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STUDENT VOICE



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Chronic wasting disease spreads in Wisconsin

Kacey Joslin

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Chronic wasting disease, more commonly known as CWD, is an epidemic that has been spreading through Wisconsin since at least 2002, according to CWD expert, Bryan Richards. The disease is most prevalent among the deer population, mostly on commercial deer farms and hunting ranches. The disease has reportedly affected more than 5,200 deer as of March, 2019, as reported by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources CWD Statewide Surveillance.

A great number of Pierce and St. Croix's neighboring counties have been labelled "watch counties," as they are within ten miles of an area with a positive detection.

The disease is neither viral or bacterial, but caused by a brain-rupturing protein particle called a prion. Though comparable to mad cow disease in cattle, there has been no evidence that CWD can be transferred to humans. This is based on epidemiology investigations by public health agencies and Center of Disease Control and Prevention.

Experts from these organizations still recommend hunters to be prudent with how they handle the disease, by avoiding animals that appear to be in poor physical health. Commercial deer farmers are told to test their herds if they notice any discrepancies in normal herd behavior.

Mark Reese, a wildlife management expert, said that it is important that all hunters follow the Department of Natural Resources

(DNR) protocol regarding Chronic Wasting Disease rules and procedures. "Domesticated deer herds or deer ranches and their management is a big issue," Reese said. "The disease spreads via direct contact with infected deer, and if the infected deer get out of the ranch and can spread the disease to wild herds."

The Minnesota DNR recommends not feeding wild deer for this same reason. If a deer is infected, their saliva spreads through shared food and water sources.

Johnny Strzyz is a hunter from Forest County, Wisconsin, where CWD has been positively detected. "About a year ago or less, there was a ban on all baiting in my county. Before, people could bait deer; a lot use corn, seeds, vegetables, apples, etc., but the most common way it spreads is by saliva from eating the same pile of food," Strzyz said. "There were a couple on a deer farm that got CWD, so the DNR banned feeding in my whole county."

Strzyz has been hunting since he was ten years old. "So that comes with a lot of learning over the years. I've been having conversations with other hunters and becoming more knowledgeable on the subject," Strzyz added. "I'd say to other hunters, if you're going to bait deer, spread the bait and don't leave it in big piles. That's one way you could prevent CWD more effectively."

Alexa Walczak, a biomedical student, has been an avid hunter since she was young.

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Deer meets a hunter's gaze in the woods of Forest County.
Photo courtesy Johnny Strzyz

Shopko bankruptcy affects River Falls community



Customers leave Shopko's closing sale
Photo by Tyler Perelman

Tyler Perelman

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Green Bay-based retail chain Shopko has officially filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, and as of March 18th, 2019, is set to close all 360 of its stores – including the River Falls, Wisconsin location – by mid-June this year. As of 2019, Shopko will have operated for its 57th year.

According to a press release given by Shopko Public Relations manager Michelle Hansen, the company was "unable to find a buyer" following an unsuccessful auction of both its pharmaceutical subsidiary and main retail branch. Given the state of the company, it will "commence an orderly wind-down" of all retail operations, hiring the Gordon Brothers investment firm to oversee a liquidation process of all remaining assets, in which is set to complete approximately 10-12 weeks from the March 18th announcement date.

Shopko initially filed for bankruptcy on

January 16th due to a combination of negative factors, including an increasingly challenging retail industry and dwindling assets. Originally planning to close about 100 stores, the company announced shortly afterward in February that it would close 251 of its 360 total locations following an unsuccessful auction of its pharmaceutical branch. As of the latest March 18th update, all 360 Shopko stores are officially set to close by no later than mid-summer of 2019.

Russ Steinhorst, CEO of Shopko, gave a short statement on the matter: "This is not the outcome that we had hoped for when we started our restructuring efforts," he stated. "In a challenging retail environment, we have had to make some very tough choices, but we are confident that by operating a smaller and more focused store footprint, we will be able to build a stronger Shopko that will better serve our customers, vendors, employees and other stakeholders through this process."

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What is your spirit animal?

Compiled by Kacey Joslin & Brooke Shepherd

Violet Penman

“I think a fox, because they’re sassy like me!”



Cassie Morrison

“A dog, because I’m basic.”



Evan Ruesch

“A chipmunk, because my hall director deemed it as such. I wanna says it’s because of my enthusiastic personality.”



Becca Iverson

“A squirrel, because I want to be as cute as one. They always make me smile.”

Sam Kim

“Just a cat. They’re fairly nice, and cute . . . sometimes.”



Megan Garves

“I would say an orca, because I like the animal and swimming around would be pretty cool.”



Ceci Charlson

“Probably a lizard, ‘cause I like to lay in the sun all day and I don’t like being touched.”



Christian Martin

“Maybe a tazmanian devil? Like me, they’re fast, efficient and I get the job done.”

Campus spotlights

Autism Awareness month

Melissa Thorud

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UW-River Falls hosted the Moreland family to talk about their experiences, struggles and triumphs with autism on April 2nd, for National Autism Awareness day. The month of April is dedicated to raising awareness for autism and the Moreland family has dedicated a large part of their life to raising awareness and helping others.

The family has been a resource for others who deal with raising a child with Autism and act as a support system for families. Their mission states that, "by sharing our

family story of living with autism and mental health concerns, we hope to inspire others to survive, live and thrive in today's society." Moreland and her daughters Lindsey and Brittany Moreland, spoke about some of their struggles and their experiences with autism and overall mental health awareness.

Moreland talked about her early experiences with Autism, when her daughter was first diagnosed. She expressed that the family endured many difficulties and went through struggles when tackling the obstacles that autism had come with. Moreland talked about how there were many times that her daughter had extreme tantrums and had a hard time bonding with friends and family.

When speaking about their experiences, the Moreland family stressed the importance of education and understanding when it comes to autism. By raising awareness, they aim to promote an educational environment and the "importance of effective communication and relationships with educators, doctors, and family." Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), has grown to become more prevalent in recent decades. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, "about one in 59 children are diagnosed with ASD and is about four times more common in boys than girls." Because of the rise in these statistics, the family finds it important to educate and raise awareness.

Brittany Moreland, also spoke about her experiences with having a sister on the autism spectrum. She talked about how bonding with her sister at a young age was slightly different but she finds herself very lucky to have experienced these dif-



Moreland and family at Autism Awareness booth.
Photo courtesy of Lauri Moreland

ferences while growing up. She spoke about helping her sister with different therapy techniques as children and how this continued as they grew together. Brittany Moreland also deals with mental health concerns, as well as epilepsy. She also expressed the importance of awareness in regards to those struggles.

Lindsay Moreland, was diagnosed with autism at a young age and she talked about her personal experiences. She explained the difficulties she has had as well as her victories. The family made it apparent that celebrating the small triumphs, as well as the big achievements, is important and has made their overall experience more positive. Lindsay Moreland expressed that she has found

her many talents and is very open to talking about her experiences and raising awareness.

The Moreland family wrote a book about their lives, their experiences and how they have overcome their struggles with mental health and autism. *Autism: A Family Lives Beyond the Label, The Lindsey Moreland Story*, is a resource for others who are going through similar situations and for anyone who wants to become educated on the topic. The Moreland family aims to inspire others to live, thrive and overcome any struggles they may be enduring and serve as a support system.



Nick Thorud, an 18 year old living with autism.
Photo by Melissa Thorud

Alumni speak at second Reimagining the Liberal Arts panel

Theodore Tollefson

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The second panel of the Reimagining the Liberal Arts initiative hosted five alumni of the University of Wisconsin-River Falls speaking to faculty and staff about the important skills students need to bring into the workforce after they graduate with their bachelor's degree.

The five alumni who were on the panel were Kristi Cernohous, Shannon Zimmerman, Barbara Butler, Michele Scheuermann, Chris Blasius, and Steve Wilcox, all of whom are either small business owners or executives at the businesses they work for.

These days, college graduates are expected to have somewhere around 11 career changes in their lifetime compared to five career changes the average baby boomer has had in their lifetime, according to the Association of American Colleges and Universities. "We can assume that in their lives they may have as many as 11.2 different jobs and careers, and the most important thing pointed out to us is the vast majority of those jobs do not exist yet," said Dean Yohnk, Dean of the Col-

lege of Arts and Sciences who attended the annual AACU conference in January.

The alumni on the panel were asked a series of questions similar to those asked to students on the previous panel from February. One of these questions was, "What are the most important skills college graduates can have today for successful lives and careers?" There was a long list of skills that were offered for the alumni on the panel to read off of and talk about which they believed to be the most important. This list of skill include things like, critical thinking, teamwork and collaboration, leadership and service, global and intercultural fluency to value, respect, and learn for diverse people, etc.

