

THE POINTER

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New hall ground breaking ceremony postponed

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The ground breaking ceremony for the new suite-style residence hall has been postponed due to the snow storm that hit the Midwest this week.

The event was supposed to be held Wednesday, Dec. 9, but Governor Jim Doyle called for all government buildings to be closed.

Many University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point administrators and students were scheduled to be present, including Katy Cimino, the Residence Hall Association president; Scott Asbach, Student Government Association president; Bob Tomlinson, the vice chancellor for Student Affairs and interim Chancellor Mark Nook.

The students were going to be holding shovels to show the \$26 million project is being built by students' housing money and ideas.

"The shovels were painted green to show that this building project is using sustainability practices," said Joe Totman, the director of Residential Living. These practices include energy efficiency and water savings by using sustainable materials and adhering to minimum Silver Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Standards.

Construction of the building may still begin this week. The building will have 82 apartments, including handicapped-accessible ones, in five stories. Each apartment will have four private bedrooms, a bathroom and separate shower room, vanity and kitchen. The hall will also include the other basic amenities: a laundry room, study area and lounges.

"The construction crews have started to move their work trailers to the site and can start whenever they are ready," Totman.

For now, the building will be called 201 Reserve Street Suites and is set to be ready for students to move in fall semester of 2011. This is the first new hall since 1968.

South Hall will be renamed Hyer Hall.

"We will utilize this name for a couple of years and then look at a formal name of someone who has made an impact to the students and university," said Totman.



Photo by Avra Juhnke

The last time the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point was closed due to snow was in 1985 on the Monday after Thanksgiving break.

"There was a major snow storm all day Sunday and into Sunday night. They didn't want students to try and come back in the bad weather. Plus it took quite a while on Monday morning to get everything cleared up. If I remember right, it was about 16 inches of snow. I lived close to the corner of Main Street and Division. My roommates and I walked to Ella's Sunday night because we were bored. We were able to walk all the way down Division Street in the middle of the road. Not a single car passed us because it hadn't been plowed yet. And believe it or not, Ella's was packed," said Greg Diekroeger, the assistant director of Campus Activities and UWSP grad of 1986.

Impersonation case under police investigation

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Stevens Point police investigation having to do with a possible impersonation circling the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point chancellor search and screen committee.

It started when someone approached Neil Heywood, chair of the chancellor search and screen committee and chair of the UWSP geography and geology department, off-campus to give him some "suggestions" about what kind of person should be hired as new chancellor. Heywood had never seen this individual before, but was given a name he recognized.

"To be honest with you, I found it very, very offensive myself. I am sure anybody else would also. I am not going to reveal the nature because, now in light of what I think has happened, I don't think it's valid input," said Heywood.

He brought the encounter up to the rest of the committee for two reasons. If anyone else on the committee had encountered anything else like this, which they said they hadn't and if the committee thought he handled the situation properly.

"Essentially, once I realized the nature of it, I told this person, this was the improper way to be submitting it, which it wasn't, and that I didn't really want to continue any further,"

said Heywood.

Heywood said the committee was "pretty baffled" and that this issue strayed from the task at hand.

He then tried to reconnect with the individual and give them the proper avenue for submitting suggestions. When he went to meet this person, it turned out to be someone else.

"As soon as I had gotten to that stage I said OK, something's definitely not right here, and at that point I reported it to protective services," said Heywood. "And there it remains."

The person whose name was given to Heywood was very "taken aback," according to Heywood.

"How would you feel if somebody out if the blue working with a pretty important campus committee comes to you and says somebody else is using your name?" said Heywood. "They were disturbed."

Heywood said he is unhappy with how this is affecting the committee. "These are good, loyal, knowledgeable, dedicated people and none of us anticipated something of the sort."

All Heywood really wants to know is why someone would do this.

"I would really like to offer my sincerest gratitude to my teammates on that committee who have picked up many of the tasks that I have been less than fully attentive to because if we are on track... it's because I did have very, very good people who I work with."

News

College Dems stay warm with chili

Jackie Lutze

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As the snow finally started to fall on the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point campus, the College Democrats filled bowls with hot chili. Monday night was the first chili cookout put on by the College Democrats, their first big event of the year.

The event was held from 5-7 p.m. in the Laird Room of the Dreyfus University Center and was open to students and community members alike.

"The main reason we wanted to hold the chili feed was as a fundraiser and to get people together," said Greg Ubbelohde, College Democrats president. "There was a good number of students and community members there. We were very pleased with the turnout."

The event also featured a lecture by Dennis Riley, political science professor, called "Evaluating the First year of the Obama Presidency." Professor Riley originally gave this speech as part of an ongoing lecture series put on by the UWSP College of Letters and Science.

Each month the dean of the college selects a professor to prepare a lecture to present to students and the public. There have been four lectures already given by professors from various departments this semester each varying in their topic. "I was chosen this past month and spoke at the library about the Obama presidency. The lecture focuses on the progress that has been made and what is still planned for the future," said Riley.

"I really want to thank Professor Riley for speaking. He is a world class professor who added a whole other level to the event," said Ubbelohde.

The feed was open to all students and community members, no matter their political views.

"All leftover chili was also donated to a nearby food pantry," said Ubbelohde.

"The College Democrat club is here for anyone. We want people to get involved and we're here for them to do that," said Ubbelohde. The College Democrats are also looking into political figures coming to speak.

"Congressman Dave Obey has shown interest in visiting the campus," said Ubbelohde.

"We're also looking into to more social events to get people together and have the ability to talk to those attending. We want to have fun and I feel education is a big deal too."

"The club has about 10 very active members and a very extensive e-mail list," Ubbelohde said. Anyone interested in joining College Democrats can come to a meeting or contact them at collDEM@uwsp.edu.

StWEA Decks the Halls

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'Tis the season for the Portage county nursing home to have halls that are festive with Christmas spirit thanks to the Students of Wisconsin Education Association.

StWEA's annual event, Deck the Halls, has been running for 12 years. StWEA members volunteer and decorate the halls and rooms of the nursing home with trees and ornaments, along with decorating sugar cookies for the residents and the Salvation Army.

This year Stevens Point Area Senior High has donated ornaments to the Christmas event.

"This is the best turnout we've ever had," said Maggie Beeber, co-advisor for StWEA and member for 21 years.

There were 50 volunteers for this year's event compared to the average of 10 to 15 volunteers in the past. With the help of commuters and students from different majors, Deck the Halls has continued with its success.

StWEA has been on campus for 55 years and the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point is the biggest chapter in the state with 170 members. They have won National Chapter of the year seven of 10 years. This program

is promoted through the education department and gives education majors benefits and leadership skills.

"It provides an opportunity to get involved outside of the classroom where students can grow in different ways," said Beeber.

StWEA has meetings every month and is involved in many volunteer activities to help others.

"It's about the community and making a difference," said Beeber.

"StWEA is a great organization and our goal is to get more members and to keep promoting StWEA," said Austin Malingowski, StWEA president elect.

Along with Deck the Halls StWEA's other events include Books from the Heart and Holiday Baskets.

Holiday Baskets are given to struggling people and families in the Stevens Point area. Books from the Heart is in February. StWEA collects money to send books to kids from kindergarten through third grade. They give books kids on Valentine's Day throughout the Stevens Point



Photo by Erin Walker

Members of StWEA decorate holiday cookies at the Portage County nursing home last week, Thursday.

Area Schools. Pat Okray is a big support to StWEA by giving donations and is greatly appreciated by this organization.

Deck the Halls was started when Portage County nursing home heard about StWEA's volunteer programs and asked if they would be able to help out with decorating the nursing home. StWEA gladly helped to make it an annual event. "What's nice about Deck the Halls," said Beeber, "is that it allows students who don't get to go home to decorate with the family to help and celebrate at the same time."

