



## Christmas concert at the Fox

by Meghan Spracklen

First, the lights. Next, the audience. Then, the audience *looking* at you.

When you first walk on to the stage at the Fox Theatre in Spokane, you feel a bit star struck. It is a beautiful performance venue with an air of elegance and class. As someone performing there for the first time, it made me feel very special to get the opportunity to perform on the same stage as several well-known singers and musicians. I even watched students who had been there years previous get thrilled by the grand stage. It makes everyone want to reveal their best talents, and that night UCA's musical talent was revealed.

From the orchestra and band, to Choralier and Choir songs, to the triumphant Hallelujah Chorus finale, UCA staff and students shone.

After intermission, a large box containing hats, bows, and other festive wear was pawed through as many excited students chose something to wear for the remaining half of the program. The audience then got to see holiday colors speckle the performers as they crafted music.

Our success was due to Mr. Anderson, Mr. Kravig, Mr. Downing, and, most of all, God. For the people connected to the heaven-bound campus in Spangle, Washington, Christmas break started with joyful worship.

## Devotions

by Coleman Dietrich

It is a choice not everyone makes, but if you were to ask anyone who makes time for devotions, they would tell you it makes their day better.

At a school like this, it is socially acceptable to spend time with God. Five minutes a day can lead to a five times better day if you spend them with Him. I don't want to make people do something they don't want to do, but I do want them to be aware of a good way to transform their lives for the better.

Devotions make you think about your choices and what you are doing. You will want to be a positive influence and shine God's light. You will be happier. Everyone can make this choice and have this happiness. How about you?

## Reunited

by Katie Folkenberg

Shrieks and screams (especially from the girls' dorm) and tackling (from both dorms) were heard on Sunday night, January 5, as friends reunited after Christmas. "How was your break?" was heard around every corner and replies—usually lacking detail—were given.

Each one's Christmas vacation was different. Some went to dreamy Hawaii while others went to the simple comfort of their homes. Jasmine Welch, a junior, went home to Canada and said, "I went snowmobiling every day! In some places, we could jump down into the snow and it would come up past our knees!"

Not only did each student go to different places but they also spent their times in different ways, accomplishing—or perhaps not accomplishing—varying tasks. One freshman said that she had the option to work on homework but decided to watch TV instead. Others went horseback riding while some went jogging every day. All of the students made decisions on what to do with their rare, school-free time. This made each individual Christmas Vacation special.

Even more special was the chance to reunite and share the fun that all had during the most wonderful time of the year.





*Students prepare to enjoy a good dining experience during the winter banquet in the new cafeteria*

## A different kind of difference

*by Giovanna Giroto*

It's December 15—ten days till Christmas. You're walking through the mall, trying to find a Christmas present for that special someone. You're frazzled and disheveled, fatigued from last-minute Christmas stresses. You meander into J. C. Penney, hoping to find the perfect gift. Suddenly, your ears are met with the most beautiful music you have ever heard. You turn the corner and right there in the middle of J. C. Penney is a small group of teenagers wearing shirts and sweatshirts exhibiting the letters "UCA" and singing their hearts out.

I'm sure this is what it must have been like for the many passersby on that bitter winter afternoon. As the Upper Columbia Academy Choraliers sang through their Christmas repertoire, they watched the expressions on people's faces as they saw and heard them singing. "I loved seeing people's reactions when they found out where the music was coming from. It felt so good when they would stop and listen," said junior Leah Holden. Children's faces were filled with the joy of the season; adults were moved by the true meaning of Christmas that was illustrated by our lovely music. Well-known Christmas tunes, such as "White Christmas" and "Silent Night," and some less-known ones, like "Noel Nouvelet" and "There Is No Rose" were heard by the seemingly awestruck onlookers. People of all ages paused their shopping to listen and enjoy the spectacle.

This trip was so different from all their previous performances. Instead of a professional recital in front of a large church congregation or school, they got to experience putting on a more casual show. They all had a really good time and could actually enjoy themselves, instead of having to stress about not making any largely-exposed mistakes. "Seeing the shoppers' expressions when they saw a group of high-school kids caroling among the socks was hilarious. I definitely want to do it again," said Sarina Meservia.