"I'm going to go old school and say writing," said Scheuermann on what she believes to be the most important skill to be for graduates. "No one can write anymore. If you can put a complete sentence together, my god, good for you. Maybe it is because I am an editor of a publication, so I see a lot of bad press releases come in from people with college degrees. What you write on your Instagram, that's not the same an email or a letter that you're going to send to someone. Put

some effort into writing."

"I think with today's technology it is very hard to judge what our work product is in the grand scheme of things," said Cernohous. "If you say, take a math problem, you can get the right answer in a dozen different ways, but there are infinite amount of ways to get the wrong answer. But there is still a right answer and a wrong answer to a math problem. I think when you're doing your problem solving, your critical thinking. How do you judge if you come to the right answer or the wrong answer when it is not as clear cut as a math problem? There real is a right answer to a lot of things."

"I think to analyze data for facts and to really choose what are those facts, where are they coming from, are they credible? Just because it's in print or somewhere on the internet doesn't mean it's credible fact. So digging in deeper, finding those critical facts, and then finding that analysis and turning it into knowledge, and then turning that knowledge into a solution, and that's why I chose critical thinking as well," said Butler.

The third panel for the Reimagining the Liberal Arts initiative, which would feature

the Dean's of CAS from across the UW System, was originally scheduled for April 11, but was canceled due to the winter storm from that day. The meeting is set to be rescheduled for sometime early in the Fall 2019 semester. More details concerning the third panel will come in the upcoming months.



From left to right, CAS Dean Dean Yohnk, Kristi Cernohous, Shannon Zimmerman, and Barbara Butler and other speaking at the RLA panel.
Photo by Theo Tollefson

Trivia mafia night in downtown
By Monica Marsh

River Fall’s own Junior’s Bar and Grill located on 414 S. Main St. is now hosting a weekly trivia competition on Thursdays at 8 p.m. The trivia is held by the group “Trivia Mafia,” which originates in the Twin Cities and has become the area’s largest bar trivia group. They claim to be an old-school, team-based, pen-and-paper trivia organization. If you aren’t already stopping into Junior’s for their wide selection of delicious foods and craft beers, trivia mafia night is a fun way to show what you know and spend some quality time with your team of friends and family.

Lions club Easter egg hunt and carnival
By Melissa Thorud

The River Falls Lions Club is hosting their annual Easter egg hunt and carnival on Saturday, April 20, the day before Easter. There will be many carnival games and an Easter egg hunt for children, each child participating will have the chance to find up to four candy filled Easter eggs. The event is free with an encouraged donation to bring a food item for the River Falls food shelf, or donations of used eyeglasses and cell phones. The carnival and egg hunt is taking place at the River Falls High school and starts at 11:30 a.m. and will conclude around 1 p.m.

Jazz on campus
By Brooke Shepherd

The RADD Jazz Series at UW-River Falls features a Jazz Ensemble, directed by Professor of Music David Milne, as well as national and regional touring jazz artists. The RADD Jazz Series events are free and open to the public. Upcoming dates for performances are April 25 and 27 at 7 p.m., taking place in the Abbott Concert Hall.

Finals Fest features country artists
Eric Paslay and Uncle Kracker
By Theo Tollefson

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls will be hosting country music stars Eric Paslay and Uncle Kracker for the annual Finals Fest which will be taking place at the University Center on April 26.

Paslay has been in the country music industry since 2011 with his most popular single being ‘Friday Night’ which was released in 2013 and reached sixth on Billboard’s Hot Country Songs that year. Paslay’s most recent single ‘Young Forever’ was released last year in 2018 and currently sits at 41 on Billboard’s Country Airplay.

Uncle Kracker has been active in the industry since the mid 1990’s where he was a turntablist for Kid Rock’s Twisted Brown Trucker. Uncle Kracker released his first solo album in 2000 titled Double Wide, his most recent work dropped on March 29 of this year and was a remix of his most popular song, “Follow Me.”

Finals Fest is an event that is free and open to the public. UW-River Falls students will be allowed entry before anyone else with their student-IDs out and present at the doors. Once the student line is completely into the University Center, the public line will then be allowed in. Events start at 5:30 p.m. in the UC, with the concert beginning at 7 p.m.



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Graphic by Kacey Joslin

Annual spring art gala in River Falls
By Melissa Thorud

The River Falls Community Arts Base, is hosting their annual spring arts gala on April 27 at the River Falls Golf Club. The event includes hors d’oeuvres, a silent art auction, raffle of art, cash bar, dancing, and musical guests “The Mouldy Figs” as well as much more. This year’s gala carries a “roaring twenties” theme, and festive attire is requested. Tickets are \$30 when purchased in advance at Art’s House, First National Bank of River Falls, Junior’s Restaurant and Tap house, Mei Mei’s Cookies and Creamery and Freeman Drug, all located downtown River Falls. Tickets are also available at the door for \$35. The gala supports events that are hosted by the Community Arts Base throughout the year.



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Lt. Gov. Barnes visits UW-River Falls, discusses expanding budget's healthcare coverage

Theodore Tollefson

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Wisconsin Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes and Wisconsin District 10 State Senator Patty Schachtner, visited the University of Wisconsin-River Falls campus on Monday, March 18. The visit was to talk with students, faculty and community members on the importance of expanding healthcare coverage for the state of Wisconsin the biennial state budget for 2019-2021.

The Wisconsin State Budget for 2019-2021 was first introduced by Governor Evers in late February, and representatives from across the state have been traveling since then to talk with their constituents about the "People's Budget."

"It's a very exciting time for us, it's a very exciting time for the state," said Lt. Governor Barnes on traveling across Wisconsin to talk about the People's Budget.

"It was a budget that was truly put together with input from people all over Wisconsin. It's not Tony Evers budget, it's not my budget, it's not the Democrats budget, this is truly a 'People's' Budget. We want to make sure we get to as many places as possible. We want to make sure we are at least present to hear the concerns."

Lt. Governor Barnes talked about how the 2019-2021 state budget would defer from the 2017-19 budget with money committed to the state's higher education opportunities. "We are looking to make sure that we

are adequately resourcing our higher education. Where as the last budget saw a \$250 million cut, we are proposing \$150 million investment into our university system," said Barnes.

"One of the biggest burdens as we all know is college affordability. Students can't go to school even if they did everything right. That is a real problem that we face in this state, in this country, and it's a real shame that the simple cost of school prohibits people from continuing their education, prohibits people from learning. And for people who do continue end up going to college, having the idea of exorbitant student loan debt is something that causes a lot of stress as well," said Barnes.

Out of the proposed \$150 million investment in the Wisconsin 2019-2021 state budget, \$17.3 million is planned to go into need based grant funding which would allow more UW System universities to accept students in need of grants or scholarships to attend a UW university. Governor Evers has also proposed in the budget a committee that will convey a study on what student loan debt reform could look like in Wisconsin in the future.

"We want to be a national leader on that issue," said Barnes on the student loan debt reform study. "When it comes to attracting and retaining talent here I think that would put us in our rightful place, will put us where we need to be. We want Wisconsin to be a place where people look to as a location to live, work and raise a family. We haven't been that in a while. We are one of the most



Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes speaks to press at UW - River Falls.
Photo by Theo Tollefson

moved from states in the country and it's a trend that we are committed and dedicated to turn it around."

Lt. Governor Barnes reiterated that the investment of \$150 million into the UW System is not a only a plan based off of knowing it is the right thing to do. It's because many people in the state of Wisconsin, whom the Lt. Governor, Governor Evers, and many other elected legislatures in Madison have visited across the state, have told their elected officials they have wanted to invest more into the state's higher education.

"This budget, again, is about creating a Wisconsin that works for all of us," said

Barnes. "The UW System is a part of our states economy as much as it is a part of the educational system. We have to lead in research and we have to be able to lead in innovation. That hasn't happened when you take money away from the system."

To learn more about the states budget process for the biennial 2019-2021 budget, visit <https://dpi.wi.gov/budget> for more information. UW-River Falls will also be hosting a public hearing by the State Joint Finance Committee for feedback on the current draft on the 2019-2021 biennial on Monday, April 15, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Riverview Ballroom at the campus University Center.

Chronic wasting disease spreads in Wisconsin

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The areas she has hunted in have not experienced a CWD outbreak, due to diligence of local hunters.

"I recommend that hunters be aware of the area they hunt and know whether or not there have been deer reported with CWD. If you are to harvest a deer, you must register it through the DNR (Department of Natural

Resources) website," she said. "On the website, you report the time and place the deer was harvested. Once you enter the location of harvest, the DNR instantly informs you if CWD is known in your area. If it is known in your area, you are recommended to bring your harvested deer to get tested. It is highly advised that a deer infected with CWD not be consumed."

Evan Verhota, a business management

student and frequent hunter, agreed. "I say just to be aware. Know that this is a problem that has been and is coming to the Midwest. It is best for your deer herd that if you see signs of CWD that you make sure to harvest that animal at the soonest sign possible. With that being said, you have to be aware that other deer may have it as well but are not showing signs yet," he warned. "It is a disease that takes time to develop, meaning

that deer can have it for years before you can see visual symptoms."

