

the. pointer

University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point

December 5, 2013

pointeronline.uwsp.edu

Volume 58 | Issue 12



Photo by Emma St. Aubin

POINTEREST Holiday How-To: Gingerbread People

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No cookie says "Christmas" like gingerbread men and nothing prepares me more to wrap gifts than some of these cookies with a good cup of hot cocoa.

To kick off this holiday season, I baked a cozy gingerbread family to share with my own family. I used

a classic recipe rather than one of those chocolate-stuffed, gluten-free, 30-calorie miracles. Although this recipe is simple, it is spectacular enough that if baked crispy enough the cookies can be multi-purposed as tree ornaments.

After running to the store to fetch some molasses, because who actually has molasses in their pantry, I turned up the Christmas music so the cookies

would be made with cheer and tied on my apron because I am a wrecking ball when I bake.

The entire house quickly filled with the warm aroma of cinnamon, cloves, ginger and nutmeg—what a dream! And to make this dream even better, it began to snow.

Something to note, if you want soft and chewy cookies, remove them from the oven around eight minutes,

but for a crispier cookie, if you are looking to use them as ornaments or other decorations, remove them closer to 10 minutes.

The best part about these cookies is that they make for easy and creative gift-giving. Use a variety of cookie cutter sizes to make families or groups of friends. For a whimsical presentation, pack them in a cellophane bag and tie with ribbon.

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Civic Engagement

TORI L. JENNINGS, PH.D.
Letter to the Editor

Just when it seems that the voice of the people matters no more, Senator Julie Lassa reminded me and my students that such skepticism ignores the everyday practice of civic engagement.

On Nov. 27, Sen. Lassa delivered a forthright and engaging lecture to my ANTH 339-Native Cultures of North America class. Senator Lassa, a University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point alumna, provided a fascinating overview of legislative decision-making, explained effective approaches to political action and addressed a variety of questions and issues concerning the Tribes of Wisconsin and their relationship to the state.

The senator shared a balanced and sometimes humorous look at the political process in our region so that we might better understand how civic mindedness becomes public policy. Sen. Lassa's own life story growing up on a dairy farm in Central Wisconsin, attending UWSP and becoming involved in politics

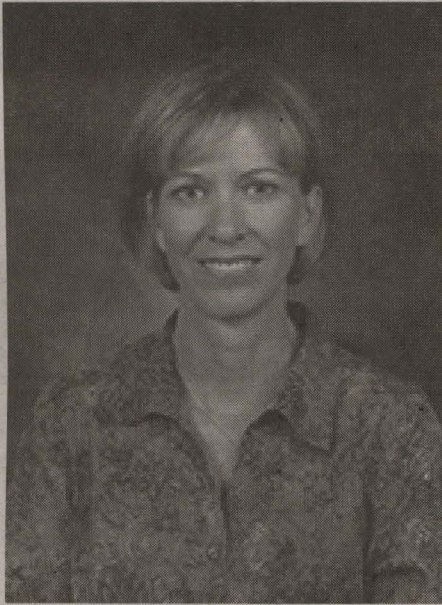


Photo courtesy of UWSP Psychology Department website
Tori L. Jennings, Ph.D.
Anthropology Coordinator, Department of Philosophy

embodies the notion that local people can and do make a difference.

I am deeply grateful to Senator Lassa for generously sharing her time and insights with my students, and continuing the UWSP tradition of student engagement and public service.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES REPORT

Sunday, Nov. 24

Staff from Hansen Hall called to report a very small "whiff" of weed coming from a room but he could not pinpoint the exact location.

A female called from the women's locker room by the HEC pool. She could not get the lock on her locker to open. She called to request an officer come to cut the lock off if no other solution could be found.

An individual walking on Fremont Street noticed a single female individual sitting alone near the windows in the eating area of the DUC. He also stated that the area was dark and she was alone on her laptop. The individual wanted someone to go check on her.

An individual called stating that there was a dog outside the HEC near Baldwin Hall and wanted someone to check on it.

Tuesday, Nov. 26

Staff member in Neale Hall called to report seeing an elderly gentleman parked across from Hansen Hall who seemed confused. The caller was concerned for the welfare of the subjects.

Wednesday, Nov. 27

May Roach staff called to report two vehicles driving repeatedly outside May Roach Hall yelling at students walking along the road to "come with them to a party". Caller stated occupants seemed to be intoxicated.

Knutzen Hall staff stated that they had a report of marijuana coming from a group of individuals standing around by the volleyball courts.

Thomson Hall staff called to report water backing up from the drain in the water fountain on the first floor. A plumber was called to repair the issue.

Female called to report that custodians had found a small scale in the bathroom of the DUC basement. Caller was not certain if it had been used for drugs.

Friday, Nov. 29

Responding officer called in a deer in parking Lot S/J that is rolling around in the lot on the ground, unsure of what is wrong.

THE POINTER Editorial

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The Pointer is printed Thursdays during the academic year with a circulation of 3,000 copies. The paper is free to all tuition-paying students. Non-student subscription price is \$10 per academic year.

Letters to the editor can be mailed or delivered to *The Pointer*, 104 CAC, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Stevens Point, WI 54481, or sent by e-mail to pointer@uwsp.edu. We reserve the right to deny publication of any letter for any reason. We also reserve the right to edit letters for inappropriate length or content. Names will be withheld from publication only if an appropriate reason is given.

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Winter is just about here, but it will be gone soon enough. Don't forget to register for your study abroad program for summer 2014 by December 1, 2013 - because the world is calling!

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Cramming Cookies and Coffee

SARAH MCQUEEN
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The library is hosting an Exam Cram on Monday, Dec. 16 from 7 p.m. to midnight for students who need study time for exams, extra help with final papers and projects, or a little free caffeine to get them through the week.

This is the fifth year the library has held an Exam Cram.

"The reason we started doing this is because it is a very stressful time for students. We wanted to provide quiet places for them to study. We also wanted to have a little bit of stress relief for them and also provide help for them," said Nerissa Nelson, a Reference and Instruction Librarian.

One of the biggest draws of this event is the unlimited free coffee and cookies offered to students. Librarians will put out a fresh tray of cookies and more coffee every hour. The cookies and coffee will be set up in the Idea Studio on the first floor, just off the main circulation area. In past years, 50 to 60 students have come every hour for the cookies and last year they went through 85 pots of coffee.

"The first year we put everything out at once and that was a huge mistake, they basically were gone right away," Nelson said.

Andy Pech, an Outreach Coordinator for the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, said that he has been handing out cookies and coffee during finals week for about 10 years now. Pech said that the library is given a small budget for the Exam Cram that they use to purchase the cookies.

"The students love it," Pech said. "We used to do it on a volunteer

basis, people would bake cookies and bring them in, but the students liked it so much it got to be thousands of cookies. I think because it is getting close to Christmas time that students are getting a little homesick and when they come in here and are given cookies it's kind of like comfort food."

The Exam Cram is run by volunteers. The librarians and the library staff come in to help with the event, putting out the cookies and coffee every hour, offering assistance to any students who need help and clean up after the event is over. There are also reference librarians available

until 11 p.m. to help with any last minute citations or articles.

Besides the librarian volunteers, tutors from the Tutoring and Learning Center will also work late to assist students with any work they need help with. The tutors will be in the IMC lab on the third floor of the library.

In addition to the free cookies and coffee they will also be giving out some free T-shirts and fortunes.

The Exam Cram is based off a similar program in Madison. It worked so well there that a librarian who formerly worked in Madison

recommended that they start a program here. It originally started as a pajama exam cram.

"Not a lot of people wore their pajamas so we scratched that idea," Nelson said.

Libraries at some of the larger schools keep their libraries open all night during finals week but the UWSP library runs its normal hours for finals. Nelson said that they have considered the idea of staying up 24/7 or having extended hours but she doesn't believe there is a need for it at this time.

