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The Grizzly, February 10, 2009

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Caught that nasty cold bug?
The solution may lie in the gym, not the pharmacy

Gianna Paone
Grizzly Staff Writer

You have a cold—sneezing, stuffed nose, flared-up sinuses, etc.—and probably want it to disappear as soon as possible. Do you hit up the doctor? Pharmacy? Your pillow? Your mom? Believe it or not, doctors are becoming increasingly convinced that your solution—or at least a little help—may lie in the gym. Recently, new attention has been brought to two studies which were performed over a decade ago. The studies sought to find whether having a cold affects one’s ability to exercise, if people should water down their exercise routines if they have colds, and if exercise could have any effects—positive or negative—on colds and their symptoms.

One of the studies began when Thomas Weidner, a Ball State University athletic trainer, was concerned over what advice to give athletes suffering from colds. Along with exercise physiologist Leonard Kaminsky, as well as fellow researchers Tracy Cranston and Terry Schurr, Weidner selected 24 males and 21 females between the ages of 18 and 29 to observe in the study. They would be willingly infected with the most common viral infective agent for the human body—the rhinovirus—which is also a known driving force for upper respiratory illness (URI), or the “common cold.”

Along with 10 men and women used as control subjects, meaning they remained uninfected, each individual’s exercise capability and lung function (varying among all the subjects) were tested. The 45 experimental men and women were then inoculated through their noses, and their cold symptoms soon appeared. At the symptoms’ peak severities, which occurred after two days, the subjects in both the control and experimental groups were asked to run on treadmills at levels of speed that varied from medium to intense. To the researchers’ surprises, their exercise capabilities, lung functions, and metabolic activities were unaffected by the workout, regardless of persistent cold symptoms or the individuals’ complaints of “feeling fatigued.” They concluded that having a cold does not seem to affect a person’s ability to exercise.

“The black in history: A three-part series” is continued on page 4.

Roger Lee
Grizzly Features Editor

Black History Month is a time of celebration and remembrance. It is a time to reflect on those that have paved the way for the success, development, and accomplishments of African Americans. In this special three-part series dedicated to Black History Month, I will spotlight three individuals who can be called stars, innovators and giants in their respective fields.

This week I will look at the life and times of music giant, Ms. Patti Labelle. This 64-year-old powerhouse has been in the music industry for over 50 years. Patti’s longevity in the business speaks to the talent and determination that she possesses. She is more than an amazing R&B vocalist, but the true definition of a musical superstar. On Patti’s website, her biography reads, “One notable soulful maven whose indelible talent has earned her a rightful place among rhythm and blues royalty is the incomparable, Patti Labelle.”

Patti LaBelle has developed her image along with the times. In her debut 1960s quartet Patti Labelle & the Bluebells, the powerhouse stepped out on the scene as the sweet and sassy lead singer. Although the group dismantled before becoming a hit, new 1970s trio, Patti’s voice never wavered. Her strong pipes, rich soulful tone, and astonishing four-octave range made Patti’s voice a force to be reckoned with. It stood out among the retro trio Labelle where Patti belted out hit after hit. Labelle’s funky wardrobe and hairstyles made the group a classic representation of the raving 1970s. By the 1980s when Patti reintroduced herself as a solo artist, her humungous Mohawks and leather outfits took her into the next decade with confidence and style. According to the official Patti Labelle website, “Patti’s artistic evolution has enabled her to be a chameleon without diminishing her edge, vocal prowess or legion of fans.” In an interview Patti adds, “I’m always going to be on a journey and I can only hope with my new discoveries that I will always be able to please my fans.”

“The black in history: A three-part series” is continued on page 4.
Caitlin Dalik
Grizzly News Editor

Octuplets
A southern California woman gave birth to the nation’s second live-born set of octuplets on Monday, Jan. 26. Doctors were only expecting seven babies and were surprised when they found the eighth. The octuplets are now the longest living set in history. Doctors said that three of the babies need breathing assistance, but otherwise the eight didn’t appear to have any serious problems. The six boys and two girls, who range in weight from 1 pound 8 ounces to 3 pounds 4 ounces, were doing well in incubators following their Caesarean-section delivery at Kaiser Permanente hospital in Bellflower, California. The babies were implanted by in vitro fertilization from sperm donated by a friend.

Controversy arose across the nation when it was reported that the mother, who was initially unidentified but later recognized as Nadya Suleman, already has six children under the age of seven. The public was angry that the mother was currently unemployed, still in school, and had her parents taking on a lot of the financial responsibility for her children. She denied rumors that she continued to have children for fame or to make money off of a reality television show. She told the press that as an only child, she had always dreamed of a large family and being a mother.