"It's a lot of fun to help out," said Malingowski. "And also allows you to interact with people here. That's the best part of StWEA."

Spring break trip for \$500

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The winter months are just upon us and we will very soon be turning our eyes south and searching for a warmer climate. Most college students do this about mid-March and take advantage of their one week of spring break.

While the cost of spring break can be daunting for some, there are ways to improve your bottom line and make your vacation both affordable and enjoyable. Rather than use the traditional "adult-oriented" travel sites such as Expedia or Travelocity, try a spring break tour company such as Inertia Tours.

Inertia Tours is based in Austin, Texas, and, according to Company Director Chad Williams, provides, "A super dialed-in spring break experience that is not just a vacation, but a package that will create lifelong memories."

Inertia Tours offers what is "the closest approximation to all inclusive available for domestic destinations. They include meals, parties, side trips and onsite party staff. This makes the trip's turnkey in that students are set up in the best properties for spring break, go to the right clubs on the right nights and do fun stuff while on the island besides just the drinking aspect," said Williams.

All of Inertia Tours' trips are less

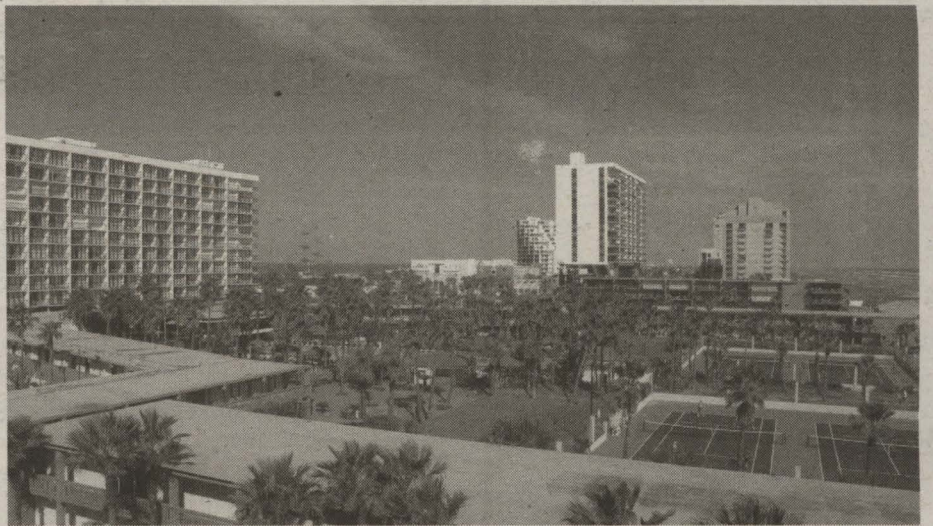


Photo by Jacob Mathias

View from Saida Towers in South Padre Island

than \$500. Their most publicized trip to South Padre Island, Texas starts at \$369 per person. South Padre Island is so affordable for a number of reasons. The island is within driving distance, so gas costs can be split and are ultimately cheaper than a plane ticket, especially during Spring Break.

Also offered by Inertia Tours is a meal plan which makes everyday dining affordable and carefree. The meal plan includes two meals per day, usually breakfast and lunch.

South Padre Island can host over 25,000 students per week in its hotel rooms and condos. With a large inventory of hotel rooms and condos to choose from, many are available cheap. Inertia tours can also offer privately-owned condos and off-beach properties that aren't available through other travel agents and Web sites.

Inertia also offers an optional \$99 Red Carpet Party Package. According

to Williams, this package is something unique you will not find on any other travel site and includes express entry into a different nightclub each night with cover charge included which is typically \$10 to \$15 per person per night on spring break and a choice of two of five side trips including a party yacht cruise, banana boat ride, dolphin watching tour, surfing lesson or jet boat ride.

Perhaps most valuable to students on a monthly budget, Inertia Tours offers a monthly payment plan for their trips. After an initial down payment of \$150, the balance of the trip isn't due until mid-January. This allows students to book in advance without losing a large sum of money in one go.

"We are Texans that want to welcome you to our beautiful island, show you a fun, yet safe time and include everything you might need all in one price," said Williams.

Make a child's holiday special Computer shopping guide

Meghan Gerosa
POINTER CONTRIBUTOR

'Tis the season to make a child's Christmas morning a memorable one. Ever wondered what you could do to make someone else's Christmas a great one? Toys for Tots is one of these ways.

The U.S. Marine Corps created the foundation which is known as the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program. The foundation has been supported by the U.S. Marine Corps since 1947. The main goal for this program is to collect unwrapped toys during October, November and December and hand them to the needy children in the community where the campaign is being held.

The Rotary Club has handled the Toys for Tots campaign in the Stevens Point area for the past four years. Last year over 2,500 toys were handed out to kids in the Central Wisconsin area.

"The number one goal is to ensure that every child in Portage County that needs one would receive one," said Jami Gebert, the community service chair for the Rotary Club.

The toys are collected in Plover and Stevens Point and are given to the needy children in Portage County. The Salvation Army and Operation Bootstrap distribute the toys to the families.

Donors drop off their toys at one of the drop-off sites, then the toys go to the Salvation Army and Operation Bootstrap so they are able to hand the toys out to the families for Christmas. The Salvation Army has their location set up like a store and have the families come in during their time slot to pick out a toy from the shelves like they are doing their own shopping. Operation Bootstrap rents out a hanger at the local airport to have the volunteers and truck drivers come there to pick up the toys and deliver them to the families' homes. They rent out trucks that run all day until all the gifts are delivered.

The Student Involvement and Employment Office have been a drop-off location for the Rotary Club of Greater Portage County Toys for Tots Campaign for three years.

"We have not had a lot of drop-offs for gifts yet. Most of the donations start coming in after Thanksgiving break and continue on through the month of December," said Shannon Williams, SIEO Coordinator.

If you want to make a donation to the Toys for Tots campaign but don't know what toys to buy, you can always go to their Web site at www.toysfortots.org to look at the wish list and see where the drop off locations are for the Portage County campaign which runs until Friday, December 11, 2009.

Shawn Ganther
POINTER CONTRIBUTOR

As the digital divide continues to shrink in America, the need for a reliable computer is becoming impossible to ignore. Heading full throttle into the busiest shopping time of the year, low computer prices and expanding technology promise to make this the most convenient, and confusing, holiday season yet.

A new electronic device called the netbook has joined the computer market and is adding yet another option to the laptop industry. However, when choosing between these three options the most important thing to remember is not what Justin Long said on TV, but what the laptop will be used for in the future.

With an appealing price point ranging from \$180 to \$500, a netbook is a small laptop-type device that is designed specifically to search the web and do other small tasks. A netbook weighs around three to five pounds, and has a small LCD screen between 10.1 to 13 inches.

Although similar in appearance and basic functions, netbooks lack the raw computing power of a fully functioning computer. At their slimmed down size, netbooks lack a disc drive, utilize a single core processor and come equipped with a slimmed down operating system.

"It is important that we say that netbooks are a supplement to a fully working computer; they're not a replacement. People think they're a small computer when they are not, they are a netbook," said Donovan Lozo, Supervisor at the Stevens Point Best Buy.

Although a netbook will surf the web and create office documents as well as their larger counterparts, more advanced tasks such as video and photo editing are going to require more computing power.

A recent survey conducted by Square Trade Inc., analyzing failure rates of 30,000 laptops, found that netbooks fail 20% more often than laptops, and that contrary to media advertisements, Toshiba and Asus make the market's most reliable laptops.

