The Grizzly, April 26, 2012

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Ursinus celebrates Fong inauguration

Each spoke not only of their appreciation and dedication but of his numerous other character traits. John Rafferty, state senator from Pennsylvania's 44th senatorial district, pulled a Philadelphia Phillies cap from under his gown to show Fong - a Yankees fan - that despite his choice of club Fong can continue to expect the support and dedication of the Ursinus community as his strategic plan unfolds.

A musical piece entitled "Breath of Days" by Dr. Garrett Hope and Dr. Nazdi Keita was debuted for the occasion.

Dr. Daniel F. Sullivan, President Emeritus of St. Lawrence University, who has known Fong since 1990 when they met at Hope College in Michigan, gave a special address that highlighted his impression of Ursinus and his high regards for the school's having chosen Fong as its new president.

"The necessary courage exists here. More than any college I have encountered, this college knows what it is about and where it wants to go," said Sullivan about his hopes for the future of Ursinus. He ended his remarks by saying to the campus community, "I love the spirit here, I love how Ursinus is so perfectly positioned to deliver more of what our students and the nation need right now, and I love that you have found a new president who knows how to work with trustees, faculty, staff, and students to do what needs to be done at a very, very high level. Bravo, Ursinus."

After the formal induction of Fong as the Fifteenth President of Ursinus College, Fong spoke for about half an hour on his pride for Ursinus at present and future.

CoSA showcases students for seventh year

On Thursday, April 19, students participated in Ursinus College's seventh annual CoSA event. CoSA stands for Celebration of Student Achievement and is an all-day campus-wide event which aims to engage the entire campus community in the presentation, discussion and celebration of all forms of intellectual and creative work done by students at all levels of their college careers as cited on the College's website. Because this event is open to all students, regardless of year and major, to participate in, all regular classes on the day of CoSA are cancelled and made up for on Monday, April 30, which is the last scheduled day of classes for the semester.

In order to participate in CoSA, students must first submit an online application which consists of an abstract or some other description of the material that the student wishes to present, along with the name of the faculty member who served as the mentor of the project. The CoSA committee is happy to assist students with finding a faculty mentor if they do not already have one.

Students may present their work in the form of an oral presentation, poster presentation, or performance, but if students have new ideas on how they want to present their work, those ideas are welcome by the committee as well.

Additionally, students can choose to present either individually or in a group, and they may select the material for their presentation from one of the following: a class project for a regular course or an ILE (independent learning experience) course, a student-designed project, or a collaborative project among students and at least one faculty member. According to the CoSA website, students must present new and original work that has not been presented in the past at a CoSA event, unless it is a project that was previously presented by that student in a class, seminar, or Summer Fellows setting. It can take the form of "honors, independent study, research, academic coursework, internships, study abroad, service-learning, performance, creative projects, leadership activities, and capstone projects."

The goal of CoSA is to give

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Headlining last weekend's chain of events in celebration of Dr. Fong was the inauguration Saturday morning at 11 a.m. in the Floy Lewis Bakes Field House. Faculty and staff were in attendance as well as over 100 special delegates representing other institutions. For those unable to attend, a live video stream was offered on the Ursinus website.

Chairman of the Board of Trustees John E. F. Corson presided over the ceremonies and, after an invocation by the Rev. Dr. Charles Rice, began with a welcoming address on behalf of the Board and some thoughts about the history and purpose of education at Ursinus.

Others offered a welcome on behalf of certain campus groups, including Dr. Dallet Hemphill for the faculty, Senior Class President Erica Schinderwolf for the student body, Director of the Berman Museum Lisa Tremper Hanover for the staff, Alan Novak for alumni, among others.

Dr. Fong addresses the crowd from the podium during his inauguration as Ursinus' fifteenth President last Saturday, April 21.