Australia fires
Australian officials said on Monday, Feb. 9, that the wildfires in southern Australia killed at least 173 people, destroyed whole towns, and left hundreds homeless. The fires may have been deliberately set. A task force has been assembled to investigate if the disaster was a case of arson. If so, the arsonists could be charged with murder.

The wildfires tore through towns in an area northeast of Melbourne on Saturday, Feb. 7. A combination of the severe drought and winds that reached 62 miles an hour with temperatures which reached 117 degrees caused the worst first conditions in Australia, experts said. About 750 homes were destroyed leaving citizens displaced with nothing.

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V-day is not just the day of St. Valentine

Liz Kilmer
Grizzly Staff Writer

Last Saturday marked the beginning of Ursinus’ first ever V-Day celebration, a campus-wide campaign lasting through March 26. “Everything is coming along well,” said event organizer Ashley O’Connell, who explained that March 26 is the date of Breakaway Student Production’s last performance of “The Vagina Monologues,” a major component to the V-Day operation.

So what does V-day stand for? It may seem apparent, given its duration through February and affiliation with the Vagina Monologues; however, “vagina” is not solely what the “V” represents. Topping off the threefold meaning is “victory,” seemingly dissimilar in terms of its obviousness. Seemingly, however, is the key word.

In fact, after researching the global movement, few would disagree that its profound international success is anything less than victorious. Within the past decade, V-Day has raised over $60 million toward its main objective: stopping violence against women and girls. According to the organization’s website, this means anything from rape and battery to sexual slavery and genital mutilation. Each year, V-Day selects a group of violently mistreated women and strives to “get them” out of these situations, said O’Connell, “They provide them with shelter, food, clothing and any other necessities.”

Verizon grant to support ESL program

Serena Mithbaokar
Grizzly Staff Writer

The student-initiated ESL (English as a Second Language) Program was recently awarded a $10,000 grant from Verizon to support students teaching English language skills to service workers at Ursinus. The ESL program run by Ursinus was launched in the fall of 2007, and has about 20 students who work with the janitorial staff at Ursinus. Many of the students are Spanish majors and many have studied abroad in Spain, which facilitates a better student-worker relationship, even though Spanish fluency is not mandatory for tutoring. Another goal of the ESL program is to make a connection between the students and the service workers, building on Ursinus’ sense of community.

With this new grant, the Ursinus ESL program plans to remodel and continue the success of the program. This is the second time Ursinus has received a grant from Verizon, as the ESL program here received a $9,600 grant from Verizon in February, 2007. The program leaders hope to use this money to recruit more students to the ESL program and take care of the necessary compensation rewarded to these students who work hard toward it. Christian Rice, advisor to the ESL program, director of the Bonner Program, and lecturer of philosophy and religion explains, “The ESL program is really a homegrown student project. We plan on using this money to maintain a consistent base of student interest and purchase supplies for the program such as textbooks and notebooks.”

Ursinus students tutor the service workers in communicating orally and constructing essays in English. They conduct group tutoring, but they also work on a one-on-one basis with the workers. The ESL program meets twice a week, on Thursdays and Fridays from 12-1 p.m. “We are very thankful that the management of the janitorial service has allowed the workers to take time out their busy work schedule,” explains Rice.

The ESL program is also helping to create a better relationship between the workers and the campus community. Verizon has always been involved in many initiatives to promote literacy. Rice explains how Ursinus received the grant: “Verizon heard about our student-run program and they believed it was very consistent with their objective of promoting literacy in communities.”

Daniel J. Reavy, Director of External Affairs for Verizon Pennsylvania said, “Verizon is proud to improve the quality of life for youth and families by empowering the community with innovative tools and resources. We’re investing in programs, such as our partnership with Ursinus College, to reach every type of learner across the lifespan and to touch people’s lives by focusing on education, health and family safety in the 21st century. We understand that education does not begin or end in the classroom.”

Serena Mithbaokar
Grizzly Staff Writer

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Rejects make the music matter most

Laurel Salvo
Grizzly News Editor

From my front row seat I observe an excited 16 year old girl to my left with black eyeliner in the shape of “AAR <3” written across both cheeks haphazardly, and Tyson Ritter (frontman for the All-American Rejects) standing two feet in front of my face. It’s the middle of their set about seven songs in at the TLA, having just finished performing their newest single “Gives You Hell” of their most recent album, “When the World Comes Down” that hit stores after our concert date took place. Standing on the edge of the stage as close to our faces as he could get, sweaty and grinning a lop-sided smile, Ritter moved his hands flamboyantly as he mentioned that for the last two years, the band has been working hard to produce great albums, not just a few great songs.

The All American Rejects was the first concert I ever attended in 2005, just after “Move Along” had debuted. “Dirty Little Secret” was on MTV constantly as well, blasting out of top 40 stations every single time I turned the radio on. It’s been an incredibly long time since they’ve toured and with the release of their newest record some two-and-a-half years later, I found myself appreciating them more after he said this.