"I don't think [the] failure rate is different across brands because it's not really HP or Toshiba - they don't make the components that they put into their computers. They choose them put them in a plastic case and put their name on it. I tell consumers that if you've heard of the name brand you're fine. I just wouldn't recommend a brand that you've never heard of," said Lozo.

From the commercials, consumers would be led to believe that the Mac is more powerful and reliable than a PC. When analyzing technical specifications alone, Mac's entry level MacBook, starting at \$999, is closely comparable to a Toshiba Satellite which sells for \$329 at Best Buy.

What truly separates a Mac from a PC isn't the internal specifications. The real difference in a Mac is their

efficient operating system, said Jeremy Spriggs, deputy of Counter Intelligence (Geek Squad supervisor) at the Stevens Point Best Buy.

"The Mac OS [X Snow Leopard] is a solid operating system," said Spriggs.

Riding on the negative reviews of Windows Vista, Apple's stable operating system has been the theme of their current campaign against Microsoft. In retaliation to this campaign, Microsoft rushed to release their answer to this problem with Windows 7. New Windows 7 users are optimistic.

"Windows Vista was a pretty hefty operating system. Windows 7 is much lighter. This will influence the load time for different applications. But, no matter how reliable the software is, you have to remember that these things are mass produced," said Spriggs.

According to Spriggs, the majority of computers they service are because of user error. These are computers that are infected with viruses that have been downloaded onto the system by using LimeWire, BearShare and downloading emails, free wallpaper and screen savers.

Viruses are yet another reason the Mac OS is considered superior to Microsoft. But it isn't the reliability of the program that make Windows so susceptible to online predators.

"Macs are only about 7% of the market. A virus would have to be specifically built to harm a Mac. If their market share explodes, I guarantee you'll see more viruses," said Spriggs.

Depending on how it is used, a Windows based computer can be just as secure as a Mac with the addition of good anti-virus software.

Netbooks are a decent, cost-efficient option for entry-level users who just want to use the Internet. When purchasing a netbook, remember that there are full size models around the same price. Also keep in mind that a major benefit of a netbook over a laptop is portability. If a computer is going to spend the majority of time sitting on a desk then maybe a full-size upgradeable laptop is the better option.

PC's offer a large and technologically diverse group of laptops with something for everyone. These laptops can range in price from as little as \$299 to well over \$11,000. The key to picking the right model is understanding what you want the machine to do.

Mac computers are still considered to be the 'best.' And OS X is a less problematic operating system than Windows Vista. For professional grade photo and video editing, potential buyers should end their shopping adventure at the Apple Store.

But for users who aren't media moguls, a standard PC is still a reliable and cost-efficient option. And with the introduction of Windows 7, PC users can hopefully look forward to an easier and faster computing experience.

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Fencing Club brings "touche" to a new level

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There is nothing better than curling up on the couch on a weekend and watching Antonio Banderas kick butt in "Zorro." At the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point there is a chance to actually learn how to handle a sword just as professionally as Zorro. The UWSP fencing club provides a way for students to participate in learning how to fence properly in a fun and enjoyable way.

The Fencing Club is considered to be both a recreational and competitive club. With student coaches that lead students through three fencing weapons (foil, sabre and epee), the two hour practices help students become more comfortable with their weapons and fencing each other. Though you can join this club for fun, there are also a few members who are members of the United States Fencing Association and who compete all over the midwest. Most of the students are participating in order to gain experience in an area that interests them.

"My freshman year I attended the involvement fair, and while I was looking around I saw some guy in the full fencing getup, and on a whim I followed him back to the fencing table. I signed up and I've been going ever since," said Nicholas Gengler, head sabre coach.

The involvement fair is a pivotal part of the fencing club's word of mouth. Since they are obviously hard to miss with their full-gear getup, they find many students who are interested. The fencing club also sponsors many activities that students can try out for just a day, or watch what is happening in their club. Each semester the club sponsors a ladies night, where only female students can participate. They also just had

a tournament which showcased the talent that the UWSP fencing club has to offer.

"We started having UWSP Fencing Club ladies' nights last semester where we invite any ladies that are interested in fencing to come and try it out. No guys are allowed in the room for the full two hours and it's proven to be an enjoyable evening for those who come," said Danielle Reed, foil coach of the UWSP Fencing Club.

"The UWSP Fencing Club foil tournament is an opportunity for new and experienced fencers to get a taste of what a fencing tournament is like. Unlike competitive tournaments, our events are fenced dry, meaning there is no electric scoring equipment. This allows us to ensure that more students can compete without having to buy their own equipment. It also lets new fencers to get a feel for how tournaments are run, as we strive to keep the tournament as close to competitive tournaments as possible, while keeping a more relaxed environment," said Gengler.

To become part of this exciting club, you can either email a club officer with questions, come to practices next semester (Mondays and Wednesdays 4-6 p.m. in HEC 110), or check out their Web site at <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuorg/fencing/>.

All of the equipment is provided by the club with no cost to you. This is a great opportunity for UWSP students to try something new that definitely gets your adrenaline pumping.

"This has been a huge part of my college experience; it's been a great way to meet people, get a good workout and it can really be a confidence booster. After all, when you can deal with someone coming at you with a sword, how bad can final exams really be," said Gengler.



Photos courtesy of the UWSP Fencing Club

Sarah Andres and Christopher Robbins compete this past Saturday in the Dreyfus University Center Laird Room. They faced off in the final bout for 3rd place. Robbins finished 3rd and Andres finished 4th in the tournament. Both are from the UWSP Fencing Club, although the tournament consisted of competitors from all over the United States.

Students reflect on negative side to holidayary consumption

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Consumerism, according to Merriam-Webster's Dictionary, is "the theory that an increasing consumption of goods is economically desirable" and "a preoccupation with and an inclination toward the buying of consumer goods." Currently in the United States, consumerism is the driving force of the economy and the repercussions this cycle of spending has on the holiday season has Pointers disappointed.

"I feel like I'm constantly being pulled away from what is significant to me at this time and being sucked into this alternate lifestyle that is too busy to remember those things," said Andy Bowden, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Junior.

The frustration Bowden expressed is triggered by the gradual shift in mood concerning the holidays, mainly from seeing this time change from "the most wonderful time of the year" to "the most stressful time of year." The National Retail Federation Foundation, a non-profit foundation that conducts industry research as a division of the world's largest retail trade association, estimated that in 2009 the United States' "Holiday sales for November-December are expected to be \$437.6 billion."

"Advent Conspiracy is a non-profit organization my church helps during Christmas. This organization compiled the fact that it would cost only \$10 billion to solve the world water crisis," said Amanda Roswell, UWSP junior.

Roswell, like Bowden, commented on how easy it is to lose focus of the big picture when consumerism

relies on creating feeling of great dissatisfaction.

"At my church we give money to fund clean water wells in developing countries to encourage the tradition of giving on Christmas but to make sure we can keep the focus off of ourselves and on what's really important, which for us is the gift of Christ and celebrating it with the people we love," said Roswell.

Ari Wagner, UWSP junior who identifies as Jewish, also has qualms about the way season festivities are portrayed in America. She however, feels that Hannukah is not portrayed enough by the media,

"With all the marketing that is done for Christmas, I find myself getting excited for a holiday that I don't even celebrate," said Wagner.

While Christmas does stimulate enormous amounts of spending in the U.S., Wagner feels left out because her beliefs and traditions are overlooked.

David Capito, UWSP senior, is also discouraged not only because of the over spending but also by the exclusion that is a byproduct of the way holidays are now being represented in America.

"In the process of becoming an atheist, I feel that I've become more aware of how holiday branding affects people of disagreeing beliefs," said Capito. "Let's ignore the presents and stop saying 'It's the thought that counts.' If we can settle down and enjoy the short time that we have together, I don't need to cage my thoughts inside glossy boxes with ribbons, even if I do need new socks."

