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## The Grizzly, January 29, 2009

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# The Grizzly

Thursday, January 29, 2009

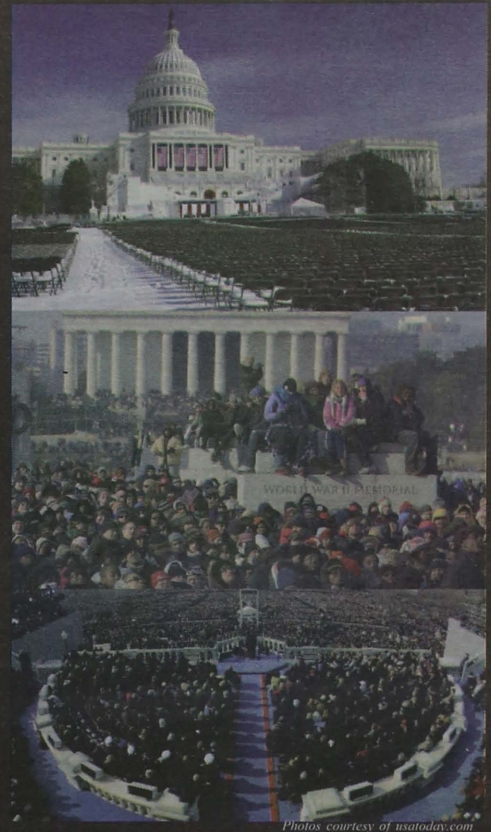
The student newspaper of Ursinus College

## UC students attend inauguration

Lindsay Budnick  
Grizzly Staff Writer

On Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2009, at 4:45 a.m. members of S.U.N., the Ursinus College Democrats, and their guests piled into a bus which would take them on the three-hour journey to Washington D. C. to watch the 44th President of the United States get sworn into office. The area was overflowing with excitement as people from all over the country gathered into the nation's capital to watch this historic occurrence of the first African American man to enter the position of President.

Once the Ursinus group arrived at the drop-off point, the group separated; some were lucky enough to fight through security and make it onto the mall to watch the speech given through the large Jumbotrons. Others were able to get to Constitution Avenue, where they were able to watch the speech directly on the Capitol while listening to the words through radios which others in the crowd lent to them. Another group journeyed to Chinatown where they were able to seek warmth and watch the event on televisions. Everywhere in the city an electric current of excitement rippled through the crowds as President Obama came to give his Inaugural address.



"UC students attend Inauguration" is continued on page 5.

## Wrestling wants results on and off the mat

Nick Pane  
Grizzly Staff Writer

When Bill Racich assumed the head coaching duties of Ursinus wrestling in 1980, the team was reeling, and in need of answers. Twenty-nine years and over 400 wins later, it is safe to say the Bears found some stability.

With Coach Racich at the controls, Ursinus wrestling has taken off. Since 1980, the Bears have not had a losing season, including nine Centennial Conference Championships. Prior to the first of five of those titles, Coach Racich was inducted into the Ursinus College Hall of Fame, a remarkable feat. However, when asked about his achievements, Racich immediately turned to the instruction he has given to his athletes, both past and present.

"One of the most rewarding things as a coach is when you're at practice and you instruct a young man about a skill tactic or technique, he believes in it, and in a certain match he uses it," said Racich. "Even if he loses, there is an education factor as a coach that we helped, which is a small achievement, which leads to the bigger achievements."

Racich clearly understands the importance of relaying his knowledge to his athletes, which is something that he takes pride in, because the result is more than wins. The lessons and teachings that are provided are a huge boost for the athletes in the classroom.

Racich was not shy in pointing out that, "classroom work comes first." This is pretty apparent when you consider that Racich has coached two Academic All-Americans, and 22 Scholar All-Americans for Division III

athletics. There is a set plan in place that the wrestlers must follow so that they can compete to their best abilities, something Racich takes pride in.

"Basically, the expectation for these guys is, number one, to do well in school, number two to be solid citizens on campus, and contribute to the community, and number three to get a little bit better every day in the practice room. Without one or two, they aren't going to reach number three," says Racich.

These guidelines are good indicators of how the leaders of the wrestling team were chosen for the 2008-09 season.

This year's captains for the 2008 wrestling team are senior, James Bloom, and sophomore, Nate Murren. Both

"Wrestling wants results on and off the mat" is continued on page 8.

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## Caffeine correlation to hallucinations? Recent studies suggest high intake of caffeine may cause hallucinations

Gianna Paone

Grizzly Staff Writer

Do you look forward to that stop at Jazzman's on your way to class? Think that you can't make it through the day without caffeine? That morning cup may be fine, but the loads and loads of coffee that you downed to write that last paper could give your brain a greater kick than just extreme alertness. Recent studies found that consuming high amounts coffee per day puts one at significantly greater risk for experiencing hallucinations.

One study was performed by researchers at Durham University in England as part of doctoral student Simon R. Jones's research on auditory verbal hallucinations (AVH's), or hearing voices. He believes that in addition to psychological causes, there are biological explanations for why a person experiences them, and his research seeks a link between the two.

The researchers first observed diathesis-stress models of psychosis, or the condition in which one experiences hallucinations, delirious beliefs, or other personality differences that characterize the mind's condition as abnormal (in common terms, such a person would likely hear "psychotic" at some point). The models showed that such delusions—often linked to schizophrenia—could be the result of stress. Stressors typically cause changes in levels of cortisol, a corticosteroid hormone often dubbed the "stress hormone," that the body produces, and its increase in the body is suggested to contribute to hallucinatory and delirious effects. Recognizing that caffeine is known to increase levels of cortisol released, the researchers suspected a potential link between the popular substance and psychotic experiences.

In the study, 219 students—excluding cigarette smokers—were surveyed on their daily consumption of caffeine products, including tea, coffee, soda, Red Bull, milk chocolate, dark chocolate, and caffeine pills. Their proneness to hallucinations and to delusion-like beliefs,

referred to as "persecutory ideation," was then assessed on a 0-4 scale (0 meaning that they found the question inapplicable, 4 meaning a definite "yes"), and their levels of stress were questioned similarly.

The experiment revealed a connection between caffeine and hallucination-proneness, but not persecutory ideation. Those who consumed three or more cups of brewed—or seven or more cups of instant—coffee were three times as likely to hear voices or see things that were not there than those who drank one half-cup of brewed—or one cup of instant—coffee daily. To give a better sense of high caffeine intake, seven cups of instant coffee contain 315 mg caffeine, which is equivalent to about six cups of strong tea, nine colas, four Red Bulls, fifteen dark chocolate bars, or three caffeine pills.