Deers afflicted with CWD show some warning signs; lethargy, staggering walk, excessive drooling, loss of appetite, extreme thirst, drooping ears and bristly coats. For additional information on recognizing the symptoms and preventing the spreading of CWD, visit the Department of Natural Resources website.

Shopko bankruptcy affects River Falls community

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Though it was not initially announced during the first wave of closings, the River Falls Shopko location is now officially set to close following the bankruptcy filing. In a short statement given by Hansen, it is noted that approximately 1,000 workers will lose their jobs from solely the Wisconsin locations. Though no number has been officially given for the River Falls location, when comparing data from other similarly-sized locations nearby, it is estimated that around 50 people will be unemployed from this location alone.

Professor Hossein Eftekari, an instructor at the College of Business and Economics here at UW River Falls, provided some additional insight on the local Shopko closures. Accord-

ing to his analysis, "Shopko's bankruptcy is partially related to competing with [retailers] Wal-Mart, Target, and Dollar General, and online stores such as Amazon." Eftekari believes that the closure will affect River Falls fairly significantly, as he stated that "many people who used to shop at Shopko came from the surrounding rural areas of River Falls. These very same people increased the volume of transactions at different local businesses, such as restaurants, bars, sporting goods stores, et cetera."

In noting the main negative impacts associated with the closing of the River Falls Shopko location, Eftekari gave four main points: lower sales for local businesses, loss of opportunity to shop locally and cheaply, reduction of a tax base for the city, and a decrease in employment opportunities for

locals – specifically the young student workforce who attend UW River Falls.

In providing some advice for the impending closure, Eftekari stated that he does not foresee any large retailers like Wal-Mart or Target coming to take Shopko's former place as the major retailer in River Falls. "The theory of 'build it and they will come' is not practiced anymore," he says. In order to bounce back from the loss and revitalize the local retail job market, Eftekari proposes that the city divide up the retail areas into smaller bits, and work to fill these spots with local businesses who are willing to hire a younger workforce. This way, River Falls will remain local, provide people with needed goods and services, and provide a steady job market for the future.



Shopko declares bankruptcy
Photo by Tyler Perelman

Dining services on campus encourages student feedback

Brooke Shepherd and Kacey Joslin
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Dining services is the food provider to the UW-River Falls campus, available to students at the University Center. There have been several changes to dining services over the last decade, including new management, inclusive menu options and an updated system for students to provide feedback. UW-River Falls is currently contracted with Chartwells, which is a food service firm.

Cara Rubis, the Director of University Center and Dining Services, explained the partnership with Chartwells is designed to, “[P]rovide residential, retail and catered dining options for the university community. Chartwells currently operates at 280 universities around the country.”

The mission of dining services, as stated by Rubis, “The goal is to create a total dining service program that meets the needs of a diverse student body, faculty, staff and guests on campus. The university and Chartwells (our dining service contractor) work cooperatively to complement the mission of the university and to enhance campus life.”

To achieve this mission, there are numerous standards and guidelines in place to ensure food quality and cleanliness. Staff are expected to be trained in food preparation and storage. According to Rubis, “Associates are trained on receiving practices, proper food storage, safety and sanitation, such as monitoring food temperatures, production levels, hand washing, avoid cross contamination, and other best practices for food prepara-

tion operations. Managers and supervisors are also ServSafe certified.” ServSafe is an agency administered by the National Restaurant Agency, or NRA, to guarantee consumer safety.

Health inspections are regularly performed one to three times a year by the county. Chartwells also contracts with a food safety company called Ecosure, which provides food safety assessments and additional training to minimize risk. Food temperature is tested every two to four hours so bacteria does not form. Refrigeration temperatures are also checked twice a day.

Employees utilize sanitized water to wipe down all areas, including furniture. “Associates utilize a pre-measured system to dispense and fill sanitizer buckets at the start of each shift. Buckets are changed out throughout the day to ensure water maintains proper pH levels for wiping down contact surfaces such as tables and counters,” said Rubis.

UWRF has a mandatory meal plan for traditional freshman and sophomore students, encouraging use of the facilities the campus offers.

Riverside Commons, a buffet-style cafeteria, is one meal option for students, located in the basement of the University Center (UC). Former staff described their experiences working in Riverside Commons.

Keira Kapfhamer is a freshman student who worked for dining services in the fall of 2018. During this time, Kapfhamer was responsible for cleaning tables and filling beverage dispensers. She described her overall experience as “eh.”

“My main job was to clean tables and the weekends were very slow, and honestly a bit boring. I left because I found a better job opportunity,” Kapfhamer said. “For what I did, I feel that the pay was the best aspect of the job.”

In comparison to Kapfhamer’s experience, other employees found their duties overwhelming. Kapfhamer commented that there was likely an unequal distribution of labor. Kapfhamer said, “To be completely honest, I would say the atmosphere was somewhat an unhappy one. It didn’t seem like many people really enjoyed working there, so not many people seemed to be content with their jobs.”

Kapfhamer was not the first to leave dining services after only a semester. Another former employee, freshman Sam Elam, worked for dining services 20 hours a week this past fall semester. Elam worked as a dishwasher. “It kind of made it feel like we were robots because of how many hours they were forcing us to do. They were pushing twenty hours for most students, which is the maximum hours you could work,” she said.

According to Rubis, there are currently 139 associates on staff, which is a combination of full time, part time, and student associates. Rubis added, “Chartwells is always actively recruiting to add talented team members to the Chartwells team.”

However, some employees felt that although there were enough staff, work distribution was still an issue. “I felt overworked,” Elam revealed. She shared an anecdote about her first days working.

“We had no training at all. They threw me on unloading and said ‘match these up with the other ones that are similar, and here you go.’ It was just mainly us students not doing a very good job cleaning up after ourselves. We barely had any supervision. Everyone was so busy working, trying to keep up, that there was no one watching us. It was just students trying their best. I wish they had someone there, just doing the dishwashing supervising and making sure everything was going smoothly,” Elam said.

As a dishwasher, Elam revealed how a “good enough” mentality may have occurred. “I think it’s just workers trying to get the job done as fast as possible because of the demand. And they’re just saying ‘oh, this is good enough’ and just throwing it out there. I’ve gotten spoons with napkins dried on them. It’s gross, I get it.” She believes that staff could still do a better job. “[It] should be to the best of their abilities, because we’re paying for this. It’s coming out of our tuition, so we *should* have the best.”

There was a recently a survey system put in place. Rubis explained, “[W]e rely heavily on the feedback of our customers in order to better understand their needs, and to point-out



Student rates food quality with new survey system in Riverside Commons
Photo by Kacey Joslin

where we fall short of meeting those needs. [...] Overall, surveys assist in moving our dining program forward, and help guide decisions and changes as we make our move forward.”

The feedback from the students is shared with the Chartwells management team, which can then review menus and operations to accommodate requests. “Some items may not be available due to seasonality, for example, some kinds of fresh fruit, but the team tries to address any issues or menu requests that can be accommodated as quickly as possible. This can be challenging,” said Rubis.

With almost 2,700 students on a meal, dining services depends on the feedback of students in order for them to provide a quality experience for a wide range of preferences. Students are encouraged to take the dining survey near the exit of Riverside Commons. There is also a detailed complaint process outlined on the university website under Student Affairs.



Cara Rubis, Director of University Center and dining services.
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Dining services staff collect dishes from dinner and prepare for clean-up.
Photo by Brooke Shepherd

Boxer Jack Johnson's story from century ago still speaks to how black athletes are treated

Owen Elle

Falcon News Service

The story of Jack Johnson, who more than a century ago became the first African-American world heavyweight boxing champion and whose race was an issue in news coverage of the day, still resonates today, according to a UW-River Falls history instructor.

Samuel Gale, an adjunct instructor of history, will be the keynote speaker Friday during the annual History and Philosophy Banquet. His speech, "Escaping Jack Johnson's Shadow: Race & Sports in the 20th Century U.S.," will examine the cycles of political activism that African-American athletes have endured since the early 1900s. Gale said his speech will go into detail about three African-American athletic pioneers in heavyweight boxing: Jack Johnson, Joe Louis, and four-time Olympic Gold medalist Jesse Owens.

"I'm going to focus on the beginning of the 20th century and look at Jack Johnson's boxing career and how his actions inside the ring and more importantly how he acted outside of the ring so completely challenged the culture of white supremacy," Gale said.

Johnson became the first African-American to win the world heavyweight championship in 1908 after defeating Tommy Burns, a white boxer. He would hold onto the title for seven years.

"The heavyweight title was the crown. It was that way when Jack Johnson won it and it was that way when Joe Louis won it," Gale said. "It was seen as the centerpiece of manhood. The strongest and most powerful man in the United States or the world was the heavyweight champion."