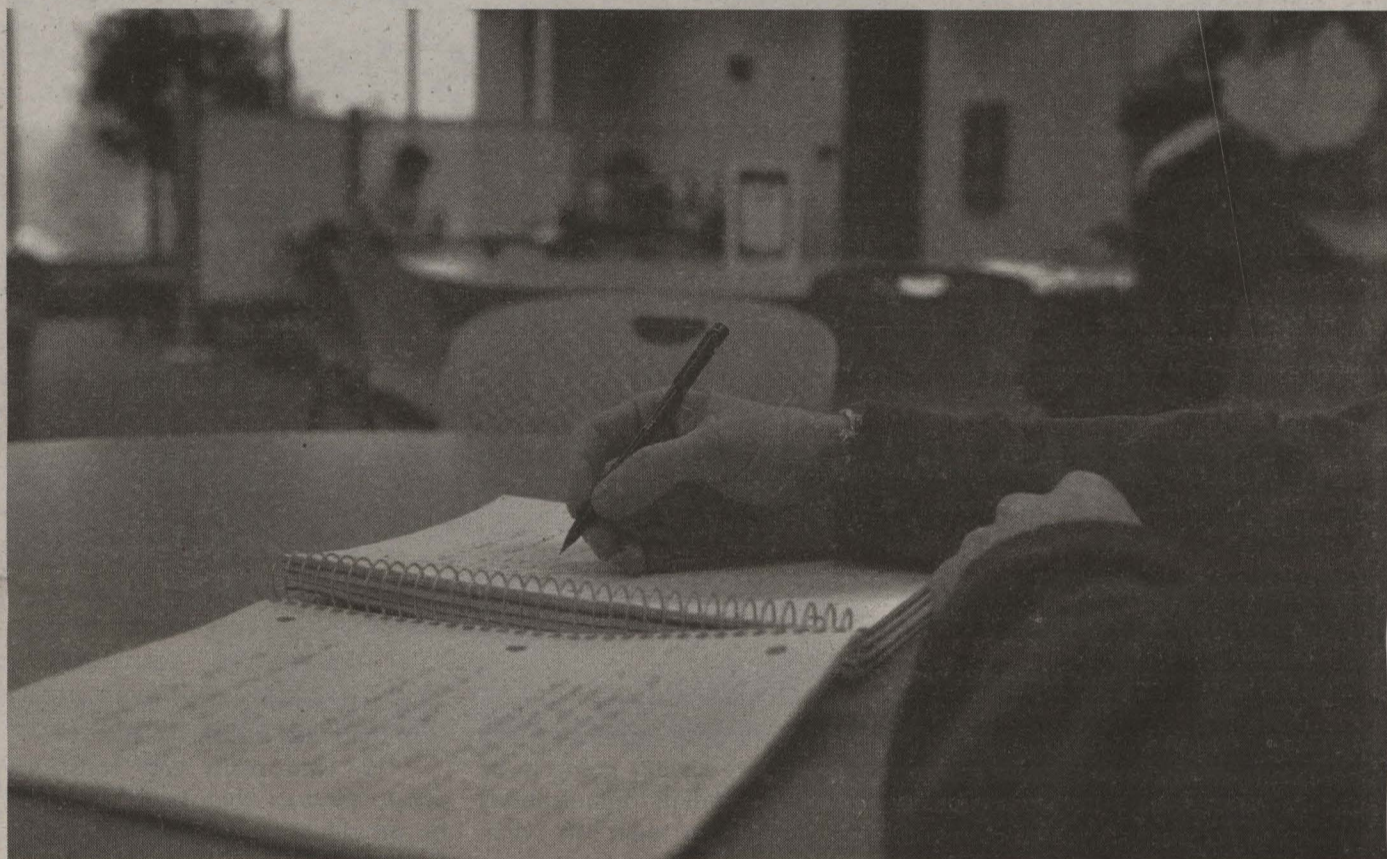


Photo by: Emily Hoffmann

The annual Exam Cram has become a popular attraction for students in need of a buzz and a spot to study.

SGA Judiciary Branch Refurbished To Ensure Due Process

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Recently, the judiciary branch of the Student Government Association underwent multiple structural changes to ensure that proper checks and balances were maintained for

semesters to come.

"We've always had a judicial branch, but we've actually never had a judicial branch," said SGA president Ryan Specht. "Structurally it existed, but it never actually had a jurisdiction or a set of duties that gave people a reason to join, stay, and do things. It really only existed in times of crisis, and even then had very, very, limited ability."

Geoff Murray, SGA's Chief of Staff, held a similar viewpoint.

"It gives us the full circle of what should've been there all the time; there was just a little piece missing, so we filled in that little piece," Murray said.

According to Specht, this newly revised judiciary branch serves several purposes. It acts as an impartial elections committee for SGA and hears cases of student organization conduction. The branch also has jurisdiction over student organization

constitutions and bi-laws as well as periodically reviewing student organizations status.

Specht maintained that transparency has definitely been a goal.

"We want to make sure that there are appropriate checks and balances with our system, and as SGA is the body that governs student's organizations, we want to make sure we do so appropriately," Specht said.

Murray went on to explain that if student government does something wrong, the judicial branch is the point of contact for a student to make a complaint.

"We're responsible for our constituents, which is the students. Every student here is a member of the student government association, we just have officers who carry out the tasks," Murray said. "Sometimes the officers may do something, and I don't believe we've done it this year,

or last year, or any time recently, but they could overstep their bounds, or make a decision that the students don't necessarily agree with. The judicial branch gives them that outlet, and gives them a place to file a complaint if they have one."

Murray also urged students to get involved with SGA and the newly revamped judiciary branch.

"We will have justice positions opening up. There are lots of areas of campus that the judicial branch will actually be touching on, so it's a great experience for students looking to get involved," Murray said.

Specht agreed.

"As always, get involved, in any capacity within your student government, whether that's joining senate, or just coming to one of our meetings and saying what you think," Specht said.



Photo courtesy of Flickr.com

SGA's revamped judicial branch looks to play a bigger role on campus

Subsidy Budget Finalized by Student Senate

RACHEL PUKALL
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The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Subsidy Budget has been written and finalized by the Student Senate as of Nov. 9.

"There are a lot of different organizations on campus that get funded by SGA. This is just the portion where we subsidize major departments on campus as opposed to student organizations, which happens in February," said SGA budget director, Charlie Greiber. "This is a bulk of the segregated fees that we allocate. There are a couple other large portions that we haven't gotten to yet, the student organizations being the big one."

There are approximately 120 student organizations on campus that are eligible for the subsidy budget this year.

"That is up from about 100 since last year," Greiber said.

Some of the groups in the Subsidy Budget have funding from multiple places and some of them have funding solely from SGA.

SGA only helps subsidize groups, like athletics, because they have other sources of funding.

"We are a major component to the funding it takes to run their operation. The same goes for Centertainment, the Tutoring Learning Center or Schmeckle," Greiber said. "We are a major portion of their funding, but by no means are we all of their funding. We're just helping pay for a portion of it."

Some of the other departments on the list include Group Fitness,

Child Care, the Counseling Center, the Student Involvement and Employment Office, Theater and Dance, Intramurals and others.

"That's where this portion of the funding will go. These are bigger departments that have full time staff who coordinate them. They are not like a student organization where it's all students," Greiber said. "For example, Centertainment has full

they're not."

As it currently stands, SGA has actually saved students money.

"The departments overall either requested to stay approximately the same or have a small increase. Some of them got a small increase, and some of them had budgets that went down slightly, it kind of varies back and forth," Greiber said.

As an overall trend, SGA has

takes to try those services, and we felt like we did a really good job of making responsible decisions as to where students prioritize spending their money the most, and this is the result of that," Greiber said.

In total, the subsidized portion of the budget was a little over \$1.7 million and SGA will address student organization funding in February, which had approximately \$800,000 last year.

"Our committee is made up solely of students who do all of the decisions," Greiber said. "It is the most student involved budgeting on the entire campus."

The money also comes directly from the students and is decided upon by students.

"When a student sees their bill in the fall it says tuition and then it says segregated fees. All of this funding comes from those lines that say segregated fees," Greiber said. "Last year there was approximately \$600 per semester per student, which totals up to be about \$13 million that we allocate for a lot of different departments on campus."

SGA has a pretty clear picture of where they will be at the end of the year, with the Student Senate only allowing them to raise the total amount that has been budgeted by 1 percent.

"That doesn't mean that there's going to be a 1 percent increase, but there is up to 1 percent if needed," Greiber said. "The net effect on students for next year is that there will be almost no change in the individual bill."



Photo courtesy of Flickr.com

Allocations for students services in the works.

time staff and the Tutoring Learning Center has full time employees. The departments are always going to be there, unlike student organizations which vary from year to year. Sometimes they're active, sometimes

allocated about \$5,000 less for next year than they did this year.

"We were really very conscious about services that were going to be provided to the students, while keeping in mind the costs that it

Questioning Christmas Music in the Classroom

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Equality around the holidays is an issue dealt with every year during the winter months.

At the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point there are no regulations against Christmas music being played or taught.

"There are no guidelines against Christmas music," said Monica Anderson, senior administrative specialist of the UWSP Music Department.

"A lot of times the December concert will include music that is religious but they always try for a balanced approach," said Patricia Holland, chair of the Music Department.

A limited amount of Christmas-themed concerts are allowed to take place at UWSP because it is a public university.

"Tuba Christmas is the only Christmas music performance that takes place around this time of year," said Anderson. "That performance is put on by people in the community

that volunteer, it's their choice."

Tuba Christmas will take place in Michelson Hall in the Noel Fine Arts Center on Dec. 13 at 7:30 p.m. The performance is free to the public and all that attend are encouraged to wear holiday attire.

Holland explained that instrumental music is typically not rooted in religion, while choral music has many aspects based within religion.

Holland also said the teaching of Christian Christmas music is more of a learning tool than it is a religious observance. Countless songs may have a religious background but students do not have to take it in that perspective.

"I think people should care about the music itself," said Sarah Nelson, sophomore clarinet performance major. "You can take your own personal feeling into any song."

Recently, the Wausau school district has been involved in a Christmas controversy regarding how acceptable it is to have religious music in school concerts and curriculum.