The researchers concluded a positive correlation between caffeine and levels of psychosis-like experiences, but none significant between caffeine intake and stress in producing such sensations. While they found limitations in the fact that, ironically, certain stressors may cause a greater caffeine intake, Jones and his study's co-author, Charles Fernyhough, believe that the research further supports that hallucinations don't necessarily indicate psychological illness. Instead, they could be a result of an individual's diet, stressors, or possibly the interaction between both.

Overall, the findings widen the gates for our further research on the link between caffeine, stress, and hallucinations, and they highlight how nutrition could impact psychosis. Jones and Fernyhough hope to discover how dietary changes could help people handle such experiences, which are often the result of traumatic events, or the frequency of their occurrences.

Jones and Fernyhough's study, called "Caffeine, Stress, and Proneness to Psychosis-like Experiences: A Preliminary Investigation," is published in the journal *Personality and Individual Differences* (PAID), which can be accessed through ScienceDirect (available on Myryn's website).

## Inauguration 2009

Spencer Jones

Grizzly Staff Writer

On Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2009, millions of people from around the world watched Barack Obama's inauguration, many with tears of joy in their eyes. For many, it marked not just the end of one era and the beginning of another, but the chance for America to reconcile itself with the world.

It was truly a star studded event, with senators and policy makers from across the country coming to witness history in the making. Several former presidents and their families were in attendance, some of whom included Jimmy Carter and his wife Rosalynn, Bill Clinton and Hillary, and the entire Bush clan from George H.W. Bush to George W. Bush. Obama's wife Michelle and two daughters sat together, with Malia snapping pictures of her father's big day.

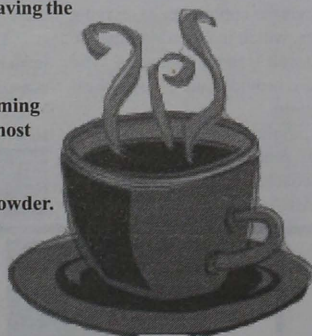
The queen of soul herself, Aretha Franklin, braved the brutal chill to sing "My Country Tis of Thee." She looked lovely in her grey felt hat which, according to Fox News, "caused an economic boom for Mr. Song Millinery" who designed the elaborate, \$500 hat. Most of the requests came from men who wanted the hat for their "wives, mothers and grandmothers." A second musical performance was provided by a quartet of renowned musicians including cellist Yo Yo Ma, pianist Gabriela Montero, clarinetist Anthony McGill, and violinist Itzhak Perlman. However, The Washington Post reported that, due to the extreme cold, the quartet was "unable to perform at the usual standard" and was forced to play with a prerecorded track in the background.

Obama's inaugural speech was arguably one of his best and he addressed the very real need for everybody to come together. He appealed directly to specific religious groups, including Christians, Jews and "non believers." With regard to the abrasive relationship between much of the Islamic and Western worlds, Obama had a special message: "We seek a new way forward, based on mutual interest and mutual respect. To those leaders around the globe who seek to sow conflict, or blame their society's ills on the West - know that your people will judge you on what you can build, not what you destroy."

## Some little known facts about caffeine

courtesy of physorg.com

- Caffeine is a central nervous system stimulant, having the effect of temporarily warding off drowsiness and restoring alertness.
- With ninety per cent of North Americans consuming some of form caffeine every day, it is the world's most widely used drug.
- In its pure state, caffeine is a crystalline white powder.
- Caffeine is completely absorbed by the stomach and small intestine within 45 minutes of ingestion.
- When taken in moderation, studies have shown that caffeine can increase the capacity for mental or physical labour.
- Caffeine use can lead to a condition called caffeine intoxication. Symptoms include nervousness, irritability, anxiety, muscle twitching, insomnia, headaches, and heart palpitations. This is not commonly seen when daily caffeine intake is less than 250mg.



## The Grizzly

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# Winter in Senegal: how four students spent their holiday

**Kristi Blust**

*Co-Editor-In-Chief*

While many of you were spending the holidays catching up with family and friends, four Ursinus students, along with Professor of French, Frances Novack, chose to spend their winter break studying in Saint-Louis, Senegal, a country on the northwestern coast of Africa. Traditionally, study abroad programs last one semester, or up to one academic year; however, few students seem familiar with the shorter, winter-study options, lasting roughly three weeks.

I know what you may be thinking; you guys went to a tropical country on the coast during one of the coldest months in the United States. Was the trip really an educational one, or just an excuse to lounge on the beach and soak up the sun? I can assure you that it was not. Being a former French colony, the official language of Senegal is French, which was primarily our area of study while abroad. However, while we were there, we were each given the opportunity to explore other areas of interest to us. Juniors Meaghan Reid and Ashley O'Connell, both on the pre-medical track and studying French, spent a morning at the medical center at the Universite Gaston Berger in Saint-Louis. There, Reid and O'Connell observed medical staff and assisted with blood pressure readings and similar tasks.

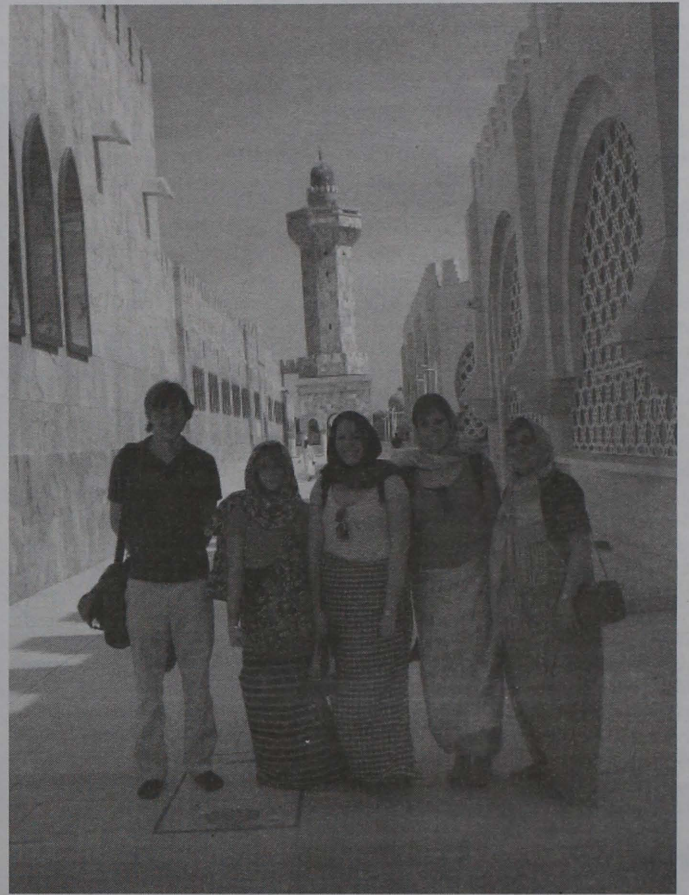
Another student, senior Josh Strainic, an international relations and French major, was able to sit in on a lecture at the University concerning West African politics. The trip was flexible enough that even I, a student studying psychology rather than French, was able to extract some meaningful information from this experience. While the others spent time in the medical center, I was able to spend a morning observing several classrooms at a local primary school.

