now. For about a year now presidential candidates have been fighting for our attention and our future votes, and this has led to everything we see, hear and talk about being tied in with politics in some way. And with the Iowa caucus occurring earlier this week, this has never been more true. Now that we are finally in the year when we will elect our new president, it seems as though every conversation turns to the topic of politics; what new outlandish and unpresidential thing Trump tweeted or whether or not we believe the United States is ready for Bernie Sanders. No matter how the conversation starts however, there is a good chance that it will end in some form of conflict.

But what we have to ask ourselves is why does it have to end in conflict? Why is politics such a sensitive subject for us where we put people in judgmental boxes when learning where on the political spectrum they fall and take it personally when others don’t agree with our own ideologies and priorities? Why do we feel the urge to keep our mouths shut in fear of a debate when a family member says that they are voting for Ben Carson? Why is politics so personal?

College is a place where adults with different views, priorities, and experiences are able to come together and learn from each other, yet with politics we don’t seem to want to learn from each other, we just want to be right. There is nothing wrong with lively debate when it’s civil, just like there is nothing wrong with respecting someone’s views while not agreeing with them. Politics will continue to be present in our lives as we leave UW-River Falls and go out into the world, but we shouldn’t use politics as an excuse to get angry or assume someone isn’t as intelligent as us just because they have different views. The topic of politics shouldn’t be a controversial thing that is difficult to talk about, it should invite lively debate and open minds. Because at the end of the day, no matter who we’re planning on voting for, we’re all searching, in our own ways, to “make America great again.”

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

STUDENT VOICE

Editor	Hayden Bosch
Assistant Editor	Natalie Howell
General Manager	Clayton Brady
Front Page Editor	Trevor Hogle
News Editor	Matthew Clark
Viewpoints Editor	Katie Galarno
Sports Editor	Kris Bradley
Etcetera Editor	Molly Kinney
Chief Photographer	Tori Schneider
Staff Photographers	Molly Kinney
	Jonathan Washington
	Lauren Zimitsch
Proofreader	Sophia Koch
Circulation Manager	Brady Johnson
Faculty Advisor	Andris Straumanis

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

Response: Inclusivity positions could be utilized by everyone

Roderick Babilius

Columnist

Editor's note: The Student Voice's final issue of last semester included an article by columnist Molly Kinney, who posits that UW-River Falls would benefit as a campus by reinstating UWRF's inclusivity director position as Student Senate had proposed. Kinney wrote that she was "sadly unsurprised" when the first two Senate members to comment and express opposition to the proposal in its original state were white men, who, Kinney said, "have less insight on what experiences the less privileged have, and why they might feel insecure talking to administration about their problems." Here, the senator Kinney argues against writes his own response. For full context, read Kinney's article at <http://uwrfvoice.com/viewpoints/15667>.

Being the subject of Kinney’s complaints, I feel I should offer my point of view on this matter. I must begin by stating that I am in favor of such a position. However, I am not in favor of the scope of the position. I believe that if we are going to have a full-time hired “inclusivity” position on our campus, it should indeed *include* all people on our campus. My line of inquisition in the Senate meeting that night was derived from this belief.

Any single person can feel marginalized in this world regardless of their gender and skin color. It doesn’t matter what demographic you come from. Context matters. Women can have it hard, LGBT communities have it hard, Muslims have it hard, any race other than white have it hard in this country, but just because I am a straight white male does not mean that I had a free pass. In fact, I would argue that I had it far harder than any single person who feels that their only obstacle is their gender, ethnicity, religion, etc.

I come from poverty. I come from a poverty that includes living without electricity, no hot water, going days eating old lettuce on rock hard hot dog buns with expired mayonnaise because we didn’t have money for food, or cutting the mold out of the cheese because that’s all we had to eat. I experienced abuse that no person should ever have to experience. I experienced and witnessed domestic violence that even Hollywood couldn’t dream up. I was a four-sport athlete and an honor student and the oldest sibling of five that had to spend his nights and weekends after school and practice working at the local restaurant at the age of 12 to put food on the table. My home had so many interactions with the local police department and the county sheriff, we knew every member by name. As a child I would be left in charge of all of my siblings, unaware of where my mother was or when she would return, sometimes going days without contact and still having to make sure everyone was fed and off to school or whatever activities were scheduled. I witnessed death, drug abuse, and cried stoically through a phone at the man in a county supplied orange jumpsuit on the other side of the glass, silently begging him to help me make it all better at the age of 11. My only way out of that life was to graduate high school early and join the Marine Corps. I put in more work before the age of 15 simply just to survive than most people will put in throughout their entire careers. I may be a white male, but I did not have anything handed to me because of it. And to say in a sweeping statement that I and my brothers, who have seen and experienced things that to many people serve as fodder for their fiction novels, are somehow better off and are responsible for you feeling marginalized simply because we are white males couldn’t be more offensive.