The district has decided not to make any further decisions on the situation of taking away Christmas music from the school setting. The proposal was to either change the theme of a recital or have four songs

that are not religious for everyone that is.

The proposal was not accepted because the district needs more time to research the issue, according to WAOW Newsline 9 out of Wausau.

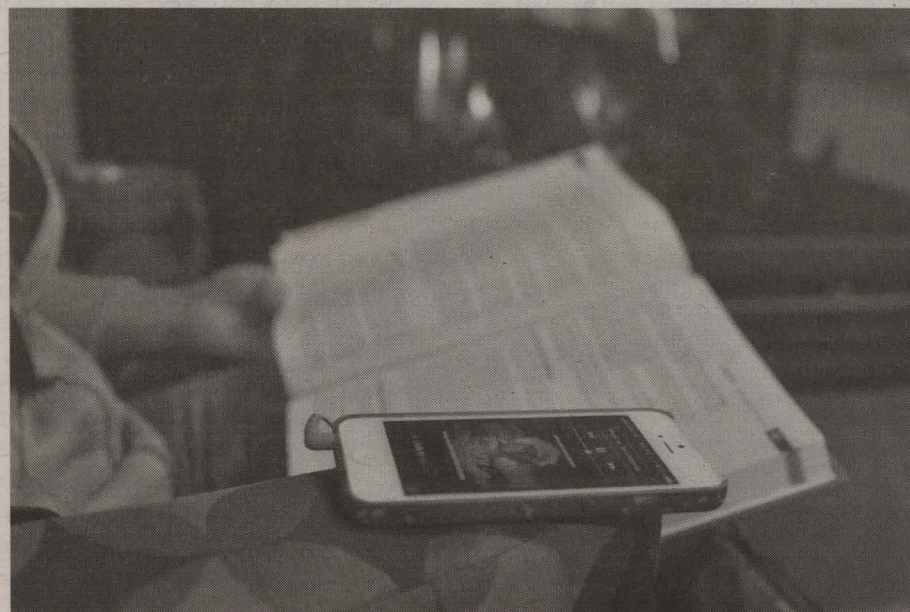


Photo by: Emily Hoffmann

Students may choose to listen to Christmas music on their MP3 players.

Volleyball Team Satisfied with Season's Turnout, Seek Improvements

CASSIE SCOTT
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After 24 consecutive wins, the women's volleyball season has come to a close after being defeated by Cal Lutheran on Friday, Nov. 22 at the DeVos Fieldhouse in Holland, Michigan.

Their hot streak ended in the National Semi-Final tournament placing them 4th in the nation. This season was the team's deepest run in program history during the NCAA tournament.

"Our goal was to take every match one point at a time, then we just started rolling," said Head Coach Abbey Sutherland. "After the loss, everyone was disappointed but proud. We held our heads high."

The girls had every reason to hold their heads high, as their team was ranked 19th going into the tournament. The team previously won their regular season championship allowing them to host the conference tournament, where they took first and were granted an automatic bid into the NCAA tournament.

The only senior on the team, Allison Davis, was unsure of how the season would end and admits she was concerned about having a first year coach and the youth of the team.

"I did not know what to expect at the beginning of the year," Davis said.

"All of the freshmen are so talented beyond measures and everyone gets along so well. We meshed together as a family and took the season much farther than I expected," Davis said.

Davis confessed that as the team started to win on a regular basis they gained confidence and believed in themselves and their abilities.

Junior setter Alexis Hartman, was excited and impressed on how well the team did this year. She stated that the girls got along really well on and off the court and their close relationships allowed them to play well together and contributed to their success.

"I think that this year has been the most fun and cohesive group of girls I have ever played with. Everyone brings their own personality to the table and has their own special role. These girls are the reason I had such a fun time this season," Hartman said.

Davis and Hartman aren't the only ones awestruck by the amazing season. Their coaches are just as enthusiastic.

"This whole experience has been surreal," Sutherland said. "The neatest thing I've seen from this group is progress. We improved a lot and as a whole team, we believed in something bigger."

By believing, the team was able to achieve their hopes of entering the national tournament, even with this being Sutherland's first year coaching for the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

She spent nine years coaching volleyball at the University of Southern Miss., but decided to come closer to her hometown of West Bend, Wis.

"I was really close with the players at Southern Miss. it was hard to leave, but there are great groups of players everywhere," Sutherland said.

Blessed with a talented bunch, both Sutherland and assistant coach Amber Dunn were satisfied with how their season ended.

They also noted that it is every coach's goal to push their team to get to the national tournament, but seasons, much like the one they just had, don't always happen.

"Each player has put in a great deal of hard work and a lot of time. In this case it has paid off and was an opportunity of a lifetime," Dunn said.

With much success, the coaches, as well as the players, are ready to work hard during the off-season to increase their chances of being victorious during the 2014 season.

During the Spring semester, coaches are allowed to work with their athletes for 16 practices during

the course of five weeks.

Sutherland explained that she uses that time to work more individually with her players in an effort to improve techniques and individual control.

Davis said the success of the season was a great way to end her senior year.

"The team I got to spend my senior year with made my last year competing even more enjoyable," Davis said. "They have such big hearts, they are full of laughter, great talent and competitive spirits that I hope takes them even farther next year. I could not have had such a great senior season without them, coaches and athletic trainers included."

As for Hartman, she knows she has work to be done and improvements to make.

"During the off season there are always things that can be worked on," Hartman said. "I always want to try to get faster so that I can get to those balls that I normally can't. I also want to continue working on connecting with my hitters and being consistent."

As the players will work on improving their individual skills, the coaches will oversee, motivate and encourage them all that they can.

"We need to take it one day at a time, work hard in the off season, get into the gym and work hard in the spring season, spend the summer staying in shape and preparing for a long four months come mid-August," Dunn said. "There are so many good things to come with this team, the future is very bright."

"We set the bar high and have pretty big goals, but I'm not putting too much pressure on us. Just like this past season, we have to take everything one step at a time, especially since we will have a target on our backs," Sutherland said.

The women's volleyball team has high hopes for next season. In order to be successful, they will have to work for it.

LAST WEEK IN POINTERS SPORTS

Thursday, Nov. 21

Women's Basketball lost to St. Thomas College 48-43

Volleyball defeated Hope College 3-0

Friday, Nov. 22

Volleyball lost to California Lutheran 3-0

Men's Hockey defeated Milwaukee School of Engineering 6-1

Women's Hockey defeated UW-Superior 2-1

Saturday, Nov. 23

Men's Swim team finished 1st and Women's team finished 2nd at La Crosse Relays

Women's Hockey lost to UW-Superior 3-1

Women's Basketball defeated Illinois Wesleyan 73-71

Men's Basketball defeated Hope College 82-62

Men's Hockey defeated Marian University 2-0

Women's Cross Country finished 28th of 32 teams at NCAA Championship

Tuesday, Nov. 26

Wrestling lost to UW-Oshkosh 22-14

Women's Basketball defeated Marian 69-43

Men's Basketball defeated St. Olaf 88-66

Tuesday Dec. 3

Women's Hockey defeated Marian 3-1

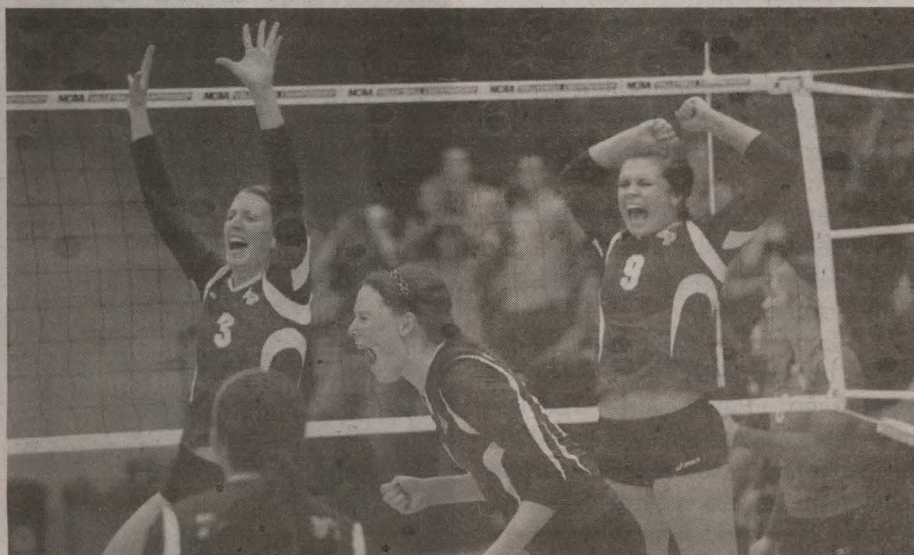


Photo by Jack McLaughlin.

The Volleyball Team experienced their best season in program history making it all the way to the NCAA National Semi-final.



Photo by Jack McLaughlin.

Despite injuries the Womens Basketball team has performed well in nonconference play.