In addition to these independent learning experiences, the four of us partook in numerous educational visits and excursions. We traveled through the holy city of Touba, and toured the Great Mosque, the biggest in the country,

visited and learned to barter (some of us better than others) at the many tourist and food markets, toured the hospital in downtown Saint-Louis, took a ride in a pirogue, a type of boat often used for fishing in Senegal, mastered (well, maybe not really) the art of tie-die, and many other things.

An integral part of our study abroad experience, aside from the visits and lectures we attended at the University, was a traditional home-stay. Each of us were placed in a member of the University faculty's home for a little over two weeks. Here, we ate meals with our families, participated in cultural activities, and lodged. Being that Senegal's population is 95 percent Muslim, all of us celebrated the Islamic New Year with our families. This celebration usually consists of preparing a special dinner, with a type of home-made couscous being the main event.

While we sometimes complained about the difficulty finding toilet paper in the local stores, and the quantity of fish and rice our families consumed, I can say with confidence that Meaghan, Ashley, Josh, and I returned to Ursinus this semester more knowledgeable of another culture, more aware of conditions around the world, and infinitely more appreciative for every opportunity and comfort we have here at home.



*Photo courtesy of Kristi Blust*

(From left to right) Josh Strainic, Kristi Blust, Ashley O'Connell, Meaghan Reid and Professor Frances Novack at the Great Mosque in Touba, Senegal.

## Sizzling Entertainment News

with  
**Li Kilmer**

### Swayze to write memoir

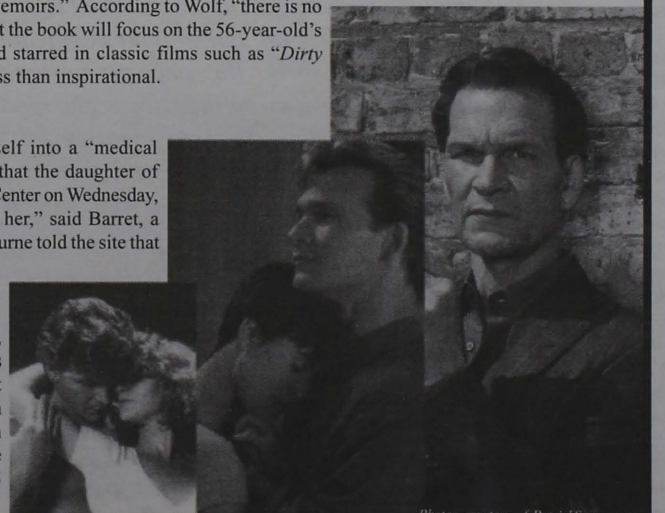
Filming a TV show isn't the only project in the works for actor Patrick Swayze, whose battle with pancreatic cancer has yet to hinder his work ethic. Annett Wolf, a representative for Swayze, told E! News that he and wife, Lisa, will be "collaborating on his memoirs." According to Wolf, "there is no further information" to be released, including the content of the novel. Sources told People that the book will focus on the 56-year-old's life "journey" and will not be "an inspirational book." However, having battled cancer and starred in classic films such as "Dirty Dancing," "Ghost," and "Donnie Darko," one may assert that his life's journey is nothing less than inspirational.

### Kelly Osbourne checks into rehab

In order to "address some personal issues," 24-year-old Kelly Osbourne has checked herself into a "medical facility," says spokeswoman Caroline Barrett. According to E! News, it has been reported that the daughter of rocker Ozzy Osbourne checked herself into Oregon's Hazelden Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation Center on Wednesday, Jan. 21, where she is expected to remain for 30 days. "Her family stands by and supports her," said Barrett, a statement which was confirmed by mother Sharon on RadarOnline.com. On Jan. 22, Mrs. Osbourne told the site that "the family is all standing behind her. Kelly knew that she needed help and she's getting it."

### Hayden Panettiere's dad

After pleading no contest to hitting his wife, Alan Panettiere, father to "Heroes" star Hayden, has been sentenced to two years probation. According to oregonlive.com, the young actor's father entered the plea Tuesday, Jan. 20 in Beverly Hills. Aside from probation, Superior Court Judge Marsha Revel also "imposed on him a year of domestic violence counseling and \$400 in fines," says the News Daily. The initial arrest took place last August, at the family's home in West Hollywood, following a benefit event hosted by Hayden. At the time, Hayden told the press that the entire incident "was blown way out of proportion by a sheriff who wanted his 15 minutes of fame."



*Photos courtesy of PatrickSwayze.net*

## Author Sheree R. Thomas visits UC

Liz Kilmer

Grizzly Staff Writer

Dozens of students, as well as some faculty members, gathered last Wednesday, Jan. 21, to hear guest speaker Sheree R. Thomas deliver a spirited and motivational lecture. The award winning author, editor, and publisher stood behind a miked podium in the Kaleidoscope's Black Box Studio, where she greeted an enthused and participatory audience.

A mass e-mail entitled "Martin Luther King Speaker" was sent to invite the Ursinus Community to the speech, which began at 7 p.m. and touched on much more than the iconic reverend. Having been raised in Memphis, Tennessee, Thomas spoke of life after King, and how his assassination is "still a wound that has never healed." More so, however, she talked about growing up in Memphis, and how her childhood experiences influenced her passion for linguistics and storytelling. She attributes this primarily to her grandfather, whom she describes as "a skinny Isaac Hayes." He, as well as Thomas' other relatives, were constantly recounting history and stories- many of which revolved around the Civil Rights Movement and other topics that a young Sheree didn't hear about in school.

In fact, at one point during her speech, Thomas sought to impersonate one of many "warnings" resonated over her grade school's intercom- her lips shot against the microphone as she explained that the previous night's episode of "Roots" was not to be discussed. She finished the impression with an enthusiastic "Go, Bobcats, go!" to which the audience favorably responded. This, however, was not the only time her inflection changed throughout the speech; she often imitated whomever she was speaking

of, even herself. According to Thomas, Tennessee alone had "three or four dialects" and she'd often adjust her speech to

to assimilate with the people around her. "As a writer, I think of myself as bilingual" said Thomas, who added: "I hear the characters first." For Thomas, these characters are generally African Americans, reacting to whatever science fictional situation Thomas allots them. Science

fiction, according to Thomas, served as an escape from the city's political quandaries while growing up, and continues to appease her today. Occasionally, she receives dubious feedback, and is asked "what does science fiction have to do with black people?" Her response: "yesterday [the presidential inauguration] was a science fictional story. That's one story we can lay to rest."