Johnson's boxing victory over a white man heightened racial tensions, while his public and private life beyond the ring was examined critically by a number of newspapers.

Despite Johnson last holding the title over a century ago, Gale said he believes that black athletes today still feel the repercussions of Johnson's actions.

Gale said, "I think the manner in which African-American athletes have to present themselves, whether how they act on the field of play and how they carry themselves off the field, the language they use, the advertisers they work with, their public demeanor is still in different ways filtered through sort of responding to the blowback to how Johnson acted."

Gale contends that despite his talk being largely historical, the topics he will discuss have modern relevance in the United States. He cites current National Basketball Association players LeBron James, Dwayne Wade, Chris Paul and Carmelo

Anthony as modern-day examples of African-American athletes who are "using their platform to speak out against racial inequality and social injustice."

"Twenty years ago black athletes didn't do that," Gale said, "so it seems somewhat new and out of place, but if we go back across the century we see that African-American athletes have gone through cycles of activism and retreating from using that position."

Gale said he believes that the standards imposed on athletes are not equal for those who are African-American. For example, if a black athlete uses social media to criticize the U.S. president or other citizens they are considered to be "stepping out of line."

"There is still a sense that African-American athletes have to navigate a very tricky terrain," Gale said. Another modern-day example Gale mentions is former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who famously took a knee during the pre-game singing of the national anthem to protest police brutality and inequality.

The different standards that Gale said Kaepernick and other black athletes have to endure is supported by a 2015 study by University of Missouri Professor Cynthia Frisby, which showed that media stories on black athletes primarily focus on criminal actions while stories about white athletes are overwhelmingly positive. The study found that 53 percent of news stories about African-American athletes had a negative tone compared to 27 percent of stories for white athletes.

River Falls native and UWRF alumnus Ace Sauerwein, now a sports director at radio station KDDR-AM in Oakes, North Dakota, said he believes the backlash of Kaepernick's off-the-field actions has kept him out of the National Football



Jack Johnson, who was the world heavyweight boxing champion from 1908-1915, is the subject of a presentation April 19 by Samuel Gale, an adjunct instructor at UW-River Falls. (Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division)

League since the end of the 2016 season.

"The off-the-field issues definitely were the big reason he was not on a team, because he led a team to the Super Bowl," Sauerwein said. "It's very hard for me to believe that 32 starters plus at least 32 backups were better than Colin Kaepernick."

Sauerwein said believes that sports media outlets like ESPN, CBS and Fox Sports covered the Kaepernick storylines ad nauseam because there was "some real drama to it."

The History and Philosophy Banquet begins at 6 p.m. Friday in the University Center. For further information, telephone the Department of History and Philosophy at (715) 425-3164.

YouTube used for fun, news and learning how to do stuff

Destinie Vhaa

Falcon News Service

YouTube has been a social and entertainment phenomenon since it began 2005. But according to a recent Pew Research Center survey, just over half of adults use it to learn how to do stuff.

The survey, results of which were announced in November, showed that 51 percent of American adults use YouTube to watch how to do tasks that they have never done before. They also use the social medium as a learning tool, to follow news, and for children's content.

Scott Mitchell, an assistant professor of communication studies at UW-River Falls, said that he finds himself in this mix of people.

"YouTube, I think, is one of the best ways, if you need an immediate reference, so a lot

of people I know use YouTube if they need to change a tire on their car... or they don't understand a concept from a book. (YouTube) presents it in a more digestible fashion," he said.

Mitchell teaches courses that deal with digital technology and communication. Like many other professors on campus, Mitchell uses YouTube not only for his own enjoyment, but for his work on campus as well. He explained that YouTube is a great tool for helping him teach in class.

"I use YouTube primarily as a teaching reinforcement, or a pedagogical tool," he said. "I teach a lot of concepts and theories that sometimes are hard to put into a visual representation and sometimes there is some sort of film or televised YouTube content that speaks more to watching it in action than what my words can capture."

A informal poll of 25 UWRF students

found that similar to the Pew survey, a majority of the students use YouTube as a means of learning how to do something they have never done before.

Almost all of the students agreed that YouTube also is a form of entertainment.

Freshman Ethan Thompson said that he uses YouTube to not only help remember his school lectures, but to keep up to date on the latest news, as well as video games and sports.

"YouTube has been an easy tool for school and other things because it's so handy," he said. "I think a lot of people are like me, where we are so used to learning how to do things visually. It makes life easier and more efficient."

Although many people can agree that YouTube has helped them in one way or another, there are still individuals who can argue otherwise when it comes to professional work.

Jeremy Nyhagen, the owner and operator of Mission Plumbing & Drain Service in River Falls, said that he gets a number of calls daily from people who try to learn things from YouTube, but end up having to call him instead.

"Half of the time when I get there and they've tried doing work because they saw someone else doing it on YouTube, it is usually a bigger mess than just not doing it at all," he said. Even though he does not mind doing the work, Nyhagen continued, it can get more expensive for the customer if they don't do the work correctly. He added, "It's really not worth it for them."

The Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan fact tank based in Washington, D.C., conducted its survey in late May and early June 2018.

Football coach accepts new position

Reagan Hoverman

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The University of Wisconsin-River Falls football team will be missing a key component of their coaching staff. Former Director of Football Operations Noah Wing accepted a job offer at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor in Belton, Texas.

For coach Wing, the process of getting to a championship caliber team has been a long road. A journey that first began while he was earning his undergraduate degree in Human Resources and Marketing from the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee. While in school he volunteered with a high school program at Milwaukee Riverside. At that point in his life, Wing wasn't sure what he wanted to do after graduation.

Once Wing had earned his undergraduate degree, he decided that he wanted football to become a major part of his life.

"I decided that I wanted to take the opportunity to try and be part of football one way or another. I volunteered at UW – La Crosse for a full year and just scraped together money and made it work. It wasn't the easiest thing in the world, that's kind of how I did it."

He spent one full season as a volunteer at UW-La Crosse and then was hired at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls. From 2016 – 2018 Wing had the official job title of Director of Football Operations. When asked about the daily duties of his job, Wing detailed an extremely busy schedule,

"The interesting thing about Division III football is that if you're going to do what I do, you have to wear so many hats and do so many different roles. My job with River Falls was I took all of the side roles from coaches. The video coordination, the recruiting, the day-to-day operations of the program, the social media, the travel. I took all of those."

Through his hard work on a daily basis for years, Wing slowly climbed his way up the ladder gaining more and more responsibility with each passing day. Head Coach Matt Walker said about Wing, "He was phenomenal at his job. He did such a great job with relationships with players. Again, he was very talented. He's a guy that was a part of our family and had a great relationship with a

Wing grew into one of the most respected members on the entire staff.

lot of the coaches and players and he will be missed, but we're excited for him."

As Director of Football Operations at UWRF Wing supervised three seasons of Falcon football. In those seasons, the team amassed a record of 11-17 without having any WIAC playoff berths. However, with the new addition of the Falcon Center, the recruiting classes have been getting better with each passing year. Wing said about recruiting, "The ability to open that new facility and build our recruiting classes around some of the great things that we had going there was so much fun." The Falcons will look to build on the strong new recruiting classes that Wing was able to build throughout 2018.

Following the conclusion of the 2018 football season, Wing received an opportunity that he simply couldn't pass up. When talking about the journey from his time volunteering with a high school in 2015, to getting a job offer from a championship level team, he reflected on the journey.

"The opportunity to recruit for a team like this, I mean, look at this journey. It was a whirlwind to go from not playing and not

coaching, to five years later being the recruiting coordinator for the reigning national champions. It's unbelievable and it's hard to put into words. This university, just like River Falls, does a have a lot of good things going for it."

Wing will take on a slightly different role in his position at Mary Hardin-Baylor. Instead of "wearing multiple hats" he will be the full-time Recruiting Coordinator. He discussed that significant change in his job description, "I'll just be the Recruiting Coordinator here, so I give up a lot of those other roles to focus more specifically on the recruiting aspect of it which was attractive to me."

The Mary Hardin-Baylor Crusaders are quite literally at the peak of their abilities in Division III college football. In the 2018 season, they won the national championship on Dec. 14 in Shenandoah, Texas. They defeated Mount Union 24-16 to win their second national championship in school history, the first coming in 2016, with runner-up finishes in 2004 and 2017.

Peter Fredenburg is the Head Coach at Mary Hardin-Baylor and is also a member of the Texas Sports Hall of Fame. His coaching staff were the group who approached Wing about the job opportunity at their university. Coach Fredenburg said about the addition of Wing,

"I think that because of the expectations and job description here it goes without saying that a person has to play and work at that level, and he's certainly one that has been recommended and he will exceed that. He will just make his own personal contributions and put his personality to it. He has already demonstrated what an incredible work ethic he has, and he is certainly going to complete out program."

When Fredenburg inquired about Wing to the UWRF coaching staff he received an

incredible gesture from Walker, "The Head Coach at River Falls wrote me an incredible letter about Noah. He has set a real precedent the right way and people really respond to that."