Taking it One Game at a Time

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Despite some early season setbacks, the Pointers women's basketball team has finished their non-conference season with a 4-1 record.

"This season has been sort of a rollercoaster with injuries and illnesses, but overall I think our team has done a good job of approaching every game with the right mindset," said senior guard Jenna Pitt.

Starters Alyssa Olp and Autumn Hennes suffered early season injuries and have been without the pair for the majority of the season up to this point.

"We are missing a few players due to injury and that's been very challenging," said Head Coach Shirley Egner. "Our reserves and the rest of the team have rallied around each other and have competed."

Senior post Myranda Tyler cites the team's depth as a reason for the Pointers continuing to compete despite injuries.

"Our strength this year really lies in the depth of our team," Tyler said. "We have girls who aren't afraid to step up and face a difficult challenge."

Egner even explained how the injuries could help them in the long run. "Other kids are getting an opportunity to play when they wouldn't have. That's going to help us in the long run," Egner said.

One of those players has been junior guard Jaime Destache. Normally a role player, Destache was

inserted into the lineup after Hennes' injury and hasn't looked back. "She's done a great job on the offensive and defensive end," Egner said.

The Pointers defense has proven to be a strength as well. They average less than 55 points allowed and are averaging 43 rebounds per game.

"Our defense is solid and we are doing a great job of rebounding," Egner said.

Egner and Pitt both cite the offensive production of the team as lacking, at least right now.

"We need to improve on the offensive end with our motion on offense, creating shots for each other and improving our assist to turnover ratio," Pitt said.

"I wish we would have a little bit more of an offensive flow," Egner said. "We aren't shooting the ball well right now, but that will come with more repetition."

It's understandable that the Pointers are struggling with offense after losing three of their top four scorers from last season; Sam Barber, Liz Althoff and Brooke Allen.

"All three of them contributed with different parts of the offense," Egner said. "We are still trying to fill those voids."

Tyler explained that the team isn't trying to replace Barber, Althoff and Allen.

"We're working to develop our own unique way of getting the job done by utilizing all the new, special talents we have to showcase this year," Tyler said.

Pitt agreed with Tyler's statement.

"We have a different team and that is all we focus on, not what happened last year," Pitt said.

Another big part of this season may not even involve the team, with Stevens Point hosting the Women's Basketball Division III Final Four.

"It's really exciting," Egner said. "It's all about the student athlete experience and I just think that central Wisconsin is going to come out and really embrace this tournament," Egner said.

Pitt also recognized the honor of hosting the tournament on their home court.

"It's just great for our community and our school to be able to experience this opportunity," Pitt said.

While there is a possibility for the Pointers to make it all the way and play the Final Four on their home court, it isn't a possibility they want to discuss just yet.

"That is neither my, nor my team's focus right now," Tyler said. "Our heads are concentrated on the very next game in front of us. I can re-answer this question when we make it there."

Egner really stressed the importance of not looking too far ahead. "We want to take one game at a time," Egner said.

"I know it's coach speak and cliché, but honestly it's where we have to go," Egner said. "The last three years we've been saying that the game at hand is the most important game of the season, regardless of who we play. It's worked for us. It's kept us in the moment."

THIS WEEK IN POINTERS SPORTS

Thursday, Dec. 5

Wrestling vs.
UW-Whitewater at 7 p.m.
Friday, Dec. 6

Men's Hockey at
UW-Eau Claire at 7 p.m.

Women's Hockey vs.
UW-Eau Claire at 7 p.m.

Swim Team at Wheaton
(Ill.) Invitational

Saturday, Dec. 7

Wrestling vs. St. John's in
La Crosse at 9 a.m.

Wrestling vs. Cornell in La
Crosse at 11 a.m.

Wrestling vs. Loras College
in La Crosse at 1 p.m.

Men's Hockey vs.
UW-Stout at 7 p.m.

Women's Hockey at
UW-Eau Claire at 7 p.m.

Swim Team at Wheaton
Invitational

Wednesday, Dec. 11

Women's Basketball at
UW-Whitewater at 7 p.m.

Men's Basketball vs.
UW-Whitewater at 7 p.m.

Volleyball Team Satisfied with Season's Turnout, Seek Improvements

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Junior setter Alexis Hartman, was excited and impressed on how well the team did this year. She stated that the girls got along really well on and off the court and their close relationships allowed them to play well together and contributed to their success.

"I think that this year has been the most fun and cohesive group of girls I have ever played with. Everyone brings their own personality to the table and has their own special role. These girls are the reason I had such a fun time this season," Hartman said.

Davis and Hartman aren't the only ones awestruck by the amazing season. Their coaches are just as enthusiastic.

"This whole experience has been surreal," Sutherland said. "The neatest thing I've seen from this group is progress. We improved a lot and as a whole team, we believed in something bigger."

By believing, the team was able to achieve their hopes of entering the national tournament, even with this being Sutherland's first year coaching for the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

She spent nine years coaching volleyball at the University of Southern Miss., but decided to come closer to her hometown of West Bend, Wis.

"I was really close with the players at Southern Miss. it was hard to leave, but there are great groups of players everywhere," Sutherland said.

Blessed with a talented bunch, both Sutherland and assistant coach Amber Dunn were satisfied with how their season ended.

They also noted that it is every coach's goal to push their team to get to the national tournament, but seasons, much like the one they just had, don't always happen.

"Each player has put in a great deal of hard work and a lot of time. In this case it has paid off and was an opportunity of a lifetime," Dunn said.

With much success, the coaches, as well as the players, are ready to work hard during the off-season to increase their chances of being victorious during the 2014 season.

During the Spring semester, coaches are allowed to work with their athletes for 16 practices during

the course of five weeks.

Sutherland explained that she uses that time to work more individually with her players in an effort to improve techniques and individual control.

Davis said the success of the season was a great way to end her senior year.

"The team I got to spend my senior year with made my last year competing even more enjoyable," Davis said. "They have such big hearts, they are full of laughter, great talent and competitive spirits that I hope takes them even farther next year. I could not have had such a great senior season without them, coaches and athletic trainers included."

As for Hartman, she knows she has work to be done and improvements to make.

"During the off season there are always things that can be worked on," Hartman said. "I always want to try to get faster so that I can get to those balls that I normally can't. I also want to continue working on connecting with my hitters and being consistent."

As the players will work on improving their individual skills, the coaches will oversee, motivate and encourage them all that they can.

"We need to take it one day at a time, work hard in the off season, get into the gym and work hard in the spring season, spend the summer staying in shape and preparing for a long four months come mid-August," Dunn said. "There are so many good things to come with this team, the future is very bright."

"We set the bar high and have pretty big goals, but I'm not putting too much pressure on us. Just like this past season, we have to take everything one step at a time, especially since we will have a target on our backs," Sutherland said.

The women's volleyball team has high hopes for next season. In order to be successful, they will have to work for it.

LAST WEEK IN POINTERS SPORTS

Thursday, Nov. 21

Women's Basketball lost to St. Thomas College 48-43

Volleyball defeated Hope College 3-0

Friday, Nov. 22

Volleyball lost to California Lutheran 3-0

Men's Hockey defeated Milwaukee School of Engineering 6-1

Women's Hockey defeated UW-Superior 2-1

Saturday, Nov. 23

Men's Swim team finished 1st and Women's team finished 2nd at La Crosse Relays

Women's Hockey lost to UW-Superior 3-1

Women's Basketball defeated Illinois Wesleyan 73-71

Men's Basketball defeated Hope College 82-62

Men's Hockey defeated Marian University 2-0

Women's Cross Country finished 28th of 32 teams at NCAA Championship

Tuesday, Nov. 26

Wrestling lost to UW-Oshkosh 22-14

Women's Basketball defeated Marian 69-43

Men's Basketball defeated St. Olaf 88-66

Tuesday Dec. 3

Women's Hockey defeated Marian 3-1

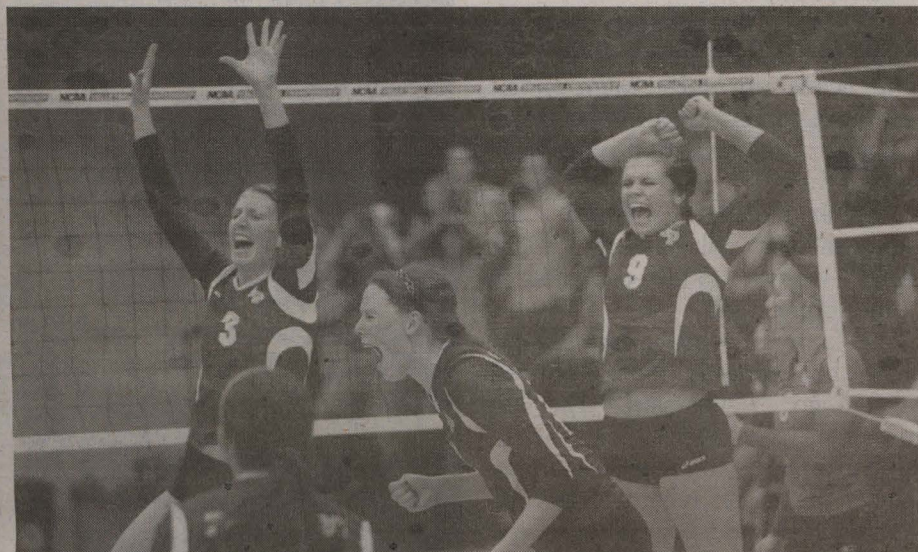


Photo by Jack McLaughlin.