During a questioning period that took place after the lecture, students asked about her favorite works, as well as her personal work (which has earned her awards and widespread recognition among the literary world). When asked for advice concerning achievement, Thomas urges students to push themselves, to develop courage, and most importantly, to "engage."



Photo courtesy of authors.aalbc.com

## Bnats to sing National Anthem for 76ers

Serena Mithbaokar

Grizzly Staff Writer

Ursinus's all-women acapella group is all set to perform the national anthem at a Philadelphia 76ers game on Friday, Jan. 30 at the Wachovia Center in Philadelphia. The 76ers originally scheduled the performance for Jan. 24, but called on Jan. 22 to explain there had been a mix-up.

The B-naturals, more affectionately known as the B-nats, are the all-women's acapella group

at Ursinus College. The group is relatively new to the student campus, having been established only about five years ago and consisting of about 25 members. The B-naturals have performed regularly for the past few years at Relay for Life, the annual fundraiser for the American Cancer Society, CoSA (Celebration of Student Achievement), and other such events.

A special B-naturals concert has also been planned for later this semester, hopefully sometime in April. The performance will include several Disney songs, a couple of Pop hits the group has sung in the past and at least two brand new pieces arranged by the young women themselves. The women may also be singing some songs on their own.

*"Auditioning for the sixers in October was an incredible experience. When we walked in to see the six judges, they all looked a bit skeptical of these 25 college girls. But, once we started to sing the expressions on their faces changed completely. They were very impressed."*

Ashley O'Connell, a junior member of the B-naturals, arranged for the audition for the Philadelphia 76ers in October of last year. Junior Gabrielle Poretta, a member of the B-naturals, recounts her experiences with the group, "Auditioning for the sixers in October was an incredible experience. I remember us all being so nervous, mostly because we felt so out of place. A majority of the people

there were younger and I don't remember seeing any other big groups like ours. When we walked in to see the six judges, they all looked a bit skeptical of these 25 college girls. But, once we started to sing the expressions on their faces changed completely. They were very impressed."

Poretta mentioned that the auditioners were very impressed by the B-nat's singing. She added, "More members from the freshman class joined us this year and they are all a bunch of talented new voices, which has really increased our level of self-confidence."

Naturally, the families of the group members were very excited. Many had bought advanced tickets to the game and the Student Activities Office also arranged for the tickets as well, but as the game was rescheduled for Jan. 30, the B-naturals will be performing on this date instead.

**The B-Nats want to apologize to all those inconvenienced by the change in date. Thanks for your support!**

## Career Corner: Dress to Impress

Career Services

[www.ursinus.edu/career](http://www.ursinus.edu/career)

First impressions are critical! Employers will make assumptions about your professional credibility and potential performance based upon your appearance and presentation during a first meeting. It's very difficult to overcome a poor first impression, regardless of your knowledge or expertise. You want to appear confident, conservative, reliable, and polished.

Your clothing should appear as a natural extension of you, tailored to help you present a positive image and "shine" in the interview.

For the UC Job & Internship Fair, Career Services recommends that graduating seniors dress in professional attire. This means a conservative suit for both men and women.

If you are searching for summer work, part time jobs, or internships as a freshman or sophomore, more casual dress may be acceptable. However, leave your jeans, sweats, and scrubs at home! Casual dress for an interview means khakis or slacks, dress shirt, and a tie for men. For women, professional looking slacks or knee-length skirt, knit shirt, or a twin set is acceptable.

This is your time to shine – give yourself the competitive edge!

Below are some general tips for dressing to impress:

- Err on the side of conservative dress. Develop a look that is simple and successful. Keep the focus on you and your qualifications rather than on what you are wearing.
- Clothing should fit well and be cleaned and pressed. Shoes should be polished.
- Make sure your hair is clean, neat and styled in a professional manner.
- Brush your teeth and have fresh breath. Do not keep gum or candy in your mouth.
- Display no visible body piercings, except for conservative ear piercings for women.
- Cover visible tattoos to avoid distraction.

To learn more about dressing for success visit [www.symdsdress.com](http://www.symdsdress.com) and be sure to consult with members of the Career Services office.

**The Job & Internship Fair is Wednesday, February 11, 2009.**

# CruXshadows: A live experience not to be missed

**Laurel Salvo**  
Grizzly Staff Writer

Admittedly, I've been infected. Since November of 2008, I've attended two CruXshadows concerts; one held at Water Street Music Hall in Rochester, NY, and the more epic of the two shows taking place on Dec. 31, 2008, at Shampoo nightclub, located in Philadelphia. The "recently played" list on my iPod consists of 80 different tracks of theirs, and I find myself watching the footage I've taped from their sets far too often.

Having seen them in New York and then later on headline the first New Year's Eve Dracula's Ball event in over a decade, I must confess, theirs is the most intensely theatrical experience of a live performance I've ever witnessed. Being front and center for both events made it all the more captivating.

Having toured in over 30 countries and now with 10 albums under their belt, the CruXshadows popularity seems to be at an all time high. With their latest album "Dreamcypher" having dropped in early 2007, they've found themselves with their third consecutive single at the top of the Billboard Dance Charts, even beating out Madonna this time around.

A mixture of future-pop, dark wave, and gothic rock, the CruXshadows lyrics are written and composed by the bands front man, simply known as "Rogue." Sometimes poetic, sometimes evocative and sensual, and more often than not contemplative about the state of the world and one's place in it, his words are a cinematic hybrid of the bands motto "Live, Love, Be, Believe."

Live on stage, Rogue moved fluidly back and forth across the crowd dancing, his body becoming its own solo instrument to the music. At both shows he entered the stage from behind the audience, walking through us and singing in individuals faces here and there. During some of the tracks they performed, he'd climb down into the pit and walk throughout the crowd, dancing with different fans; one time, he even stood on a barstool in the middle of us spinning around in the darkness under the neon lights as they

reflected off our faces. In a sense, he's redefining what a front man should be by changing it into a more tangible and interactive title. He is becoming a cohesive part of the audience more than an object entirely out of reach.