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The goal of CoSA is to give

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See "FONG" on pg. 2
Plane crash in Pakistan, Attack against rebels

127 Dead in Airline Crash

Friday, April 20

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN – A commercial airplane carrying 127 people crashed Friday in Islamabad just before it was to land at a nearby airport, killing everyone on board. Pakistan’s Civil Aviation Authority is citing poor weather as a possible factor for the crash. The Bhoja Air Boeing 737 was making an evening flight from Karachi to Islamabad, where the weather was cloudy. The crash occurred near the Chaklala airbase, a military site used by Pakistan’s air force, and adjacent to the Benazir Bhutto International Airport in Islamabad. Workers sifted through the wreckage, which was scattered in a heavily populated residential area. Debris from the plane has been recovered and over 150 bags filled with body parts have been transported to hospitals in the region. The flight data recorder, which may be a key component in determining what caused the crash, was recovered. (CNN.com)

Army to strike rebels

Friday, April 20

LIMA, PERU – Peru’s army is preparing one of the largest offensives in two decades against Shining Path rebels, officials said, hoping to nullify remnants of the group that embarrassed the government recently. The public expressed outrage this week when rebels brazenly kidnapped 36 natural gas workers, shot down a helicopter, and killed six security agents. The leader of Shining Path, who has never before shown his face to the media, appeared on local television to mock the army’s losses. A military official explained that a strong military offensive is coming because of political pressure to show results against the rebels. He added that President Ollanta Humala was in favor of the assault. To avoid civilian casualties, the military was evacuating hundreds of indigenous people from villages in a jungle area and known as the Dog’s Ear, where Maoist rebels have used landmines, snipers, and ambushes against government forces. The Shining Path launched a war to overthrow Peru’s government in 1980, resulting in 70,000 deaths. In 2003, the group captured 70 workers. Over the last three years, around 60 security agents have died in skirmishes with the rebels. (Reuters, hosted on NewsDaily.com)

Train collision kills woman

Sunday, April 22

AMSTERDAM – Officials said a 68-year-old woman died Sunday in injuries she sustained when two trains collided on Saturday in Amsterdam. The trains collided head-on on Saturday in one of the worst train crashes in the Netherlands’ recent history, seriously injuring 42 passengers.

"FONG" continued from pg. 1

his hopes for greater achievement in the future.

"Today, as we celebrate the latest chapter in the history of Ursinus, let us also rededicate ourselves to the promise of what an Ursinus education entails for present and future students," Fong said. He established four themes as well: inter-disciplinarity, experiential education, commitment to service, and appreciation of difference.

He later continued, "So let us bring to campus great artists and scientists and thinkers and peacemakers who have contributed to the bounty of human achievement, to inspire our students and give them examples to emulate....But let us also remember that our students are watching us, and the lessons we dare to teach and the visions we dare to espouse obligate us to try and live them as well." "As President of Ursinus College, I pledge this institution to the pursuit of academic excellence, but not simply for its own sake. I pledge that an Ursinus education will engender in students not only habits of mind but also, in de Tocqueville’s famous phrase, ‘habits of the heart,’ which will enable them not only to make a living but also to make lives that are personally fulfilling precisely because they are implicated in the wellbeing of others."

"COSA" continued from pg. 1

students the opportunity to showcase their accomplishments and gain experience with presenting their work to a larger audience. The great·est justification for the kind of education we do here is that it can change the world. And our greatest obligation to our students is to remind them that the work they do will make a difference for good, not just for themselves, but for all. For this reason, our final gift to our students must be to teach them to hope."

"Ursinus College must be a repository of hope," he said shortly thereafter, adding that "hope is the greatest obligation we owe our students."

Fong ended by saying, "Let Ursinus then celebrate, anticipate, and rededicate itself to the equipping of our students in knowledge, in skill, in character, and in hope to work to make a brighter future marked by justice, prosperity, understanding, and compassion for all. This is the Ursinus I have come to serve."

Following an ovation and benediction, a traditional Chinese lion dance was performed by the Philadelphia Suns. All in attendance were invited to a social gathering behind the stage after the ceremony.

Sarkozy setback

Sunday, April 22

PARIS, FRANCE – Francois Hollande, the Socialist party candidate for the French presidential election, won a narrow victory in Sunday’s first round of elections. He will face off against incumbent president Nicolas Sarkozy in runoff elections on May 6. Hollande has promised economic growth, and the election reflects a general dislike for Sarkozy. The strong showing by the political left seems to reflect a desire for change in France after 17 years of centrist, conservative presidents. It also reflects a growing anti-incumbent trend in Europe, and frustration with the narrative surrounding the ongoing euro crisis. Hollande received 28.5% of the vote and Sarkozy received 27.1%, followed by far-right candidate Marine Le Pen with 18.2% of the vote. (New York Times)
Nadler to join MCS department for fall semester

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The Media and Communication Studies faculty is excited to welcome Dr. Anthony Nadler to its department as an Assistant Professor of Media and Communication Studies, beginning in Fall 2012.