As Bowden, Roswell, Wagner and Capito would agree, the "must-haves" of the season are not materials at all but found rather in the people around you and the time you spend with them.



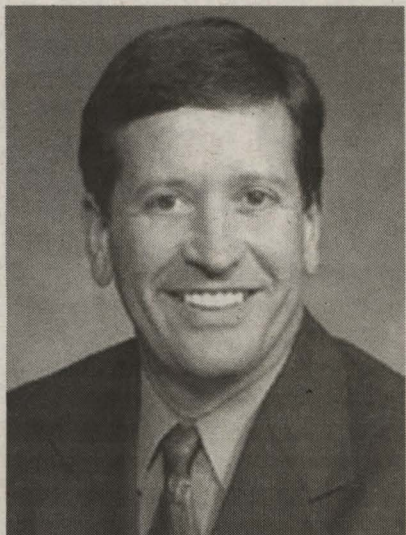
...worst holiday presents...

10. Nose hair clippers.
9. Condoms, lubrication or anything like that.
8. A framed photo of yourself.
7. 20-foot long electric blue inflatable walrus pool toy.
6. Any dead animal (please include air holes)
5. Gym memberships or workout videos (unless they asked for it).
4. Protractor or anything math or school related.
3. Deodorant, Viagra, floss or anything the has to do with health.
2. One year old calendar
1. Anything obviously previously used.

Science & Outdoors

Senator Decker expects more from DNR

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http://www.legis.state.wi.us

Senator Russ Decker is the voice for Wisconsin hunters.

On behalf of hunters throughout Wisconsin who have endured two equally disappointing and consecutive deer seasons, Senator Russ Decker (D-Weston) is asking the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources secretary Matt Frank, to replace the big game wildlife management team.

If Frank fails to act, Decker will take his request to the DNR Board for

consideration.

"I've talked with a lot of hunters and business people and everyone has said that this was the worst deer hunting season they have ever had. The DNR has mismanaged the deer herd and a new team needs to be brought in that can do the job," said Decker.

The current big game wildlife management team is proposing an extended 16-day gun season for 2010, despite the existing concern for the herd population with the traditional nine-day season.

"An understandable reaction to creating additional hunting seasons is a concern that deer herds will be over-harvested," said Keith Warnke, DNR big game ecologist, of the proposed 2010 season.

The DNR's solution involves the use of the existing quota system. "Under this system, the harvest of female deer is limited by permit to maintain populations at healthy, sustainable levels," said Warnke.

A lofty goal if the deer populations were already at a healthy and sustainable level.

Clearly, over-harvesting hasn't been a problem lately. After the past two seasons, the problem has deeper roots in deer management, the reason

for Senator Decker's address.

The total number of deer harvested this year was 195,647. Despite the fact that over 638,000 licenses were sold throughout the state, that number is down by over 40 percent from last year.

"We have annually adapted our harvest strategies, and will continue to do so in consideration of what the 2009 harvest tells us of the deer population," said DNR wildlife biologist Jeff Pritzel.

If the awful season didn't propel Decker's decision, then the proposed 16-day season, which contradicts the DNR's mission, would surely be enough to pull the trigger.

The DNR has come up with excuses for unsuccessful seasons, including the harsh winter two years ago, which had a greater impact on hunting than previously estimated. They claim that hunters spent less time in the woods, hunting only a few days out of the nine-day season, to which Decker replied, "horse hockey."

The excuse for this year involved wet weather and an increase in corn and temperature. May not sound like a recipe for disaster, but DNR conservation warden Michael Young argued otherwise.

"We've got the warm weather.

We've got a whole lot of corn up. We've got a lot of water...and hunters don't want to go into a lot of areas because they're going to get wet... And those areas are accessible to deer. So they'll find a nice wet area to hide in, and unless somebody steps on them they're not going to move," said Young.

"The swamps were pretty dry where our crew was hunting in Lincoln county...We don't let a little water stop us from going after deer," said Decker.

Decker is fed up with the DNR's "overzealous deer management plans," as are hunters, throughout the state, and replacing the big game wildlife management team seems the only viable solution at this point.

Though Decker recognized the benefits of the mentored hunting program passed by Legislature, the DNR big game wildlife team has had an overall negative impact on deer hunting in the state. Decker is a proud believer in hiring a team who will not only do the job they get paid to do, but do it well.

For the time being, Decker appears to be just the blaze orange donning, head mounting hero hunters been looking for to save the tradition of deer hunting in Wisconsin.

Snow arrives in time for winter sports season



Granite Peak, located in Wausau, is comparable to mountains out west, but in Stevens Point's backyard.

http://www.skigranitepeak.com

Jackie Lutze
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Last week, snowboarding, sledding and skiing seemed way off base, but as the snow is hitting the ground, winter sport lovers are getting geared up. Luckily for those cold-loving athletes, Wisconsin has many options for an enjoyable time in the snow.

For those who are itching to put their snow pants on, there are many hills and resorts around the area that are gearing up too. Some of the most popular hills in the area are located at Cascade Mountain in Portage, Granite Peak in Wausau, Devil's Head in Merrimac and Standing Rocks in Stevens Point. These are just a few of the many options Wisconsin and neighboring states have to offer.

Cascade Mountain offers diverse hills for snowboarding and skiing as well as hills for the less daring who want to try tubing. The hills

have automated snow machines for those who couldn't wait for the first snowfall.

"There are a lot of runs and a nice array of levels so everyone can find a hill that suits them," said Julie Driscoll, a UWSP student and skier.

Granite Peak is located at Rib Mountain National Park. This park also features a resort for avid snow lovers to spend the weekend or even the week. The park has over 35 jibs and 15 jumps, many of which are new this season. Opening day is anticipated all year long and Saturday, Dec. 12, marks that magical date.

"We are making snow and will continue daily with anticipation to open 40 percent of our runs," said the Web site.

Devils Head Ski Resort attracts skiers and snowboarders of all levels because of its 500 feet of vertical excitement. Most of the runs sit atop one of the highest points in Wisconsin.

"Winter vacationers visit this

Wisconsin ski resort because it also offers a variety of day and night recreational outlets for all ages," according to their new season advertising. Another great feature is lessons for all ages and stages.

Standing Rocks is located just seven miles east of Stevens Point. This park offers downhill and cross-country skiing. Downhill skiers can enjoy five trails, a vertical drop of 125 feet and three rope tows. There are two beginner hills, one intermediate hill and two expert hills.

Whether you're an avid skier or first time snowboarder, you can find a hill that suites you at one of the many parks around the area.

"Wisconsin may not have the Appalachians or the Rocky Mountains, but there are a lot of other options," said Driscoll.

For those looking for more information the many hills and resorts in Wisconsin are located on <http://www.wisconsinvacations.com/skiing.htm>.

A new class on survival is introduced for spring 2010

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Introduction to basic survival skills, Military Science and Leadership 222, was given the go ahead from the curriculum committee last spring and will be having its first class taught in spring 2010. The course will be taught by Sergeant First Class Jason Pond.

The idea to start this class was from students a year and a half ago. For adventure ed, and a few other majors, there are courses that bring students out to remote places where at times they would want more skills to help them out. The army, who goes to remote places for long periods of time, knows the keys for survival, and with that expertise, instructors from military science decided to create this course. The four main instructors in military science Jeff Kurka, Mike Butcher, Rob Keho and Jason Ponds then got together to create MSL 222. Jeff Kurka is a teacher for seniors, Mike Butcher, juniors, Keho Sophomores and Pond teaches the freshman.

MSL 222 is dedicated to surviving wilderness situations that are very stressful," said LTC Jeffery Kurka, Department chair of Military Science, "What it takes to survive and how

see "Class" pg. 11

Sports

Archery club right on target for a student org.