Yet another aspect of their live set that's worthy of an almost circus event is the eclectic presentation of the band members talents. With two electric violinists, a keyboardist producing synth-pop vibes, an electric guitarist, and two dancers with movements choreographed to all the sounds being produced and dancing around Rogue during the

set, it was almost too much to take in at once. I found my eyes constantly bouncing back and forth to different members, trying to absorb as much as I could.

Their aesthetic presentation is something else that contrasts every other concert I've seen live. The female rockers and dancers on stage wear a mixture of black and hot pink outfits, some in corsets made of pleather and lace, and their dancers in matching two-piece, barely-there uniforms made of mesh. Violinist JoHanna Moresco and guitarist Valerie Gentile (two of the newest members of the band) proved to be the most interactive of the live performance, seeing a camera and flocking towards it immediately and dancing as close as possible to whoever was filming them or taking their photograph, which is yet another great thing about the experience for any fan.

Something else unique about the CruXshadows is the connectedness the entire group seems to have with one another. Valerie and Rogue can often be seen standing back to back grinding as she plays and he sings. Additionally, both violinists face each other and mimic the other's movements playfully. The most dramatic of all however, were dancers Jessica Lackey and Sara Kilgore melting around and into each other's bodies, using black scarves to blindfold and twist each other in different directions, and moving with neon color-guard flags and wooden staffs choreographed to the music.

The most intense of these connections was definitely between Rogue and lead dancer/back-up vocalist Jessica Lackey, having just celebrated their one-year marriage anniversary on New Year's Eve. They utilize that connection and the potency of how they feel toward one another is incredible. It came off of them in waves as they performed the haunting track of "Memorare" together, a song about a lost connection between two lovers. It's hard to tell where the thespian behaviors of the CruXshadows set begins and where the actual live concert ends. Both are intertwined so tightly it becomes something else for the fan to experience and the allure of the violin sounds, combined with the mesmerizing dancers, and intensely emotional lyrics bring individuals who are there to another world entirely, and one I'm more than eager to return to.



Photo courtesy of Laurel Salvo

*"Live on stage, Rogue moved fluidly back and forth across the crowd dancing, his body becoming its own solo instrument to the music... he is becoming a cohesive part of the audience more than an object entirely out of reach."*

"UC students attend Inauguration" is continued from front page.

The speech was 18 minutes long, but in those 18 minutes, President Obama was able to make a crowd of over one million people stand and listen. In his speech, Obama pledged to lead America to happier and more prosperous economic times. "Today, I say to you that the challenges we face are real. They are serious and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this, America- they will be met," were the words which were echoed by cheers and supportive chanting from the crowds. The new president did not place the task of fixing the nation solely on the government; rather, he made clear the importance of every

citizen working toward this goal, referring to it as "a new era of responsibility."

The new president also drew upon history. He declared, "Now there are some who question the scale of our ambitions- who suggest that our system cannot tolerate too many big plans. Their memories are short. For they have forgotten what this country has already done; what free men and women can achieve..." He brought up past sacrifices Americans have made in places such as Gettysburg and Normandy to protect the nation's freedom. Obama made it clear that in order to fix the problems we face, the nation must sacrifice as others have in the past.

The inauguration itself went very smoothly, but as the Obamas and their 237 guests were having lunch in the

Capitol, Senator Edward M. Kennedy suffered a seizure and needed to be rushed to the hospital. He was released the next day. The newly sworn-in president and vice president attended the National prayer service at Washington National Cathedral before starting their first day of work. The sermon was delivered by Rev. Sharon Watkins, the first woman to have this role. The National prayer service is an event attended by many of the newly elected presidents, and has existed since George Washington's inauguration.

At the end of the day, the Ursinus group, over one million others who attended this historic event, and Americans across the country have a new man to call "Mr. President."

## In response to "Letter to the editor" by Julie Tran

**Robert Whitehead**  
*Grizzly Staff Writer*

On November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008, a group of Ursinus College students boarded the Route 93 SEPTA bus at the corner of Sixth and Main, clutching protest signs written on the backs of pizza boxes and adorned with glitter glue and feathers. This group was headed for Philadelphia to join the approximately 5,000 protesters assembled around City Hall in demonstrating against the passage of Proposition 8, an amendment to the California state Constitution which restricted the definition of marriage to "between a man and a woman."

The amendment, as Julie Tran mentioned in her "Letter to the editor," is, at least superficially, a sign that "the anti-gay community is a prevalent one." However, there are more convincing, tangible indications that the historical prevalence of this collective homophobic sentiment is in decline, steadily losing its stronghold on the American morality.

Loud with chants of equality, love, and an end to discrimination, the voice that rose up from that recent protest at City Hall was the voice of a new, pro-gay majority. The reason why Tran, and possibly other like-minded students on this campus, are frustrated with what she says is "hypocritical intolerance" of "the anti-gay community" is because this ideology is now shifting into the minority. She questions, "where are [the anti-gay students] on this campus? Why have they not come out to talk about what they believe in?" Might I suggest an answer: there are fewer students aligned with this cause now than there have

been in the past.

As examples, the City Hall protest had fewer than 5 people voicing an anti-gay opinion as compared to the 5,000 who marched for gay equality. Tran's "anti-gay community" was certainly the minority here, eventually having to be escorted by law enforcement off of the protest site because they did not have a permit.

Similarly, though Prop 8 did pass in California, lawsuits challenging its constitutionality have recently been accepted for hearing by the United States Supreme Court,

*"There are more convincing, tangible indications that the historical prevalence of this collective homophobic sentiment is in decline."*

and requests to implement the proposition even as it

awaits trial have been denied. Additionally, the success of Prop 8 was due in large part to the manipulative television ads and not to genuine support. The "anti-gay" proponents of Prop 8 raised \$2 million dollars less than those defending gay marriage, a confirmation that the support for the anti-gay cause was less than the pro-gay. And yet the proposition did pass, a fact which should negate my previous statement had not the television advertisements for the traditional marriage advocates given in to alarmist rhetoric and flagrant untruths about the issue.

In one Prop 8 ad, for instance, a young girl was posited in a living room with her gay fathers, asking, "what's marriage for" if not "to have babies?" Following this logic, a ban should similarly be placed on the unions of sterile individuals or those who choose not to have children. And the same faulty logic was echoed in a Prop 8 ad about a teacher who disagreed with state-mandated lessons on

## Obama in office: Observations from the bomb shelter

**Christopher Wierzbowski**  
*Grizzly Staff Writer*

Are we all, America, going to be jumping on the "I'm not racist because I voted for Obama bandwagon?" Will that one vote stop you, soccer mom, not in my backyard (NIMBY) liberals, from subtly locking your van when a black man walks on by? Do not get me wrong, Jan. 20, 2009, was saturated with such historical impetus that I could barely trudge through my African American coffee and toast. (The media was obviously struggling with the vernacular balance between Black and African American; it was fun watching them squirm wasn't it? Also, I find it interesting that there was an obvious avoidance by all of Barack's middle name, which may be indicative of our nation's inability to distance ourselves from some of its most traumatic experiences. His middle name is Hussein. Say it loud. Say it proud.)