Dr. Nadler was born and raised in St. Paul, Minnesota, spending much of his life there.

He is a graduate of Macalester College, a small, liberal arts institution like Ursinus. He continued his education at the University of Minnesota, where he completed his Ph.D. in Communication Studies with an emphasis on Media Studies with an emphasis on Media and Society, and video production.

Upon graduating from Macalester College, Nadler spent two years working in different AmeriCorps programs, which exposed him to working with college-aged individuals.

"Outside of my teaching, I had several other work experiences that have shaped who I am as a teacher and a scholar," explains Nadler. In speaking of his AmeriCorps experience, he explains that he developed "an appreciation of the kinds of knowledge that come from experiences outside traditional educational settings," citing his work with the National Civilian Community Corps and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "My time in AmeriCorps has left a permanent impression about the importance of integrating all sorts of experiences into learning."

The search committee for Dr. Nadler's hire consisted of Chairperson Dr. Woodstock and Professors Edwards, Miller, Hettigga, and Bukatman from the MCS Department, as well as Professor Kontostathis from the Math and Computer Science Department. "We are so excited about Dr. Nadler," says Woodstock. "This position is fairly new because it has been re-conceptualized. We needed someone with a strong general background in the field of communication who can contribute to the department as a whole and with specialization in new media to develop the curriculum to meet the needs of a rapidly changing communication environment." "The search committee viewed him as the candidate who could help students use the technologies of new media and further apply what they learn in the classroom by assisting with further development of the news classes offered, providing more insight on new communication technologies, and helping to teach core courses. "That matched my interests to a T," expressed Nadler.

Pursuing a career at a small liberal arts college is another important factor that contributed to Nadler's decision to join the Ursinus community. "What's special about these environments is that they can cultivate a community that appreciates deep thinking and critical questioning. Through small, discussion-oriented classes and strong bonds among students and faculty, I think this kind of college creates an environment that fosters intellectual curiosity, an openness to new ideas, and a willingness to take risks that comes with being open to new ideas," says Nadler of his liberal arts education at Macalester College, which also resonates with Ursinus' values.

Upon visiting Ursinus, Nadler felt "at home" right away. "I taught a sample class, and students asked great questions, including some very tough ones. I met many students who were candid with me and offered their insights on what they most appreciated about Ursinus as well as what they say as their biggest challenges there. The faculty I met were enthusiastic, creative, and welcoming. Even though I was only a prospective faculty member on a job interview, I was able to meet with President Fong. I can tell you that it is not a very typical faculty interview experience, and President Fong's dedication to liberal arts philosophy came through clear as day." Woodstock also explains that she and the search committee recognized Nadler's appreciation of liberal arts. "He appreciates Communication, which is not always represented in liberal arts, and he understands the discipline in a liberal arts context."

Woodstock explains that Nadler will start out with teaching Intro to New Media and Digital Storytelling, along with a new course, Remix Culture. She hopes that throughout his tenure at Ursinus, he will continue to develop courses based on his fields of expertise. "Courses will integrate theory and production, allowing students to understand the difficult big questions about how new communication technology shapes society while also learning how to better use those technologies for creative work and social good."

Nadler indicates that he is hoping "to work with students who are crafting creative projects that challenge [my own] thinking and open up some new horizons. For someone to really embrace critical thinking, I think you have to find a special joy in it. A person has to find pleasure in applying scrutiny to accepted assumptions, in using thought to make the world more interesting, and in posing and reflecting upon complex questions. I want to foster those kinds of experiences and offer opportunities to appreciate the unique enrichment that comes from critical thinking. That can be difficult, but I feel lucky to be in media studies. I think almost everyone has at least a vague sense, an intuition, that we're going through a period of intense changes in media that are having a major impact on the felt experiences of our daily lives and, on a broader scale, on our society and culture. This sense offers a great starting place for discovering the joy and power that can come through thinking critically about media."

"I can see him making bridges for students in terms of taking what they're learning in the classroom and thinking about them in professional contexts," concludes Woodstock. "He's enthusiastic, energetic, and super smart."

New dean named

On Wednesday, April 18 it was announced that Ursinus' next Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College had been named.