Granted, it’s exciting for a band to be able to produce albums faster so they can tour more often and advance their popularity via ticket sales and record sales. It’s great to see one of your favorite artists on stage more often than you can wish for, too. Even more so, with the ever-growing digital download era we’ve all found ourselves in as music consumers, it’s so easy to buy splices of albums on iTunes in place of a compilation of 12-18 tracks. Despite this, the negative effects of over-producing records spirals us all downwards in the end.

Some bands I listen to are and have been doing this for some time. However, after the concert I attended at the TLA when the third album of The All American Rejects dropped on Interscope to purchase, what a breath of fresh air it was to be able to listen to all 19 tracks and appreciate each and every one, and realize that they’re not making a copy of their last album with singles that stand only slightly apart from before. As a listener, it’s more than fantastic to preview a new album track by track and get a different buzz from each one, and to realize these songs don’t remind you of anything else at all. With “When the World Comes Down,” although many of the songs carry less of a combustive energy than “Move Along,” the contemplative and sometimes bluesy sounds seem to be working. Once female vocals are added, the instruments and transitions begin to feel more experimental. Poignant lyrics come from a different place of a growing writer in Tyson, the overall feel of individuality track by track sets up completely separate moods and undertones for the listener.

Remembering back to when I saw them at the Giant Center in Hershey years ago, compared to the performance they put on this past November, their passion on stage is still perpetual, their lyrics still sung with heart, and the charismatic outlook on how their fans matter to them more than anything comes through stronger than ever. They’re still top 40 and considered a “pop rock” band, but I continue to have a great deal of respect for the All American Rejects. They are not loosening themselves among the waves of bands that are set together more than apart from the scene.

Patti Labelle’s fans are not just music listeners, but some of today’s current music stars. This was evident in the recently aired Patti Labelle tribute concert filmed last fall. The event was sponsored by the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) and was titled “An Evening of Stars featuring Patti Labelle.” The concert featured numerous singers paying tribute to the legendary soul diva.

Today’s stars sang their hearts out as Patti cheered them on from the audience. Two standout performances of the evening came from American Idol alumni Jennifer Hudson and Fantasia. Jennifer finished in seventh place during season three of the hit reality series, while Fantasia was crowned winner of the same season. Both have found success in their own right, with Fantasia starring in “The Color Purple” on Broadway and recording two albums. Jennifer Hudson earned a Grammy from her work in the movie version of “Dreamgirls.” She also starred in “The Secret Life of Bees” alongside Queen Latifah and Alicia Keys while releasing a top-selling debut album that is in stores now. The two delivered heart-wrenching performances that had Patti Labelle literally jumping out of her seat. Jennifer’s soulful and gospel-tinged cover of “Somewhere over the Rainbow” had Patti near tears. Fantasia brought down the house with an extremely energetic version of “Lady Marmalade” that showed off her vocal range, dynamics, versatility and showmanship, all of which Patti is best known for.

The concert debuted in late January on the Black Entertainment Network (BET). It was amazing to see some of today’s brightest stars pay tribute to Patti Labelle through song. They made the powerhouse’s timeless classics current and catchy for today’s audiences to latch on to. The songs reminded me of Patti’s many musical contributions to the record industry and R&B music as a whole. It appears the middle-aged songstress is not slowing down at all either. The Philadelphia native can be seen starring in TV One’s popular “Living it up! With Patti Labelle.” Patti can be seen in the recording studio, cooking at home, shopping, and enjoying life in each episode. Her voice still possesses the same power, range, and emotion that brought Patti on to the music scene over 50 years ago. This singer will remain in history as one of African American music’s best singers and performers. She is a true representation of a legend both in the music industry and in life.

The biology of love

Caitlin Dalik
Grizzly News Editor

So you’re in love. Butterflies in stomach, stupid grin on your face, long phone conversations, and counting down the days till Valentine’s Day. So in the spirit of the Hallmark holiday, I’ve decided to investigate the effects of love. The biology of what makes us act so smitten. Is love just some drug we become addicted to? Some scientists say “yes.”

Scientists have found that falling in love is physiologically similar to mental illness. Scientists have also found that the same chemical process that occurs with addiction also occurs when we fall in love. So love is like a drug that we become addicted to and obsess over constantly. Sounds about right.

However, the chemicals of love change depending on the stage. Scientists have discovered three main stages: lust, attraction, and attachment. This is the cycle that any long-term relationship follows.

A Rutgers University study found that the “lust stage” is driven by sex hormones, testosterone and estrogen, in both men and women.