You see, I have been dreading/praying as much as an atheist can for this day since President Obama was elected on a cold, rainy Pennsylvania evening. Receiving the news from "The Daily Show" anchor John Stewart was apropos, considering that the incredibly fervent youth movement following the candidate treated the "Daily Show" as their home for the realist fake news in modern television. The news was shockingly sudden, the gravity of this historical result had yet found its way to my broad shoulders, and all I could do was scream the ever so cliché exclamation of "yeah!" I did not have time to mask my emotions or care about my peers' opinions.

However, I did not vote. Does that make my opinion invalid? I hope not. (Insert grand explanation, individual

liberties, citation, etc...I know I shoulda (but coulda woulda). It did make me sad, however. It was like not acquiring a free ticket to the last performance of your favorite band, I guess. All I could do, after Barack Obama was elected, was sit and listen, watch and accept, believe and celebrate the fact that President Bush and his crew of flunkies got swept off the stage.

As George W. Bush took his seat on that frigid stag and his Penguin/Darth Vaderesk vice president was wheeled into place I buried myself as deeply as I could in a hoodie; I crossed my fingers and hoped as hard as I possibly could that no one would get hurt.

I know it is rattling in the back of your brains. Manifesting the second our first African American president steps out of his heavily armored Cadillac. There are plenty of people, and I am sure you know some, that feel that Obama's rise to power was similar to Hitler's. I have heard words like these spoken. I have heard intelligent people make incredibly racist remarks regarding the implications of an African American in the White House (fried chicken, posses, etc). I have heard classmates whisper of the possibilities of a race war. I have heard of guns being bought at an incredibly alarming rate.

We cannot wait for the other shoe to drop. I caught myself letting fear dictate my emotions that day; the only cure to such a potent affliction was the remembrance of how President Bush was elected to a second term. The events and emotions experienced during 9/11 were manipulated and pimped to the extent that the prolific feelings experienced that day became petty and cheap. By moon walking Bush's dusty trail, I concluded that I could not let fear master my emotions.

gay marriage, an issue that was nowhere to be found in the text of the Prop 8 ballot. The teacher said, "children don't come from same-sex relationships." Tell that to the "over 52,000 California children...being raised by gay or lesbian parents," a census-backed figure which appears in a "No on Prop 8" commercial. The manipulative ads endorsing Prop 8 were rife with vague appeals to the "protection" of children when the very law they support would end the legal status of these 52,000 children in nullifying their parents' marriages. These ads convoluted the issue, diverting the votes of moderates into the passage of Prop 8 by lying.

So as Tran admits she "worries for this community when the dominant heterosexual culture"—a culture she dangerously and very wrongly equates with the "anti-gay community"—"does not come out and have discussions that are needed for a safe and open community," let us recognize that this worry is one that can only belong to minorities. In fact, in this statement, Tran echoes a similar worry of the LGBT minority. Perhaps unknown to the author, her own words give us the clearest indication that the "dominant" reign of the "anti-gay community" is no longer.

No longer can those who take "the side that is politically incorrect and highly intolerant," according to Tran, leave it up to some "anti-gay" majority to speak for them. The majority is pro-gay, politically correct, tolerant. If any member of the Ursinus community holds firm to the beliefs of Leviticus, that it is "detestable" or "abominable" to "lie with a man as one lies with a woman," be assured you will find yourself growingly alone on this campus. So I urge these individuals to take personal responsibility for their minority beliefs, to stand up for them and defend them however they can. Just know that I and many others will be here, standing stronger against you.

The Bush campaign staff of 2005 was able to manipulate national attention and redirect it toward the deepest regions of the national psyche. Fear, hate, and prejudice dictated Middle America's steps toward the ballot box. Now during our nation's darkest hours, as wars ravage the Middle East, sabers rattle in Russia, and global warming offs more polar bears, America turns to a new hope.

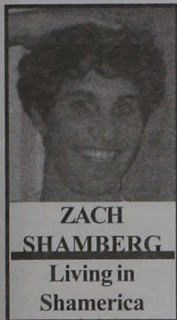
On Jan. 20, 2009, I almost cried along with my mother. Obama's speech was as perfect as it was necessary. The words which rained down upon the crowd on the steps of the Capitol building were broadly precise, pinpointing the vague themes which register a seismic spine tingle in the unwavering believers. Even though I registered minor tremors on the Richter scale, I had to keep in mind that words are words, action is action. All of the processions pomp reinforced this; moreover, the absolutely monstrous crowd which flooded D.C. reminded me that the majority of America has fallen in love with the idea of Barack Obama, rather than tangible results.

Let it be known, then, that the MSNBC's of this world must not remain enamored with the idea of Obama; do not make the majority of objective observers turn to Fox News for reporting. Terry Gross, do not get Limbaughed. NIMBY liberal, do not become holier-than-thou to the point that your opinion becomes discredited by ratiion and logic. Groupthink is as potent on both sides of the political spectrum.

So, to you, Barack Hussein Obama, I applaud your accomplishments. To you, soccer mom, NIMBY liberal, your paradigm may never shift, your locks may never remain unlocked; I just hope you talk the talk and walk the walk.



## The Academy and the *Road* less traveled



ZACH SHAMBERG  
Living in Shamerica

Let me start off by saying that I wholeheartedly support the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. The people there are wonderful, intelligent, and well-versed in the crafts of acting, directing, and screenwriting. I look forward to the Oscar ceremony they host every single year, even if it has simply become a forum for actors to voice their liberal beliefs

and "expert" opinions about the travesties President Bush has committed (here's looking at you, Michael Moore!). The Oscar nominations were announced last Thursday, and there were no huge surprises. Except for one small, glaring omission. This year, the Academy has made a grave mistake. Sure, I can accept it when Jim Carrey does not receive acting nominations for "*The Truman Show*" and "*Man on the Moon*," respectively. I can deal with the fact that Steven Spielberg's masterpiece "*Saving Private Ryan*" was defeated in the Best Picture race by "*Shakespeare in Love*" due to heavy campaigning and shameful brownnosing by Harvey Weinstein and the Miramax Company. And I can handle the obvious contempt the Academy shows towards anything vaguely comedic, having not awarded a true comedy anything since *Annie Hall* in 1977. But this time, they have gone too far. "*Revolutionary Road*," a film about marriage, love, and defeated dreams, was inexplicably absent from basically every category at this year's Academy Awards. Only Michael Shannon, who stars in the film and is known most for his supporting roles in movies like "*Bug*" and "*Bad Boys 2*," was nominated for Best Supporting Actor in a Motion Picture. No Oscar nod for Leonardo DiCaprio? No mention of Kate Winslet? Not even some sort of honorary award for director Sam Mendes, who brought a seemingly dull novel to life? "*Revolutionary Road*," in my opinion, was unquestionably the best film of

the year, and it was gravely overlooked by the Academy Awards.