I am sure they will do this again because it is a blessing to both the performers and the audience.

## Dissections change atmosphere

*by Madeleine Everett*

You may have noticed the smell in the hallways this winter here at UCA. It overpowered the science lab end of the upstairs hallway, speaking boldly of rubber gloves, hand sanitizer, and skipping lunch. The smell came from the biology classroom, where two dozen or so hairy kitties resided with us from Thanksgiving until after the December holidays. Some cats had names and white paws. Others, thankfully, remained nameless, and were not so cute. Sylvester, Felix, and Tom were just a few of our feline residents.

The Anatomy and Physiology students were dissecting cats. Each student was partnered with a classmate and a very dead, preserved, hairy waiting-to-be-skinned cat. The students had just learned about the human muscular system, and had memorized a good chunk of the muscles found on our bodies. Now, they were applying their knowledge of muscles to the cats and dissecting the small cat muscles that are very much like our own.

They started by skinning the cats, which had come with their hides and whiskers still on. This took a couple of days. Skinning is useful not only for uncovering the muscles below, but also for becoming familiar with their cats and get over any of the hesitancy or squeamishness that comes with cutting into a dead animal. The students moved through the muscles, starting on the chest and abdomen, worked their way down to the hind legs, then over to the cat's back, and finally up the head, neck, and forelegs. By the time they were finished, most of the students had gotten used to the smell of formaldehyde, and the delicate work of separating muscles without slicing them (and other organs) off.

After Christmas break, the A&P students had finished with their cat muscles but were waiting for their felines to unthaw before they cut open their intestines. . . .

## A tableware treat

by Tyler Warren

UCA Students returning from Christmas break were in for a little surprise. The students blessed with 7:15 classes woke up early and completed their morning routines. However, when they reached the new cafeteria complex for what they perceived would be an ordinary breakfast, they were met with something unanticipated: newly implemented dishware. The students flopped crepe shells onto the real, reusable, hard plastic plates. They filled their fresh, hard plastic bowls with cereal. Then they sat at a table to hastily chow down with the new metal utensils and sip from the new plastic cups. Once they were done, they carried their dirty tableware to the window into the new cafeteria's dishroom for the workers to clean for use at the next meal. It was, all in all, an exciting and surprising event.

Talk of the new dishes was the topic of the day. Students discussed the pros and cons throughout all of their classes. Gone were the easy days of grabbing one last drink and disposing of the cup on your way to class. Gone were the days of shaking salads between two Styrofoam bowls. Gone were the days of the cup wall and smashing the cups for the auditory pleasure that followed. Gone were the subtle nuances of the plastic mealtime inventory on UCA culture. However, the new, better articles have their advantages as well. They will save the cafeteria and the school money by ending the need to constantly renew the old disposable cups, plates, and utensils. They will give the cafe a nicer, more sophisticated feel as well as eliminate the ability of students to litter (well, maybe not entirely). The implication that we as a student body are responsible enough to have permanent plates and utensils boosts school morale.

Many students liked the idea of this change. "It felt like I was eating at home," Sam Fritz said. "It will quite difficult to break these plates, so they should last a long time," said Jake Carlson. Chris Tataryn commented, "It will make a much lighter trash load for the cafe."

Some students also expressed their disdain for the new utensils. "I'm not sure the money saved is worth the time added for cleaning all those dishes," said a concerned student. "I hope they get cleaned well," muttered another. A female student stated, "I don't really want to eat on a plate someone else has already eaten off." Many students voiced their contempt for the smell of chemicals radiating from the new cups and also carped about their size. "I downed a whole glass in two measly swallows," grumbled Brian Paredes. "It only gives us another thing to complain about!" griped another disgruntled student.

Even though the volume of the cups is now smaller, the bowls are larger and bulkier than ever before. The new tableware really is a nice addition and makes mealtime more enjoyable as well as creating a more efficient and homey cafeteria. Despite the current faults, the cafeteria will soon have the system improved to the satisfaction of these discontent students. The dishes have proved to be a nice welcome back and a late Christmas treat for the student body. As is the tradition with a new year, the cafeteria is embracing the saying "Out with the old, in with the new."