The chance to recruit for the best team in Division III was a career opportunity that Wing couldn't refuse. "All things equal, I would have stayed there. But the opportunity to dwindle down the scope of what I was working on and really be able to focus on one thing, was a big part of my decision to leave."

His departure from UWRF is a bittersweet moment for Wing. He reflected on his time in UWRF and what his time here meant to him.

"The guys on the football team and the coaches, I can't say enough about how much they are family to me and how they made



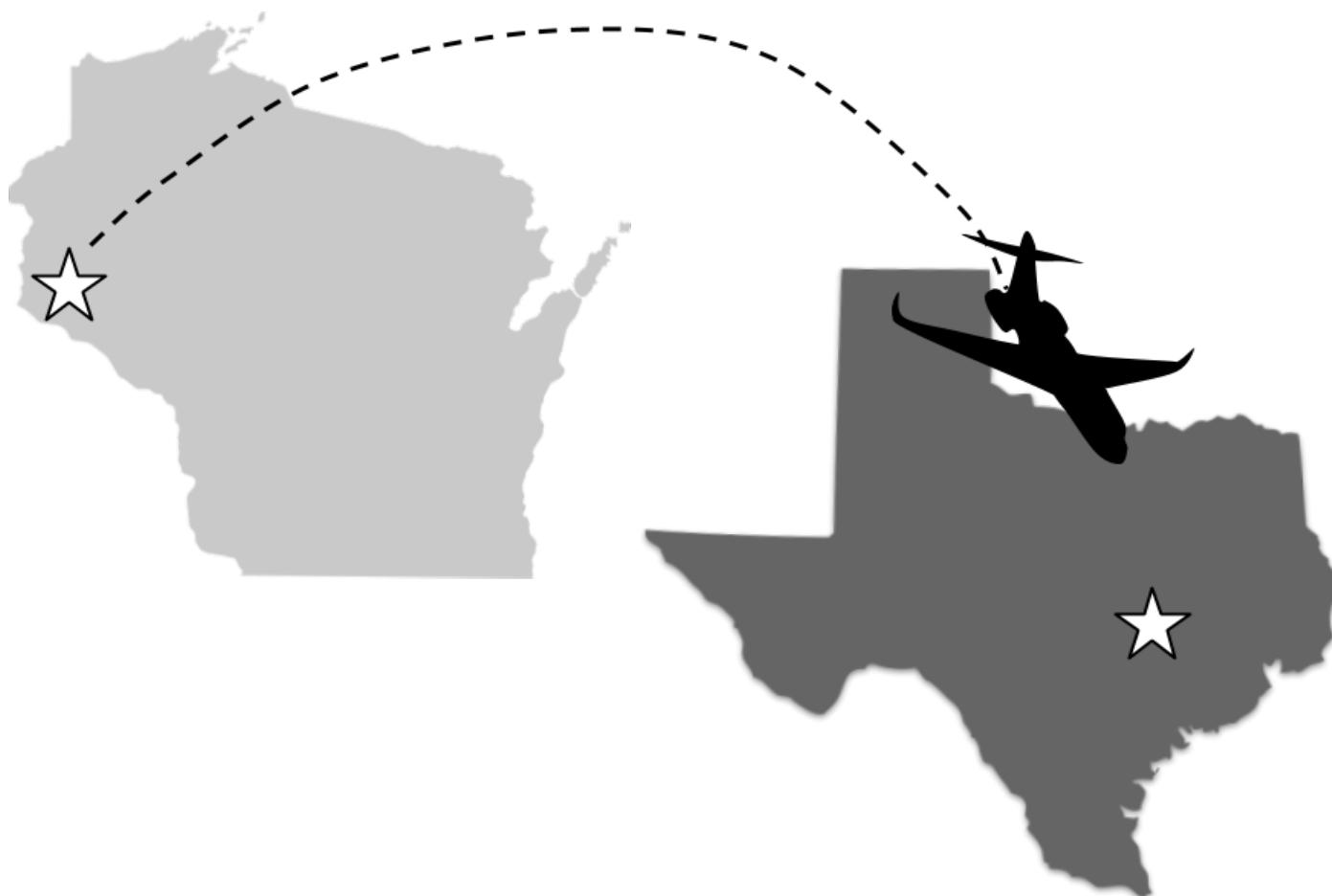
Foremer Director of Football Operations Noah Wing.
Photo used by permission.

me feel welcome there. If I could go back I would do it over and over again. That three years was probably the best three years of my life."

Family was a common theme when talking to the coaching staff here with Falcon football. Wing continued on to say, "I've never been around a group of guys that works as hard as they do and want to win as badly as they do. I think Head Coach Walker, he became like family and he's a guy who's very loyal and is going to give you every opportunity to do your job without him micromanaging you at all."

As a member of the UWRF coaching staff, Wing grew into one of the most respected members on the entire staff. Head Coach Walker reflected on Wing saying that the Falcon coaching staff is family, "It doesn't surprise me, and I think that he's got a mutual feeling from the other coaches and players as well. I mean, it just makes me smile. It's one of the things we stress as a program is this family atmosphere and culture. We base our entire culture on family and relationships."

Wing was a valued member of the Falcon coaching staff for the three seasons that he was in River Falls. Following his departure, the Falcons will look to find replacements for the variety of responsibilities that he provided for the Falcon football team.



Epidemic of the nonreader tied to content of books

Kacey Joslin

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I used to be an avid reader, with an emphasis on “used to.” I was the type of child to bring a book with me everywhere. At family functions, I would avoid cheek-pinching relatives and hide in an empty bedroom, head bowed over the newest “Percy Jackson” installment. Late at night, on car rides home, I would greedily lap up every beam of passing lamplight to catch even a glimpse of the next few sentences, giving myself quite the headache from squinting.

I was a fast reader, once challenging myself to read the first “Divergent” novel in less than two days. I won a contest for reading over 100 books in one summer. I took talent development courses in elementary school where we read the “Secret Garden” for fun. High school was different, I read the books that would be adapted into movies like “Hunger Games,” or anything written by John Green. I also read the books required for class. By my senior year, I was proud to even have slogged my way through “Friday Night Lights” for an English class.

Now?

Fast forward to college and the last thing I read – skimmed, rather – was a required textbook on the pitfalls of our generation. I know our generation as Gen Z, but the textbook satirically called us “iGen” as the author brutally called out our inability to put our phones down. The book told me my generation is, and I quote from the title, “completely unprepared for adulthood.”

It was a bit of a slap in the face.

Almost sheepish, I tried to pick up a book over Spring Break, determined to read a few chapters every night and get myself back into the habit. My bookshelves at home are filled with the “Harry Potter” series, “The Mortal Instruments” and dozens of unread young adult novels. Unsatisfied with any of them, and regretting my taste in overwhelmingly cis-het romance novels during high school, I went to Goodwill for some more options.

What I found was so, so sad. Adults my mother’s age were kneeling on the linoleum floors while they read the back covers of what could debatably be called erotica, decorated in drawings of swooning women and well-oiled men. I picked through the dozen of “Twilight” novels sold at half price, and felt a deep pit of despair in my stomach for all the aspiring authors whose life works had been tossed into a cardboard box, given away and sold for a couple dollars in the back of a thrift store. Unread. Unwanted, except by middle-age moms.

Regardless, I found three books that suited my needs and prepared to immerse myself in the world of literature. In truth, I only made it through about forty pages – and I haven’t picked it up since. The book was genuinely interesting, but whenever I go to reach for the novel, it’s almost like I hit a mental roadblock. My brain *groans* at the thought of thinking harder than necessary, when pretty pictures and funny blog posts are only a click away on my cell phone. I physically cannot force myself to pick up a book.

And I’m not the only one.

I asked a friend if she ever reads “for fun,” and she gave me a snort. “. . . No!” Laughing, she elaborated. “There’s just no time.” She did, however, read a required textbook on the Underground Railroad last semester. Sounds fascinating.

Another friend admits she hasn’t picked up a physical book in a long while, but she reads fanfiction on her phone. I’m fond of fanfiction myself; endless stories about my favorite characters, with different settings, different motivations, different outcomes, most of them incredibly well written. It’s a veritable goldmine, but if it actually counts as “reading” could be debated. You wouldn’t compare a thousand word fanfiction in which the characters of “Glee” are . . . I don’t know, *cats* to something like Oliver Twist.

With a few exceptions, I started to notice a pattern among my peers – a phenomenon I’d like to call the “epidemic of the non-reader.” (It just sounded cool).

Reading, it seems, has become a burden to students, when it used to be an *escape*.

Statistics seem to differ on the amount of books college students actually read. A survey from PEW research center in 2015 said that compared to high schoolers, who may only read an average of three books in a year, college students are reading seventeen.