Based on a 1961 Richard Yates novel of the same name, the story follows a Connecticut couple living in the suburbs and their efforts to break free of conformity and the stranglehold of mid-20th-century expectations. DiCaprio plays Frank Wheeler, a young man working for a company in New York that makes and sells machines to businesses. Winslet is his wife, April, a struggling actress and bored housewife who spends her time cleaning and waiting for her husband to return from the city. As their marriage grows cold and the two drift apart, Frank and April find themselves stuck in a life of desk jobs, tableware, and endless routine. April eventually decides to move the family to Paris, as she plans to take a job with a government agency and allow Frank to pursue art and literature. However, as the dream of a new life quickly fades and the reality of suburbia settles in, the couple realizes that their lives will never be anything more than missed opportunities and wasted ambition. The film ends (not to give anything away) with a bleak outlook on married life and the trappings of love. Basically, this is the last film you want to watch with your husband or wife on the flight to your honeymoon vacation.

This is a movie that I had been waiting to see for almost a year, and it lived up to every single one of my expectations (unlike a certain Christian Bale/superhero movie last summer). DiCaprio's performance alone was enough to carry the film, as he clearly illustrated why he might as well be called this generation's Jimmy Stewart or Marlon Brando. Winslet was extraordinary (as always), and she has swept most of the female acting awards so far this year. Millions crowded into theatres in 1997 to see the pair act in "*Titanic*," so too should the public make their way into the local multiplexes to witness "*Revolutionary Road*." Shannon, as mental patient and former mathematician John Givings, gives possibly the best supporting performance of the year

in what materializes as a funny, disturbing portrait of a man unafraid to speak his mind and voice his personal disdain for those around him. In one of the film's most searing scenes, he remarks to DiCaprio's Frank about life in the suburbs, "Plenty of people are onto the emptiness, but it takes real guts to see the hopelessness." I don't know if I could even have tuned in to the Oscars had Shannon not received a nomination; however, as the Heath Ledger campaigners grow stronger in numbers by the day, Shannon stands to have about as much chance as winning an award as this columnist does to scoring a date with Angelina Jolie come Oscar Sunday (as long as she doesn't bring the kids). Shannon is so good that he steals every moment of the scenes he's in, grabbing the limelight from DiCaprio, Winslet, and even Kathy Bates (as his gossiping, overbearing mother). But let's face facts: unless his character shows up wielding a knife and white makeup, Shannon will have to take a backseat to Ledger's Joker.

Members of the Academy: please take note. "*Revolutionary Road*" deserves much better than three measly Oscar nominations. And if you think that three nominations are good, consider this: even the revolting "*Transformers*" film got three nods last year. It's not fair to simply award films based on their campaigning and their budgets. It is a travesty to hand over acknowledgment to movies because they might be more popular than others. And it is certainly immoral to honor a movie because it appeals more to those liberal, biased actors and actresses over in Hollywood. Why, if our Presidential elections were like this, we would be...right where we are now. Hmm...never mind my point. Just try to enjoy Oscar night when it comes along. And get out to the theatre and see "*Revolutionary Road*" for yourself. It will truly be a revolutionary experience (I've been waiting to use that pun). Because when the Academy doesn't recognize a film like this, it isn't the cast and crew who lose out—it's the viewers.

## Grunge critical to current musical and political climate?

Nathan Humphrey  
Grizzly Staff Writer

The angst-ridden voice of Nirvana's Kurt Cobain, the gloom of Soundgarden's front man Chris Cornell, the brooding guitar riffs of Jerry Cantrell, lead guitarist for Alice in Chains: these are the iconic memories of the grunge era - a time when music and politics fought in an epic battle that played to our ears. The passion for this movement shown by those involved is reminiscent of the sixties, yet it, unlike the golden age of liberation, has faded to the background. Why? Is there something unique in grunge music that causes its rejection by the mainstream music community? This point of contention has caused this columnist to remind everyone what it was that created grunge, why it existed, and why it is not just necessary, but critical to our current musical and political climate.

Grunge developed directly out of Washington State, most notably Seattle, in the mid 1980's, and for those living under a rock, is a conglomeration of indie rock and heavy metal. Grunge, as a musical movement, held common-ground with the *beat* movement in jazz where musicians reclaimed the art form for themselves. This came about in response to the ever-growing popularity of super produced tunes such as "*Livin' On A Prayer*" and manufactured stars like Paula Abdul. The political and social climate of

the late 1980s started us down the road to our current distribution of wealth, understanding of science and war-centered, corruptible government. Grunge also rejected the popular societal norms with the artists opting for unkempt appearances and minimal theatrics.

After Nirvana's release of "*Nevermind*" in September, 1991, grunge was on a downward spiral. According to one avid listener, "it was the end of an era." Some attribute this to the instant mainstream success of grunge which caused destruction in the local scenes with bands touring the United States and, sometimes, the globe. This created a split in grunge, where bands such as Bush were similar to grunge but lacked the cultural roots to become a serious grunge artist.

This being said, the decline of grunge does not necessitate the end of grunge. Nirvana still blares recklessly on the radio and we all reach for the volume button. However, why has no new grunge scene become prominent? Where are the angry teens begging for acceptance and pissed-off that they don't have it? Drew, a metal musician, said of grunge, "once something influences enough other genres it fails [to be its own genre]."

Maybe this is the case, that grunge, as amazing as it was, assimilated too quickly into post-grunge, scream-o, scream-core, and the countless other genres that use fuzz guitar and the "stop-start" song format that became

prominent features of grunge music. This author, however, has another notion. The underground music scene is making great strides in the jam-band scene. This scene is, in theme and message, the most similar to grunge and yet has maintained the ability to remain separate from the mainstream culture.