In the “attraction stage,” there are three main neurotransmitters involved: adrenaline, dopamine, and serotonin. It’s the initial feeling of falling in love that activates your stress response increasing adrenaline. Dr. Helen Fisher, anthropologist at Rutgers University, says that adrenaline has the “charming effect that when you unexpectedly bump into your new love, you start to sweat, your heart races and your mouth goes dry.” Dopamine triggers an intense feeling of pleasure, so intense, it has the same effect on the brain as cocaine. Dopamine can increase energy levels, create less need for food and sleep, focus attention, and produce an overall blissful feeling. Serotonin is one of love’s most important chemicals. Researchers have found that those with obsessive disorders and those in love had serotonin levels 40 percent below normal, which suggests that love is similar to a type of obsession.

“The biology of love” is continued on page 5.

“The black in history: A three-part series” is continued from the front page.
Teaching Assistants spotlight series: Cemile Tat

Serena Mithbaokar
Grizzly Staff Writer

Spotlight Series: This is the first part of a four-part series on the four foreign language teaching assistants here at Ursinus. Since 1968, the Foreign Language Teaching - Assistant Program (FLTA) program, by the Fulbright Program, has recruited native speakers to assist with foreign language instruction programs at educational institutions in the U.S. According to the FLTA website, the Program provides an opportunity for young, international teachers of English to hone their teaching language skills, while extending their knowledge and experience of their cultures to American students.

Ursinus College has four teaching assistants, one each for language.

Cemile Tat is a 25 year old student from Berlin, Germany, currently studying American and British Literature and culture at Berlin’s Freie Universität and Potsdam University, Potsdam.

SIFE: Advice from Ursinus alumni

UC SIFE Alumni Advice Column
SIFE – SIFE@ursinus.edu

Alumni Advice is a resource for students to discover and network with Ursinus alumni. SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise) and Career Services have partnered together to provide students with a network of graduates to connect with and to assist in your career development. Networking and mentorship are two of the most important resources when in pursuit of a job or internship.

This Week’s Alumni: Michael R. Flemming (1998)
Industry: Financial Services
Job Title: Senior Investment Analyst, Vanguard.
Education: BA in Economics & Business Administration.
Minor in Japanese.

A Day in the Life
Briefly describe what you do.

As a Senior Investment Analyst, I evaluate funds and the performance of financial markets and portfolios, analyze market and economic data and create presentations for internal and external distribution, and evaluate and present multiple investment styles across asset classes in an in-depth and objective manner. I also provide documented analysis of Vanguard’s funds, advisors and markets, and tailor discussions of their performance with various audiences, and work with business units to understand client needs.

What course at Ursinus helped you the most, or was the most useful for application in your job?

Not surprisingly, my entire EcBA course work was directly related to my current role. If I had to select one class it would be macro economics class. I would add that my Japanese classes were also important. These classes gave me the confidence to stretch myself academically, which is a strength of the liberal arts education.

Breaking into the Industry
What was your first job after graduating Ursinus College?

I started as a service administrator in operations at Vanguard.

Are you currently still employed with that same job? If not, what other jobs have you had?

I have been with Vanguard my entire career. For the past eight years I have been in the same role, albeit with increasing levels of responsibility.

The Ursinus Connection
Were there any outside activities that helped you, as well?

I was both an orientation assistant and intern for three years. These activities allowed me to grow as a student leader, which is an element that companies like to see in prospective employees.

What did you wish you had done on campus that you thought would be helpful with getting you where you are today?

I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Ursinus and my involvement in a number of different organizations and activities. However, with the benefit of hindsight, I would have gotten more involved with multicultural activities. Is there any other advice that you would like to give Ursinus College students? Anything you wish you had known when you were still in college?

It goes without saying that college can be very stressful. Try to find a balance between both academics and outside activities. Most employers look for students who excel academically, while being involved in outside activities. However, don’t stretch yourself too thin with a lot of activities. My advice is to be an active member in a few activities, than a passive member of many activities.

To learn more about Mike and other Ursinus alumni, check out the Alumni Career Profiles page on the Career Services website.

Want to request more information on a successful Ursinus Alumni your professional career of interest? Email SIFE at sife@ursinus.edu. We would love to hear your feedback about this week’s selection!

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“The biology of love” is continued on page 5.

And finally there’s the “attachment stage,” where couples have become committed. This is the stage that allows couples to stay together “for better or worse,” and raise a family. Dr. Fisher has found two hormones responsible for this stage: oxytocin and vasopressin. Oxytocin is the powerful hormone released during an orgasm for both men and women, which also creates a desire to cuddle after sex. According to researchers at the University of California, San Francisco, the hormone oxytocin has been shown to be “associated with the ability to maintain healthy interpersonal relationships and healthy psychological boundaries with other people.” Couples that are able to find ways to stimulate oxytocin levels have the highest rate of success. The hormone helps to bond couples together, so the more sex, the stronger the bond. Surprisingly, there are perfumes on the market that contain oxytocin although doctors say that they contain too little to act as an aphrodisiac. After sex, vasopressin, an anti-diuretic hormone, is released. It’s another chemical that has been associated with long-term, monogamous relationships. According to the Rutgers University study, Dr. Fisher believes that the combination of oxytocin and vasopressin can interfere with the dopamine and norepinephrine pathways, which might explain why passionate love fades as attachment grows.

