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The Grizzly, September 13, 2007

Matt Flyntz
Lane Taylor
Caitlin Dalik
Kristen Gallagher
Megan Helzner

See next page for additional authors

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Hall on campus, and seen the new swipe card access and huge flat screen televisions, but how is technology improving in other parts of campus? Better yet, how is campus safety improving?

Some of the smaller improvements may have gone unnoticed, but here is a look at some of the new changes made this year.

One of the campus’s most important new additions is helping to protect students against imminent physical threats. The new system, called e2Campus, is the new emergency notification system. An e-mail sent earlier this semester stated that the e2Campus system uses Short Messaging System (SMS) technology to send messages to “registered mobile phones, Blackberries, wireless PDAs, smart phones, and satellite phones.” More information about this system is posted in residence halls and in the student handbook.

According to Dean Deborah Nolan and Director of Campus Safety Kim Taylor, about 200 students have already registered their phones. Students can register their phones via Blackboard.

Another important addition to student safety is a new full-time counselor in the Wellness Center, Susan Phillips. Dean Nolan said, “Having another full-time counselor is important to this campus especially after the Virginia Tech shooting and other school shootings.” While the Wellness Center has two counselors, a new member will allow more students to seek help. “Counselors can help when they see some troubling signs that others may not notice,” Dean Nolan said. “Susan Phillips will also be doing some group work.”

Swipe card access has also been spreading across the campus. “So far, Richter/North, New Hall, Bomberger, Ritter, and the field house have swipe card access, and we’re excited about that,” said Dean Nolan. “Eventually we’d like all of the buildings to have swipe card access.”

Campus Safety is a valuable resource for students, open 24/7 and 365 days a year. Students can call Campus Safety for an escort anywhere on campus. “Also, introduce yourself to the Safety Officers and make sure you put the Campus Safety phone number in your cell phone in case of an emergency,” said Dean Nolan. The phone number for Campus Safety is 610-489-2737.

Campus Safety Officer Gary Hodgman said, “In brief, we [Campus Safety] are the center for information after 4:30 p.m. when everyone leaves.” Officer Hodgman has worked at Campus Safety at Ursinus for 18 years, and said, “Our assignment here is that every one of these students I look at as my kid who I look after and I take personal interest in every student’s welfare.” Campus Safety also handles problems that facilities would handle during the day. Campus Safety can help with auto lockouts, jump starts, and locked buildings.

Aside from Campus Safety, Resident Assistants (RAs) are also help with student safety. Senior Resident Assistant Danielle Langdon said, “The RA’s ensure safety.” When speaking about safety on Main Street, Langdon said that the biggest issue with the houses on Main Street is the propping open of the doors. “As RAs, it is our job to un-prop any doors we see open. There are townpeople on Main Street (since it is public) and it is important to keep non-students out of the houses,” she said.

Another issue on Main Street that Dean Nolan, Officer Hodgman, and Senior RA Langdon all spoke about is crossing Main Street. Langdon said, “It’s important to walk in the crosswalks.” Officer Hodgman said, “Be sure the look both ways, be cautious, and make sure cars obey the yield to pedestrians sign.”

Strassburger Goes to Dubai

MATTHEW FLINTZ
mflyntz@ursinus.edu

On Aug. 30, you may have noticed that Ursinus College was one bowtie short of normal. That is because President John Strassburger was thousands of miles away delivering the keynote address about liberal education to the 20th anniversary convocation ceremony of the Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) in Dubai.

The leadership of the HCT (which is closely linked with the leadership of the United Arab Emirates) anticipates a “new world,” according to Strassburger – one that understands the value of liberal education.

Given the publicity that Ursinus College and its Common Intellectual Experience (CIE) program have received in recent years, the HCT invited President Strassburger to deliver a speech regarding both the value of liberal education and how the HCT might be able to integrate aspects of liberal education into their technology-driven (or “practicality-driven”) system of education.

Strassburger noted that even America’s greatest technological colleges (he cites the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as an example) require students to study the humanities. He argues that “general education can invite students to think about how they will find meaning in their lives and the paths they might pursue that will knit them into the larger fabric of humanity.”

While achieving economic success is certainly a legitimate goal of college graduates, Strassburger argues that liberal education will allow these students to truly become members of the world community – not just the world economy. But having chosen to attend a liberal arts college, we already understand the benefits of liberal education. I asked Strassburger how this trip benefited the college.

He stated that while intellectual curiosity did play a role in his decision to go, he “wouldn’t have gone if [he] didn’t think there were benefits for the College.”

One goal of this trip was to establish contacts so that Ursinus might collaborate with the HCT in various ways.

Strassburger suggests that having students here from the United Arab Emirates (and perhaps sending Ursinus students there) is a possibility. This is important, he states, because “the center of gravity in the world is shifting... to the Middle East.” Thus, a good liberal arts college must allow its students to gain an understanding of this important culture.

Ursinus has hired a full-time Arab Studies faculty member, Dr. Barbara Von Schlegell, and discussions are beginning about how to properly expand Arab Studies at Ursinus. As with any cultural studies program, connections in the foreign country are essential for success. So, Strassburger will be returning to Dubai in October for the HCT’s “Festival of Thinkers” to underscore his seriousness about establishing a working relationship.