The Volleyball Team experienced their best season in program history making it all the way to the NCAA National Semi-final.



Photo by Jack McLaughlin.

Despite injuries the Womens Basketball team has performed well in nonconference play.

Taking it One Game at a Time

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Despite some early season setbacks, the Pointers women's basketball team has finished their non-conference season with a 4-1 record.

"This season has been sort of a rollercoaster with injuries and illnesses, but overall I think our team has done a good job of approaching every game with the right mindset," said senior guard Jenna Pitt.

Starters Alyssa Olp and Autumn Hennes suffered early season injuries and have been without the pair for the majority of the season up to this point.

"We are missing a few players due to injury and that's been very challenging," said Head Coach Shirley Egner. "Our reserves and the rest of the team have rallied around each other and have competed."

Senior post Myranda Tyler cites the team's depth as a reason for the Pointers continuing to compete despite injuries.

"Our strength this year really lies in the depth of our team," Tyler said. "We have girls who aren't afraid to step up and face a difficult challenge."

Egner even explained how the injuries could help them in the long run. "Other kids are getting an opportunity to play when they wouldn't have. That's going to help us in the long run," Egner said.

One of those players has been junior guard Jaime Destache. Normally a role player, Destache was

inserted into the lineup after Hennes' injury and hasn't looked back. "She's done a great job on the offensive and defensive end," Egner said.

The Pointers defense has proven to be a strength as well. They average less than 55 points allowed and are averaging 43 rebounds per game.

"Our defense is solid and we are doing a great job of rebounding," Egner said.

Egner and Pitt both cite the offensive production of the team as lacking, at least right now.

"We need to improve on the offensive end with our motion on offense, creating shots for each other and improving our assist to turnover ratio," Pitt said.

"I wish we would have a little bit more of an offensive flow," Egner said. "We aren't shooting the ball well right now, but that will come with more repetition."

It's understandable that the Pointers are struggling with offense after losing three of their top four scorers from last season; Sam Barber, Liz Althoff and Brooke Allen.

"All three of them contributed with different parts of the offense," Egner said. "We are still trying to fill those voids."

Tyler explained that the team isn't trying to replace Barber, Althoff and Allen.

"We're working to develop our own unique way of getting the job done by utilizing all the new, special talents we have to showcase this year," Tyler said.

Pitt agreed with Tyler's statement.

"We have a different team and that is all we focus on, not what happened last year," Pitt said.

Another big part of this season may not even involve the team, with Stevens Point hosting the Women's Basketball Division III Final Four.

"It's really exciting," Egner said. "It's all about the student athlete experience and I just think that central Wisconsin is going to come out and really embrace this tournament," Egner said.

Pitt also recognized the honor of hosting the tournament on their home court.

"It's just great for our community and our school to be able to experience this opportunity," Pitt said.

While there is a possibility for the Pointers to make it all the way and play the Final Four on their home court, it isn't a possibility they want to discuss just yet.

"That is neither my, nor my team's focus right now," Tyler said. "Our heads are concentrated on the very next game in front of us. I can re-answer this question when we make it there."

Egner really stressed the importance of not looking too far ahead. "We want to take one game at a time," Egner said.

"I know it's coach speak and cliché, but honestly it's where we have to go," Egner said. "The last three years we've been saying that the game at hand is the most important game of the season, regardless of who we play. It's worked for us. It's kept us in the moment."

THIS WEEK IN POINTERS SPORTS

Thursday, Dec. 5

Wrestling vs.
UW-Whitewater at 7 p.m.
Friday, Dec. 6

Men's Hockey at
UW-Eau Claire at 7 p.m.

Women's Hockey vs.
UW-Eau Claire at 7 p.m.

Swim Team at Wheaton
(Ill.) Invitational

Saturday, Dec. 7

Wrestling vs. St. John's in
La Crosse at 9 a.m.

Wrestling vs. Cornell in La
Crosse at 11 a.m.

Wrestling vs. Loras College
in La Crosse at 1 p.m.

Men's Hockey vs.
UW-Stout at 7 p.m.

Women's Hockey at
UW-Eau Claire at 7 p.m.

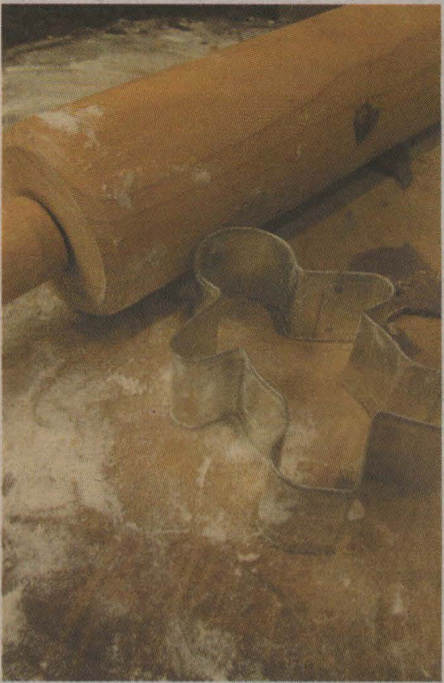
Swim Team at Wheaton
Invitational

Wednesday, Dec. 11

Women's Basketball at
UW-Whitewater at 7 p.m.

Men's Basketball vs.
UW-Whitewater at 7 p.m.

Continued from page 1



Photos by Emma St. Aubin

Gingerbread Cookies Recipe

<i>Ingredients:</i>	
1 ¾ cups all-purpose flour	¼ teaspoon salt
1 cup whole wheat flour	¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 ½ teaspoons ground ginger	¼ teaspoon ground cloves
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon	¾ cup granulated sugar
½ teaspoon baking powder	¼ cup butter, softened
¼ teaspoon baking soda	½ cup molasses
	1 large egg
<i>Decorations:</i>	
1 ¾ cups powdered sugar	Sprinkles, M&Ms and chocolate chips (optional)
2 tablespoons milk	

Combine flour and next 7 ingredients (through cloves) in a large bowl, stirring with a whisk.

Beat together granulated sugar and butter in a separate large bowl with a mixer at medium speed until smooth and well blended. Add molasses and egg; beat until well blended. Stir flour mixture into sugar mixture until well blended. Divide dough in half; shape each dough portion into a flat disk. Wrap dough portions separately in plastic wrap; chill 1 hour or until firm.

Preheat oven to 350°.

Remove 1 dough portion from refrigerator; remove plastic wrap. Roll dough to a 1/8-inch thickness on a floured surface. Cut with a gingerbread man or woman cookie cutter. Place cookies 1/2 inch apart on parchment paper-lined baking sheets. Repeat procedure with remaining dough portion. Bake at 350° for 9 minutes or until they are lightly browned. Remove from pans; cool completely on wire racks.

To prepare decorations, combine powdered sugar and milk, stirring until smooth. Spoon the mixture into a heavy-duty zip-lock plastic bag. Snip a tiny hole in one corner of the bag to use as an icing tube. Squeeze icing onto cookies. Decorate as desired with sprinkles, M&Ms and chocolate chips.

Residential Rule-Breaking

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Most anyone who attends college can agree that as fun as living on campus can be, adhering to the university’s guidelines can sometimes be difficult.

“One of the biggest issues I see is the underage consumption of alcohol, which I think is because it’s ‘the cool thing to do in college.’” Other than that we’ve had some minor vandalism, such as people tearing stuff down, which could be attributed to the alcohol,” said Hansen Hall community advisor, Devon Feldt.

Matt Curtis, a community advisor for Baldwin Hall, additionally cited several other typical instances of dormitory rule breaking.

“The most general rule-breaking I see is noise violations and coming in the back doors has become a pretty big thing now,” Curtis said.

Johanna Buksky, a sophomore who currently resides in Smith Hall, agrees with Curtis, admitting that noise violations are a fairly common nuisance.

“It depends on the floor,” Buksky said. “I’m on an all-girls floor, so it’s very quiet, but higher up on the co-ed floors, the doors are never shut, so it can get pretty wild.”

Feldt also noted several other, more bizarre instances of rule breaking that he has personally witnessed.

“We’ve had some smoking of marijuana here in the dorms which I don’t understand because clearly you’re going to smell it,” Feldt said.

“I’ve had people come talk to me about people stealing their undergarments out of washers and driers, which is strange to me, and kind of awkward and unnecessary.”

To remedy these and other similar problems, Curtis went on to explain that the community advisors within his hall have been putting extra emphasis on the enforcement of residence hall regulations.