So love really is like a drug, a feeling that with hormones pulsing through our bodies makes us act so inattentive with our significant other.

Are you interested in writing for The Grizzly?!
If so, come to our meetings every Monday at 6:15 in Olin 103 or email one of the editors.

THANKS!
Losing is hard with Joseph O’Neill’s new novel “Netherland”

Chris Schaeffer
Grizzly Staff Writer

In “One Art,” Elizabeth Bishop wrote that “the art of losing isn’t hard to master.” In Joseph O’Neill’s “Netherland,” released in 2008 and a ubiquitous title on year-end lists, this poetic axiom is challenged—losing is hard, O’Neill suggests, and requires everything you have. The novel, described by James Wood as “a post-colonial retelling of “The Great Gatsby” is in fact a fascinating inversion of the context of Fitzgerald’s novel. Where Gatsby rose in affluent East Egg amidst 1920s high-spirits and optimism, “Netherland” takes place in New York rattled by the events of 9/11 and a London politically confused and morally adrift, with its purported Gatsby-analogue, Chuck Ramkissoon, moving in subaltern circles, losing isn’t hard to move on to the next (perhaps more) interesting book about cricket I’ve ever read. In a handful of years dominated by overhyped novels and memoirs of intense but fleeting interest, ‘Netherland’ deserves every ounce of attention it has received.

Another frequent claim is that “Netherland” is “a 9/11 novel,” which is in some ways just as untrue. While the events of 9/11 do play a major part in setting up the plot, most of this takes place before the novel begins, and while the narrative does jump back and forth from London in the 70s, to Trinidad and back again, 9/11 is mostly dealt with as a catalyst rather than as an event in and of itself. The most poignant treatment of the event is near the end of the novel, when Hans is confronted with the difference between his first-hand experience with 9/11 and how his fellow upper-middle class European bankers experienced it. It’s less an act of physical violence in the novel so much as the heart of a chain-reaction upsetting themselves into the national jigsaw puzzle, financially, socialy, emotionally, and spiritually. O’Neill strolls into the realm of easy clichés and proceeds to wreck up the place, flipping things over and turning them inside out until every familiar trope, the fat black gangster, the emotionally rigid businessman, the estranged marriage, the affair, the murder, the flashback, all the ingredients of a staggeringly mediocre novel, become strange and new. The most useful similarity between this novel and “The Great Gatsby” is in fact their dissimilarity with the tropes of their time, their transformation of the mundane into the meaningful.

In “Netherland,” O’Neill, an Irish born, half-Turkish writer raised in the Netherlands, has written what is already being referred to as one of the great novels of the American tradition, one featuring a cast of immigrants, expatriates, aliens legal and otherwise, newcomers and outsiders. As a document of the start of this century it captures the restlessness and the sense of shifting boundaries like no other book I can think of. As a portrayal of New York City it ranks with “Bright Lights Big City,” “The Age of Innocence,” and “Fortress of Solitude.” It’s also easily the most (the only?) interesting book about cricket I’ve ever read. In a handful of years dominated by overhyped novels and memoirs of intense but fleeting interest, “Netherland” deserves every ounce of attention it has received.

Environment in crisis: Is Ursinus preparing students well enough?

Kristi Blust
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gasses are causing global temperatures to rise: the polar ice caps are melting, the oceans are warming, and marine species are being wiped out, among other things. Before you stop and move on to the next (perhaps more) cheerful article, consider this: these facts are scary, they are not remotely amusing to think about, and there are no simple solutions. I’ve heard it more times than I care to recount: just leave the environment to the scientists and tree huggers. On behalf of future generations and those cute little polar bears way up north whose habitat is quickly melting away, I urge you to reconsider. Read on, allow yourself to absorb these “inconvenient truths,” because financial crises and the economy aside, global warming and all of its horrific consequences will still be waiting for us at the end of the road. Isn’t it better we address these issues now, while we still have the time to make changes? In choosing this path, we may stand a chance of averting the worst effects of global climate change.

If you are an environmental or psychology major at Ursinus College, you are no stranger to information about climate change. As part of his experimental psychology course, the ‘infamously’ challenging psychology 210, Professor Bruce Rideout, has been distributing information about climate change and measuring student attitudes and knowledge about environmental issues for 20 years. Dr. Rideout’s ongoing research on environmental attitudes has shown that even brief exposure (2-3 weeks in psych 210) significantly improves student awareness on the environmental problems we face. While the information distributed during this environmental module is useful for psychology majors, what about the rest of the Ursinus community? Are we adequately informed to take the future in stride and recognize the opportunities inherent in crisis? Perhaps a little background here may be helpful.