In fact, being a white male has worked distinctly to my disadvantage. It is assumed that I as a white male just had everything handed to me, that I inherently have some kind of advantage over everyone else. Well I haven’t seen a dime of that advantage. This advantage never put food in my stomach when I was hungry or turned the heat on when I was cold. I watch women, people of other ethnicity or different sexuality than me stand up and say that they inherently deserve to be handed something they didn’t work for because they aren’t in the right demographic. They ask for it simply based on the merit that they are not a straight white male. They ask for these reasons, they receive for these reasons and it is wrong. Many of these people come from homes and situations where they had the family and financial support that protected them from ever having to be exposed to the idea that people could potentially grow up the way that I did, but I am still the bad guy.

We are proposing to create a position to help those who can’t or don’t know how to help themselves. A position that will hold their hand, ask them what they need, tell them everything is going to be alright and go to bat for them. Anybody can benefit from this so long as they aren’t a straight white male. This angers me. This offends me. This hurts me. I am a straight white male and I too have the right to feel these things.

This is a university. A university is meant to be a place where people come to grow, to learn about themselves and prepare for the world and life ahead of them. People are going to be offended. The world is offensive. Life is offensive. We would be failing ourselves and our students if we spent all of our energy trying not to offend. If you don’t ever feel offended on a college campus, then you were never challenged to learn and grow as a person. The university is indeed a sanctuary, a safe place, but safe from what? How do we

determine whose speech and philosophy is correct and should be the basis of our “political correctness?” We must do what we can to help make all feel welcomed and give everyone the best opportunity to learn, but we should not do so with the agenda of creating cookie cutter humans who all think alike and speak alike. This philosophy of censorship and avoidance is in direct contrast to the mission and purpose of the centuries old liberal arts education.

However, I do recognize that these are real problems in our society, but I refuse to let them be defined in broad vague strokes when there is so much context necessary to understand each individual case. I do not believe that creating a position that specifically caters to any gender, ethnicity, sexual identity or religion in the name of inclusivity sends the correct message. The day we arrive on a college campus is the day we all step onto the same platform in life regardless of demographics. We are all provided with the same opportunity to succeed. If a student is then faced with a person or university staff member that withholds opportunities or specifically goes out of their way to make threats of harm to someone, or attack their personal character, or are purposefully excluded because they are different, then that issue should be dealt with. No one should feel unsafe or feel excluded from participating in the educational process provided by the university and this position should be used to address these type of problems. These types of scenarios do not fall under “being offended,” they fall under hatred, bigotry and lack of civil common sense.

If a black student, or any race, has to drop out of college because they have true financial hardships then we should help them, or if a black student drops out because they had been attacked in the ways stated above, then it is common sense that we help them. But if a black student simply decides to drop out of college and we bend over backwards to put him back into college entirely due to the idea that we need more black people on college campuses and nothing else, that is wrong. If a group of women says they feel underrepresented in positions of leadership, and therefore demands that it be required and mandated that more women be hired simply on the merit that they are women, that becomes a real problem. If I encountered a group of people from beginnings such as mine, or worse, protesting and demanding that they be given the opportunity to attend college I would be right there with them. It makes sense that everyone have the right to an education. But if they then said that they want to see more people from humble beginnings in positions of leadership because they feel underrepresented, I would tell them to go home because they have to earn those positions.

If we create a position that can be used by a group to demand that they receive tangible benefits and programs in the name of “equality” because they were “offended” or feel marginalized and underrepresented, then we will have created a position that is furthering the problem by creating more institutional and structural segregation by giving benefits to undeserving groups because they pounded their chest loud enough in proclamation that their feelings were hurt. Those who whine loudly enough, though on equal footing, will then receive “additional equality.” Is this the message we want to send?