A great deal of the students I spoke with disagreed; “there’s no time to read,” they said, or “everything I read is mind-numbing – textbooks, or required readings like the ‘Grapes of Wrath.’” In the era of SparkNotes and Cliff Notes, it’s easy to *pretend* to read literary classics. These websites assist in cutting down reading time greatly – which is one of the main factors in why students *aren’t* reading.

Reading takes time and is energy intensive; even the most dedicated students do not have the energy to analyze 30 chapters on the acidity of soil on top of their other courses, work, social lives, and – of course – sleeping and eating. The last two, of which, many college students forgo entirely just to complete their textbook work.

Pew Research Center suggests colleges look into digital book reading options or audio books to reclaim students attention. But I don’t think it’s the medium that’s the issue; it’s the content.

I once had passion for reading – where did that go?

Was it squashed the first time I was made to read the memoir of some author I don’t care about in middle school? Was it in high school, when the textbooks that weighed down my backpack were ridiculously dull, but the only thing keeping me from failing my psychology course? Was it in college, where every class has three textbooks.

And let’s not forget, I *am* taking an English course – but the book they *want* me to read tells me how my generation, “iGen,” is a let down because skimming social media gives us more pleasure – in less time – than reading a newspaper ever will.

I’m not trying to make a blanket statement about *all* college students across *all* campuses; but the fact remains. The books students *are* reading in college are not the ones they *want* to be reading.

Student Voice offers suggestions for improving Riverside Commons

Editorial

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From a strange smell by the conveyor belt, crusty spoons, to crumb-covered tables just minutes after the doors opened, dining services is no stranger to student complaints. They have made several attempts in the past to resolve these issues, however the problems are reoccurring.

It is clear dining services has made efforts in the past to improve conditions. However, many students believe more could be done to better fulfill the dining services mission. The mission emphasizes quality, variety and cleanliness, but it’s debated whether or not these goals are actually met.

The main issues we see at the University Center dining hall involve a lack of staff training, poor distribution of labor, and potentially unmet hygienic standards. As students exit Riverside Commons, a popular dining location, they are met with a foul smell by the conveyor belts.

An insider revealed the cause of the smell. A former employee, Sam Elam, explained this pungent odor. It’s a result of “people dumping out their glasses onto the grates, instead of leaving them on the belt. They’re not supposed to do that.”

Workers are supposed to clean the grates, Elam admits, but often dishwashing staff are not aware of the smell until they’ve received a complaint from management.

As for issues with labor distribution and training, dining services should attempt to closely follow their own policies. Employees have reportedly received little to no training from qualified staff, for positions such as dish-washing and table-wiping. Although these duties seem straightforward there are aspects that are more complex than what meets the eye, such as testing the pH of the table cleaning solution, and the frequency of changing out dishwasher water. Additionally, Elam recalled being expected to close within her first few days working without proper instruction. “They said ‘oh, you’re closing this night, hope you know what you need to do,’ and I didn’t know anything,” Elam confessed.

Kiera Kapfhamer explained the little training she received. “My manager gave me a tour of the kitchen area and where to find the cleaning supplies. Then, she asked another employee to show me where to find the buckets for water and the cleaner we used.” Kap-



Conveyor belt in Riverside Commons is culprit of frequent odors.

fhamer said.

In the opinion of the Student Voice staff, dining service employees should receive proper training for the jobs they are expected to do, as well as be given the knowledge necessary to be a successful participant in the strategic mission.

Dining Services employees interviewed had a variety of experiences, from uncomfortable interactions with other staff, difficulty completing tasks, feeling either overworked or bored, to broken machines and a lack of communication. Elam stated, “It was grinding, everyday, to get things done.”

Elam had a message for students that frequent the Riverside Commons, “Yes, there’s a nasty smell. I know sometimes it’s frustrating not finding a plate or a spoon that’s clean. Just understand that there’s a lot more going on than what you can see and be patient.”

Student complaints aside, dining services at UW-River Falls are trying to ensure the facilities are “nice and welcoming.” For that mission to succeed, students and faculty both need to speak up when they feel a disservice has been made, in order for these problems to be resolved. Improvements are always possible and feedback facilitates the change.

Join the Student Voice!

The Student Voice is hiring for next semester!

Applications are available outside the Student Voice Office, North Hall 304.

Positions Include: -Editor -Cartoonist -Photographer
-Assistant Editor -General Manager -Columnist
-Sports Editor -Advertising Manager
-Proofreader -Reviewer
-Reporter

Please submit applications by Wednesday, May 1, outside North Hall 304. Interviews for applicants will be held Monday, May 6.

Contact editor@uwrfvoice.com with any questions.

Vegetarian diet shows health benefits

Melissa Thorud

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Switching to a plant based diet and embracing a vegetarian lifestyle can be a huge transition. However, for me, making this switch has come with several benefits. It was originally a hard decision for many reasons. It meant giving up some of my favorite food, my body went through a tremendous change, and at first it was hard to find new alternatives to getting the right amount of nutrients that my body needed. Still, all these challenges brought so many benefits.

Before making the switch I did extensive research on the benefits of vegetarianism. I watched documentaries and read articles before I decided that I wanted to try a plant based diet. When researching, I found that eating a plant based diet can help with many health issues, both physical and mental.

Another reason I wanted to make this transition was the idea that, besides having major benefits for my own well being, this type of lifestyle can benefit so many others as well. By cutting out most animal products from my diet, I am helping the overall welfare of animals and I am making an environmentally conscious choice. I believe that with a plant based diet, I am helping to improve my quality of life as well as improving the lives of others.

Over the years, vegetarianism has become a more widely accepted and used lifestyle. There are more studies that are available on the topic discussing the many benefits of transitioning. Many people use a plant based lifestyle as a diet to improve their health and it is used by many athletes as well. I have found that my sleep, mental and physical health, and overall energy has improved with choosing to eliminate animal products from my diet.

Eating a plant based diet has allowed me to eat healthier and enjoy a variety of new foods as well. Cutting meat out of my everyday diet was much easier than it sounds and I feel healthier overall because of it. Some studies have shown that eating meat can contribute and lead to several chronic



Freddy's C-Store offers vegetarian options
Photo by Kacey Joslin

diseases, and by switching to an alternative plant based diet these diseases can be reversed. When doing research and making the decision to switch my lifestyle, this really stood out to me. When first making the switch, finding new foods and getting the right amount of nutrition was somewhat difficult. I have since discovered many new appealing alternatives to my favorite foods while also shopping on a budget.

When making the decision to switch and doing my research, the point of helping other animals came up several times. The idea that the mass consumption of meat in the United States means the mass destruction of animals was something that stayed with me. Knowing that by eating meat and other animal products, I was promoting killing other animals for my own benefit and this was something that did not sit well with me personally.

Being a vegetarian has brought me many benefits and making the switch has been one of the best decisions I have made. By continuing to improve my health from several aspects, I am also promoting a lifestyle that shows compassion. Although eating a plant based diet might not be for everyone, however, I have peace of mind knowing that I am choosing healthy alternatives as well as improving the lives of others.

Reagan Responds



Reagan Hoverman

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Dealing with heartbreak and graduating teammates

Q: What is the best way to get over a hard breakup?

Getting over a hard breakup completely depends on the person who is dealing with the breakup. The best way to get over a tough breakup is to do something that you love. For many people in may be taking up a new hobby, spending more time outside, or spending more time with friends that may have been lost during the time of the relationship. Overall, the key is doing something that will make you happy. For some people it may be hunting, it may be watching movies, playing sports, etc. there is an endless amount of possibilities that will help somebody that is struggling with a tough breakup. Another way to get over a tough breakup is to do something to improve yourself. This is one of the most common times for people to start working out. I think that it's a good way to deal with a tough breakup because there are very few ways to feel better about yourself than by improving your own health. Essentially, there is a wide array of ways to get over a tough breakup, the hard part is finding one that works for you.

Q: Which graduating senior will their respective sports team miss the most?

There are a lot of valuable seniors that are graduating and will not be returning for the 2019 season. Among them are Taylor Paulsrud, Trenton Monson, Janari Glover, Austin Heidecker, and Clay Seifert. Each one of these athletes had a significant impact in the sport that they played while here at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls. In my opinion the graduating senior that will be missed the most will be Austin Heidecker, a former starting forward for the men's basketball team. Over the course of his senior season with the Falcons, Heidecker averaged 12.8 points per game, 10 rebounds, all while shooting over 50 percent from the floor. Heidecker was one of the main reasons for the Falcons having a chance to make the WIAC playoffs late in the season. Although they fell short, Heidecker put them in position to make a postseason run. Without him there is going to be a significant hole in the starting lineup that the coaching staff will have to address. I wouldn't be surprised to see Ross Ingersoll make an appearance in the starting lineup to start his junior year at UWRF. Without Heidecker on the roster the Falcons lose a lot of the dominant post and interior play that they relied on so heavily for the majority of the season. Austin Heidecker is the graduating senior that will be missed the most at UWRF.