Lucien T. (Terry) Winegar is currently the Dean of the School of Natural and Social Sciences at Susquehanna University, where he serves as a member of the President's Executive Staff and University Council.

There, he has been a member of the Strategic Planning Advisory group, Science Facilities Planning group, New Faculty Orientation team, and First Year Seminar Pilot and Implementation group.

In a campus-wide email sent by President Fong, it was stated that Dr. Winegar fit the bill of someone who "appreciated the distinctive liberal arts education to be had at Ursinus, possessed the academic credentials and experience to lead a community of teacher-scholars, and had the administrative expertise to grapple immediately with the opportunities and challenges confronting the College."

Winegar is succeeding Dean Judith Levy, currently in her 16th year at Ursinus. Levy announced her plans to retire last fall.

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English professor spoke on Diane Rehm Show

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Dr. Meredith Goldsmith recently appeared on Washington D.C. National Public Radio on the Diane Rehm Show to speak about Edith Wharton, who was a Pulitzer Prize winning American writer.

According to NPR’s website, the Diane Rehm Show is a call-in show that was named on the Audience Research Analysis’ list of top ten most powerful national programs in public radio. It also happened to be the only talk show on the list.

National Public Radio is a privately and publicly funded nonprofit membership organization that serves as a national syndicator to a network of 900 public radio stations in the U.S.

Goldsmith, a graduate of Columbia University, is the Vice President of the Edith Wharton Society, and was asked to be on NPR because they were doing a special on Edith Wharton’s 150th birthday.

The show wanted a representative from the Edith Wharton Society to come on the show and speak knowledgably about Edith Wharton’s work and life.

Wharton was a Pulitzer Prize winning American novelist, short story writer, and designer that lived from Jan. 24, 1862 until Aug. 11, 1937.

She was born in New York City, but spent her final days in Saint Brice sous Foret, France where she died.

The Edith Wharton Society is an international membership organization dedicated to fostering the Edith Wharton Scholarship.

The society was founded by Professor Annette Zilversmit in 1983, and met for the first time on Dec. 17, 1983 at the MLA Convention in New York City.

The society offers Wharton scholars and other interested persons an opportunity to share in the study and appreciation of the life and works of this author.

When asked about being on NPR, Goldsmith said she enjoyed her experience.

“Being on NPR was great fun, and a fantastic experience. I was very nervous the night beforehand, but when push came to shove I was not nervous at all—that had a lot to do with Diane Rehm and the way she asks questions and cultivates discussion,” Goldsmith said.

The story that Rehm focused on during the interview was Edith Wharton’s “Ethan Frome.”

“Ironically enough, I do not consider Ethan Frome a dominant story in my life; I had only read it once or twice before this event and I had never taught it until this semester. But it speaks to feelings lots of people have had in their lives—feeling trapped, having feelings one is unable to express, having to live with the consequences of one’s actions. These are all important lessons to learn in life,” Goldsmith said.

As a professor at Ursinus, Goldsmith tries to teach these valuable life lessons in her classroom.

“My favorite part about teaching at Ursinus is working with students, opening them up and getting to hear what they really think. I hope to help them become better readers and writers along the way,” Goldsmith said.

Four years of changes for UC seniors

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Whether we want to face it or not, the school year is wrapping up, and for seniors that means only a few more weeks of being a college student.

It’s hard to believe our four years here is almost over. Our class has definitely seen a lot of changes at Ursinus over the years, and we will carry certain memories with us that no one else will have.

Here’s a list of some major changes our class has seen since 2008:

• John Strassburger was the president. We’ve had 3 presidents in our 4 years here.
• Only New and North were swipe card access buildings. Now BWC, BPS and most Main Street houses are.
• Jared Rodriguez was our freshman RD.
• No residential buildings (dorms/houses/suites) had soap dispensers or paper towels in the bathrooms.
• Wismer trays still existed, but no one ever used them.
• RIP Pandinis.
• Wismer’s salad bar was in the center of the cafeteria. There is also a completely new exterior and new stations inside.
• If you got a package, a slip was put in your mailbox. Now we get emails.
• Rushing for Greek organizations started in the fall and pledging was in spring. Freshmen could join.
• The Hookah Bar became Blend Cafe, which became Lunch Box on Main.
• U.C. EMS was fondly known as SERV.
• Wegmans and the rest of Providence Town Center did not exist.
• The circular bulletin board in between Wismer and Olin still existed.
• Mailboxes were located right outside the back entrance of Wismer. They are now outside and that exit with the turnstile is gone.
• Alpha Sigma Nu lost their charter.
• The Berman Museum of Art had not been renovated yet. It did not have the front glass area, classrooms or sculpture terrace it does now.
• The Reimert sculpture by the parking lot is now bolted down and students can no longer rock on it.
• The sycamore tree was still in the end zone, and the football field was grass not turf.
• Commencement was held on Saturdays.
• The open container policy seemed much more relaxed than it is now.