If this position were to have the impact we hope it would, it would be necessary and most important for this person to interact closely with those people that could be considered as doing the marginalization. Just because someone is saying or doing something that is offensive to another person doesn’t mean that they are somehow inherently doing something wrong. We need to learn to understand and accept our differences, and in doing so, by virtue, work together with those that may offend us, because you may learn that we can agree upon and accomplish far more when we civilly disagree and move forward than if we spend all of our time focusing on our differences and trying to censor one another. My solution is to create an Inclusivity Department which has staff members who specialize in these specific areas and who are to be utilized to address these problems and then collaborate to help educate *all* people understand and cope with the differences in the world. We need to learn to look past and understand all of these differences and work together to overcome our current problems, not create more avenues that encourage us to self-segregate.

In direct response to the sentiments expressed in the column, I as a white man have my concerns heard because I stand up, find the avenues through which to work, and don’t back down no matter how afraid I am. It isn’t because I am white; it is because I am willing to track down the leads and tenaciously fight for my charge. These are things that I have learned through self-education, not something that was entrusted to me the day I was born as a white male. And as far as, “those who have historically held control of positions of power have to start agreeing to letting [sic] some of their power go…” This is really not the right message to send. Nobody should receive anything by virtue of it being simply handed to them because they demanded it. If anybody attains a position of power through hard work and dedication they should never be forced to give up the fruits of their labor of which they have so deservedly earned. If a person wants power they have to earn it. They have to put in the blood, sweat, tears required to climb the mountain and maintain that position. If you want something, go get it; don’t stand there and whine about it until we all get annoyed and give it to you.

The Student Voice has a Twitter feed: @uwrvoice

Tweet, suggest, and browse stories.

WRFW 88.7

Student Radio

Tune in. Stream online. wrfw887.com

LISTEN.

The process of spontaneously morphing into an octopus

Trevor Hoglund

Columnist

This argument has been deemed quite controversial: is it possible for one to simply become an octopus without outside forces acting upon them? To start off, one might ask if this is likely, the answer to which is clearly “no.” While it would be amazing for someone walking alongside you to suddenly be dragging themselves around as I imagine an octopus would on land, we just don’t see it happen every day. Then again, many things are unlikely yet the probability of their happening is discussed, such as random quantum fluctuations generating a new big bang that results in the creation of an identical universe to our own, which according to the Wikipedia article “Timeline of the Far Future” will only take about 10 to the 10 to the 10 to the 58 years. I honestly can’t think of a good way to read that number. Moving on.

Now, the easiest way to become an octopus is to shorten the gap between your current state and octopus-dom as much as possible. When you Google “What is an octopus?” you get an answer along the lines of: “A cephalopod mollusk with eight sucker-bearing arms, a soft sac-like body, strong beak-like jaws, and no internal shell.” Quick note: I’m going to call the plural of octopus ‘octopodes,’ because otherwise Microsoft Word doesn’t show enough spelling errors and that’s boring.

Breaking down the definition, we first come across ‘cephalopod mollusk’ which seems sort of redundant to me, like saying a ‘monkey mammal.’ Googling “What is a cephalopod?” gives us “an active predatory mollusk of the large class *Cephalopoda*, such as an octopus or squid,” which gives us pretty free reign here since it basically just says active predatory mollusks that are squids and octopodes and whatnot. But “What is a mollusk?” We must ask

Google, and in 0.52 seconds we get a really long description that is mostly a list and such: “An invertebrate of a large phylum that includes [...] octopuses. They have a soft, unsegmented body and live in aquatic or damp habitats, and most kinds have an external calcareous shell.” So we know we’ve got to be soft, unsegmented, live in damp environments, and predatory. Basically, just lose the bones and live by a river.

Next up it says “sucker-bearing arms.” Arms could be anything, like branches of government. Suckers also could be anything, like lollipops. So let’s say you become the CEO of a company with eight divisions, all of which have one of those bowls of suckers in their front office.

“Strong beak-like jaws” and “no internal shell” are pretty self-explanatory. Which means that in order to meet this definition of octopus you just need to keep working up that corporate ladder, buy a house on a lake, then surgically remove your bones and get a beak-like jaw implant.

Some people are against the idea of bending the definitions of something just to meet it. Fair enough, we’ll be more “scientific” about this. Well, for your DNA to become that of an octopus, most of it could stay the same because that’s how DNA works. A lot of molecules would have to simultaneously switch out, but only the majority of your cells really need to change, the immune system will kill off the rest later. Also by majority I mean like 27 pounds of your overall mass. Anything over, like, 30 pounds is going to need to be lobbed off because octopodes are typically like 30 pounds (the heavier kind).