## New year, new schedules

by Melissa Petrello

2013 had come and gone and so had the time for UCA students to come back to school after Christmas break. The students went from class to class as they normally do, waiting for classes to be out for the day. Once the day was done and rec was over, the dorm students went back to their respective dorms. It was time for worship, and in the girls' dorm, Dean Chelle stood up to make announcements.

"Starting on Wednesday we'll have a new schedule," was how she started out. She explained that on Wednesday, classes would be shorter by one minute and on Fridays, they would be longer by one minute. The chapel buzzed with chatter. "What's the point of that?" "Will it really make that much of a difference?" "Why do we have to get out later on Fridays?" Those were the questions that popped up the most.

Every minute adds up. On Wednesdays, Choraliers have been kept later because of assembly. The reason why they couldn't meet earlier on Wednesdays was because Octet meets during the 4:15 period when choir meets the rest of the week. The only way to resolve them not being there so late with their growling stomachs ready for supper was to make classes on that day shorter. Since students are required to be in school for a certain number of hours during the school year, Fridays had to be made slightly longer.

After having the same schedule memorized for so long, will it be hard to adjust? It will definitely be interesting to see how everything will turn out at the end of the day.



## The last supper

By *Kristen Cottrell*

Supper on Wednesday, November 20, was bittersweet for some and filled with anticipation for others. It was the last supper in the old cafeteria for the freshman, sophomore, and junior classes, and the first supper served in the new cafeteria for the senior class. For some, the concept of a new cafeteria was exciting since the old cafeteria is . . . well, old. For others, the thought of leaving all the good memories made in the old building was bittersweet as was the thought (for the girls) of the longer walk to breakfast.

The actual last supper served in the cafeteria was very nice. We were treated to pasta, sparkling cider, and ice-cream. The old rickety tables were draped in red and white checkered table cloths and crowned with sunflower centerpieces. The atmosphere was that of a rustic Italian restaurant filled with raucous teenagers. The seniors, on the other hand, were served Papa Murphy's pizza in the new cafeteria.

Although this experience was bittersweet for some, all were excited to move into the new cafeteria. Now we can make fun memories there, and we hope it feeds the students of UCA for many years to come.

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## The midnight munchies

by *Katelind Miller*

Most UCA students go to class from about 7:15 until 5:00. That's about ten hours of long, hard studying and working accomplished every day. We eat a ton, but it's still not enough. Welcome to the UCA Midnight Munchies.

If you're not acquainted with this, let me enlighten you. It's about ten at night, and after a long hard study, the bear inside you tries to eat you alive. But, of course, you can't let this happen. Because you just simply will not make it to the next meal, you resort to digging through your closet for things your loving relatives have sent you. You pull out a bag of candy or, maybe, some Ramen noodles. You make a five course meal out of the finest foods: seven Kit-Kats, three Milky Ways, two Ramen noodle packets, a bottle of Gatorade, and a nice pint of ice cream from the girls' dorm store. Finally, you feel satisfied . . . and weigh ten pounds more.

There seems to be some agreement about the best midnight snack. Sarah Lehman said, "If you're going for ice-cream, go for Ben and Jerry's. It's simply the best." Karel Pintos claimed, "The best midnight snack is anything I can eat, but the best go-to is ice-cream of course." Several in the guys' dorm also claimed ice-cream was the best. Dean Maxson claimed in his boisterous fashion, "Taco Bell is the way to go!"

So the next time you think that the "freshman fifteen" comes from the café food, think again. It's just the midnight munchies coming to get you.

## They're always watching

by *Brian Paredes*

The staff and teachers at Upper Columbia Academy are obligated to keep the students safe and their wild intentions at bay. From our parents, the responsibility is handed to the adults of this campus. We honestly cannot blame them for being suspicious of some of the things we might find ourselves doing, but we can always know they intend the best for us as a student body.