According to information posted on the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) website, the burning of fossil fuels, such as coal and oil, have caused an increase in the concentration of “heat-trapping” gasses in the earth’s atmosphere. This buildup has, over the last two hundred years, warmed the earth substantially. The average surface temperature on the earth has risen by approximately 1.2 to 1.4°F in the last 100 years! In fact, since 1850, the eight warmest years to be recorded have occurred since 1998. The implications for these temperature changes are vast and far reaching, and affect you. Global warming has been associated with higher sea levels, changes in the range and distribution of plants and animals, trees blooming earlier, lengthening of growing seasons, ice on rivers and lakes freezing later and breaking up earlier, and even adverse health effects on humans. For example, smog, air pollution resulting from the interaction of sunlight with certain chemicals in the atmosphere, can lead to respiratory problems, heart attacks, even lung cancer.

So, back to the original question: are we prepared to deal with the crises ahead? I have recently learned that some readings pertaining to global warming have been implemented into the second semester of C.I.E. While this implementation is a step in the right direction, I do not feel it is enough. Lights are left on in empty dorm rooms, classroom projectors left on while classes are not in session, and I don’t even want to think about all the garbage cans overflowing with disposable Jazzman’s cups. All of these observations seem to convey a lack of understanding among members of the UC community concerning the environment and the gravity of the climate crises that will likely come.

Ursinus prides itself in graduating enlightened, socially responsible individuals who are prepared to contribute positively to society. Being aware of the current state of the environment would seem to be an integral part of an Ursinus education, taking the college’s goals into account; however, I am continuously amazed at how little my non-psyc and environmental major friends know about these issues. It is time that we do more, Ursinus. Whether it be to make climate change education a bigger part of the required curriculum here, invest in alternative forms of energy (solar panels, anyone), or some other way, let us continue to set the bar high for liberal arts colleges across the country. Look for articles in the coming weeks on current environmental issues and little things you can do to make a positive impact on the environment.
How to make Hollywood’s biggest night fun again

There aren’t many televised events as momentous and important as the Academy Awards. On the same token, there aren’t many televised events as boring, either. You’d be hard pressed to find a handful of people who actually enjoy watching the Oscars for the entertainment of the show itself. Sure, we’d all like to find out who the winners are and simply go to bed, but that isn’t how Oscar chooses to run the show. Last year, the writer’s strike canceled the Golden Globe Awards and forced the show to become almost a silent auction announcement at a charity event. Winners were simply announced by television personalities and there were absolutely no movie stars to be seen. The frightening part about all this was the fact that this particular format actually worked quite well. The awards were finished before the early morning and there was no pointless drama to be had. This year, there are Oscar truths we have come to accept: Heath, Kate, “Slumdog”…they’re all going to win. Why sit through three hours of dull programming and lame acceptance speeches to learn something you already know? Last year’s Golden Globes broadcast has terrified Academy insiders and those behind the Oscar telecast. Ratings for recent ceremonies have made the stock market look successful. Hollywood is beginning to realize that, someday, the Oscars may become a simple list of names, categories, and winners. To help boost interest and save the Oscars, I am offering the following remedies:

Nominate Hollywood’s stars
Melissa Leo? Richard Jenkins? I wouldn’t be able to pick these people out of a lineup, much less know who they are and which films they’ve been nominated for. Both, I’m sure, are very talented actors, but the Oscars should forget about talent and nominate the stars who draw big crowds at the movie theatre. Now, I’m not saying Rob Schneider or David Spade should be thrown nominations for being solid box office draws, but I am suggesting that the Academy choose bigger names and brighter stars. Replace Jenkins with Leonardo DiCaprio and you’ve got a million more viewers. Kick out Melissa Leo and bring in Nicole Kidman’s turn in “Australia.” Do you really believe that Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt deserved nominations this past year? Of course not. However, the Academy was thinking in terms of the show: this power couple is sure to draw a few million people to their television sets. Think bigger and brighter, Oscar voters—not smaller and more unusual.