Either way, this is still more likely than the universe copying itself so whatever.


Trevor J. Hoglund is a sophomore at UW-River Falls.

STUDENT


Voices

What was your New Year’s resolution and have you kept it?


Compiled by Lauren Zimitsch




Matthew Wilhelm
Freshman
“I didn’t make a resolution because they are cliché and lame.”




Henry Schwartz
Freshman
“I didn’t make a New Year’s resolution because I like to say that I am perfect.”




Ryenne Peter
Sophomore
“I didn’t make a resolution and even if I did, I probably wouldn’t have kept it.”



Isabel Collins
Freshman
“I didn’t make a resolution because I would never keep it this long anyway.”



Ebiere Nagberi
Freshman
“My New Year’s resolution was to stop cussing people out so much and for the most part, I have kept it.”



Eric Stifter
Freshman
“My New Year’s resolution was to post more memes on the internet and so far I haven’t posted enough.”

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 **editor@uwrvoice.com** AFTER 10 a.m. Friday wins!

The winner will be announced on the Voice’s Twitter and Facebook accounts:
@uwrvoice and **facebook.com/Uwrfstudentvoice**

Now Playing: Kung Fu Panda 3

Do you have something to say?

Write a letter to the editor.

Email your thoughts to editor@uwrvoice.com

Women’s hockey falls to Superior in tough 3-1 loss

Zach Dwyer
zachary.dwyer@my.uwrf.edu

The Falcons fell in a disappointing game Saturday afternoon, dropping a WIAC matchup to the UW-Superior Yellowjackets 3-1 at Hunt Arena.

UWRF had opportunities throughout the game by forcing the issue on many power plays and getting great looks on shots on goal. But ultimately, the Falcons couldn’t close the deal against a Yellowjackets team they’d previously defeated twice this season.

The Falcons started off by attacking UW-Superior goalie Sky Brown from the opening face-off. UWRF also managed to kill an early power play by the Yellowjackets and looked to be in control of the momentum.

But at 9:46 in the first period, Superior struck the first blow off of a Mikayla Goodin goal from sophomore Lexi Weiss that put the Yellowjackets in early control of the WIAC showdown.

The Yellowjackets built on their pace after their first goal, shutting down two River Falls power plays and forcing Falcon goalie Angie Hall to make some incredible saves in the closing seconds of the first period to keep the score at 1-0.

“This was a game where we didn’t come out with a sense of urgency. After the early goal we were forced to play catchup the entire game,” Head Coach Joe Cranston said.

UWRF owned the second period, but just couldn’t manage to put the puck in the net. Unlike the first period in which it was an even 9-9 comparison on shots on goal, the Falcons outshot the Yellowjackets 12-2 in the second period and had UW-Superior and fans on their toes throughout the twenty minutes. Dominating puck control and having many good looks on goal still couldn’t put the Falcons over the top and the score remained 1-0 going into the decisive third period.

The third period began strong for the Falcons but was blown open when Mikayla Goodin stole the puck in the UWRF zone and netted her second goal of the afternoon. Her eighth goal of the season propelled UW-Superior to a position that was going to be difficult for the Falcons to respond to.

And barely three minutes later, Yellow-



Tori Schneider/Student Voice
Falcon senior, Dani Buehrer attempts to get the puck past her UW- Superior defender. UWRF lost to the Yellowjackets 3-1.

jacket Forward Kelly Cockerill scored a goal off of a put back shot to extend the UW-Superior lead to 3-0 and erase any doubt about the final result.

The Falcons fought valiantly until the end, pushing the Yellowjackets throughout the final five minutes with Angie Hall pulled from goal. Freshman Ashley Effertz managed to push through for her first goal of the season and bring the deficit to two with three minutes remaining. But in the end it just too little too late, with the Falcons losing to the Yellowjackets 3-1.

Cranston said, “Even though the bad first period was the difference, we played very well in the second and third periods but just couldn’t find the back of the net. If you don’t play a full 60 minutes it’s going to be tough to win in the WIAC.”

UWRF outshot Superior 34-16 on the day, but the Yellowjackets quick start and ability to shut down Falcon power plays proved to be too much for UWRF to overcome.