Erin Walker

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The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point archery club is getting a good start for its first year as an officially recognized club.

Braden Mook, a UWSP student who is now the archery club president, started the club. He wanted to get into the College Archery Program with UWSP alumnus Jason Winters. The two of them attended the National Indoor in Wisconsin Rapids, the United States Intercollegiate Archery Championship in New Jersey as an unrecognized club in 2007 and United States Intercollegiate archery Championship that was held in California in 2008.

"After that I had the idea to find a place on campus for us to shoot and to try and help fund trips we were taking," said Mook.

The UWSP Recreation Advisory Council helped the archery club and was able to promote the group to gain more members. The archery club also has sponsors such as the Black Hawk Archers who help with providing a place to shoot and Vortex optics, based out of Madison, has helped by offering help with optics and running the upcoming archery events.

"They help bring more people in from the community and other archers from across the Wisconsin who wants to shoot," said Mook.

Easton Sports Development foundation has provided an equipment grant and HHA archery have donated sites for beginner's bows. Equipment such as, targets, bows, arrows and all safety equipment are scheduled to arrive in December.

The club staff includes Braden Mook, president of the archery club and officers, Brad Kuechler, Jase Hintz, Paul Rades and Elizabeth Asproth.

"There are about 10 active members that will be paying dues

to shoot with us at Black Hawk Archers on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. in Polonia," said Mook.

There will also be practices in the Multi Activity Center when that is finalized and when the equipment arrives. The \$20 dues will go toward wear and tear on equipment, hotel and food costs.

Three main shoots the UWSP Archery club plans on attending this year include the National Archery Association Indoor Nationals in Wisconsin Rapids at the end of February, USIAC in College Station, Texas hosted by Texas A&M University and the National Field Archery Association Indoor National championship in Louisville, Ky.

Other events the UWSP Archery Team is hopeful to attend include the Texas Shootout and the ISAA Iowa Pro-Am in the beginning of January. Most local tournaments and smaller shoots will be attended by the UWSP Archery Team as well. An indoor tournament is being planned for April 3 and 4, but there is more planning needed for this.

Tryouts for the traveling team will consist of shooting scores above a certain line.

"We want a traveling team who will be serious about shooting well and representing the University well at a national level," said Mook.

Fundraisers are also in mind for the UWSP Archery Team.

"Lately we have been trying to reserve space for a shoot we want to have this spring and hopefully one in the winter too," said Mook.

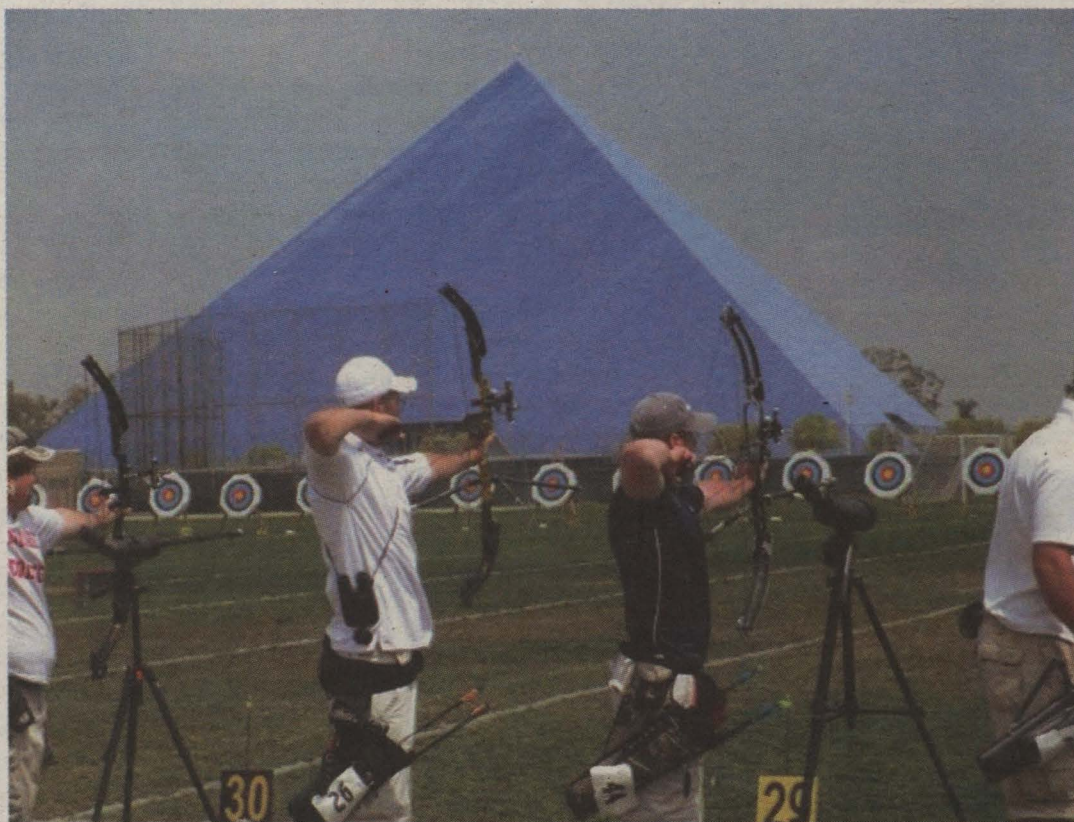


Photo courtesy of Jason Winters

Founding members participate in a competition.

In April there will be a warm-up for the Arizona Cup. The warm-up will be held in the MAC and it has already drawn interest from other states.

"The club is a great way for students to make friends and learn to better themselves at something they love or try something they might be interested in," said Jase Hintz, archery club officer.

People interested in learning how to shoot or would like to shoot for fun are encouraged to join.

"The club is open to people who have never shot before and there are experienced people who are here to help them," said Mook.

A scheduled seminar will be set up for beginners including a power point presentation to walk through steps of proper form, technique and safety. When shooting there will be a set time for practice to allow experienced archers to walk around

to help form and technique correction along with any other help they can provide.

"If they want the help we are there to help them," said Mook.

People involved in teaching would be Mook, Brad Kuechler, Jase Hintz, Paul Rades and volunteer Gary Hintz.

People interested in joining or learning more can be put on the e-mailing list archery@uwsp.edu or may contact Mook.

"I'm happy there's a club on campus," Rades said. "I'm also excited to be the first UWSP recurve shooter on campus."

With a good start for this young club there is hope to keep it going for future students.

"If they still want this club around and have a place to shoot they're going to have to help keep it going," said Mook.

How UWSP students can avoid the winter blues with fitness

Heather Sheets

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The winter weather has a reputation for discouraging avid exercisers and sucking the last ounce of motivation out of those not so interested in the first place. But this does not have to include you. There are many opportunities at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point to stay in shape during the winter chill.

First of all, the abundance of wellness classes offered for next semester can be taken advantage of. For people who enjoy the indoors, there is weight training, taekwondo, cycling, ball sports and many other opportunities for a shorts and t-shirt way to sweat it out.

For more adventuresome folk who enjoy the brisk outdoors, classes

like backpacking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing and ice skating could provide the perfect outlet a body needs to stay in shape and still connect with nature.

Some advice to these adventurers comes from the staff at Mayo Clinic, who published the article "Exercise and cold weather: Stay motivated, fit and safe," which said, "Dress in layers that you can remove as soon as you start to sweat and then put back on as needed. Start with a thin layer of synthetic material such as polypropylene, which draws sweat away from your body. Avoid cotton, which stays wet next to your skin. Next, try fleece for insulation. Top this with a waterproof, breathable outer layer. A heavy down jacket or vest will cause most people to overheat."