The Movie Tavern is one of Providence Town Center’s new attractions. Best Buy, ULTA, Five Below, Wegmans, Qdoba, and many other retailers have opened franchises in the shopping center.
Students for Barack Obama encourages student participation

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With the fast approaching November 2012 Presidential Election, students on the Ursinus campus have been campaigning for two-term hopeful, Barack Obama.

There are multiple students who are dedicated to the purpose of mobilizing the student body for Election Day and work continuously to keep the campus aware and politically charged.

Back in 2008, Students for Barack Obama (SFBO) helped to transform voting records by participating in the highest youth voter turnout in American history.

Students across Pennsylvania have continued to stay active for the upcoming election.

Among the core group of students involved in SFBO on the Ursinus campus are Student Leader Brett Hillsberg, Ryan Welby, Megan Williams, Epiphany Summers, and Diana Finesmith.

The U.C. Democrats have also worked to organize voter participation, having held two voter registration drives this semester.

Next semester, both organizations will be working to continue to register as many people as possible.

Hillsberg is hopeful for Barack Obama in the upcoming election. "He has a strong chance for reelection because of his sophisticated network of organization and the move of the Republican Party further to the right," Hillsberg said.

Hillsberg and the other students involved in SFBO work to recruit students by sending out mass emails to invoke student interest.

SFBO urges all who are interested to join in the fall as Election Day approaches, and they are always open to having other students to help with their cause.

Both organizations look for strong volunteer leaders who are willing to organize, team build and engage other students to build campus teams.

SFBO recognizes the importance of discussing key policy issues that impact students; campus groups like this give student leaders a positive forum to have their voices heard.

Like any other election, Hillsberg realizes that in this election Barack Obama will face certain obstacles.

"[There is] virtually unlimited funding from corporations to Mitt Romney, due to the Citizens United Supreme Court ruling," Hillsberg said.

This ruling allows corporations, unions, and issue advocacy organizations to spend uncapped amounts of money from their treasuries on independent political expenditures in support of or in opposition to a Presidential candidate.

However, Hillsberg and the rest of SFBO is sure that the most powerful organization will be most vital to the outcome of the election.

Wampole’s Lockheed Martin internship becomes career

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Kristen Wampole, a senior business and economics major with a minor in mathematics, interned at Lockheed Martin, one of the world’s largest defense contractors, on the Cost Accounting team in King of Prussia this past summer.

Wampole used Microsoft Excel for projects like the creation of automatic templates to run reports through the computer system in order to analyze things such as rate changes, and soon her knowledge of the program increased tremendously.

She now uses features like macros and pivot tables in her classes and in organizing tour guide schedules and timesheets.

She performed many account reconciliations as well, spending her work-week mainly at the computer.

One of the things Wampole really enjoyed was working with other Finance interns on a summer-long project that allowed them to travel to Maryland to present to the CFO of Information Systems & Global Solutions (IS&GS).

"That was really fun, getting the chance to meet some of the big-wigs," Wampole said.

When Wampole applied to the internship program, she did not hear a response for quite some time.

She began looking for a way to get herself noticed and contacted Career Services to find if the office had any connections or alumni working there.

She was referred to one of Ursinus’ professors who provided Wampole with the contact information for an employee who was willing to put her resume on the hiring manager’s desk.

This winter, Wampole got an offer to work full-time at Lockheed Martin.

She starts after Memorial Day, the same time she started as an intern just a year before.

Wampole will be working on the International Commercial Team of the IS&GS and on the Defense Product Line doing financial planning, analysis and program finance.

Wampole will be working mainly in forecasting costs for customers contracting Lockheed Martin.