With the loss the tenth ranked Falcons drop to 15-4-1 on the season and stay atop the WIAC conference standings at 6-3. They

have managed to win 13 of their last 16 games as the regular season winds down. The Falcons next get a rematch with the Yellowjackets in Superior on Saturday afternoon at 2 p.m.

Cranston said, “We usually don’t drop two games in the second half of the season, but we have the chance to tweak the lines a little bit and come back this week. If we come out flying and set the pace we can win.”

UWRF next returns home on Feb. 9 to host the fourth ranked Adrian Bulldogs. Puck drop is set for 7:05 p.m.



Tori Schneider/Student Voice
Junior forward, Karleigh Wolkerstorfer looks for teammate to pass the puck to. The next Falcon home game will take place on Feb. 9 at 7:05 p.m. in Hunt Arena.



88.7
WRFW
FM

WWW.UWRF887.COM

LIVE

FALCON BROADCASTS

MEN’S HOCKEY FRIDAY, FEB. 5 HOME VS. SUPERIOR PUCK DROPS- 7:05	WOMEN’S BASKETBALL SATURDAY, FEB. 6 HOME VS. STEVENS POINT TIP-OFF- 3:00 P.M.
---	--

UWRF ranks low in attendance at athletic events

Trenten Gauthier
Falcon News Service

Last place does not usually bring positive connotation when it comes to some sports, and at UW-River Falls, attendance at athletic events has been abysmal this year.

Compared to other campuses in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC), average attendance at games in four of the seven major sports is last or second-to-last, according to data reported by the conference. The three sports that are not are both men’s and women’s hockey, and soccer.

The four sports that are last or second-to-last are women’s basketball, with an average attendance of 129; men’s basketball with an average of 195; football with 1,125 per game; and women’s volleyball with an average of 146.

The WIAC includes seven University of Wisconsin campuses besides River Falls: Eau Claire, La Crosse, Oshkosh, Platteville, Stevens Point, Stout (Menomonie) and Whitewater. UWRF, with about 5,900 undergraduate and graduate students, is the smallest school.

In any given year, a casual observer might not find the game attendance numbers unusual. However, two of the sports with low attendance are men’s and women’s basketball, both of which are currently in a tie for first place in the WIAC — a surprise given that pre-season selections pegged the men’s team to finish fourth and the women’s team fifth in the conference.

Athletic Director Roger Ternes and the athletic department acknowledge the lack of attendance, but also know the teams that are performing during the winter months are exciting to follow.

“Our women’s basketball team is fun to watch,” Ternes said. “We



UW- River Fall students support the Falcon football team at the 2015 Homecoming game.

were up 30 at the half against UW-La Crosse. Now they may not be a fun basketball game to see, but if you watch this team, they have some skills. As does both of our hockey teams, and as well as our men’s basketball team who was down 20 in the first half and won by five in regulation.”

Whatever the reasons students and community members do not attend games, Co-Sports and Information Director Amber Dohlmán said that’s not how it was when she attended UWRF in early 2004.

“I don’t think there is that connection to the athletic teams like we had before,” she said, “and, yeah, we have not competed in all

sports, but we’ve seen (that), with success, the men’s basketball team has had an increase in attendance. It all starts with those major sports. If the football team is good in the fall, it brings more excitement into the winter, and that hasn’t been the case in recent time.”

Connecting to the athletes and the sports is what being a fan has always been about. At UW-River Falls, Dohlmán said, athletes and non-athletes don’t have a connection.

“When I went to UWRF, people were huge hockey fans because they wanted to hang out with the hockey guys,” Dohlmán recalled. “The entertainment at the hockey games

was at an all-time high. There were events like if the team got six goals, everyone got free ice cream. People felt connected and made it so they wanted to attend those events.”

Ternes and his staff don’t have a fool-proof outline to increase attendance at games, but know they can only do so much to get people at the athletic events.

“Making people as aware as we can about events (is) important, messaging people, but information about the games is out there,” he said. “We are in a culture where we receive things instantly, and email may not be instant enough for people. We don’t have the staff here to be everywhere, people have to go

out and find it.” The Athletics Department has now seen two different associate athletic directors leave in consecutive years.

As the regular seasons wind down for winter sports at UW-River Falls, there is a chance that WIAC play-off games will be hosted at Karges Center or Hunt Arena. With lack of attendance, Ternes urges students to take advantage of the events they have already paid for and enjoy the successes of the winter sports teams while they can.