There were two other goals as well. First, Strassburger thought that it was the responsibility of a president of a liberal arts college to be a “passionate defender of liberal education.” Second, he argues that by achieving a better understanding of the world community, he can become a more effective president. If you do not think these are legitimate goals, do not fret; Ursinus College did not spend a dime for this trip. All expenses were paid for by the HCT.

So, if you see the President around campus, ask him about his trip. He has some very interesting things to say, and it seems that this is the beginning of an important change for Ursinus College.
**Why Don’t You Escape Velocity?**

**KRISTEN GALLAGHER**  
krsgallagher1@ursinus.edu

Everyone on campus wants to find a way to get rid of their stress and have a great, stimulating time, right? So why not do it in a way that allows you to workout as well? If you have the proper attitude, a good dancer is also a good teacher and a great motivator.

Escape Velocity Dance Theater is a fun and invigorating way to let go of everyday stress and learn some great dance moves. Escape Velocity specializes in all types of dance, including hip-hop, ballet, modern, lyrical, jazz, tap, contemporary, partnering, African, and even belly dancing. If you are interested in some of these but have never danced before, do not worry! From beginner to advanced dancers, anyone interested is welcome to be a part of Escape Velocity.

Hip-Hop is a popular style performed by Escape Velocity. Hip-Hop dance instructor Roger Lee said that he is thrilled with this year’s turnout, but is still encouraging more participants. “We can always use new dancers for the company,” said Lee. “If there are people interested in

Students practice hip-hop in the dance studio during a class taught by Roger Lee.  

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**ResLife Sponsors Alcohol Education Program for Freshmen**

**MEGAN HELZNER**  
mehelzner@ursinus.edu

Last Wednesday night in Paisley Lounge, first year students, Senior RAs, and student leaders, along with new Residence Life Director (RD), Jared Rodrigues, sat in a circle, ate snacks, and talked informally about drinking on Ursinus’ campus. Senior and RA, Heather Turnbach, described the panel as a chat about “lessons learned and ways to drink safely, rather than a ‘don’t drink’ session.” Seniors Sabir Peele, Allison Stouch, Ryan Daley, Heather Turnbach, James Sproule, and Julie Balko talked openly about their experiences going to parties and drinking, sharing stories about good times, as well as some not-so-good nights.

This innovative approach to alcohol education is part of new RD Rodrigues’s hope that early and open dialogue with first year students will lead to smart decisions for their college years, and all four years, at Ursinus. “There are really easy things you can do that will allow you to party and stay safe,” he says. For example, Balko and others advocated the “buddy system” for students going to parties, and Stouch encouraged students to monitor the quantity they drink, “know your limits—especially if you’re a girl.” Peele cautioned first year students not to walk down Main Street in large groups to attract the attention of the Collegeville Police, and for another practical reason: “groups of twenty people don’t get let into parties.”

First year students asked questions like, “How should I tell a friend that he or she is an obnoxious drunk?” Seniors peppered their responses with funny and not-so-funny stories about friends of theirs who have been “obnoxious,” and suggested, in this case, that first year students should subtly tell that friend to calm down and pace him or herself in the future. Other questions included, “When is it a bad time to drink?” and “How can I say ‘no’ if I don’t feel like drinking?” While drinking is a part of the college atmosphere for some people, said James Sproule, “it doesn’t have to be.”

While on another part of campus, Residence Life conducted Social Host training, informing students about the College’s official policies on alcohol and parties, in Paisley Lounge, students discussed the unofficial rules and elements of Ursinus’s party scene. Seniors Daley and Peele suggested that stealing beer from parties is not in good taste, while Turnbach cited over-enthusiastic public displays of affection as a party faux pas, and Sproule cautioned first year students about the problem of alcohol-induced fights. In the “What I Learned” program, seniors also spent time talking about the schoolwork/party balance that they have discovered, and that all students must find for themselves.

Drinking water, eating bread-like foods like pretzels, and taking Advil, were all methods the seniors suggested for warding off hangovers. But according to the panelists, if students ever found themselves in a more difficult situation about which they felt threatened, seriously ill, or otherwise uneasy, they should know that Campus Safety, Res Life and RAs, and Social Hosts are there to help them and their friends. They should be viewed as caring resources who, according to Balko, “would rather see you safe than get you in trouble.”

The seniors finished the session on a lighter note, and James Sproule left the first year students with one very important thing to keep in mind: “Don’t slide down the fountains before you’re a senior, because it’s bad luck.” So, was this untraditional approach to alcohol education on Ursinus’ campus effective? First year student, Max Kriesky thinks so. “The panel was far more effective than a dramatic presentation, or a presentation by staff and faculty, because these were people on our level, willing to talk maturely and openly upon the subject of drinking,” said Kriesky.

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**COMMENTS SOUGHT FOR TENURE REVIEW**

In accordance with the Ursinus College Faculty Handbook, student comments on teaching effectiveness and student-faculty interaction are invited at the time of a faculty member’s review for tenure. Although student letters must be signed to be considered, student names may be withheld, upon request, when their comments are shared with the Promotion and Tenure Committee, and the faculty member. This year, the following members of the faculty are being reviewed for tenure:

- Dr. Leah Berman, Mathematics & Computer Science
- Dr. Klea DaCosta, Psychology
- Dr. Sheryl Goodman, Media & Communication Studies
- Dr. Rebecca Lyczak, Biology
- Dr. Gabrielle Principe, Psychology
- Dr. Nathan Rein, Philosophy & Religion

Your feedback is strongly encouraged and will assist the Committee in its review process. Letters should be sent to Dean Judith T. Levy, Office of the Dean, by October 12, 2007.