Some Pointers may prefer solitude while exercising outside of classroom restraints. For them, winter biking

may prove most rewarding.

In the article "Prepare your bike for winter," published by the Great Lakes Cycling and Fitness store, "If you are planning on riding your current bike through the winter months then you want to prepare your bike for the harsh conditions it will encounter during the winter. Studded tires are the first thing you want to put on your bike if you are planning on riding in the snow. They are the only tires that will actually give you some grip in snowy/icy conditions. You will also want to make sure your bike is well-lubed and switch to a heavier lube for your chain in order to protect it against the constant bombardment of salt and water."

Another worthy option, if solitude means zoning out with an iPod at a fitness center, would be to look into joining the one nearest you. Close to campus is the YMCA,

which offers a student discount of \$29 per month. On campus, both the Cardio Center and the Strength Center offer superior equipment and good prices. Free classes at the Cardio Center are available every week; the schedule can be seen at http://www.uwsp.edu/centers/healthwellness/GroupFitness/gf_209.pdf.

The prices for both the Cardio and Strength Center fluctuate according to the time of year a student decides to buy a membership and also by what kind of membership is purchased. These prices can be found at <http://www.uwsp.edu/centers/healthwellness/cardiocenter/pdf/Fitness%20Center%20Fees%202009-10%20Apr%202009.pdf>

So get your endorphins pumping, muster up some of that stowed away umph and don't be afraid to be a winter athlete.

Sports

Five easy rules from a Monday night at Lambeau

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Every game at Lambeau Field essentially starts the same way. After getting the first glimpse of the crowd waving whatever free foam or towel handout that was provided, there's always the rush of nervous energy when you step inside the stadium. This is because there is no way to really know what you are about to watch for the next three hours; once the ball is kicked, each game takes on its own life.

With that said, I think there are some constants that every fan can control to get the most out of their Packer game-day experience. Being at Lambeau for Monday night's crucial 27-14 victory gave me the chance to hastily make a mental list of relatively obvious guidelines for this very reason. In other words, prepare to be amazed. Here they are.

Tailgate. Players have to stretch and run drills before the game, fans should have to tailgate as their pre-game warm-up. No matter what happens in the game, the pre-game can still be considered a success with the right amount of ignorance. I don't like talking about the game beforehand, unless I'm approximating how many running backs B.J. Raji is going to eat before halftime (and I really think he could do this). The stresses of the game should be saved for inside the stadium with the outside for everything else.

Stand up. We had a few discussions with the guys behind us about standing up before and after big plays and the conclusion was reached early on that they did not support standing up for any reason other than the national anthem. These people should be in their living rooms. When it's third-and-ten for the Ravens, I'm going to be standing up. For a place to go where standing

is probably not necessary, contact the Cleveland Browns ticket office. Yeah, easy joke I know, but I'm tired.

Let's try to pay attention. One of the worst parts about going to a Wisconsin football game is the fact that about 60 percent of the student fan base isn't quite sure they are at a football game until "Jump Around" comes on after the third quarter. Packer fans in general are much more attentive than this, but there's always someone more concerned with getting "The Wave" started. I hate "The Wave." According to famed reliable-source Wikipedia, the origin of the audience wave, as it's called on the Web site, is disputed, but I saw at least two claims that it was started in Canada. Wouldn't surprise me.

If making a sign, make it creative. I've never made a sign, but I've seen a fair share of bad ones, especially when people try to include the letters FOX or ESPN for a better chance at getting on TV. But on Monday night,

my buddy Mueller spotted one of the most creative attempts at squeezing a network acronym into a phrase. The sign read, "Ray Lewis Stabs People Intentionally," with ESPN highlighted in the saying. Not sure if that one made the broadcast, but I would've loved to have heard Ron Jaworski's analysis of it.

Don't leave early. When the couple in front of us left, I looked up at the clock and there was about five minutes left in the game. This was obviously made more perplexing because the Packers were closing out the game at that time; these were the celebratory minutes where you didn't have to worry so much and simply bask in the upcoming victory. I can't come up with a good reason as to why someone would leave at this moment, and I'm getting confused just thinking about it. So, this is probably a good time to end this column. Happy holidays, everyone.

Men's hockey will work to 'black out' cancer this Saturday

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A great game and a worthy cause will team up this weekend when the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point men's hockey team and Ministry Health Care host their first "Putting a Check to Cancer" event this Saturday as they play UW-Eau Claire at the K.B. Willett arena.

The event will serve as a fundraiser for the Cancer Services Fund of Saint Michael's Hospital in Stevens Point. Proceeds will be donated to help cancer patients at the local hospital. Additional sponsors include Scaffidi Motors, the Point After Pub & Grill and Team Schierl Companies, most known for The Store convenience stores.

All fans are encouraged to wear

black to the game, and UWSP players will be wearing special black jerseys.

Spectators will be able to purchase the jerseys in a silent auction during the game, and can also buy pink roses for \$1 each. Auction winners will have the game jersey presented to them by the player after the game, and buyers of pink roses will receive black "Put a Check to Cancer" t-shirts donated by Team Schierl Companies.

Tom Weaver, a Public & Community Relations Manager for Ministry Health Care said that while this is the first time they've done the event, they're hoping to make it an annual establishment.

"Well, I guess the hope would be that we're laying the foundation here in year one for a long relationship of helping cancer patients in the Stevens Point area," said Weaver.

Weaver also serves as the radio

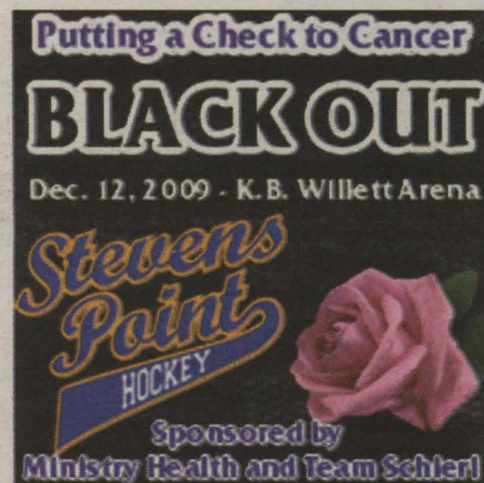
play-by-play broadcaster for the hockey team on B104.9FM, so he was able to connect the team with the hospital to set up the event.

"I thought we could put together a really neat event to do some good community work for local cancer patients. You could say it was mutually developed," said Weaver.

Weaver said that anticipation for the event has been high, mainly due to the promotional work done by the team.

"We're very pleased with the feedback we've gotten, with a lot of folks calling and asking questions," said Weaver. "I really give a tip of my hat to Coach Nichol and some of his guys for the promotional work they've done at the games leading up to this weekend."

Weaver especially admired



Graphic courtesy of athletics.uwsp.edu

Pointer goaltender Steve Hamilton who came out to center ice last weekend during intermission to announce the upcoming event.

"For him to say 'Hey, my dad beat cancer, I'm very proud of him and you can come next weekend and really help folks like him,' that was really cool, and I think they've been really getting people interested in this," said Weaver.

Head Coach Wil Nichol said that he also hopes it will be an annual tradition for the Pointer hockey team. He said that the team decided to do it near the end of the first semester for promotional purposes.

"We thought this would be a good target date that gave us six or seven home games to promote it. Our goal is to get as many people there as we can, and for them to donate to this important cause."

Coach Nichol said that the team and its booster club along with the sponsors have worked hard to spread the word about the event, and is looking forward to a crowded event.

"We're constantly talking about, as a program, how we can give back to this wonderful community that gives so much to us."