Do something with the Best Song category

While the Grammys is a poor excuse for an awards show, it is one hell of a concert. Music groups coming out of retirement, never-before-seen duets, jaw-dropping performances from our favorite acts. The Oscars need to incorporate some of the Grammy trademarks into its three-hour timeslot and fast: last year’s performances of nominated songs from “Enchanted” were so dull that they made the Coen Brothers seem interesting. First, the right people have to be nominated. Snubbing Bruce Springsteen’s song from “The Wrestler” was a huge mistake, as he could have definitely added a much-needed spark to the telecast. M.I.A.’s monster hit “Paper Planes” was also eligible for being included in “Slumdog Millionaire,” but the Academy instead went with a song from “Wall-E” and two “Slumdog” imports from India. The nominees themselves are so important in a category like this, and Academy members have essentially voted themselves into a corner. Second, make the performances exciting. A few years back, a nominated song from the “South Park” film was met with laughs and huge applause. Only two years ago, Three 6 Mafia’s performance for “Hustle and Flow” not only won them an award but became the most memorable moment of the night. Instead of using the Best Song category as filler, make the performances something every viewer will want to see. When Beyonce volunteered to perform almost every nominated song at the 2005 Oscars, it was something people tuned in to witness. Remember: we want to see film and music stars, not obscure stage acts that could be found performing in the local community center down the street. And finally, follow in the steps of the Golden Globes and add a Best Musical or Comedy Film category to the Oscars. The Best Song category becomes so much more important when the film it originates from is nominated as well.

Find a host worth watching

We miss you, Billy Crystal, more than you may ever know. The venerable host and master of Oscar ceremonies was so good in the 90s that it didn’t matter which films were nominated. His parodies of famous movie scenes and popular songs were enough to keep the telecast moving, and his one-liners after acceptance speeches (“Jack Palance has just bungee-jumped off the Hollywood sign”) were comedic genius. Lately, though, Oscar hosts have seemed more like nagging waiters at a fancy restaurant: sure, they’re fine in the early part of the evening, but why do they have to keep checking up on the proceedings? This year’s show will feature Aussie Hugh Jackman as host, and those close to the ceremony are saying that he will be evocating Crystal performances.

Root for the underdog—not the “Slumdog”

As I stated before, it has become common knowledge that “Slumdog Millionaire” is poised to win Best Picture of the Year. So who enjoys high drama more than the stars of Hollywood? If you’re one of the few people on Earth lucky enough to vote for these awards, do yourself a favor and make a pick that no one expects; take “Milk” over “Slumdog” or Robert Downey Jr. over Heath Ledger. Surprise us for once! Take it from a faithful viewer: it’s not fun when you already know who’s gonna win.

“Fever Ray”: The love child of Blondie and Flock of Seagulls?

Kevin Bendis
Grizzly Staff Writer

“Fever Ray” is an album that sounds a bit like the love child of Blondie and Flock of Seagulls—if the two acts had been forced to live together in a cave for several months. Yes, it is a mysterious album filled with icy synthesizers, minimal beats, and warped Swedish singing. Sweden, musically, is better known for its acts like Abba, Ace of Base, or any Euro-Death Metal group. Sweden, naturally, is better known for its music that is at the heart of the world. Andersson soon cuts open the song. The music is not overly creepy, but it sounds more like it was written in an abandoned factory somewhere in Sweden. This album is very much an electronic album featuring a very inorganic or mechanical sound. Album opener “If I Had a Heart,” sets the tone with a pulsating, saw-tooth bass line that could work as part of the score for “Children of the Corn.” Andersson soon opens the track with her familiar ghostly robotic vocals. While the synths certainly carry the songs, it is actually Andersson’s voice that is at the heart of this record. She adds delay effects and distortion to her voice, and in other moments she uses a more glossy falsetto that complement the more dancey tracks (think Kraftwerk, not Kanye).

Andersson’s influences lie in early 1980s techno, yet she still sounds fresh and relevant in 2009. On “Dry and Dusty,” Andersson utilizes her creepy voice while a whispering synth builds around a mid-tempo beat. Andersson’s voice is unmistakable, yet her synth tones are recognizable as well, often sounding more like a whining Theremin than the familiar warm Moog tones found on many pop songs today. On key track “Triangle Walks,” Andersson lays on the reverb and uses bouncing steel drum-like synths to really give the tune a “Flock of Seagulls” meets Top Gun” soundtrack feel. On “Now’s The Only Time I Know,” she returns her voice to higher pitch, while a wood block and drum machine dance in the background. We also get a strong sense of Andersson’s mastery of lyrics with this track, as she paints a rather bleak picture, reminiscent of Kosinski’s disturbing tale “The Painted Bird.” “Come here, sparrow,” she coos, “Watch my hand: Black and blue seeds/ That is what my hand can/ Now’s the only time I know.”

The album finishes after about 42 minutes, though it feels more like an elongated trip to Saturn and back. At times, this album may seem to lag or repeat itself, which can give it a somewhat exhausting quality. However, that is primarily due to Andersson’s insistence on creating an intense mood or feeling with each song. Sometimes the sounds-capes of each track can overwhelm the listener, as they steadily unravel in your ear. It’s a dark and heavy record, yet it deserves much praise for its redefinition and skewering of common melodies and sounds. So, if you’ve enjoyed this cold winter so far, you may take to this album, as it makes things seem a tad bit chillier.
Men's Basketball Captainlooks fondly on his four years

Frank Martin
Grizzly Staff Writer

With the men's basketball team going into its last month of the regular season, it is time for the team's seniors to start looking back on their four years here at Ursinus. This time is especially emotional and difficult for senior captain, and three-year starter, John Noonan. Noonan started playing basketball early on in life and quickly gained a passion for the game.