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Features

Beyond the Condom - A Guide to Safe Sex

When the majority of students hear the term “safe sex,” they typically think of the condom. The condom is an innovation that has revolutionized the practice of safe sex by preventing bodily fluids from entering the penis or vagina, which is preventative of most sexually-transmitted infections. Throughout the years, condoms have evolved to fit the needs of the individual, whether that is through lubrication, increased sensitivity, or other options that can enhance one’s sex life. However, the condom can only aid in disease prevention to a certain extent, which is important to emphasize because sexually-transmitted infections can also be communicated to the individual that is receiving oral sex. During vaginal oral sex, dental dams and female condoms can be used to protect both partners from infection, and can be purchased locally. (If you are having trouble locating dental dams, you can consult the Planned Parenthood in your city and you will be able to aid in your search.)

Because “outercourse” (dry-humping) and mutual masturbation also often cause exposure to bodily fluids, it is important to utilize condoms and latex gloves or finger cots to prevent exposure of fluids to cuts on the hands and fingers.

In order to insure a healthy sexual relationship, it is important to communicate openly with your partner about sexual histories, feelings, and fears about starting a new relationship. Opening communication early in the relationship will make it easier in the future to express your needs and wants to your partner. Showing concern for yourself and your partner will also increase intimacy, allowing you to use the previously discussed mechanisms to make the most out of your sexual experience.

Career Corner

Write a Graduate School personal statement with pizzazz! Writing an engaging and effective personal statement that captures your strengths and career goals can be a daunting task. Admissions representatives are looking for interesting and insightful writing that does not begin with “I always wanted to be a (fill in the blank).” Consider your personal history, academic life, and work experiences.

What is special, distinctive, unique, or impressive about your life story?

Have you overcome any unusual obstacles or hardships?

What are the most compelling reasons an admissions committee should be interested in you?

Consider the following:

1. Focus on one or two specific themes. Aim for depth—not breadth.
2. Strive to make the essay unique by using real examples from your life.
3. Create a conclusion that refers back to your introduction and ties your points together.
4. Comment briefly on irregular grade trends or circumstances that affected test scores—but DO NOT dwell on them.
5. Find a way to identify your strengths and what sets you apart from other applicants so you don’t sound like everyone else.
6. Keep a positive and engaging tone and avoid boring content. Capture the reader’s attention quickly.
7. Always follow directions and answer key questions posed in the application. Adhere to word or page limits.
8. Select trusted others to read and provide feedback. Leave adequate time to edit and revise. Never send a first draft to an admissions committee without having others read through your work.

You can bring your personal statement to the Career Services Office for critique. Forward an electronic copy before your scheduled appointment. Consider consulting with staff in the Writing Center and certainly request feedback from your faculty and advisors.

Get advice on writing a personal statement along with other grad school application tips from author Don Asher, The Grad School Guru, who will be speaking on campus on Monday, October 8th at 7:30 in Pfahler Auditorium.

Happy writing!

LANE TAYLOR
Everything You Never Knew You Wanted to Know About Sex

The Language Department as a full-time Japanese Language instructor.

Yamashita was born in Tokyo where he majored in Economics as an undergrad­

ten years. He attended Soka University in Japan, however, friends of his asked him to teach their children Japanese. He has done research with Native Americans in Arizona, and he hopes to continue doing such research on small minorities here.

Yamashita is also particularly interested in the reading process of studying students, including measuring eye movement and measuring how long it takes students who are reading and absorbing information to do so. These studies are important to him in order to learn how students begin to digest and understand the texts they are reading.

Yamashita hopes that while he is here his Japanese students will learn the four skills he thinks are needed to learn a language: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. He hopes what he is here Japanese students will learn the four skills they think is needed to learn a language: listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

On a more personal note, Professor Yamashita has shared that he especially enjoys bird watching and, on occasion, rescuing birds. He likes Mexican and Turkish food, such as Turkish coffee and dolma.

Professor Yamashita looks forward to teaching at Ursinus this year, and everyone is encouraged to make his first year a successful one!

AKASYABENG
akaben@ursinus.edu

Yamashita has also taught Japanese linguistics and participated in research outside of his field. He once did research with a colleague on how to assess intelligence in both students and adults, and he collected information from many young people for this. He continues to be interested in research at Ursinus College and plans to continue studying how to preserve and protect small minorities’ languages (such as Japanese) from dying out in the United States.

According to Yamashita, Japanese minorities are not his only interest. He is also interested in any small minority living in the United States, including Native Americans. He has done research with Native Americans in Arizona, and he hopes to continue doing such research on small minorities here.

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Facility Spotlight: Yoshitomo Yamashita

Ursinus College welcomes Yoshitomo Yamashita to the Language Department as a full-time Japanese Language instructor.

Yamashita comes to us as a Japanese teacher at the University of Arizona. Before his arrival at Ursinus, he worked in Claymont for about seven years, and in total he has been teaching Japanese in the United States for about ten years.