We can all think of our favorite songs by Dave Matthews Band or Jack Johnson, but how many of us know songs by Tea Leaf Green or Medeski, Martin & Wood? These small bands are able to survive and thrive in small niches all across the country while remaining off of the mainstream radar. Occasionally these bands attain brief national attention with a well-placed song in a soundtrack or commercial. But these bands don't play for that. These bands focus on the same feelings of confinement that the grunge bands were frustrated by two decades ago. The bands, however, respond to the feelings by expressing their love of freedom and gathering for festivals in the warm months where huge groups of people gather, from all ages and backgrounds, to have an immersive, weekend-long musical experience. It is still unclear whether these bands can persevere. They could easily assimilate to an unrecognizable degree. It is a statement made by a relatively small number of people; however, it has its message and it is clear. And it should certainly be listened to.

Do you think about things sometimes? Write them down and email Zach Shamberg at [zashamberg@ursinus.edu](mailto:zashamberg@ursinus.edu)!

## Gymnasts tumble with Temple and Towson in tri-meet

**Danielle Chmielewski**  
Grizzly Staff Writer

Never seen gymnastics right in front of your very own eyes? Well, now is your chance to watch the Ursinus women's gymnastics team stun you with many of the same moves the Olympians performed!

With four different events to watch during a competition, the excitement never ends. Almost everyone is familiar with the death-defying four inch beam, standing about four feet off the ground. Think walking across it is hard enough? Try doing standing back flips, twists, and turns and somehow managing to stay on! Floor routines are always a highlight, with powerful tumbling and high energy dance moves to keep the crowd entertained. It is not hard to act like monkeys on the uneven bars: swinging high and flipping from bar to bar. Do not forget the vault, where girls sprint full speed towards this immovable object and pop high into the air, flip, twist, and then stick the landing.

Competitions are always high energy, loud, and thrilling! There is always someone amusing the crowd with stunning high flying skills. But behind closed doors, gymnastics is very much a big mind game. It takes undeniable power and strength as well as an impressive time commitment and dedication. All of the gymnasts currently on the Ursinus Gymnastics team have been flipping since they were younger than ten, some even starting at three years of age!

Gymnastics becomes much more than a sport to these girls; it transforms into a way of life. The ideals and morals

that the sport teaches carry over to the real world. Consistency. Hard work. Dedication. Time. Effort. Passion. Enthusiasm. These all create a formula for success, not only in the gym, but in being a successful student and employee.

Believe it or not, the Ursinus gymnastics team holds the longest running season out of all sports on campus. They start to train at the beginning of September and finish the week before finals in May. The team is in season during the months of January through the end of March, traveling to compete against other Division I, II, and III schools along the east coast.

With the excitement of New Year's still lingering in the air, the girls made their way back to Ursinus on Jan. 2, 2009. Resolutions still to be determined, they traveled by train to Boston, Massachusetts for their first competition on Jan. 10 with four Division III schools: MIT, SUNY Courtland, Rhode Island College, and Wilson College, and Division I, Yale University.

The two newly declared team captains, Amy Edson (senior) and Kira Oldham-Curtis (junior) maintained calm composites before the competition as those new to the team looked to them for guidance.

Ursinus finished ahead of all four Division III teams with a score of 180.525, coming in second place just behind Division I Yale.

"It was a great start to the season," said head coach Jeff Schepers.

Five days after returning from Boston, the team traveled to Brockport, New York. Braving the frigid temperatures and snow drifts, the team successfully competed against both SUNY Brockport and Springfield College, finishing in

second place with a higher than the score!

Crowds roared meet against Temple University this held strong Division I t h i r d

183.675, scores from the

With the team on a National the abilities of each team. Composed of sophomores, two senior, they continue u p c o m i n g up to the ECAC hosted by Ursinus that could advance Championship!

So come out and Champions once again, title. There are only a these high flying loud with your UC out for emails, flyers, and upcoming home very own Helfferich gymnasium! GO BEARS!

team score of 181.15, previous week's team

as Ursinus hosted a tri-meet against Temple University and Towson past weekend. They against these two big schools, coming in place; the team collectively scored a again beating their team previous weeks.

the right track, the dreams of Championship title lie within gymnast on this very young five freshmen, six juniors, and only one to look forward to the competitions. It all leads Championships, proudly College on Mar. 6 and 7 them to the National

support your 2008 ECAC as they try to defend their few opportunities to see athletes, so come and be Gymnasts. Keep a look reminders for the four competitions held in our.

Photo by Abby Raymond

### Upcoming Games

#### Men's Basketball

Sat. 1/31 Johns Hopkins\*  
Wed. 2/4 at Washington\*

3:00 p.m.  
7:30 p.m.

#### Women's Basketball

Sat. 1/31 Johns Hopkins\* 1:00 p.m.  
Tue. 2/3 at The College of New Jersey 7:00 p.m.

#### Gymnastics

Fri. 1/30 Brockport 6:00 p.m.

#### Swimming

Sat. 1/31 at Washington (Md.)\*

1:00 p.m.

#### Wrestling

Sat. 1/31 at USMMA\* w/ Hopkins & Stevens 11:00 a.m.  
Wed. 2/4 at Muhlenberg 7:00 p.m.

#### Track and Field

Sat. 1/31 at McElligott Invitational (at Haverford) 11:00 a.m.

### Scorebox

#### Men's Basketball

Sat. 1/24 at Swarthmore\* 79-63W  
Mon. 1/26 at Franklin & Marshall\* 83-80L

#### Women's Basketball

Thurs. 1/22 Haverford\* 50-48L  
Sat. 1/24 at Swarthmore\* 69-50L

#### Gymnastics

Fri. 1/23 Temple/Towson 3rd  
(183.675)

"Wrestling wants results on and off the mat" is continued from the front page.

Bloom and Murren were a big part of the team's opening tournament of the season at the Messiah College Invitational. Between Bloom, Murren, and senior, Chris Springer, they totaled eight wins and only three losses.

"You can pick any leader you want or captain you want. Leaders are the ones that the people of the world will follow. Any coach can name any captain. As a coach over the years, you find out that your best wrestlers are not always your best captains. It is one of the most difficult jobs as a coach. [Bloom and Murren] share my beliefs and personalities, and I trust them to no end," said Racich about his captains.

With that being said, both Bloom and Murren seem very capable of leading this team to a tenth Centennial Conference Championship this season.

When you consider that Ursinus went from a struggling program for 52 years, to prominence almost overnight, a lot of credit has to be given to the coach, as well as the recruited athletes. As Ursinus' program continues to grow and dominate the Conference, the UC community can look forward to more winning ahead as the season progresses.

### Scorebox

#### Swimming

Sat. 1/24 Franklin & Marshall\*  
W: 113-86LM: 116-83L

#### Wrestling

Sat. 1/24 vs. Gettysburg 32-14W

#### Track and Field

Fri. 1/23 Collegeville Classic  
M:6thW:7th