“We’re starting to crack down on it a little more. Seeing people coming into the back door is no longer an ‘Okay, I’ll let it slide this one time.’ Now it’s more of a ‘No, you need to go around or you’re going to get documented’ kind of deal,” Curtis said.

Curtis also added that all the rules in place, regardless of how

irrelevant they may seem, serve a specific purpose.

“The rules are there for a reason, mainly for safety, especially the back doors. If you don’t understand why a rule is there, ask a community advisor because they’re all very important,” Curtis said.

Feldt believes, however, that residents are, for the most part, well behaved.

“I’m pretty darn impressed with my residents,” Feldt said. “Everyone’s made it really fun to be a CA and I’m really impressed with the level of respect that the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point residents have for their facilities, faculty and everyone on campus.”

Baby, It's Cold Outside: How to Warm Up to the Holidays

GRACE EBERT

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COMMENTARY

For many, the day after Thanksgiving marks the beginning of Christmas. It finally becomes socially acceptable to engage in all activities synonymous with the holidays. I like to hang up the lights, put Elf on repeat and sip Latin hot cocoa while I plan my visit home.

The time is also when I begin to create all of the gifts I've been planning to make for months. This year I'll give out Christmas cards, candied nuts and knitted mittens far before Christmas Day because I can never wait to gift the things I've made.

In addition to all of my solitary holiday preparations, each year I make a point to attend community productions and festivities that celebrate the holidays.

The holiday parade is essential to Christmas spirit. This year, the arctic temperatures didn't seem to matter as the crowds still gathered to watch the fire departments, bands and local businesses march on Main Street in Stevens Point.

I recently attended Toast to the Nutcracker, a community production at Sentry @1800 Theater. The presentation was refreshing as a classic production was transformed into something more contemporary and jazzy.

Brad Dallman, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point freshman, played horn with the UWSP Jazz Ensemble during the show.

"The show definitely brought about the Christmas spirit. In my opinion nothing signals Christmas better than a live show. Back home there was the Green Bay Symphony Holiday Pop's concert, and this year

we were lucky to have this wonderful production. It was very hard leaving Sentry without a smile knowing that Christmas was on its way," Dallman said.

The pieces kept me humming for hours and I couldn't get the beautiful ballet sequences out of my head. I left the theatre with an even greater appreciation for Hoffman's original novel, *The Nutcracker* and *The Mouse King*.

Now that Thanksgiving has passed and our bellies are sufficiently stuffed, we are able to devote ourselves to the next season.

Stores and restaurants will undoubtedly begin playing the holiday music if they haven't already been doing so. Houses will be finished with lights and retailers will be busier than they have been all year.

As for further upcoming events in the Stevens Point area, I will be attending as many as I possibly can. Although squeezing something extra into a busy student schedule isn't always easy, I make an effort to do something simply for myself each week.

During November and December, I will attempt to surround myself with the cheer and happiness of the season, including holiday shops and socials with Santa.

This coming Saturday, Dec. 7 from 9 a.m. until noon, you will be able to return to your childhood during the event, Breakfast with Santa. The breakfast will be held in the Dreyfus University Center Laird Room and is free to UWSP students with an ID, or \$6 without.

The Amherst Village Christmas will also be hosting a free event on Dec. 7 from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. which is sure to bring out a little holiday spirit in even the biggest Scrooges.



Photos by Emily Hoffmann

(Top) Local firefighter hands out candy canes to children during the holiday parade.
(Bottom) Participants in the holiday parade head towards the square where the giant Christmas tree stands.

Held on Main Street in Amherst, the event includes gift shopping, a craft show at the Jensen Center, and live music and poetry at the Tomorrow River Gallery.

If you have not latched on to the cheer just yet, it's time. Bake some gingerbread cookies, watch a holiday flick, blast some jazzy Christmas tunes and soak up the holiday cheer.

Zombie Culture Incorporated into Classrooms

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Just when you thought there might be a new movie, comic or television show fad, the undead slowly staggers into the spotlight again.

In the last few years, zombies have taken the helm in every category of media including television and theatrical movies.

With the show "The Walking Dead" becoming more popular in the last couple of years, it seems zombies have made a comeback.

Zombies became popular in the late 1960s with the movie "Night of the Living Dead," directed by George

A. Romero. Over time these moaning, limping undead have captured our interest and become a part of pop culture.

"They are not just in movies, they are all through popular culture," said Leslie DeBauche, professor of Media Studies.

DeBauche also provides a scope in which we can look at how zombies got to this popular iconic status.

"One thing that I think makes zombie movies and zombie lure interesting is the level of specificity about what zombies do, who zombies are, where they came from and how you kill them," DeBauche said.

Others have different views as to why zombies are such a popular topic in recent years.

"I like zombies because they are kind of funny, they are slow and you could probably kill it but people are scared of them," said Jessica Chavarin, a University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point junior.

Another student assessment of the undead falls on the opposite side of the scale.

"I think they are always scary. No matter who you are you always have this fear of the dead coming back to life. It always makes a good story," said Jeanette Colombe, a UWSP sophomore.

Not only do zombies make for good stories, but they make for good teaching material as well.

DeBauche is teaching the Division of Communication capstone

class next spring revolving around zombie culture. She has decided to have the class write, cast, shoot and edit a short zombie film to a piece of music provided by composer Charlie Barnett.

"Capstone literally means the stone that lays on the top of a grave, held up by other stones," DeBauche said. "Capstone courses are meant to tap all of the things that you have learned in your years in college, then it gives you a problem to solve by using all the things."

The short film will be presented on April 23 with the UWSP Orchestra providing live accompaniment of Barnett's score.

Last Blood Drive of the Semester

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Students, faculty and community members alike took advantage of the opportunity to save lives by donating blood one more time this semester before winter break.

The American Red Cross came to the Laird room in the Dreyfus University Center on Dec. 3 and 4 from 10 a.m to 4 p.m.

The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point has been very successful in donating so far this academic year. The Blood Center of Wisconsin previously came to campus on the Sept. 23 and 24.

"During the last drive we managed to get 225 units, beating our goal of 170 units by quite a bit," said Katie Morici who coordinates all of the blood drives for the Student Involvement and Employment Office.

While the option to register online is available on SIEO's webpage, walk-ins are always welcomed and encouraged. If a potential donor is feeling healthy the day of the drive, they are able to give blood upon arrival and if they have any tattoos or piercings that were done by a licensed Wisconsin parlor, there is no longer a waiting period for donation.

To donate, one must be at least 16 years of age and weigh a minimum of 110 pounds. It only takes a few minutes to donate and allows donors to significantly help someone in need of whole blood, double red cells, or platelets.

Morici did not want to get her hopes up too high before this last drive.

"I don't expect as impressive of a turnout this time around due to the cold and flu season paired with the colder weather; there are less people walking the streets, so we are less likely to get walk-ins," Morici said.

Although this was the last blood drive of the semester, there are still two more opportunities left during the academic year at UWSP.

The Blood Center of Wisconsin will be returning on Feb. 24 and 25, and the American Red Cross will be returning on April 22 and 23. There are typically four blood drives throughout the course of the academic year. Two are held by each organization, so there are plenty of opportunities to donate.

Regular donation is both safe and encouraged. According to the American Red Cross, one can donate whole blood every 56 days, up to six times per year, platelets up to 24

times per year, plasma every 28 days or up to 13 times per year, and double red cells every 112 days or three times per year.

Donating blood is great way to help someone in the community or perhaps even the world. As stated by the American Red Cross, someone is in need of blood approximately every two seconds.

The American Red Cross also states that roughly half of all blood donations across the United States

are done at blood drives, though only about 8 percent of the eligible population actually donates. UWSP is actively working to raise that percentage and keep meeting or exceeding its goals.

For questions regarding eligibility to donate, call the Red Cross at 1-866-236-3276, or the Blood Center of Wisconsin at 1-888-310-7555. For questions about blood drives at UWSP, please contact Katie Morici at sieodrive@uwsp.edu.