One night I was asked to leave the upstairs weight room in the gym because I was not, in fact, working out. I questioned this action and was informed that the supervisor on duty that night should not have to supervise the weight room as well as the other areas for two or three inactive students. I wondered if the supervisors were too suspicious of me and my companions, who, they apparently feared, might try to do something dangerous or against code. Or was there a bigger issue? I started asking around.

Most of the answers I received were mumbles and empty remarks of the general, disgruntled attitude toward even the idea of supervision. "We live in a prison," some said. "They don't trust us," others agreed. Then someone said something else, "It's not just the staff, it's the insurance regulations." Believe it or not, insurance regulations are really the cause of the many hard feelings students have.

Being a private facility that houses hundreds of rambunctious teenagers, UCA is by law required to meet and enforce certain standards. All in all, as tightfisted or untrusting as the staff and supervision might appear their main concern is our safety and well-being, and we shouldn't blame them for enforcing rules they cannot change.

So think of that the next time you are talked to by the staff for being somewhere you shouldn't be. Maybe even smile and thank them for a job well done.



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# Catching some zzzz's

by *Niqolas Ruud*

Sleep is a very important aspect of our lives, especially here at UCA. We rely on it to re-energize ourselves so we can continue into the next day. Sleeping also progresses the body's growth and rejuvenates the immune, skeletal, nervous and muscular systems. Sleep similarly improves short-term memory as well as our general moods, which can directly affect our educations and social lives.

At UCA it's no secret that most of us get less than the nine hours of sleep recommended for average American teenagers to function and grow properly. But as we all know, it is really hard to keep up with the busy life here on campus and even harder keep up with a regular and proper sleep schedule at the same time. One student, Giovanna Giroto, said of the predicament, "It is insanely difficult to stay awake in classes while living off less than six hours of sleep per night." Another student, and Girls' Dorm RA, Stephanie Ing, also made a statement concerning the issue. "I never realized how important sleep really was until this year. I hated naps until I became an RA."

Sleep is very important, and sometimes here at UCA it seems that we just can't get enough to cope with life. The solution? You either need to take the time to simply take a nap, or you may just have to hold on until the next homeleave, and then try not to stay up till three or four doing absolutely nothing!

## What's that on your face?

by *Sarah Lehman*

Every year when the trees are stripped of their attire, and the air seems to claw at you, and everyone starts chattering about Christmas prematurely, a strange phenomenon takes place of the campus of Upper Columbia Academy. Whether this happening is brought on by the extreme cold or is a passing annual fashion was truly the question in the minds of females all over UCA.

You see, the men have a month where they grow out their facial hair. Along with this fascinating occurrence is Lumberjack Week, a week where all these hairy males prove themselves by inhaling practically any number of pancakes in a minute or by arm-wrestling. Two-time arm-wrestling champ Brian Paredes said he was growing out his *bear* as an experiment.

But what did the girls have to say about the change brought by No Shave November? Junior Katie Miller said, "It's actually pretty nasty, but I suppose I can deal with it." November is long gone and most of the men, once again, have smooth faces . . . that is, until Facial Hair February!

## Music, sports combine forces

by *Shawn Stratte*

On December 6 at around 6:15 a.m., the Choraliers, orchestra, and varsity basketball teams boarded the UCA bus and some vans and headed south. After approximately a three hour bus ride, they arrived at Harris Jr. Academy in Pendleton, Oregon. After some quick warming up, the Choraliers and orchestra performed a 45-minute concert for about 40 students and some staff. Once the mini-concert was finished, the chairs and risers were quickly put away, and the basketball teams started their clinic.

By the time this was all over, it was lunchtime. The students were dropped off at a nearby grocery store with many restaurants within a 5-minute walk. After about an hour, the students left for the Hermiston SDA Church to perform for the Journey to Bethlehem there. The attendance was very low, most likely due to the cold, but it was a good practice opportunity. After the performance, the bus and vans left for Walla Walla to stay for the night. Luckily, there were enough families willing to house students so no one had to sleep on a gym floor.

The next morning, the Choraliers and orchestra played for the church service at the Eastgate SDA Church. The church was packed with about 400 people in attendance. After the service, students had the option to go back to UCA early or stay for the guys' and girls' varsity games against WWVA that evening. Most students chose to stay for the games.