Professor Yamashita is originally from Japan where he also taught Japanese. He attended Soka University in Tokyo where he majored in Economics as an undergraduate student. In his sophomore year at Soka University, however, friends of his asked him to teach their children Japanese. This occurred because after WWII, many Japanese who had been living in China returned to Japan, yet their children could not speak Japanese at all.

With time, Yamashita became more and more involved with these sorts of jobs, and eventually began teaching himself how to teach others Japanese. After graduation, he became a teacher of Japanese in a small private school. He also attended Ohio State University and received his master’s degree, and now he is in the final stages for receiving a Ph.D. and plans to be finished in about a month.

Overall, Yamashita has been teaching Japanese for about 20 years.

Besides simply teaching Japanese, Professor Yamashita has also taught Japanese linguistics and par-

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Wismer Hall: too Hard to Handle?

SARA ROMAINE
saromaine@ursinus.edu

Wismer Hall on our own Ursinus campus. Although a lunchtime rager may seem like fun, in reality it is a problem that is currently plaguing the school. The main reason for the current overflow is the largest incoming Freshman Class that the school has seen. With an incoming class of over four hundred and fifty students, the accommodations of the campus are being tested. Nowadays, Wismer during the lunch hour more resembles Animal House than a cafeteria. Freshman John Whitman says “it can be hard sometimes because the food you wanted isn’t available anymore.” The consensus of the student body seems to be one of concern and disapproval.

How can this problem be remedied? Director of Dining Services Scott Dube says that “historically Wismer and Zack’s are extremely busy the first two weeks of school. Towards the end of September students will become accustomed to when the best time is to eat. An example would be on Wednesday: Wednesday’s common hour starts at 12:00pm – 1:00 pm and all students enter both operations and then realize that eating later would alleviate the lines in all operations. There is always a lunchroom on the corner in Philadelphia. Instead, this hectic scene is Wismer Hall on our own Ursinus campus. Although a lunchtime rager may seem like fun, in reality it is a problem that is currently plaguing the school. The main reason for the current overflow is the largest incoming Freshman Class that the school has seen. With an incoming class of over four hundred and fifty students, the accommodations of the campus are being tested. Nowadays, Wismer during the lunch hour more resembles Animal House than a cafeteria. Freshman John Whitman says “it can be hard sometimes because the food you wanted isn’t available anymore.” The consensus of the student body seems to be one of concern and disapproval.

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Ursinus Recycling 101

ZAKARY ARN HOLD
zaarnhold@ursinus.edu

Every building at Ursinus College has trash bins coupled with can or paper recycling bins for a reason - to recycle! It is troubling to find empty recycling bins within inches of trash bins that are filled with plastic bottles, glass, and paper. The time and effort invested in providing recycling receptacles and collecting recyclables is wasted if these resources are not utilized.

The purpose of this article is to provide information on the economic and ecological benefits of recycling and an overview of recycling at Ursinus College. The combination of information and a conscious effort gives meaning to the efforts of the many students, faculty, and staff that are dedicated to campus sustainability.

Recycling is the reprocessing of raw materials to replace the need for mining extraction of new materials and provides significant economic and ecological benefits. Economic benefits include the creation of over 1 million jobs in America, the reduction of energy costs, and the creation of new markets for recycled products that stimulate the economy. For example, recycling aluminum saves 95% of the energy required to produce goods from raw materials. Plastic and paper recycling saves over 50% of the energy that would be required to burn plastic and paper waste. Also, paper and glass reprocessing saves over 50% of the water required for producing goods from raw materials. The reduction of energy and water consumption during reprocessing results in lower manufacturing costs and has translated into the creation of a $236 billion dollar a year industry according to the National Recycling Coalition.

The ecological benefits of recycling are related to the reduction of energy and water consumption, saving trees, and reducing carbon dioxide production. Interesting facts about the ecological benefits of recycling are listed below:

- Aluminum and glass can be recycled forever – yes forever!
- One ton of aluminum recycled reduces the burning of 17 barrels of oil needed for extraction of new materials.
- One ton of paper recycled saves 17 trees, 380 gallons of oil, 4,000 kilowatts of energy, and 7,000 gallons of water.
- The amount of trees saved above (17) would absorb up to 250 pounds of carbon dioxide annually.
- If all newspapers were recycled, we could save nearly 250,000,000 trees annually.
- Plastic bags and trash not recycled and thrown into the ocean kill as many as one million sea creatures annually.
- Plastic waste takes 400 years to decompose, while aluminum takes up to 500 years, and glass can take up to 4,000 years.

Water bottles, soda cans, glass jars, or magazines and many of the other products that we use daily can be recycled instead of thrown away. If we simply throw away our products, then we do not reap any of the benefits that recycling processes provide.

Kristen Roman
kroman@ursinus.edu

Wismer Hall: too Hard to Handle? has occurred before and experience from the past proves it may not be as worrisome as it seems.

For the time being, the overcrowding situation still haunts us. Hopefully the situation will be fixed soon, or else we are left with few options, none of which seem that appetizing. There is the choice to go to the dining hall (Wismer or Zack’s) and wait in the excruciatingly long lines to get your food, after which, you are forced to struggle through the hoards of people to potentially find a seat. Or, students can opt to forgo the enjoyable social interaction meal time used to bring, and stay in their rooms surviving off of Easy Mac and Cup O’ Noodles but avoiding the stress of the Wismer Hall crowds. Out of options A and B, I would personally have to pick C. While waiting in line and staying in the room is certainly appealing, there has to be another option.