“The problem is going to be when we get to playoffs. The students will have to pay for that,” Ternes said. “They do not get in free anymore like they do during the regular season. They have already paid to see the games during the regular season with segregated fees.”

Dohlmán noted that players and teams have a role in the attendance numbers, and that they can do more to get fans in seats.

“Even having more sports supporting each other, having the soccer team, or the football team supporting other sports, those are huge amounts of people that could support their fellow athletes,” she said.

In recent years, the Falcon Cup has grown into a competition between sports to see who can get the most percentage of players at other events.

Tradition is something Ternes would love to see at UW-River Falls, but knows traditions are hard to establish.

“Any traditions are started so long ago, some 75 plus years ago, and that would be great to have that here,” he said. “On occasion we have fans and alumni that are passionate, but the hard part is building that tradition from the ground up and keeping that consistently.”

UWRF men and women’s track and field teams place second in Falcon Winter Classic



Angie Reed, a freshman from DePere, Wisconsin pole vaults in the Falcon Winter Classic on Saturday, Jan. 30 in Knowles Center. The women’s track team placed second.



Left: Robley Kiplagat leads his race on Saturday, Jan. 30 in Knowles Center. Right: Madelyn Hvidston closes gap between St. Kate’s opponent at the Falcon Winter Classic.

Deep losses can sometimes aid you in finding yourself

Molly Kinney

Columnist

On the second to last day of the fall semester, my best friend died.

To say she was beautiful wouldn't do her justice, as cliché a phrase that is. Her hair was in it's natural state- curly, short, and dark brown- the last few months I knew her, though she was bleach blonde when I met her, and a sort of chestnut-honey in-between. It was constantly clogging the shower drain of our apartment two houses behind North Hall.

Her irises were an almost indigo blue with a perfect, olive green outline surrounding her pupils. The whites would turn a glassy red when we smoked at parties in high school, feeling like such cool kids together. These same eyes were usually hidden behind thick, rectangular, black and clear Warby-Parker hipster frames. Blind as she was, she'd often go without them, as it softened the world, making it a little easier to take in, she'd say.

Her sense of creativity was certainly what she valued most about herself. She was so much more than an artist, though. She loved cats, tattoos, Bob Dylan, Dr. Who, Minneapolis hip-hop, exploring waterways, Game of Thrones, trying desperately to tan, eating chocolate ice cream, and sweeping up bread crumbs at the coffeeshop we worked at together.

She was funny in the most outrageous way, more deeply empathetic than I've thought possible, tasteful always in her music choices, curious in ways I've never imagined, and ever-whimsical in the way she saw the world.

She was certainly one of the best artists I've known, though. Her work wasn't based on photorealism usually, but more so on wherever her thoughts had taken her that day. She focused heavily on symbolic and non-objective drawing in the last few months of her life. I witnessed her working in spurts of energy. She'd often go weeks without touching her portfolio that leaned against her windowsill, and then suddenly I'd hear her turn on some obscure band she liked (before they were cool of course) and break out her pencil box around midnight. My now most prized possession is a still life, white peonies in front of an apple basket, that she gave me for my high school graduation.

She was also deeply conflicted in the last months of her life, as she suffered from schizophrenia. It would have developed eventually, but was prematurely onset after a

hapless experience with psychedelics a few summers ago. Though as much as I wish that hadn't happened, I disagree with how the psychiatric community describes what was her condition, as 'suffering.'

If you had the good fortune to know her, it was clear she wasn't suffering from the voices in her head, but rather found inspiration from them regularly. Her 'condition' lead her to think in a context so differently than anything I've known, read, or heard of. I'll cherish always memories of talking late into the night with her about theories of chakras, empathic wavelengths, atomic or interstellar messages from the universe, and energies from spirits she truly believed surrounded us. She told me she could physically feel love flowing between my partner and I. She told me my aura was a "mellow, seawater blue."

The days and weeks following have been bizarre, to say the least. Our group of friends gathered at our tiny apartment that night. We sat around our living room awkwardly before deciding it would be more comforting to discuss at Emma's (the bar). What else can you do in that situation besides just be somewhere together? Nobody was sure. I met her father for the first time when I helped him choose an outfit for her to be dressed in at the funeral. A week later her room had been cleaned out, but I was shaken when I noticed her toothpaste and makeup were still in our bathroom cupboard.