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Arts & Culture

The hottest event on the coldest night of the year

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The sixth of February 2010 will mark the eighth year that the annual Arts Bash will aim to raise over \$150,000 to support students in the Departments of Theatre & Dance and Art & Design. Arts Bash 2010 has been dubbed "The Hottest Event on the Coldest Night of the Year."

Arts Bash is the largest student scholarship fundraising event in all of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. The event is a showcase that features not only wonderful creations from student artists and performers but also great culinary art from local restaurants through the dinner and

wine served at the event.

"It is a merge of all arts," said CJ Robinson, one of the event coordinators. "People often forget culinary as an art but with the wonderful local businesses participating, the food of the night is really something to appreciate."

While "art of all kinds" is the feature of the night, the main mission is to raise money for scholarships for students.

"With the economy going the way it is, it is really important more than ever to support students," said Robinson.

100 percent of the proceeds from Arts Bash will be used toward scholarships used in various ways inside the art departments.

"It's different than many other majors; there are workshops, various

trips to view shows and the Senior Showcase that cost money, but are not covered by financial aid," said Robinson. "This event really helps fund these events and with many scholarships presented to students."

Alongside the great food and entertainment, there is also a raffle with a prize of a Thomas Dailing original jewelry piece valued at \$2,500. Raffle tickets are now on sale for \$10 each or three for \$20.

"I've actually had a few guys buy tickets as Christmas presents, they can't afford jewelry for their girlfriends so they buy this instead; it's actually a really good idea," said Robinson. "I also would encourage students to purchase/sell raffle tickets to family and friends."

Along with the purchase of raffle tickets, student art work will be on sale throughout the night.

The event will start with the art sale from 7:30-10 p.m.; performances at 8 p.m. and a dance party at 9:30 p.m., with complimentary hors d'oeuvres, desserts, wine and beer and a cash bar. People in attendance are also encouraged to wear appropriate expressive attire and have an enjoyable night "experiencing the arts."

For more information and to purchase tickets visit <http://www.uwsp.edu/cofac/artsbash/> or contact CJ Robinson, Director of Development at (715)346-3056 or crobinson@uwsp.edu.

Student work receives awards

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Students, faculty and community members gathered for the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Juried Student Exhibition last Sunday afternoon in the Edna Carlsten Art Gallery of the Noel Fine Arts Center.

The exhibition included a variety of works submitted by students primarily within the Department of Art and Design, but also included those submitted by non-art students. The works included paintings, sculpture, drawings, prints and other types of 3-D design.

There were 182 works of art by 87 artists entered for the exhibition, with 55 pieces from 44 artists accepted for display.

Thirteen awards were given for excellence, including three Foundations Awards donated by DigiCopy of Stevens Point. These awards were for students beginning in the Fine Arts program who are enrolled in the 100-level courses.

UWSP alumni jurors John Paskiewicz and Branden Martz chose work that would represent a balanced exhibition, showing the diversity of the Fine Arts program and highlighting pieces that excelled within their medium.

Senior Lecturer and Carlsten Gallery Director Caren Heft said she was satisfied with both the submissions, and the selections chosen by the jurors for this year's display.

"As a body of student work, it could probably stand with any other student exhibition in the country," said Heft. "We have very, very talented students, and the jurors chose a very compelling exhibition that included a strong balance of works," she said.

Heft said that some students who were informed of their work being selected for awards were surprised.

"I sent out e-mails to all of the students who were award winners, telling them to come to the show. One student who replied said 'Did you mean to send that to me?' I told them that I absolutely did and to please come on Sunday," said Heft.

Awards were sponsored by donors from the university and community, as well as funds from the 2009 Arts Bash, the university's largest student scholarship fundraising event.

David L. Smith, a former faculty member and the owner of The Smith Scarabocchio Art Museum in Stevens Point said that he has been continuously involved in the area's art events for years.

"I'm still doodling. That is, I'm still working on art. I'm doing it all the time because it's part of me—I can't do anything else," said Smith.

"I appreciate the art department giving awards, even if the monetary amount wasn't as much as previous years, due to the economical conditions. I think that keeping students involved is what is most important," said Smith.

Graphic design student Dorothy Barnard said she enjoyed seeing submissions from younger students, coming from 100-level classes.

"You see work that everyone has to do for the 100-level classes, things that you remember doing as a freshman. And so then, you start to see the people work their way up from that and evolve with amazing new work," Barnard said.

Karolina Romanowska, a UWSP student who submitted work in multiple mediums and won two awards said it was very rewarding to be recognized in the show.

"It makes me feel appreciated, like I'm going the right way with all the work and the hours invested in the studio," she said.

Romanowska said she was very happy with the turnout of submissions and spectators, but hopes that next year will bring more non-art students into the show.

"I thought there were really a lot of people there, but considering the fact that this show is open to all students, it would be nice to get more people from different departments to get involved, and try to get their work into the show," Romanowska said.

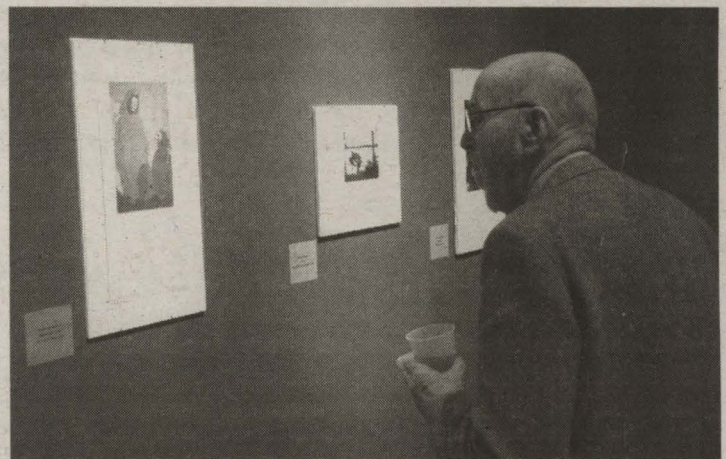


Photo by Dan Neckar

David L. Smith, donor of the David L. Smith Award for Art Excellence, views work in the juried student exhibition.

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Arts & Culture

Movie review: Michael Jackson's "This Is It" shows new side to pop legend

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There were many ups and downs through the king of pop, Michael Jackson's life. Accusations and trials concerning his actions caused mass media to put the spotlight on him in ways that made generations after his musical peak know him less for his music. People throughout the world put Jackson aside as a pedophile, while others still saw him as the king of pop. Since Jackson's death, people have lamented the fact that Jackson is never again going to perform his magic onstage. The new movie, "This Is It," portrays Michael Jackson's last days onstage while he perfected his performance one step at a time, while trying to put the focus on what made him an icon in the first place, his music.

Beginning on Sept. 27, 2009, tickets were on sale for Jackson's memorial movie. This personal insight into the life of Jackson was the last hope for many fans to get a glimpse into what he was truly like.



MJ at his prime.

Photo by Sony Pictures

Kenny Ortega, the director of "This Is It" and the creative director of Jackson's tour believed that showing the world who Jackson truly was was something that needed to be experienced by all—especially the true fans.

"This film is a gift to Michael's fans. As we began assembling the footage for the motion picture we realized we captured something extraordinary, unique and very special. It's a very private, exclusive look into a creative genius's world. For the first time ever, fans will see Michael as they have never seen him before—this great artist

at work. It is raw, emotional, moving and powerful footage that captures his interactions with the "TII" collaborators that he had personally assembled for this once in a lifetime project," said Ortega in an interview for Sony Pictures Entertainment.

When coming into the theatre to see this movie, I had an open mind. There are so many rumors, ideas and accusations regarding Michael Jackson. I wanted to experience this movie with open eyes and an open heart in order to give this movie, and this person, a chance to prove there was more to him than headlines.