Despite the dismal problem now, there is no doubt that everything will fix itself. The students will learn when the best time is to eat comfortably and the situation will relieve itself. As for now, the faculty and dining staff deserve much respect for working so hard amongst the crowds to still provide options and good food for the student body. Their help is crucial to the survival of the school, and it is greatly appreciated. In due time, the crowds will thin and meals will no longer bring stress.

KRISTEN ROMAN
kroman@ursinus.edu

features
Opinions

Should We Lower the Drinking Age?

SERENA MITHBAOKAR
serena.mithbaokar@ursinus.edu

If maturity and adulthood were to be defined by certain characteristics, responsibility would be one of them. Often, age and experience are considered, although this has been a rather debatable issue. Laws today have created a dichotomy where the world has been divided into those who are legally allowed to do certain things while there are those who are not. Most things in life are permissible when you are 18. That is, one is expected to be mature enough to be enlisted or drafted for the nation, marry or adopt children, own property, smoke, vote or hold public office, and enter into a legally binding contract. If one is considered responsible enough to handle all these issues, then why doesn’t the law trust him or her to drink alcohol?

In 1984, the Congress passed the National Minimum Drinking Age Act, which led to the establishment of the legal drinking age at 21. This has been a rather controversial move, because many believe that this restriction has not been very effective. Raising the legal age to 21 has not done much to lower cases of alcohol poisoning. Although statistics have reported that there have been fewer adults drinking, those who do indulge in drinking are doing so more heavily, harmfully and irresponsibly than ever before. Various reasons for such attitude in the youth have been discussed, with much being attributed to peer pressure. Some suggest that the drinking age should be lowered, American students have the highest rate of alcohol use among developed nations since 2005, and 21% of the population are heavy drinkers.

One of the most significant issues in the youth has been the lack of understanding of responsibility in the whole process. It would help much more. If this would be the case for a positive change, then it would definitely also incorporate many causes, like family, peers and other aspects of society that play the role in making decisions and understanding responsibility. It wouldn’t necessitate not drinking at all; it would rather make students think wisely about their decisions.

(More information available at ChooseResponsibility.org).

Have opinions?
Send them to dasergeant@ursinus.edu.

Fear of Music: The Weakerthans’ “Reunion Tour”

CHRISTOPHER SCHAEFFER
chschaeffer@ursinus.edu

Hey, remember Propagandhi? Nah, don’t feel too bad; the 90’s Canadian punk-bands was mostly forgettable save for their cheekily outspoken political crusading (a quick review of their catalogue turns up songs such as “Apparently I’m a PC Fascist,” “Homephobe Are Just Mad Cuz They Can’t Get Laid,” and ah, “Ska Sucks!”). Despite a lukewarm comeback album in 2005, I think it would be safe to say that the group’s long Satyagraha is done for.

Forlorn Propagandist John K. Samson, however, has become one of Canadian indie rock’s most high-profile figures since trading in progressive thrill and passionate vegan apologetism for Only One. “This should be a power pop hook and wry, introspective song-writing with Winnipeg outfit The Weakerthans.

Reunion Tour, the group’s 4th studio album, and their first without founding bassist John Sutton, is both a comfortable extension of their established sound and a tentative step toward more experimental, sparse arrangements as always, the band’s distinguishing feature is Samson’s song-writing; he remains, in a way, as earnest as in his polemic punk days, but with a bent towards struggling relationships, 21st century alienation and the inherent drag of living in Winnipeg as opposed to social and environmental activism. He’s got a heart on his sleeve where his politics used to be. On Reunion Tour, he turns his attention toward subjects as diverse as bus-drivers, existentially troubled cats, down and out dot-comm millionaires, and notorious Canadian bigfoot hunters. However, rather than shooting for quirky or precious, Samson tells the stories of each of these unlikely protagonists with a delicate balance of pathos and sardonic humor that feels unthinkably honest and human. “Civil Twilight,” the bands anthemic first track, is also one of its finest, lyrically. “And they bite their mits off to show me transfers, deposit charge, and I can’t stop finding your face in their faces, all rearranged, and angry like you never were.”

Musically, the band sticks, for the most part, to its comfort zone. Their effortless melding of punkish power-pop with folksy alt-country twang remains as pleasantly catchy as ever, and despite producer Ian Burtnett’s assertion that it is their most experimental album, it’s perhaps their most radio friendly as well. Single “Sun in an Empty Room” sounds a bit like Summerheath-era Wilco, and much raucous numbers such as “Relative Surplus Value” and “Reunion Tour” are driving enough and pack enough snotty bravado to appeal to even the surliest of Van-bedhead highschoolers. The tape loops and synth tricks are unobtrusive but effective. Carrol’s guitar work remains cheerfully dependent on driving power chords and irresistible hooks, and Jason Tait still carries the band with text-book-perfect pop percussion. If the band’s instrumental contingent is perhaps larger than in the past (the album sports five guest instrumentalists, and Tait breaks out the banjo and glockenspiel on occasion), it in no way veers into the pretentious or overblown. The whole production is a fine example of a band expanding its sound and tweaking it for the better, without making missteps or losing something essential.