She is also thrilled with the potential to be part of the Finance Leadership Development Program (FLDP), which would allow her, after a year of employment, to have FLDP pay for any graduate school.

Wampole also looks forward to her involvement in more than one part of the business process.

"[It] was a functional role in that I was supporting all four business units," said Wampole when explaining her job as an intern.

"The job now, I actually get to communicate with the project manager, the engineers, and I get to talk to them about forecasting their hours and labor cost and that kind of thing. So I am now assigned to a specific project and so I can see where my efforts are going and that’s more rewarding than what I was doing this summer," Wampole said.

Wampole advises students searching for internships to use as many resources that are available.

"You can’t rely on just submitting your application online, especially to the big companies. You have to take it a step further and network- reach out to anyone and everyone you know," Wampole said.

Word on the Street

with Brooke Mitchell

“So are your plans for the summer?”

Joe Kost
Exercise and Sports Sciences, 2012

“I’m going to work at my job at a golf course, where I’ll make money and play a lot of golf. I’ll also go fishing and spend time with family and friends.”

Annabel Clarance
Math and Dance, 2012

“This summer I will be directing a summer arts intensive camp program at a community center in Norristown.”

Tim Ball
Math, 2013

“I’m interning at Compucraft Manufacturer’s Inc. for my math major. I also hope to finish recording and producing my band’s album.”

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Zolidis premiers "White Buffalo"

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It’s not every day that a white buffalo is born in your hometown. Professor Don Zolidis wrote a play called "White Buffalo,” which was based on true life events: in the spring of 1994, a white buffalo, which has religious significance for the Sioux and many other Native American tribes, was born on a small farm owned by white people in southwestern Wisconsin.

In the play, Professor Zolidis explores the meaning of the significance of the white buffalo for the various characters of different cultures and beliefs. "White Buffalo" received a world premiere recently at the Purple Rose Theatre in Michigan.

When asked on the inspiration behind writing "White Buffalo,” Zolidis said he had gone to see the calf during the winter and was struck by how important the birth of the white calf was for the Native Americans community. “[What] was interesting about it is that the birth occurred on a farm owned by white people, who were now in de facto possession of a religious miracle. That brought up all sorts of interesting questions.”

Additionally, the play received an Edgerton Foundation New American Play award.

It took ten years for the script of "White Buffalo” to go from finished script to world premiere. According to Professor Zolidis, he started working on the script on 2002, and completed the first draft by early 2003. Many changes and years later, but still true to the retelling on the original story, it finally premiered.

On the writing process of eliminating excess language, Zolidis said, "No one wants to come in to see how beautifully you wrote. They came in for the story." A review by the Jackson City Patriot said, "There is no wasted gesture or unnecessary word in this beautiful and moving production.”

For all of us who have not seen "White Buffalo,” the play is about a woman named Carol Gelling, a single mother faced with raising a teenage daughter under financial stress, who discovers a white buffalo has been born on her farm.

Besides the calf being an odd curiosity, she doesn’t think much about it until she realizes that a white buffalo, according to Sioux belief, fulfills a very old prophecy of unity on human kind and peace on earth.

Soon, massive amounts of people begin to make pilgrimages to her farm and Carol Gelling is exposed to a different culture unfamiliar to her. Then one day a mysterious businessman offers her two million dollars for the calf. This conflict forces her to contemplate on whether she should profit from people’s religious beliefs or remain true to a spiritual concept that is unknown to her.

On the myth of the white buffalo, the story generally goes that a white buffalo woman came to the Lakota during drought to offer the people a sacred peace pipe called the chunuunpa, which offers a connection between a deity and man.

She gave them knowledge on the rituals of the pipe and how to prosper as a people through family. After she transformed herself to a white buffalo and promised to return during times of peace.

One of the main praises from reviews is the genuine attitude of the play. The basis of the characters are said to not be stereotypical. The authenticity continues with the exploration of realistic desires and motivations to the realistic dialogue and monologue of the characters.

As a playwright who is comfortable writing about primal themes and conflict (and has taught the importance of primal themes to smoothly drive the plotline of a play to his screenwriting class), "White Buffalo" was slightly different in that Professor Zolidis wanted to explore the meaning of the white buffalo in relation to the different characters without insulting the belief behind it.

Students explore spirituality at college

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Graduating from high school is one of the exciting days in a person’s life. Why? Because many high school graduates are headed for college in the fall, one of the most amazing experiences in a person’s life.