Send your questions about life advice or sports to
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Best dining options available on campus

Monica Marsh

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It's no secret to anyone that the foods provided by schools, be it high school or college, do not have the best reputation among most people. We constantly see in movies the grey slop that is slapped onto a plastic lunch tray in a cafeteria. Don't even get me started on the ever so daunting "freshman fifteen" epidemic that's included in the many joyous adventures of college. If you're anything like me, good food is the equivalent to good mood, and good mood is vital to good everything else including grades, performance, you name it.

Upon picking my colleges, I was intimidated by the horror stories I heard from friends. Some of them shared being made sick by the food on campus, while others felt their meal plan was a waste of money, considering how often they would avoid the cafeteria and opt for restaurant service

instead. Something that was very appealing to me about the River Falls campus was that, despite its smaller size and enrollment numbers, there is an unexpectedly large variety of food selections to choose from. The question I set out to answer was, what is the best place to eat on the River Falls campus?

Let's start with the most popular location to grab a meal, the classic University Center commons. My freshman year I lived in Johnson Hall, as a result of living on campus I had to have a meal plan. Typically, my group of friends would just stick to the Riverside Commons, until about halfway through the year when I was so sick of it.

I am a junior now living off campus, so I typically cook at home. The UC commons food is much more valuable to me now than it was two years ago (cooking gets old when free time is slim). I now typically grab lunch in the commons every day, and I have to say I don't know if it's the crazy hunger I have from skipping breakfast or some other factor,

but I absolutely love going into the Riverside Commons now. There are so many different options, from the waffle maker, to the pasta, to the sandwiches and pizza lines, I really have grown to appreciate the variety that is available.

I was never too intrigued by many of the things until I tried the sandwiches at Erbert and Gerbert's. If you haven't already tried it, I promise the line is worth waiting in.

The bread is freshly baked and the aroma will be the first to greet you. You can use transfer meals here, so this is especially nice when you're in a hurry but also need something good to eat. In addition to a variety of sandwiches you can get a variety of soups. Erbert and Gerbert's is a classic that I'm always in the mood for.

When choosing the best, it's a tie. It all depends on how much time I have and my mood. Erbert and Gerbert's is consistently good, and I am a huge fan of soup and sandwiches, while the UC has a wide array of options that rarely disappoint.

Professors recommend balancing work and freetime

Kacey Joslin

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This month's note-worthy staff members are Amber Pineda and Melissa Schnettler.

Amber Pineda is a recent addition to the UW-River Falls staff. She joined in August of 2018 as an associate lecturer for the Marketing Communications department. Pineda teaches writing for mass media, advertising and a digital press release class, as well as a class on persuasion.

Outside of school, Pineda contracts for an organization called EntryPoint, which works to promote entrepreneurship across the Mid-



Amber Pineda discusses her work with entrepreneurs.
Photo by Kacey Joslin

west. Pineda tracks trends in investment and diversity among the entrepreneurial communities, to help support the growth of new companies. "Through EntryPoint, we identify problems that exist in these industries, and we create a solution," Pineda elaborated. "It's really technical."

"I love working with entrepreneurs," Pineda said. "I love to watch a business grow from the ground up. It's really exciting to hear their stories. Often, they are very innovative and creative."

According to Pineda, the Midwest has a younger entrepreneur community, much like Silicon Valley. "I find it fulfilling to be apart of that group and see more start-ups emerging in the Midwest. And, of course," she added. "The blog aspect. Basically what I do, with the research reports and trends, I help to tell the story of what this data means. I get to work with reporters in terms of sharing these growth and trends, do blog posts and do Q & A's. It's really cool connecting with entrepreneurs."

Her career as a marketing communications professional "definitely" intersects with her hobby.

"It all goes hand-in-hand. I do media relations for EntryPoint and part of my role, too, is social media. It's interesting, because I can share what I'm *currently* doing and share those skills with students."

As a Millennial, Pineda finds her younger, fresher perspective a huge advantage when connecting with students as well as working with EntryPoint. "Being younger, you're more open to new ideas. I feel like I'm con-

stantly learning. I'm learning as a teacher, I'm learning as a marketing comms professional. From a teaching perspective, it definitely helps to be more relatable, because it wasn't that long ago I was in my student's shoes."

Pineda elaborated, "A lot of social media channels were just emerging when I was in high school, so it's unique in the sense I remember what it's like not having these technologies. But I also remember seeing, for instance, Facebook becoming the company it is today."

"Snapchat wasn't around when I was younger," Pineda continued. "But it's hugely popular among our student body as well as Gen Z. I tend to use Facebook and Instagram, because I find that to be user-friendly, but Snapchat kind of has its own code. It's interesting how different generations use things differently."

Pineda was adamant with the fact that teachers should keep an eye on these trends. "When I first started teaching, I had the philosophy of 'no tech in the classroom! Turn your cell phones off!' It was very harsh," she admitted. "One of the things I've been trying to do this year is instead of fighting against it, *embrace* it. It's a way to get students engaged in content. In class, I try to have activities where we're actually *utilizing* the apps, using social media for online discussions and figuring out how the platform works. I think embracing that technology can definitely help the classroom, especially in terms of communication. Teachers need to stay on top of those trends."

Pineda does have "more, actually fun hobbies," outside of EntryPoint. "I've started doing yoga, because I'm sitting at a desk all day when I'm not teaching. It helps to kind of be more patient, and also to strive to have some kind of balance. I also love to read in my spare time. I'm an avid reader. I feel like that's usually what I do to decompress."

Pineda continues. "I love fiction, but I also like to read non-fiction as well. I read books on social media and I'm looking forward to reading this book on influence and influencers, just because with technology, the marketing and communications field is constantly changing. Reading these books helps me keep track of trends in the industry, and really helps to make sure that I'm able to incorporate that into the classroom as well."

She believes that it's especially important for students to have something for themselves outside of academia and jobs. "It's important to have something that helps them to refocus, re-center and take that time for themselves."

Pineda will be taking the position of an assistant professor next year. "I'm excited to continue working at UWRF, I love working with students, I think that's the biggest thing that really gravitated me toward this role is being able to share what I've learned with students."

The strive for balance is a common theme among faculty, attempting to balance their personal lives with their professional lives. Associate lecturer, Melissa Schnettler, found this to be especially true.

"Freetime?!" Schnettler laughed, when asked about her hobbies. "It's funny, I was talking with some co-workers about how I

have no hobbies. That's like the running joke between us. I don't know what my hobbies are, to be honest."

Schnettler is a wife, and the mother of an almost two-year-old son. "I would say 'freetime' is usually spent with them. When I go home, I don't have freetime. You know? You leave here, you go home, you get dinner, put your son to bed and you're usually too tired to do anything – which isn't always a bad thing," she assured.

The weekends, Schnettler said, are for family adventures. "When you have a child, you do things that you wouldn't do before. You go to the zoo. I wouldn't go to the zoo with just my husband. You do these adventures, and you see them through somebody else's eyes, which I feel is the fun part about it," she said. "You have new experiences, but there's no way my husband and I would've gone and done that if we didn't have [my son]."

"You keep very busy doing things," Schnettler continued. "You keep very active. Before we had our son, I joke with my husband, 'What did we used to do on a Saturday?' Probably laid around, watched some TV." To de-stress, Schnettler admitted to a guilty pleasure.

"I know it's taboo, but I go out to eat by myself. I just go to Caribou, and watch Netflix. I'm sure a lot of students do, too. I've been watching 'The Office,' for like the fourth time now. It's my go-to show."

She compared it to a balancing act. "Students balance a lot, too. You're trying to balance work, friends, family – and then when you become a parent, you're balancing family. But you only have so many hours in a day."

Students don't often approach her for advice, but she knows, in general, that students have a lot that they're balancing. "The best advice I'd give is to be purposeful. It's really easy to sink into a time-wasting mindset. You can't spend half the day watching Netflix. There's been times where I fall into the same trap."

Schnettler admits that it's a difficult skill to learn. "A lot of us probably feel we have trouble balancing everything. I don't know if that ever goes away. One thing becomes balanced, another becomes unbalanced. Usually one thing is always missing. I wish I could work out more, but I don't. I'm tired by the end of the night. Something's always got to give, it feels like. But it's all about being smart with your time and more efficient."

Ultimately, Schnettler advised that students and faculty both remember that they're not alone in their struggles. "Everybody has to balance different things. When I was in college, it was balancing tutoring, tennis,

academics and friends and family. Now, it's balancing work, family, friends. Everybody is always balancing something," she said. "I remember as a student not recognizing that teachers do that too. There's that disconnect. As a student, you sometimes forget that everybody's balancing something, it just *looks* different."

Schnettler tends to be an informal instructor, and she hopes that her students find her easy to relate to. She encourages open communication between students and teachers. She understands that there can be a grey area when it comes to balancing school and personal life.