Although just a bit over half an hour in length, Reunion Tour is one of the most fulfilling releases of the season thus far, wedded to the best of all worlds: political, social and environmental activism. Look a little closer though, and you’ll find the weary melancholy in Samson’s lonely protagonists, the subtle technical footnote in “Utilities” or “Virtue The Cat Explains Her Departure.” Or don’t. Like the Smiths or Elvis Costello at his peak, the Weakerthans achieve one of modern music’s trickiest tasks: they make this whole pop thing look easy.

On Patriot Day

DANIEL SERGEANT
dasergeant@ursinus.edu

A little-known fact about September 11th is that it is a national holiday. Enacted unanomously by Congress and signed by President Bush, it is technically a discretionary holiday. It is a day to thoughtfully consider the ramifications of the events of six years ago. Sounds nice on paper. But what’s striking about the holiday is not its intended purpose. It’s its name: Patriot Day.

It might seem innocuous enough at first glance. After all, patriotism is a good thing, right? Who would object to a day devoted to patriotism? But listen to it. Say it out loud. It’s the name: Patriot Day. If it leaves a bad taste in your mouth, rest assured you’re not alone.

Perhaps years of cynicism have blinded me to the meaning behind some platitudes, because I cannot see just how the death of some 3,000 men and women can be described as “patriotic.” To say so would imply that they died because they loved their country. As far as I have been able to discern, those killed were not especially patriotic, at least, not more so than the average segment of the American population. The people on the planes and the people in the towers were not there because they wanted to stimulate the economy – they had jobs to go to, families to provide for, meetings to attend. The people in the Pentagon may have been vaguely motivated by patriotic sentiment, but I’d bet that love of nation was not the force that drove them out of bed that morning. Even the fire department and police officers were heading in for another day at work. If it’s the innocent victims our government had wanted to honor with Patriot Day, they should have called it just that – Innocent Victim Day. But that’s not as catchy, is it?

Continued on pg. 7.

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September 13, 2007

grizzly@ursinus.edu
Why Not to Vote for Fred Thompson

As you know, we at CFD have a certain amount of political expertise, and we would like to share some with you in a new segment we call "Election 2008 for Dummies." The first installment will tell you why voting for Fred Thompson would be a bad idea. Enjoy.

1. His wife, Jeri Kehn, shows far too much cleavage. Now, normally we here at CFD are pro-cleavage, but we're not sure if this sort of fashion statement is a good one to be made by a First Lady. Can you imagine what results this might have? President Thompson could be hosting a state dinner for Kim Jong Il, and while he is trying to discuss matters of nuclear disarmament, ol' Kimmy can't stop looking at the First Lady's breasts. Thompson is a good ol' boy who wouldn't take kindly to Asian dictators ogling his lady. I don't want to think about how many wars might be started thanks to Ms. Kehn's inability to cover up.

2. He is 65 years old with a one-year-old son and a three-year-old daughter. Again, usually this would not be a bad thing. We might, under normal circumstances, say, "Good for you, Fred! Way to get yours!" And, we would celebrate his virility. But, these are not normal circumstances. After eight years of the Bush family in the White House, I think we should try to class it up a bit. I'm not sure that having Ms. Kehn (who is 24 years younger than Fred) popping out old man Thompson's freakishly-conceived children would accomplish that.

3. Didn't we learn our lesson? What I mean is that we should have learned by now not to vote based on who we would like to share a case of beer with. Out of the Republican field, I think Thompson would win that contest (although, getting drunk with Mitt Romney could certainly be a life-changing experience). But, maybe that means we shouldn't vote for him. That's how people voted in 2000 and again in 2004, and look where it got us. The guy who people wanted to drink with doesn't even drink, and now we're stuck in a war that ironically only could have been launched by a drunkard. You know, if you want to drink with a presidential candidate, your likelihood of enjoying that privilege increases as his numbers in the polls decrease. So, if you want to get buck wild with Fred Thompson (or whatever you kids say these days), you'd be better off to support someone else – like Ron Paul.

4. His presence in any campaign means no Law and Order re-runs in which he appeared will air, and that is a sad thought. Mr. Thompson exudes a certain aura of masculinity and mysticism which is better housed in the confines of Law and Order reruns than a Presidential campaign. No one can deny that the Thompson era represented the pinnacle of Law and Order. Nay, of television all together! You know where you belong, Fred; in syndication.

5. He looks like a bullfrog.

6. After Rick Santorum's defeat in 2006, Fred Thompson was assigned by the Republican Party to punish him. The punishment involved Mr. Thompson tearing out Mr. Santorum's heart and feeding it to his dog. However, Thompson misinterpreted the instructions and ate the heart himself. Given the vile status of Mr. Santorum's heart, Mr. Thompson received his own punishment of sorts; an incurable case of uncontrollable diarrhea. Unless he were to wear Depends, this would require him to shorten all public appearances such as the State of the Union address to roughly fifteen minutes.

Now that I think about it more, maybe we should give all presidents cases of uncontrollable diarrhea.

Matt and Dan have formed a 2008 presidential exploratory committee. Why not, right? To contribute, contact us at maflynty@ursinus.edu and dasergeant@ursinus.edu.