Incoming college freshman are thrilled to be taking that next step, especially because they will have more freedom.

In the semester preceding my freshman year of college, my friends all talked about how they were excited to meet new people, party, and be more independent from their parents.

Thinking back, I couldn’t wait for all those perks of college either, but one aspect that I was most looking forward to was being able to make my own religious choices.

Coming from a modern orthodox Jewish background, I was accustomed to observing all the religious laws and practices that my family did. We kept kosher, strictly observed the weekly Sabbath, and recited prayers, just to name a few. We also lived in a community which consisted of mostly Orthodox Jews, which meant I had to be extremely conscientious with how I dressed. While I loved my family and appreciated some of the religious values, I couldn’t wait to go out on my own and decide how I wanted to practice Judaism.

During the first few weeks of college, I attempted to observe some religious traditions by attending events offered by Hillel, the Jewish organization on campus. I attended Hillel’s Shabbat dinners and the various holiday celebrations. However, after a few months of being at Ursinus, I stopped attending the Hillel events. Looking back on it, I think I just really wanted to be able to do my own thing and take a hiatus from religion. God and Judaism had been such a big part of my life for so long that I wanted to see what life is like without all the religious pressures.

Larry Braskamp, a professor emeritus at Loyola University Chicago, articulates that college offers an environment conducive to religious exploration. He writes, “Students come to campus not yet tested in their faith, and experience considerable challenges to their prior religious perspectives, which are often greatly influenced by their parents’ views. They are exposed to new information, differing values and religious perspectives, and meet and relate to different types of people.”

Braskamp’s assertions most definitely apply to my own experience as well other students’ religious journeys. For instance, junior Christian Poslock came to Ursinus firm in his religious beliefs, having attended catholic school his entire life. Though when he was at college he would not attend church, he would make sure to attend Mass whenever he was home.

However, more recently, Poslock said his beliefs are not as firm as they once were, and he believes that his science classes have contributed to this. “I’m more of a factual person...now, I could see a world where there isn’t a God,” Poslock said.

It seems that students at Ursinus use their time here to reevaluate their relationship with God and the religious teachings they learned when they were younger. While those who are more religious may perceive this change in religious beliefs to be detrimental and disloyal, some, including myself, would argue that this type of new thinking is refreshing. I reason that this reevaluation of beliefs may help people better understand if they are religious for the right reasons.

Some people in society are only religious because that was how they were brought up as children. They didn’t know what life was like without religion. It’s one thing to come to college and continue to be religious because you truly believe in your religious values. It’s another when you’re only religious because you want to please your parents, not because you truly feel passionate about God.

Here at Ursinus, students are also given more opportunities to learn about and get involved in other religions. Junior Stephanie Breitsman, who grew up a non-practicing Presbyterian, has been attending Hillel’s Shabbat dinners since her freshman year. Before she attended college, Breitsman said she was very wary of religion. Nonetheless, when she came to Ursinus, she decided to branch out, and now, she rarely misses a Shabbat dinner.

Breitsman said that Hillel “is the most welcoming environment on campus,” and the Jewish organization invites everyone to join, not just Jewish people. She also really appreciates the religious rituals and traditions and said, “It is something I want for my own family and something I didn’t have growing up.”

A college campus like Ursinus allows for trial-runs with different religions. Breitsman noted that if it wasn’t for college, she definitely would not have an appreciation for religion like she does now.

When a person decides to remain religious, try a new religion, become an atheist, or what have you, it’s crucial that students make their own decisions about something as important as faith.
Thomas leaves legacy of pride and integrity

Shane Eachus
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It’s not every day that your college can claim to have had its athletic department lead by a decorated military veteran AND baseball legend. However, that is the case at Ursinus, where former athletic director and current baseball coach Brian Thomas calls home.

Thomas has a remarkable winning resume at the junior legion, high school and college coaching ranks, including three Centennial Conference championships and roughly 800 total victories. He is also a proud military veteran who served his country as a first lieutenant and platoon leader in the Vietnam War.

It’s certainly not every day that you are able to witness the dedication of a field in honor of said coaching legend.

This will be the opportunity granted to the Ursinus community on Saturday, when the Bears’ baseball team will play host to Gettysburg College in a key conference matchup, in which Ursinus’ conference playoff hopes may be on the line.