"Life happens. If life happens, you have to communicate that with me. If life gets in the way, and you're having trouble with that balance, connect with me. We have policies, but if stuff happens, talk with me. As a teacher, you're trying to find that balance between upholding the policies but also recognizing that life happens. Because life happens to me, too."

"A lot of people are stressed and get overwhelmed, but you have to be healthy and take care of yourself in order to excel at school, keep friendships, to work," Schnettler concluded. "When you think about it, you only have twenty-four hours in a day to do what you want to do. You have to figure out what you need to do and what's important to you."

If you're interested in having your interesting hobbies showcased, contact reporter Kacey Joslin at kassandra.joslin@my.uwrf.edu



Melissa Schnettler confesses to enjoying Netflix in her freetime.
Photo by Kacey Joslin



Pretty and powerful in pink: a review of ‘Legally Blonde’

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I’ll watch cringey movies so you don’t have to! Email me with any recommendations.

I’ll admit to this one being a guilty pleasure.

My mother and I used to curl up on the couch with a bowl of overly-buttered popcorn and watch Reese Witherspoon strut her way in painful-looking stilettos, giggling over the movie’s occasional swear and Witherspoon’s ridiculous outfits.

“Legally Blonde” was a blockbuster hit from the early 2000s, starring a number of c-list actors outshined by Witherspoon’s bubbly personality and bright pink wardrobe. It’s a go-to for cheap laughs, with a good message about self-respect, making it difficult to dislike.

Elle Woods’ senior year at college has been nothing but frat parties, romantic dates with her boyfriend, Warner Huntington III, and mani-pedis with her sorority, Delta Nu. She’s a fashion major with clear aspirations – the script hints at Elle’s perceptiveness from the very beginning, as she calls out a retail worker for trying to sell her a last-season dress at full price.

Elle’s perfect life, however, is thrown into chaos when her boyfriend dumps her at a fancy restaurant. Warner claims that if he’s going to become a senator by the time he’s thirty, he needs a “Jackie, not a Marilyn.” Viewers can tell from the beginning that Warner is going to be the bad guy by the way he wears sunglasses indoors and the gel dripping from his hair.

Her reaction is proportional to the callous break-up; watching sappy rom-coms and eating chocolates to drown her sorrows. But then, in a move that could be described as stalkerish, Elle decides to follow Warner to Harvard Law School.

Cue the endless studying montages.

With a 4.0 GPA and a 179 on the LSATs, Elle barely manages to be accepted into Harvard, although it probably helped that she wore a bikini in her college admittance video essay.

Law school is made out to be a “completely different world,” but with actual studying, antisocialness and strict teachers, it seems more realistic than her sorority did.

With her barbie-doll hair style and fashion, Elle stands out among the population of “bor-

ing, ugly” Harvard students wearing shades of brown and puke green.

There is a clear us versus them mentality at this Ivy League school – and it’s nothing so deep as race or sexuality. It’s hair color.

As a blonde, Elle feels she is “discriminated against.” She’s rejected from study groups, laughed out of class and even tricked into dressing up as a Playboy bunny for a classy “bring your own merlot” party.

Elle becomes fuelled by pure spite, ready to kill them with kindness.

She’s accepted into an internship program with Professor Callahan, along with Warner and Warner’s new, frigid girlfriend, Vivian Kensington – the “Mean Girl” of Harvard Law.

Audiences are drawn into an intriguing court case surrounding Brooke Taylor-Windham, a famous fitness instructor and a former Delta Nu. The evidence is so incriminating that everyone, including her attorney, Callahan, believes Brooke is guilty of murdering her older husband – everyone. It doesn’t help that Brooke won’t give an alibi.

Elle takes the initiative and approaches Brooke in jail, giving her a care basket of skin products and a luffa. Brooke reveals that on the day of her husband’s murder, the fitness instructor was, in fact been getting liposuction. The reveal came fit with fake gasps and astonished looks and shameful sobs.

Elle keeps Brooke’s secret, gaining the scorn of her fellow interns – except Vivian, surprisingly, who shyly calls Elle’s loyalty “very classy.” To be honest, I find Vivian and Elle have more chemistry than any of the other characters.

The movie begins with Elle as a classically ditzzy and dumb blonde, but she evolves into a strong female role-model, with an eye for fashion and the drive to become *more* than just a pretty face.

The plot comes to a head as Callahan makes a pass at Elle, leaving her discouraged and distraught. The scene is awkward. *So* awkward. Even knowing it was coming, I still got whiplash at Callahan’s transition from a nice guy to a total, utter creep.

Reese Witherspoon takes the trophy for her emotional range. It’s in the small things; her portrayal of stress with her hands shaking rapidly, her lips open in a still disbelieving gape, the stress lines between her brows.

It also shows clear character development, how Elle goes from sloppy sobs to quiet fury as her heart is broken yet again by a man she

trusted.

The conclusion comes swiftly after that, with Callahan being fired – as he deserved – and Elle taking his place as Brooke’s defendant. And Elle. Kicks. *Butt*.

It’s a truly goosebump-rising scene when Elle uses her knowledge of perm maintenance, wet t-shirt contests, and last season Prada shoes to get Brooke’s step-daughter to admit to the murder. Elle, we learn, is *powerful*.

Her potential love interest, Emmett Richmond, said it best; “You know, being a blonde is a pretty powerful thing. You hold more cards than you think you do. And I personally would like to see you take that power and channel it towards the greater good.”

Although this reference to white privilege is sloppy, it’s also well-meaning, and Elle *does* use her power for good. She subverts expectations and rose above those who tried to tear her down. After winning her case, Elle walks off stage into a screen lit with sunlight, like an avenging angel.

I watched it with a friend, who thought it would be “more stupid.” She was pleasantly surprised by how heartfelt and “interesting” the plot was. It’s a charming tale – if difficult to explain to children.

While as Elle grows into her own, there are several subplots to keep track of. Including, but not limited to; a shy, awkward, creepy-eyed boy struggling to find love; the strained relationship between Vivian and Warner; a second love interest for Elle, a supportive, handsome man eerily resembling Nicolas Cage; and a manicurist named Paulette putting her abusive ex in his place, and falling in love with a UPS guy.

The manicurist scenes are the worst to watch. Paulette, played by Jennifer Coolidge, is down on her luck. Having lost a custody battle with her ex-husband over their bulldog, Rufus, Paulette enlists the help of Elle. After spewing some legal bullcrap at Paulette’s ex, Elle successfully confuses him into giving up the dog, and Paulette reigns champion. But her biggest challenge comes next; wooing her local UPS guy with a dance move called the bend-and-snap.

Fun trivia: the bend-and-snap scene was thought up in a drunken-spur of the moment by “Legally Blonde”’s co-writer. And it shows.

Eventually, a dozen scenes later, Paulette accidentally breaks the UPS guy’s nose utilizing the bend-and-snap method, and they

lived happily ever-after.

“Legally Blonde” is wrought with sexual references and frequent stereotyping. I wouldn’t recommend watching it with kids, like my mom did with me, unless you *really* want to explain what a lap dance is to a eight year old.

Everything about the movie is delightfully early 2000s, from the props and costumes – everything Elle owns is either pink or some garish pattern – to the lack-luster cinematography. Repeating “he has a package” with the camera right at the UPS guy’s groin height clearly showed where their priorities were.

The female cast dominate this film; Reese Witherspoon as Elle, Selma Blair as Vivian, Ali Larter as Brooke, Holland Taylor as the stern, appropriately terrifying Professor Stromwell and Linda Cardellini (Velma, from the live action “Scooby Doo”) as Chutney, Brooke’s spurned, homicidal step-daughter. This is clearly a girl-power movie, but where it takes several steps forward on the feminist front, it takes a step back in LGBT+ representation.

Again, it was made the early 2000s, but re-watching “Legally Blonde” in 2019 reveals some harsh truths about how the LGBT+ community was treated only a decade ago.

There’s Enid Wexler, an opinionated lesbian feminist protesting against the term ‘semester’ and petitioning for the winter semester to be call ‘ovester’, as in ovaries. Then there’s the thong-wearing cabana boy dressed in a sparkling dress-shirt as he testifies at court, claiming to have had an affair with Brooke. This is disproven as Elle realizes “only gay men know designers” and publically outs him, as well as ruining his relationship with his boyfriend.

Pitfalls and cringe-worthy moments aside, the movie comes out with a good message about girl-power and femininity. But if you liked the movie, do not, under any circumstances watch the sequel “Legally Blonde 2: Red, White & Blonde” or the truly awful spin-off, “Legally Blondes” – plural – that features twin high-school girls attending a debate club. The franchise will be ruined for you.

Not to mention, MGM has confirmed the release of “Legally Blonde 3” on Valentine’s Day 2020. Maybe a modern take on this 2000s classic will correct all it’s pitfalls, but then again, reboots are almost never as good as the original.

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