The death of a roommate guarantees a delay of your plans for at least a few days. I admittedly did not finish as high quality final papers and projects as I could have in hindsight, but at the time I really did not care. I'd also been planning a hiatus to the west, and ended up making little more arrangements than where we'd stay once we got there, though I typically plan details down to what coffee shop I'll visit on the third morning. Enveloped in grief, I almost abandoned the idea, but after crying over her toothpaste, I realized all I was sure of anymore was that I couldn't stay another day in that house, for awhile. Thin, fresh mountain air was exactly what my spirit was longing for.

The day after Christmas, rising at 5 a.m. on the dot, my partner and I drove down Main Street, took off up Hwy 35, and merged onto 94 West. If you've had the pleasure of road tripping, you know that euphoric energy one usually feels during the first few hours. Endless road with only your favorite music to hear and your loved one's hand to hold brings about the most pure sense of adventure, as you move further and further from familiarity at 70 miles per hour.

This time it felt different, given the circumstances, but everything did; I still smiled as I sat down in his passenger's seat nonetheless. With our boots and skis and boards and blankets and trail mix jam packed into his tiny sedan, we headed West on 94. We hit Iowa by noon, Nebraska by three, Wyoming by nine, and spent the night in a quaint little hotel just outside Cheyenne. We were almost taken out by a giant tumbleweed just as we left Nebraska's border behind.

Our last six hours on Sunday, we drove through some truly desolate towns. If you

think River Falls is small, visit Sinclair, Wyoming- it's the gas station and 11 houses. Identical tiny trucking towns made up the sparse civilization we encountered the last 300 miles, before finally descending into the valley of the Great Salt Lake and its surrounding city.

I've been to Utah before, but the mountains of the Wasatch range looked even more beautiful covered in snow. I recognized the red rock I was familiar with peeking through, but I was still breathtaken as we moved closer to the city in search of our airBnB.

The next five days were ceaselessly fun, affording me a much needed head clearing. That first night my ski-bum cousins took us to 'their bar' up in the canyon between two Wasatch mountains where they grew up. We were introduced to an overwhelming amount of their ski-bum friends, all who exuded that effortlessly cool vibe all mountain people seem to give off. We danced while one of these lady friends shred it on the guitar in a electric-jazzy style. We took part in the painful (in my opinion) shotski tradition, made friends with a giant taxidermied buffalo, and ended the night sashaying across a bowling alley parking lot back to my Aunt Katie's house.

Most of our time was spent actually riding the mountains, as was the plan. For snow enthusiasts such as we, the "dishes" (conditions) of the mountain's powdered sugar snow are what truly draws humans to this treacherous topography of the world. Though there's a certain unspoken tension between some skiers and snowboarders, riders of any breed can agree that Utah has possibly the best of this substance in the world- especially compared to the ice pellets we call snow at ski resorts in the midwest.

Though the snow alone was worth the 1,300 miles, the truly majestic beauty of these mountains and the ecosystems living on them only added to the whimsical ambience these days had. Brave birds who hadn't vacationed for the winter chirped in the trees beneath our chair, as we were quietly pulled up over the lip of a mountain, breezing past snow covered pines. The whole experience actually being within the vastness of a mountain, interacting with it, gives you a far different perception than just looking at it does. It's hard to forget the serendipity of suddenly looking back near the peak, to see this mountain range sprawl for 20, 30 miles- I wouldn't want to, either. In fact, it makes me long to go back.

We rang in the new year, hiked around the Salt Lake, played some pool, skied some more, hurt one of our knees, packed up the suitcases and suddenly what I'd so been looking forward to was about over. We hugged it out with the aunts and uncles and cousins and made our way back towards 94 East.

It was strange how quickly life went back to normal, or as normal as it could be. We went back to work, back to 'our' bar, back to our own beds, back to dirty dishes, to paying wifi bills and to waiting in line at the co-op for coffee each the morning, because I always screw up the French press. I cleared

out all the sugary cereals she had left in our pantry, more room for my breads and bag of falafel mix. I started talking about her in past tense. And, I did a lot of thinking: about my life, her life, our disconnect from nature, change, what it means to be human, and other such things one ponders after losing a loved one.

It sucks, frankly, to realize that you're never going to see someone again, that there's really no reason their existence and company and friendship has been taken from you forever. It just happens to people sometimes, every day really. There's nothing we can do to stop it. Death, as contradictory this sentence sounds, is an inevitable part of life.