During the opening, I was instantly struck and I understood what the fans and others who loved the king of pop really felt about this great entertainer. Tears streamed down the faces of his backup dancers of the tour who never got to perform officially for him. They stated how much this opportunity meant for them in order to be a part of Jackson's world—an extension of himself through dance. Many flew across entire countries in order to dance for him. This opening was truly moving and set the stage for what else was to come.

The movie showcased Jackson's work ethic and how he interacted with his creative director, backup dancers and his music entourage. His quirky and perfectionistic style was something to be admired. He knew what he wanted. He knew what his fans wanted. It was clear he would do anything in his power to achieve everything that they all anticipated. At points it was even comedic how serious he was taking each process of the tour. His style in operations created an environment that all of his admirers and fellow performers wanted to be around—and they definitely showed it.

Jackson's love for people, the environment and relationships glow brightly through this movie. His new renditions for his old performances and songs were awe-inspiring. "Thriller" was definitely a highlight. His slower songs seemed to bring out more emotion than ever before. He even created movies to accompany them for a few songs. When being raised on a cherry picker for a song, he exclaimed, "Wee!" He was a little kid at heart and kept expressing how much he loved everyone in that room.

Jackson's movie was definitely something to experience. I found a new side of him that many don't believe that they will see. By being blinded by the media we will not be able to learn and love. Step out of your box and experience a part of Michael Jackson that will always live on.

Aqua Teen Hunger Force does Christmas

Jarad Olson
Contributer

If you like Aqua Teen Hunger Force, you will probably like their newest venture into the music world. When I opened the mail at 90FM about 2 weeks ago to find an ATHF Christmas album, I was not surprised for some reason, but I was certain it would be ridiculously weird and crude as hell. I was correct in that assumption, but there were some twists along the way. There are at least 10 minutes worth of straight up Christmas cover songs. That is a much larger chunk of "traditional" than I expected. The album runs about 36 minutes, but feels like a lifetime about half way through the disc. This is my biggest qualm with this album: "I Hope I Don't Have To Beat Your Ass This Christmas" is the biggest pile of way-too-long crap you can ever receive on your auditory front lawn. I'll admit, there are a few funny parts in this original piece, but that track kills the mood for me.

The fact that this album actually creates a mood is what really impressed me. I've held the opinion that the only good Christmas music is sad Christmas music for a while now. Roughly forever. In fact, I haven't ever really been in the mood to listen to Christmas music. It's not that I don't like Christmas; it's just that Christmas music bores me. Plain and simple. It's always perplexed me as to why so many people get off on the same recycled songs for roughly three months straight. Why do some radio stations feel it is Christmas two days after Halloween? It is not Christmas two days after Halloween. It's really hard to have control over what you're listening to when every elder member of your family loves this stuff and you couldn't reach the damn radio and you're hung-over and the cat won't play with you and your girlfriend's in Poland and you smell. That felt good to get that in type.

If you're thinking to yourself, "I am becoming disinterested in this off-topic ranting," don't bother with the new Aqua Teen Christmas album. The majority of the humor here is based on confusion and getting off-topic. It's just like the show. Seriously, if you like Aqua Teen Hunger Force you will probably like this album. I'm leaving the "probably" in because I do know some religious folk who can appreciate ATHF humor for the most part. They probably won't like this album. Atheism is a bit of a motif. I thought it was funny. Have yourself a meaty little Christmas.

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Letters & Opinion

Food Swings

Jacob Mathias
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There's something you need to know about me. I freaking love tater-tots. Not only are they delicious, they are fun shaped and can be stacked into castles. So, just saying, eat more tater-tots. Unnaturally shaped foods are the American dream. Thomas Jefferson actually changed the Declaration of Independence from "the pursuit of tater-tots" to "the pursuit of happiness." Also, all potatoes are not created equal. Just sayin'. The following is the actual potato ranking from most awesome to most lame:

1. Tater tots
2. French fries
3. Mashed potatoes

4. Fried potatoes
5. Baked potatoes
6. Boiled potatoes

(Any complaints or changes that you would like to make to this list will be ignored. It has been said.)

Another thing that you need to know; I love hotdish. Microsoft Word just told me 'hotdish' is a misspelling. I do not believe this. Hotdish is a one-word entity designated for the one and only awesome combination of everything in your kitchen mixed together and baked. Don't give me this casserole bullshit like you're some southern FIB. Hotdishes are delicious and should be celebrated.

So in honor of both tater tots and hotdish, I present, tater tot hotdish.

You will need:

1 lb. hamburger
1 10 oz. can cream of mushroom soup

1 ½ cups cut green beans

¾ cup frozen corn

1 bag tater tots

Brown the hamburger. Mix together with the soup, beans and corn. Place in a hotdish pan (not a casserole). Line the tater tots up in rows until the entire meat and veggie mixture is covered and delicious looking. Bake at 375° until tater tots are golden brown. Scoop and serve. And remember, live to eat.

'Tis the season to be diverse

Avra Juhnke
THE POINTER
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The holiday season certainly bombarded us as soon as Halloween was over. Christmas trees were erected in stores ready for consumers by November 1. Christmas lights were put up on people's houses, maybe not plugged in till Thanksgiving, but put up in trees, on houses and bushes. This may have been due to the mild weather we had, up until now of course. Radio stations turned to all holiday music all the time. It has been reported stores and media have done this trying to bring up the mood of this fairly depressed population.

Let's face it. We are down because of the economy and the holiday season is the worst time to be in an economic slump. All of the cheer, joy and shiny things just make me want to buy gifts for the people I care about around me. It seems the force of the holidays is doing exactly the opposite and making us feel worse.

Another thing that may be making us feel worse is the fact that our vibrant diversity is fading.

As the "melting pot" of the world, we are constantly trying to accommodate everyone. I respect that. I understand why we need to do that. There is a school in Colorado that has banned all holiday decorations and celebrations. There is a veteran who is not allowed to hang his American flag outside of his house because of the neighborhood coalition in his area. This is just taking it too far. If we keep trying to be so politically correct, so accommodating, so all encompassing, all diversity just might disappear. We will no longer be able to appreciate our differences, no longer be that melting pot.

Here at the Pointer, we even had a "secret non-discriminate holiday figure" gift exchange. Not only is that a mouthful to say, it is really vague and plain. When someone

says, "Merry Christmas" and you don't celebrate Christmas but you celebrate Hanukkah, say, "Happy Hanukkah" right back! I only say happy holidays so that it includes all the holidays I celebrate in this season: Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years. If someone said, "Happy Kwanzaa to me, I would be really excited and want to learn more about the celebration of that holiday.

With this, I ask please keep our differences in mind this holiday season. Appreciate diversity, don't erase it.

This being my last Pointer ever, I want to thank the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point for being such a vibrant and diverse place and always giving us something to write about. There are so many wonderful people, cultures and ideas to learn about. It was a pleasure being able to work for you, and I hope you are encouraged to use your rights of free speech through reading this publication!

Letter to the editor

I cannot believe the intelligent, worldly and articulate man I voted in for President will engage in more warfare for Afghanistan - often called "the land where empires go to die". This at a time when our overstressed soldiers are on their fifthth and sixth tours of duty and our whole U.S. economic system is tanking. It is estimated that the Iraq War alone will cost \$3 trillion, not to mention this new Afghanistan operation. Do we want our taxes used for more death?

Isn't it time the human family embraces cooperative ways to solve its problems, even though they aren't as glorified as the battle stories we have all been raised with? The true naivety lies with those who think eternally going down the same war rat hole will give us a new world.

- Debbie Metke

THE POINTER

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Letters to the editor and all other material submitted to The Pointer becomes the property of The Pointer.



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Happy Holidays

Have a safe winter break

and good luck on your finals