"Equilibrium" (2002)

What would happen if you took some successful (i.e. good) science fiction films, like say "The Matrix," "Logan's Run," "Fahrenheit 451," and maybe a dash of "Demolition Man," smashed them together and threw Christian Bale in for good measure? It would probably end up something like this week's flick, coming to you by request of a person who shall remain nameless in exchange for being spared the embarrassment of being responsible for un-leashing this abomination upon me. That being said, here's "Equilibrium."

In the not-so-distant future, the government has suppressed emotions through a combination of drugs and iron-fist tactics. John Preston (Christian Bale) is a top agent in charge of enforcing these laws. However, after missing one of his doses of said emotion-suppressing drug, Preston begins down a path that could bring down the fascist government and free the people of Libria (I wish I was making this up) once and for all.

One of the most mind-boggling things about this movie is how clearly it wears the bits and pieces of other movies on its sleeve. Fashion from "The Matrix"? Check. Wholly dedicated agent who questions all he once believed in...but in the future? "Logan's Run" called it...it wants its plot back. The most bizarre theft is the Dennis Leary leader of the revolution character from "Demolition Man." Really? "Equilibrium" has to be one of the most shameless movies I've seen in a long time.

After all that, you may be wondering why I'm writing about this movie in the first place. Two words: gun kata. This invented form of martial arts involving projectile weapons brings a freshness and originality to the action sequences that literally saves the movie. The fights are fluid and are endowed with a sense of believability somewhat missing from the wirework in "The Matrix." The only complaint I have about the action sequences is that there aren't more of them. After the initial fight sequence, the viewer is left to deal with the plodding plot much too long until we're treated with even more gun kata.

Speaking of the plot, it's worth noting just how ham-handed the social commentary is. The insignia of "Libria" is obviously a slightly modified swastika, and even the name is obviously the most thinly of veiled shots. Director/writer Kurt Wimmer ever goes so far as to directly steal a plot point out of "Fahrenheit 451" by having Bale's character steal a forbidden book and then get caught by a character that could expose him. If nothing else, the brazenness of the plagiarism is worth noting.

As far as acting goes, Christian Bale seems to think that he's in a much better film than he actually is, playing his character a little too seriously. Taye Diggs, on the other hand, playing the main antagonist, seems lost, appearing as if he spent the shoot wandering around the set wondering what he lost to have ended up there.

Final word that "Equilibrium" could have been a much, much worse movie, but as it stands is not a bad waste of a couple of hours. Skipping to the Look Ahead, or "Swing Kids." You can reach him at alewife@ursinus.edu.

Opinions

Patriot, cont'd from pg. 6

Then again, perhaps I am mistreading the intention of Patriot Day. Perhaps it is not about remembering the dead at all, but commemorating the feeling of national unity that the events of the day instilled in us. If that is the case, then I must beg your pardon, because I will not be participating in this year's Patriot Day festivities. The sight of slaughter does not beat the drums of national pride in my chest. What happened that day was a massacre, not a Fourth of July parade.

In the end, I am at a loss for how to explain Patriot Day. My best guess is not an optimistic one: it is a shallow attempt by our government to give meaning to a national catastrophe, to dictate a kind of cultural mythisms that will make the population more susceptible to electing the "right kind of people." A grim evaluation, to be sure, but unfortunately not an unrealistic one. Look at the way ours government has attempted to "remember the victims" (or "patriots") of 9/11. Two wars with dubious outcomes and mounting casualties. A rollback in personal freedom in the name of security. A culture of distrust and fear between the people and their elected officials. If this is not callous indifference, it is malicious manipulation, and frankly, I'm not sure which I fear more.

The Grizzly
September 13, 2007

grizzly@ursinus.edu
Dubble Vision: Rank 'em

JASON DAVIS
jadavis@ursinus.edu

Alright, so this week I'm going to do something a little different, but none the less... exciting. You see, I was unable to get out and attend any games this week (thank you capstone), so I don't have any awesome insight or game observations... but that gets boring anyway, right? What I do have is something new, something unprecedented, something out of this world! Ok maybe it's not all of that, but I'm pumped.

This week I will unveil my first ever Ursinus College Fall Athletics Power Rankings, or in short... the UCFAFP's. That's right folks. Every sport has their own conference little different, but none the less... exciting. You see, I was putus. So this week displays a more powerful presence week in and week out to be ranked in any other poll. Therefore our beloved girls Jadavis@ursinus.edu

UCFAFP's

1. Coach Brian Thomas

No single entity associated with Ursinus Athletics displays a more powerful presence week in and week out than our beloved Athletic Director. I think I even heard the LaSalle fans chanting his name at our football opener. Despite their fans chanting his name at our football opener, they man up and little shaky, however they are showing some signs of coming together. And I have to hand it to them, when they need to buckle down and get a touchdown, they man up and come through.

2. Field Hockey

They may be ranked #1 almost everywhere else, including nationally, but I don't think Brian Thomas is eligible to be ranked in any other poll. Therefore our beloved girls will have to open UCFAFP's at #2. Back to back could open some eyes though.

3. Football

This team is just fun to watch. The offense is still a little shaky, however they are showing some signs of coming together. And I have to hand it to them, when they need to buckle down and get a touchdown, they man up and come through.

4. Appalachian State

They may have beaten Michigan, but we're undefeated against Division 1-AA teams. Sorry I just had to do this.