The girls' game started at six that evening. The game was pretty close for the first half, but WWVA was able to shut UCA down in the second half and beat them pretty soundly. The guys' game started at 7:45, immediately after the first game. It was very close for almost the entire game. The biggest game changer was WWVA's Dustin Rose who knocked down five 3-pointers in the game. UCA had three players score 10 or more points: Daniel Wilkinson, Landon Hall, and Andrew Fisher, but WWVA was able to pull away in the fourth quarter with a final score of 48 to 64.

Soon after the games, the students boarded the bus and vans for the final time and left for UCA. They finally arrived at about 12:30 p.m. to conclude a very eventful and worthwhile music/basketball tour.



## Technology: *friend or foe?*

by *Darla Morgan*

The use of technology has greatly influenced how we live life today. It makes school assignments so much easier. If you are lost on the road, you can instantly find out where you are on the planet. Years ago before answering machines were invented, it might have taken a couple of days to get a message to somebody. Now, it's hard for us to refrain from texting in class because whatever information we feel we need to send our friends is urgent and so important.

Have you ever taken a panoramic view of the cafeteria during a meal? Many students are glancing down at their phones every couple of minutes or so, and those that aren't at least have their phone displayed out on the table top. Do many teenagers find it awkward to have face-to-face conversations and feel more comfortable texting somebody?

Technology is amazing and can be very useful, but have we forgotten that one of the best things in life is building real-life friendships with others? When our generation looks back at our academy days, let's hope we remember them as a bright spot in our lives where we grew closer to God and built real, lasting friendships with those around us.

## Guys' dorm cameras

by *Daniel Wilkinson*

Since the dorm was equipped with surveillance, there have been many humorous occasions caught on film. People walk by and seem to completely forget that the cameras monitor everything that takes place in the halls. They think their actions will never be seen. They are so wrong!

Last year, we had a student who got up to use the restroom at around three o'clock on several mornings. Every time, on his stroll back to his room, he would stare at the cameras and break into a little dance.

More recently, a resident was caught doing something awfully out of the ordinary: During the night, the lobby camera caught him coming in and sitting down on one of the couches. He was caught in the act of sleep walking. After sitting there for several seconds, he awoke and walked back to his room.

These are just two examples of what entertainment came along with new surveillance cameras. We are eager for much more to come, and I am sure that it will.

## Shorter days

by *Tiana Gerber*

Winter sets in and the days become shorter. People tend to get moody faster, tired quicker, and depressed easier. Some don't notice right away—like others do—that their mood is changing.

This change in mood is sometimes called Seasonal Affective Disorder, and its effects include low self-esteem, obsessiveness over little things, irritability, loss of interest in activities, sleeping more often, fatigue, and craving and eating more starches and sweets.

The condition really doesn't have to do with the annoying rain and wind; it has to do with the amount of vitamin-D you are receiving from sunlight. Less sunlight means less vitamin-D, and less vitamin-D means less serotonin which is a chemical in your brain that plays a big role in your mood changes. The more serotonin you have, the better you feel.

The depression that may be brought on by less sunlight can be prevented through exercising and avoiding extra sweets and coffee. Coffee can depress the serotonin levels in the brain, first lifting you up, but soon after bringing you down. Sitting under bright 300-watt bulbs for 20 minutes a day may also be helpful.

Just keep in mind that if you're feeling down, you are probably just missing a little light during these short, gloomy winter days.

## Back, ready to go

by *Mason Parks*

“What did you do over break?” This question echoed all over the UCA campus the day after Christmas vacation. The answer was usually the same: “Nothing, it was kind of boring.”

It’s ironic that all the student body gets incredibly excited for Christmas break and makes big plans; then, they seem to squander their precious freedom sleeping, watching *Breaking Bad*, or playing *Call of Duty*. (Yes, video games and TV will get you nowhere in life.) Near the end of their respite, many students secretly want school to start again to rescue them from their inactivity.

I also find humor in how many of us think we are going to do school work over break. I often deceive myself into thinking that I will get way ahead or study diligently and then once I get home I find something “better” to do.