Who better to lead the way for Ursinus in such a pivotal matchup, than the winningest coach in the history of the college?

Thomas has amassed over 400 total wins at Ursinus, and this week, he will likely need to lead his men to victory once again in four contests as the Bears will take part in back to back doubleheaders, Saturday against Gettysburg and Sunday at McDaniel.

Both Gettysburg and McDaniel currently lie ahead of Ursinus in the jumbled Centennial Conference standings. Both will also be playing for potential playoff positions; Ursinus needs victories in all four games badly, in order for their playoff hopes to live on.

To say this is a big weekend for Ursinus College baseball, would be an understatement of epic proportions. Despite the importance to the 2012 baseball team’s season, Saturday will also be host to an equally emotional ceremony between the first and second games of the afternoon doubleheader with Gettysburg, as Ursinus baseball alumni and the athletic community will officially name the baseball field after Thomas, a Montgomery County Coaches’ Hall of Fame member.

It is also not every day that a college is charged with replacing the services of a baseball coach with upwards of 200 centennial conference victories, and one whose career as an athletic administrator is responsible for the hiring of nearly all of the department’s most tenured coaches.

This has become the duty of the Ursinus College athletic department, which has formed a search committee, led by head basketball coach, Kevin Small, that is conducting a national search for a replacement to Thomas.

Finding a replacement for Thomas will be no easy task, and surely the heir to the Thomas throne will have some big shoes to fill in the Ursinus dugout.

While his achievements and accolades are well documented, Thomas’ unmeasurable qualities, such as his character and dedication to the college are perhaps his most endearing.

Always quick to congratulate a student athlete on an achievement, Thomas has made a name for himself at Ursinus by devoting himself to students in a manner reflective of the institutional mission. He has coached environmental studies majors, and biochemistry and molecular biology majors all the same, wanting the best for them.

The character and class, the integrity and leadership that Thomas has brought to Ursinus is unmatched, perhaps in the history of the athletic program’s existence.

Thomas has been everything Ursinus College could have ever asked for, and then some as one of the game’s true class acts.

Thomas has won games, and done it with class. He brought a baseball program to life that had never achieved more than mediocrity, and he did it by demanding as much from his supporters as he did from his players. Thomas ensured that his team represented what a group of student athletes should stand for, which he did a remarkable job of.

Surely, nobody is perfect, and Thomas would never claim to be.

It’s just that, it’s not every day you are given a chance to reflect on such a legacy.

But then again, it’s not every day that you lose a Brian Thomas to retirement. One thing is certain both he and his commitment to the Division III vision of the “student athlete” will be missed.

However, his legacy and the positive impact that he has had on the athletic program and campus community of Ursinus College as a whole, will live on forever.
Baseball to dedicate field Saturday

After 23 years, the Brian Thomas era is coming to an end at Ursinus.

The longtime coach who announced his retirement at the beginning of the spring semester will coach his final home games this Saturday vs. Gettysburg on Senior Day at which time the field will be dedicated in honor of Thomas.

Thomas, 67, who has been a stalwart on the Ursinus campus and within the athletic department, finishes his career with more than 200 conference wins, 400 wins at Ursinus, and 800 wins over 42 years of coaching baseball altogether.

Although his career will be over at the end of the season, Thomas, known by many as “Coach T,” is still focused on the end of the current season, but not without an eye to what the future holds.

“I have tried to keep my mind on the season from February on. But I think I am in the right place to leave. I feel good about my career as a whole. I think it is the right time for me to leave and depart Ursinus,” Thomas said.

“Everything considered, I am in a good place. I can leave in good health. My wife and I can now enjoy years in retirement. While I will miss the field and the interaction with the players, it is time,” Thomas said.

Although Thomas is stepping aside, his teaching points and

Upcoming UC Sports Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Opponent</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/28</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>vs. Gettysburg</td>
<td>12:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Softball</td>
<td>vs. Swarthmore</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/28</td>
<td>Men's Golf</td>
<td>@ Blue Ridge Country Club</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/28</td>
<td>Men's Lacrosse</td>
<td>vs. Washington College</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/28</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>Game 2</td>
<td>vs. Gettysburg</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/29</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>Game 1</td>
<td>@McDaniel</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/28</td>
<td>Softball</td>
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