5. Women's Soccer

They're currently 1-1-1, but they've been playing some top competition, and I know they will be at the top of the conference at the end.

6. Cross Country

The women are off to an awesome start, finishing first at Del Val and then second at our own UC Invitational. The men keep improving with two top ten finishes in their first two races.

7a. Men's Soccer

7b. Volleyball

I thought for a while about these two. Both teams are off to their best starts since I've been here. I have a feeling first year Coach Kyle Rush is just what the guys' soccer team needed to jump start the program. He's young, energetic, and looks like he's having a great time coaching. And volleyball is in a similar situation with Coach Diana McNamee entering her second season. Both teams are looking good, but I'm going to wait a little before moving them up.

8. Cheerleading

I have enjoyed watching them this year. Some of their flips and cartwheels and stuff are pretty cool. Captains Ryan Romberger and Danielle Indelicato along with their advisor/coach Erin Dickerson from over in the admissions office are really doing a great job.

9. Chain Gang

Simply put, if the lines don't get laid...the games won't get played.

There you have it, the first UCFAFP's.

UC Volleyball Spikes to Success

ASHLEY DROGALIS
asdrogalis@ursinus.edu

The heat is on for the women of the Ursinus Volleyball team. After bumping and spiking their way through pre-season training, the Bears anticipate an exciting season full of tough competition. With only four returning members, the team is full of fresh-faced new talent. Although they may be newcomers to the UC team, these ladies show no lack of hard work or determination.

The team's impressive skills on the court demonstrate the strong bond that the new mix of players have built. Some of their strongest areas of play lie in their hitters and tough defense. Unfortunately, the team suffers from two members out of play due to injuries. One of their main concerns is getting these ladies healthy and on the court again as soon as possible. Hopefully we'll see these two players soon with the help of UC Volleyball's unity and support.

Coach Diana McNamee leads the Lady Bears for the second year in a row. Her high expectations and intense practice regimen keep the team on its toes and ready to play hard. This year's captains for the UC Volleyball Team are Senior Jill Alspach and Junior Kelly Hosier, both experienced and well-qualified for the position. With McNamee's skilled guidance and the Alspach-Mosier duo for leadership, the team hopes to come out with a winning record this season.

Ursinus Volleyball began their season with a tri-match against both Wesley and Delaware Valley on Saturday, September 1st. Although the Bears suffered a loss from the five-game match up with Delaware, they earned their first win of the season later that day against Wesley. Stand out newcomer Mary Kate Wilmoth topped team and match-highs with her 15 kills, and also led the team with a fierce 28 digs. Another impressive contributor during Saturday's matches was freshman Gabrielle Gallace, serving up 11 aces against Delaware Valley and 23 against Wesley.

Thus far for the season, the team's record stands at 1-2, with a record of 0-0 in Centennial Conference action. The team looks forward to bringing the same drive and intensity they have been to their match against Cabrini. Senior Captain Jill Alspach commented on her enthusiasm toward the Bears potential: "There is more intensity and passion on the court this year. We jump higher, we're stronger, we're faster and I think we are tough competition for the other teams in the conference."

Bearly Reminders

Women's Soccer

9/15 vs. Franklin & Marshall Volleyball

9/14-15 Lebanon Valley Tournament Cross Country

9/15 Baptist Bible Invitational Field Hockey

9/15 @ Haverford Football

9/15 @ Juniata Men's Soccer

9/15 @ Gettysburg

Men's Soccer Stumbles in Home Opener

RUSSELL SMITH
rssmith@ursinus.edu

Ursinus fell to 1-2 on its 2007 campaign Wednesday when the Bears suffered a 4-0 defeat at the hands of Lebanon Valley. Ursinus hoped to treat its fans to a win in its home opener, but a powerful Lebanon Valley squad (3-0) dominated from the start.

The scoring opened only three minutes in when Travis Steedle pumped on a rebound off goalie Ed de Groot and slipped a pass by the Ursinus defenders to an open King Saah who tapped in the score. Lebanon Valley continued to pressure early, but the Bears earned the next opportunity only a few minutes later. Dustin Young broke free on goal after a well developed counter attack only to be denied by Lebanon Valley keeper Tim Mehl.

The pace of the game continued to be wild and offensive as Lebanon Valley drew a free kick 25-yards away from the Ursinus goal. From there, Dan Pitonyak delivered a perfect ball onto the head of Ben Wagner who redirected into the Bears' net for a 2-0 lead.

Dejected but not defeated, Ursinus continued to push for scoring chances. It looked like they had gotten one back when John George turned at the top of the box and found himself one on one with the Lebanon Valley keeper. However, George's shot flew over the crossbar and the score remained the same.

The Bears continued to pressure for the remainder of the first half, earning a series of corner kicks, but ultimately, nothing came from their hard work. The Bears were missing that stroke of luck or moment of brilliance to get on the scoreboard on Wednesday, and as the first half ended ultimately, nothing came from their hard work. The Bears were missing that stroke of luck or moment of brilliance to get on the scoreboard on Wednesday, and as the first half ended it became clear that the soccer gods were not on Ursinus's side. With 19 seconds left in the half, Lebanon Valley whipped a cross onto the head of David Dundore who converted it into a 3-0 lead. That goal sealed the victory for the visitors who were able to coast comfortably through the second half to an eventual 4-0 win.

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