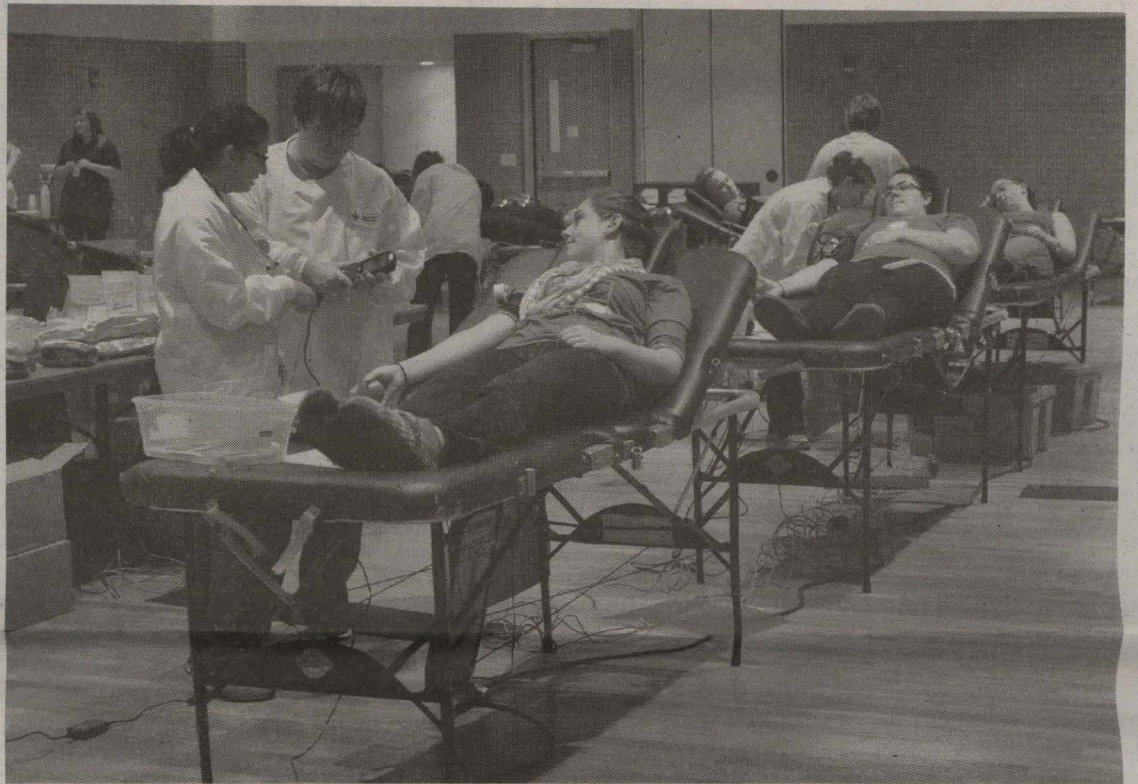


Photo by Emily Hoffmann

Students recline as they donate blood in the Laird Room on December 3rd.

Listen in to Amateur Radio

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One club on campus that many students may not know about is the amateur radio club.

HAM radio, also known as amateur radio, is the use of a spectrum of radio frequencies for recreation. It is used to exchange messages, experiment with the equipment, training and sometimes emergency communication.

The club has around 20 members, ranging from students, to faculty, to members of the community. People from all over Portage County come together through their love of radio.

The club is mostly for people to just have fun. Members can meet and connect with other people all over the world.

Travis Augustine, a club member, says he first was introduced to it by a friend in high school.

"The furthest contact I've ever had was a guy in New Zealand," Augustine said. "I reached him from my backyard with my equipment."

Members call up other people known on air by their Federal Communications Commission call signs. The club's sign is WB9QFW.

Augustine states there's no shortage of people to talk to. People are always chatting about anything from the weather to personal issues.

The airwaves are monitored by volunteers. This method of self-policing restricts the use of profanity. Anyone can listen in to two people chatting if they're on the same frequency.

The club puts its knowledge to

work in the community and helps out with events such as the Special Olympics, providing communications for the duathlon. They notify members at points along the course and radio ahead if anyone needs assistance. They also participate in weather spotting and the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) program.

The group also participates in Field Day, which is a contest where amateurs show off their skills in emergency simulations. The amateurs have to make contacts within 24 hours to help out communications in the simulated emergency.

According to the club's website, WB9QFW.com, the ARES consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment, along

with their local ARES leadership, for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes. Every licensed amateur is eligible to apply for membership in the ARES.

A person can become an entry level operator in as little as a weekend. The first level is a technician, second is general and third is amateur. The more a person levels up, the more frequencies they have access to.

It's not difficult to get a license and call sign and trainees get a guide to teach them how to operate the radios.

More information about amateur radio can be found at WB9QFW.com and the group meets in the George Stein building on the second Tuesday of every month.

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The London Underground

CAROLYN MATTHEWS

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Before coming to London I had heard of the London Underground. Everyone has heard of the London Underground. In my mind this famous form of public transportation was a damp cavernous tunnel system only to be attempted with a backpack containing enough food for a few days and a sleeping bag.

As a girl from a small New Hampshire town my only exposure to public transit was the Stevens Point bus system, which is unfortunate because I cannot even count the number of times I got hopelessly lost on those busses and had to call my friends for a ride back from Plover. Needless to say, the idea of an underground train system that covers approximately 300 miles around London and beyond was a little terrifying.

Now that I have been living in London for about three months, I am incrementally more comfortable with "The Tube." The first time was a bit of a disaster. A group of fellow Pointers and I were trying to get to an urban food festival in Shoreditch (a trendy region of London).

We spent our time glued to various maps trying to figure out if a line that curves down on the map would be considered eastbound or westbound, and why so many people just got off. Maybe we should get off? No one else is on this train, and it's not moving. When we all emerged back on the street the sun was blinding and I felt like I had just suffered an ordeal. It has become easier since then, but on the London Underground strange people and

situations are never terribly out of place.

A few facts about the tube: there are 270 different stations, at rush hour 57,000 people have been counted moving through a single station, (it's Waterloo, by the way, avoid it at rush hour), each tube train travels 114,500 miles a year, and each year 1,229 million passengers are carried.

A few facts I have learned personally about the tube:

No one talks. If you are talking, laughing, looking around, or really doing anything other than reading the newspaper or a book you are automatically hated a little bit. Passengers on the tube do nothing except avoid eye contact with each other.

If you disregard this literally unspoken rule and talk loudly or get caught up in hysterical laughing fits like I have many times in the past months, everyone will turn and stare at you uncomfortably until you exit the train.

It is inappropriate to laugh at the tube station name "Cockfosters."

The left side of the escalator is for those sprinting up, presumably really fit or really late. If you stand on the left side you will get pushed out of the way. I know this from personal experience.

Adventures on the Tube:

One fateful evening around rush hour a pigeon found itself five stories below central London. Birds are not the smartest, and this one must have been particularly dense because it flew directly into the waiting train just as the doors closed. I sat and watched complete chaos break out. People were screaming, the pigeon was frantically swooping around, I

heard curse words in six different languages, and whenever the bird landed someone would inevitably aim a kick and it would take flight again, proving that perhaps the bird was not the stupidest creature on the train. At the next stop it was a mass exodus off the carriage, bird included.

There is a recorded message that plays when the doors opens, it says "Mind the gap" to remind commuters that sometimes there is a space between the platform and the train. It is very useful.

One afternoon while I was sitting on the tube I think that the message got stuck. "Mind the gap...mind the gap...mind the gap...mind the gap." About 10 messages later the doors still hadn't closed and the recorded voice became more and more insistent "MIND THE GAP! MIND IT!" finally ending with "THERES A GAP, DON'T FREAKING STEP IN IT!" Well, okay, maybe it just stuck with the original, but it sure sounded frustrated.

Recently the train was stopped at the platform a friend and I were trying to get on. She sprinted towards the train and jumped on seconds before the doors shut behind her, leaving me standing at the platform's edge.

I also have a handful of stories about

falling over on the train because I wasn't holding on. Sometimes it was just a bit of a stumble, but once or twice I did fall to the floor and was dubbed most awkward person on the train.

I've also seen small acts of kindness. I witnessed someone carry a women's suitcase down some stairs that she was struggling with. The occasional person who offers their seat to expectant mothers or the elderly proves that perhaps chivalry is not dead. Every now and then someone will even smile down there, but that is few and far between.

90 percent of the time I manage to get where I am going, or at least successfully explain to someone else where to go. The other 10 percent I get on the train going east when I want to go west, I fall over, I miss the last train, and I get stuck in the turnstiles. I am not an expert by any means, but at least I do mind the gap.

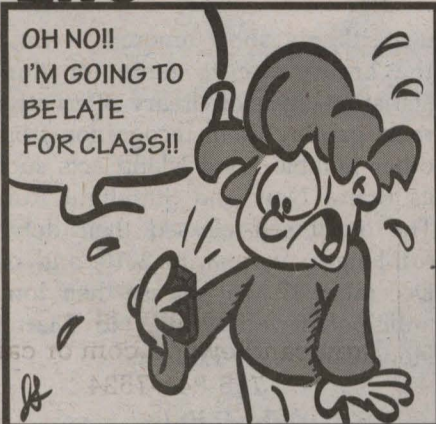


UNDERGROUND

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Life

OH NO!!
I'M GOING TO
BE LATE
FOR CLASS!!



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By Jonathan Seymour

ON MAXY!
DASH AWAY!



MADAME ZAMBONI'S PREDICTIONS

Capricorn: December 22 - January 19

Get a blanket or put on a sweatshirt. We're all cold. Be an adult.

Aquarius: January 20 - February 18

You will receive compliments on your ugly sweater at a Christmas party. You will return home following the gathering and sob heavily because it is your favorite sweater.

Pisces: February 19 - March 20

Your copies of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" and "Elf" will be so scratched that they will be unwatchable this holiday season.

Aries: March 21 - April 19

Your aunt spiked the eggnog. Drink as much as you can.

Taurus: April 20 - May 20

Your alcoholic uncle will finally open up to you and pour you a brandy on the rocks on Christmas Eve. He can't be trusted. Not with that lazy eye.