I'm far less spiritual than she was. I think a lot of people are deep down. But I don't think that means a remembrance or grieving less meaningful. I personally doubt she's in Heaven, one with Brahma, re-incarnated, or whatever to me, her existence is just over. Certainly too soon, to be sure. I think of her every hour of every day, and it hurts- deeply. This of course will change with time, both how bad it hurts and how often she crosses my mind. It's not as if you move past such an event, though, you rather learn to live with the reality of it.

It's strange to think that we're the same yet so changed every morning when we wake up. Every instance and interaction shapes you- pleasant, unfortunate, miniscule or large. All you can really do is be mindful and decide how you're going to let each affect you.

Losing Maddie has been beyond most unpleasant and sorrowful instance of my own 'existential journey' so far. It still feels too sour to think of 'memories' and 'the good times' we had; instead I've simply avoided thinking of them altogether, in favor of functioning day to day. Damn the 'stages of grief or whatever-' just do what you can to get by.

I know though, that when eventually I again feel so saddened by a loss as when I first learned of hers, I'll be able to think of her sweetly, and find some comfort. I've heard forever that "time heals all wounds-" and I'm learning that now to be true.

We rang in the new year, hiked around the Salt Lake, played some pool, skied some more, hurt one of our knees, packed up the suitcases and suddenly what I'd so been looking forward to was about over.

Molly Kinney is a senior journalism student with a minor in political science. When she's not writing, she spends her time outdoors, promoting climate justice, neglecting homework, playing pool at Emma's, and reading the news. In the future she would love to travel the world and cover politics for NPR.

Kung Fu Panda 3 impresses with wit, animation and plot



Ryan Funes

Reviewer

Having now found kung fu and discovered inner peace, Kung Fu Panda 3 searches for unity with the universe through its engaging plot, funny gags, and gorgeous animation.

But of course, that should be expected now from these films and their long line of high standards on its Ancient China inspired world and loveable character Po.

Now that Po has faced many challenges and saved China once, Po has matured to where he must now take the next step in his training and become a teacher of kung fu himself. Though resistant at first, his spirits are lifted when he discovers his long lost father, who informs Po of a hidden sanctuary for pandas.

This has all come in time as a new threat from the Spirit World has returned to seek vengeance on the land he once ruled and seeks to destroy the pandas, who wielded a power that could stop him. Now Po will have to protect his people and the power they wield from this powerful new foe, and make his own people into kung fu warriors like himself.

A pretty heavy plot for the second sequel in the series, but Kung Fu Panda 3 manages to become one of the most beautiful and touching entries in the series.

Good animation is expected now of Dreamworks Animation, but this film manages to go up and beyond. As the



series entrenches itself further in spirituality and eastern philosophy, it enters realms foreign to its characters that really show off what the creators have wanted to bring. Massive environments and beautifully animated worlds come alive here that we have not seen yet, and it allows for some of the most dynamic action the series has seen yet.

The writing is also spot-on. Whereas some series might run out of steam by the third try, Kung Fu Panda 3 manages to balance out its many fine aspects. The problem of balancing identities, finding meaning in who we are, striking a balance between having two fathers, these are some of the things the film addresses maturely and with great heart, creating a truly appreciative story.

And this also happens to be the most gag filled of the three films. It seemed as though I was much more aware of the sharp, quick humor this time around as before, but the film manages to keep you laughing constantly, and balances it all quite well with the serious moments. Tonally the film feels very balanced.

Even its new villain, a monstrous Yak named Kai, manages to garner some laughs while managing to be cool with his actions and design.

One thing people will definitely feel is entertained, as nothing about this film felt boring. The actions is fluid and powerful, while also using the it to the fullest extent to bring out the comedy and intrigue through each scene. No boredom should be expected in those who go to see this.

With the only major problems I could see in the film are placements of certain scenes being re-written, or even for the philosophies to be pushed a bit more, Kung Fu Panda 3 manages to be another stellar entry in the series.

If it were to end here with there never being another, people would feel satisfied that this was the film that entrenched the legacy of Kung Fu Panda in animation history.

Ryan Funes is a junior at River Falls majoring in journalism with a minor in art history. In his personal time he enjoys all facets of popular culture, discussing the influence of the media, and desperately trying to find the chance to sing a drinking song with all his friends.