"I loved the competition that went along with the game, both with opponents and the fun competition between teammates," Noonan notes. After having a successful high school career at Friends Select High School in Philadelphia, Noonan was quickly recruited by Ursinus men's basketball Coach Kevin Small for "his tenacity, his passion and his DI athleticism." In return, Noonan also felt a connection to Coach Small's philosophy of forming a basketball family around the team.

"Playing college basketball had always been a dream of mine and a goal I worked hard for throughout high school," Noonan says, "and I established a good relationship with Coach Small even before my first recruiting trip."

When asked about the high points in his career, Noonan quickly responded with being a part of last year's team which had an epic journey through the NCAA DIII tournament. The 07-08 Bears basketball team played every game at home in front of an overflowing home crowd before eventually reaching the final four in Salem, Virginia.

"Making it to the final four was a great experience and I appreciate it as something few people can say they've done in their life," Noonan said. Noonan also mentioned winning the Conference Championship as a freshman being a highlight. More recently, Noonan hit another career high note in a game against Centennial Conference opponent Muhlenberg on Jan. 28, when he had a career high of thirty points. He had another big game with twenty-eight points versus conference rival Johns Hopkins on Jan. 31, to move the Bears into fourth place. He was then subsequently rewarded with the Centennial Conference Player of the Week award for the week of Jan. 26.

Coach Small also touched on what he will miss about John when he graduates from Ursinus with a degree in business and economics this May. "I'll miss John stopping by my office just to chat and I'll miss John's passion for big games," Coach Small said. Of course, there are things Noonan says he will miss about being a Bear.

"Besides missing my coach and teammates, I'll miss representing the school while playing in Helfferich in front of friends and family, Noonan said. As for after he graduates, Noonan says he is thinking about taking his career in basketball to the next level by playing in Europe or even taking up the role of coach somewhere down the line.

"He's a terrific player and he has the talent to keep playing if he chooses to," says Small, "But I also hope if he elects to start working right away that he finds ways to stay involved with basketball given what it has meant to him all these years."

You can catch Noonan and the rest of the Ursinus Bears at Helfferich Hall for their remaining home games versus Centennial Conference opponents on Saturday, Feb. 14 against Dickinson.

Scorebox

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Tumbles and acrobatics: From toddlerhood to adulthood

Danielle Chmelewski
Grizzly Staff Writer

Beginning gymnastics when she was only 18 months old, she has come a long way. Nineteen years later, she's still defying gravity in more ways than one. Warm-hearted, kind, and selfless, she is everything you would look for in a positive role model. As a senior and team captain, Amy Edson, known as "Eddy" to some, has spent four years balancing gymnastics, a biology major, and a Biostatistics minor. It is safe to say she's an admired asset to Ursinus College. One thing that truly rings loud and clear for Edson is the support her teammates have provided throughout her college career. When asked what the best thing is about competing on the gymnastics team, she replied with much enthusiasm.

"My team! It's amazing how close you can get to each and every girl on the team. No matter what happens with anything in your life, you always know you have a bunch of girls that will help pick you up when you fall down," Edson said.

Obstacles in the sport of gymnastics are inevitable. Everyone runs into them at some point, and whether you tackle them or let it deteriorate you, is in your hands. For Edson, she rose to conquer her obstacles each and every moment during her four years here. But her favorite, by far, occurred at ECAC's during her freshman year. Nobody expected Ursinus to finish in the top three, qualifying for Nationals. But they defied all expectations.

"When they announced that we had made it to nationals, it was the greatest feeling in the world. Everyone on our team was so excited! That feeling was priceless," said Edson.

Now Amy continues to finish her senior year stronger than ever, hoping for one more chance to make it to Nationals.

Gymnastics has proved to shape Edson as an inspirational student, teammate, and most of all, friend. Her advice to all of the underclassmen:

"HAVE FUN! College flies by and it will be over before you know it! I can truly say I had the time of my life! Don’t let it slip away. Treasure every moment!"

She will be greatly missed here at Ursinus. For now, she has slowly been making plans for her future. With great honor and excitement, she revealed that she was just recently accepted to Columbia University for an accelerated nurse practitioner program. However, she is also waiting on a couple more applications to medical school. But no matter where she goes, she wants to be involved with the medical field. She has left a shining legacy at Ursinus that no one could ever replace, good luck Eddy!

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