Gemini: May 21 - June 20

You will buy a sweater for your cat, who will then resent you because you forgot she is allergic to wool.

Cancer: June 21 - July 22

Your Adderall prescription will make you the most popular person in your social circle for the next two weeks.

Leo: July 23 - August 22

Due to intense anxiety, you will spend multiple hours studying on the toilet.

Virgo: August 23 - September 22

Make a mental map of the best places in your room and across campus to have a mental breakdown.

Libra: September 23 - October 22

The smile your significant other gives you after unwrapping their gift will be fake. Brainstorm redemption gifts in the days following Christmas.

Scorpio: October 23 - November 21

The emotional fragility that overtakes people during the holiday season makes it the ideal time to hit on that special someone eating by themselves.

Sagittarius: November 22 - December 21

You will receive a present from someone you did not expect to receive a present from and you will not have gotten them a present and you will feel totes awkward.

the pointer

University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point

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90 FM ALBUM REVIEW



[La Luz] It's Alive

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Surf culture is an intriguing sect of society. The mentality, fashion trends and music that it encompasses has impacted many. Since rocketing out of the 50s and 60s, surf music has stayed afloat and is still a prominent offshoot of rock n' roll.

Nowadays, we see indie music integrating sounds of old from acts such as Link Wray or The Beach Boys with their own style. La Luz, an all-girl band from Seattle, WA, continues that trend with their latest release *It's Alive*.

An immediate comparison to La Luz that comes to mind is Dum Dum Girls with the punk level turned way down. Also, turn the surfy/rockabilly guitar level way up; the guitar is always being plucked at consistently throughout the album. I'd bet if Quentin Tarantino knows about this album, it is on his playlist and is in consideration for the soundtrack for

one of his new flicks.

I would doubt myself if I were to say there are "standout tracks" on *It's Alive*, because to me all of the tracks are a blur of similarity up until the very end of the album. This isn't necessarily a knock on the album. La Luz finds a comfort zone and sticks to it. They stay within their realm looking for melodies untouched, or rehash old ones and provide their own twist of sound. If I were to pick a favorite track, it would have to be "Call Me in the Day" with its almost doo-wop-like sound and excellent rhythm section. It also features the keyboardist with a solo that can be distinguished as the album's climax, with everything else being the resolution.

La Luz's debut LP doesn't bring anything new to music world but provides a satisfactory expansion to the distinct genre of surf rock. Fans of surf can resonate and appreciate these young ladies, and can totally chill out to their music, dude.

Creating a Handmade Holiday

GRACE EBERT

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My family started a tradition a few years ago that has changed my opinion on both gift giving and gift receiving. In our exchange, each family member is required to give a gift to one other person and will receive one from someone else in return.

However, this exchange varies from tradition slightly as each item must be handmade and must not exceed the cost of \$15.

I do admit, the process can be difficult, demanding a lot of time and thought for a single gift. Yet, the reactions from the recipients are worth the the great amount of effort involved in designing these keepsakes.

Creating a present requires so much more thought and skill than simply buying one. It's easy to shop for someone, but to make something for someone? It's difficult and consuming, but that makes the product even more precious when it is finished.

Over the years, I've learned that a gift made by a loved one is much more exciting and meaningful than a gift purchased, and that a gift I've made for another is received the same way. I cherish what's been made for me and I have no doubt that others do the same.

As always, I am anxiously waiting for our exchange this year. I'm in the process of sewing a pair of slippers, made from silk and felt, for my mom. And I'm secretly hoping that whoever has chosen my name

will make me a new wine rack.

To begin this tradition in your own family, or to just save a little money and impress those closest to you, attempt a handmade holiday of your own. Whatever set of skills you have can be translated into a meaningful and and memorable gift. And when in doubt, a handmade card will always beat one from Hallmark.

From the Chef: a batch of homemade gingerbread cookies using your family's secret recipe or a savory spice blend for making winter stews

From the Artist: your rendition of a beloved photo, or if you prefer a different media, a handmade mug to enjoy morning coffee.

From the Musician: a recording of a favorite piece played by no one other than you.

From the Hunter: hand-cut and wrapped meats from your most recent kill.

From the Writer: a story or poem describing a treasured memory or a hand-crafted journal to record memories not yet made.

From the Botanist: a terrarium constructed with the most durable of plants for those with even the brownest of thumbs.

From the Environmentalist: a handmade tote in a favorite color for carrying large loads of groceries home from the store and for preventing the use of plastic bags.

From the Traveler: share a piece your adventures. Did you learn how to make paella in Spain? Illustrate a recipe card and gather some of the ingredients needed to let your loved one experience what you did.

NEED-TO-KNOW TUNES

KYLE FLORENCE

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Too often in our society, beautiful art, which has the potential to change lives, sculpt individuals and alter the ways in which we think, goes unnoticed. This is especially true in regards to music, whose more thoughtful messengers are often overshadowed by a maelstrom of cookie-cutter acts all strumming the same four-chord progression. For this reason, we at The Pointer present you with Need-To-Know Tunes, a weekly column dedicated to highlighting not necessarily the newest releases, but rather the totally awesome one's that, for one reason or another, you may have missed:

No Matter How Narrow
The Republic of Wolves

For Fan's of:

Brand New "Sowing Season", Manchester Orchestra's "I Can Feel a Hot One", Kevin Devine's "Brother's Blood"

The Scoop:

The Republic of Wolves came into being during the summer of 2009, when longtime cohorts Mason Maggio and Christian Van Deurs of Tigers On Trains began writing more dynamic, experimental music. Shortly after, Billy Duprey and Chris Wall rounded off the lineup, and in

a startlingly short amount of time, the group rose to fame for their signature style of dreary alternative rock, gaining them recognition from other notable Long Island acts such as Brand New and Straylight Run. The outfit self-released their debut full-length, *Varuna*, in 2010, and on December 17 will release their long anticipated follow-up, *No Matter How Narrow*. And it rules.

Why It Rules:

In my humble opinion, *No Matter How Narrow* is nothing short of a masterpiece. Each track meshes well with the one before and after it, and the collection as a whole sets a definite tone that is ideal for the reflective winter days ahead. The opener "Frozen Feet" is probably my personal favorite, and almost certainly single material; built upon a flurry of sounds and toe-tapping percussion, it is catchy, but at the same time reclusive enough to maintain the interest of even the most tactful music snob.

The hook of "Stray(s)", though slightly more commercial than the group's previous efforts, is unrelenting, while the intriguing guitar work of "Spare Key" and "Pioneers" will likely provide comfort for all those with an ear for technical songwriting. "Keep Clean" is also a gem, with dizzying changes in pace throughout, while "Vinedresser" is perfectly stripped down, relying on its poignant lyrics to move forward.

Chill out and go see Frozen!

MARY MARVIN

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There has been a lot of hype around Disney's "Frozen." Some people are angry about the ethnicity of the main characters. Others are upset about the changes from the original Hans Christen Anderson story, "The Snow Queen." Still, if one goes into it with an open mind, they might find that it is pretty enjoyable.

I have seen a lot of angry bloggers on the Internet who were understandably disappointed when the concept art first came out, and as a result, they have decided to boycott the movie. There is no argument that the movie industry needs more diverse characters, and Disney needs to know that people want more. Even so, this movie looked too cute to resist, and I ventured forth with candy in hand.

Frozen is about a queen named Elsa who has the power to conjure and control ice and snow. She finds it difficult to control, and accidentally traps the kingdom in winter.

Frightened by this, she loses her cool and flees into the mountains, and it is up to her younger sister, Anna, to retrieve her.

Having never read the original story, I cannot say how the adaption holds up. I just know that the movie was entertaining and satisfied my Disney craving. Some parts did feel rushed, but overall it was a great story of sisterly love and adventure.

The animation was very pretty. Some sources say that Disney used a program to animate each snowflake so that it was unique. I did not go back and take a look at every snowflake, so I can't confirm this, but each scene featuring Elsa's powers was really well done.

Disney has to stick to its reputation and make it a musical, of course. The songs featured in Frozen are half dangerously catchy and half goofily forgettable. I have been humming "Do You Want To Build A Snowman?" since I saw the movie on Monday. Because Broadway star Idina Menzel is the voice of Elsa, the queen, there are several big show

stopping numbers, the biggest one being "Let it Go." You could say the song gives people chills. Kristin Bell, who plays the younger sister Anna, has a clear, sweet voice that fits her name. The two work nicely together.

The previews floating around claim Frozen is the biggest Disney movie since The Lion King. While Frozen was entertaining, this bold accusation does not hold up. The Lion King is too great. Do not let that deter you from seeing Frozen, though. It would be incredibly difficult to beat what is widely regarded as one of Disney's greatest triumphs.

For fans of Tangled, there is a very brief cameo of Rapunzel and Eugene when they are entering the castle gates. Keep your eyes peeled. And as always, I encourage you to stay through the credits. Not only because you can soak up the music and

determine if you want to get the soundtrack, but also because there is a cute scene at the end.



Photo courtesy of disney.wikia.com