Despite the laziness and the unproductive behavior that happen over leave, it is still a good time to recharge and rest up for the next half of the year because by January 6 we were all back to the grind.



## Thanksgiving vespers

by *Meghan Spracklen*

Most vespers begin just the same: there’s singing, praying, listening, and then more singing. All of that is great, but on November 15, in honor of Thanksgiving, the students at UCA did something special. They gathered in the cafeteria and sat at the tables which were covered with bits of paper.

For the next hour, everyone wrote notes to . . . well, everyone else. They wrote to friends, to acquaintances, and even to staff members just to let everyone know that they were appreciated and valued at our school. They shared laughs and gave words of encouragement. And then a thank-you note war broke out!

The list of things you could thank your friends for was never-ending. In return they’d give you a compliment, and then you would reply with a drawing until notes of pathetic doodles were flying back and forth. This lasted until all the stacks of note paper were used up and students found themselves surrounded by piles of folded paper.

After this was all done, the best part came—reading the notes! There were notes from your best friends and from people you hardly knew, notes telling you just how much you are treasured. It made everyone’s night, and was a satisfying way to get everyone in the spirit of Thanksgiving.



## The snore heard ‘round the classroom

by *Mike Evans*

It was another exciting day in English class. There we all were, languishing under British rule when we witnessed a small glimmer of hope. Someone was portraying the true American spirit of rebellion and exploration. Clayton Haggerty was lying face down on his desk, ignoring every tyrannical comment. He lay there entranced in the exploration of the mysterious blackness behind his eyelids.

Suddenly, a raucous snort issued forth from Haggerty’s nostrils, and the tyrant shot a quick glance at the “delinquent sinner,” who, like all true heroes was oblivious to his unassuming act of patriotism. This one unobtrusive spark started a spontaneous wave of rebellion.

In the forefront of the classroom at Danny’s desk, the battle of his eyelids came to a decisive close, and in the back, Dustin’s head rested peacefully on his laptop. Another head went down and then another bit the desk. Clayton’s patriotic spark flamed through the classroom. All across the room, true American snores were heard; then, the liberty bell rang and we were freed from British rule.

That snore brought us together. It brought weight to our eyelids and drowsiness to our minds, and it gave us the will to fight our common enemy—lack of sleep during junior year. It was in all truth the snore heard ‘round the classroom.

# Careers

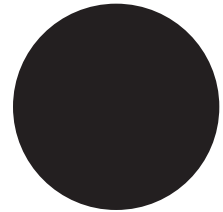
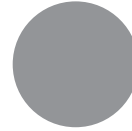
by Ariel Barrutia

As juniors and seniors reach this time in their lives, most are trying to figure out what they want to study in college. This is a very important decision because a future career should be one that you will love and enjoy for the rest of your life.

A good strategy is to take some time during the summer to shadow a person whose career interests you. This kind of experience is crucial. It will help you know much better if that is the career for you. Ask all the questions that you can to help you learn about the professions that interest you. After you have had a little on-the-job experience and have asked many questions, you will know much better if a career is the one for you. Shadowing is a very smart way to test yourself about the future.

Getting summer work is another great way to get helpful experience. Trying out different jobs gives you a lot of knowledge about what you like. If you don't like a summer job, you probably won't enjoy a career in that field. Summer jobs are also very good for your future résumés.

So, plan ahead, give it some thought, and this summer have a little fun with a summer job or career shadowing.



## 2ND SEMESTER ASB OFFICERS

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## The future

by Madalynn Kack

The sounds of Christmas carols and the smells of gingerbread are long gone. The smiles of cheer and joy have slowly left student faces, and now the storm returns: flying papers, spinning pencils, and small scraps of erasers. Everyone is waiting anxiously to see if their scores are high enough or if their grades are good enough to brag about. No-one has the smallest idea what their future holds.

The day is almost upon us, the day that will determine whether we will go on to become great scholars. Those A's on report cards can determine whether we will get in to Stanford. Everything is at stake.

First semester has come to a close and the second has begun. There is half a year left to get our acts together. Keep your chin up and work hard. You never know what good things can happen next.