Ranchers Joe and Arlene Watt of Sheridan cared about giving. The Watt’s contributions to the University of Wyoming began in the 1960s with a land of 1,000 Head from Jonelle Martinez to the University. Since then, the Wattle have given more than $2.1 million to support scholarships in the colleges of Agriculture, Business, Engineering, and Law, as well as other university funds. Joe established the Joe and Arlene Watt Foundation in 1999 in honor of Arlene and their shared passion.

"You only need so much money. You can’t take it with you, so you can do one of two things with it. One, you can throw it away on things you don’t need, or two, you can give it away for things that matter." — Joe Watt

Whether you’re entertaining at the table or at the tailgate, treat your guests to the best of Wyoming cooking. Black Tie & Boots – A Wyoming Cookbook also makes a wonderful holiday gift. Now available for $5, exclusively at the University Bookstore.
Tamara Linse grew up on a ranch in northern Wyoming before moving to Laramie to attend UW. She received her bachelor’s and master’s in English while working as a technical editor for an environmental consulting firm, as well as freelancing. She is now the editor for the University of Wyoming Foundation, and she also chases after three-year-old twins and writes fiction.
Arnold’s loss mourned, life celebrated

Craig Arnold was spending the year studying volcanoes all over the world. A faculty member in the UW Department of English, Arnold was in Japan during the spring through the U.S.-Japan Friendship Commission’s Creative Artists Exchange Fellowship. The end of April found him on Kuchinoerabu-jima, a small volcanic island in a chain of islands reaching southwest from Japan into the East China Sea. He planned to stay long enough to visit the volcano, stay at an inn on the island and leave the next day. Arnold had blogged about his trip on his blog, Volcano Pilgrim: Five Months in Japan as a Wandering Poet.

Arnold already had a celebrated career when he took the year off to continue his study of volcanoes. Arnold was considered one of the most exciting poets of his generation. Two of his poetry volumes earned acclaim: Shells, which was selected by W. S. Merwin for the highly prestigious Yale Series of Younger Poets in 1999; and Made Flesh (2008). They were only two of the honors, awards and recognitions he earned.

But Arnold didn’t return to the inn after his hike up the densely forested volcano, triggering a local search and an international effort to find the missing poet that lasted more than two weeks and involved the Wyoming Congressional delegation, the U.S. Department of State and finally a private search team.

Few traces of Arnold were found on the island; he was not found at all.

“We had truly hoped for a different outcome to this story,” UW President Tom Buchanan said in a statement offering his condolences to Arnold’s family.

On Sept. 2, Arnold’s friends and family feted his life at the Centennial Complex in Laramie. Peter Parolin, chairman of the UW English Department and Arnold’s friend, drew this picture of his friend:

“He was a complicated man. Anybody here who knows him will tell you that. Brilliant, absolutely; independent, ornery sometimes. I can still see him, when I would be talking in department meetings, contorting his long body into paroxysms of disagreement. He wouldn’t want to hammer me publicly but such was the integrity of every fiber of the man’s physical being that he could not sit still. He was public, he was a performer. He burst on our Laramie scene and instituted those amazing local poetry slams. I remember how many kids took part in those slams, how many high school kids had the courage to stand up and declare themselves poets under Craig’s auspices. He gave those young people a gift.

“Maybe because he was such a public performer, it took me a long while to recognize that Craig was also a shy man, a bit diffident, wanting to connect with others, but a bit awkward sometimes, a bit of the gangly teenager still hanging on him. It was in quiet moments that I saw a real vulnerability to Craig. He was a writer, for God’s sake, so he wanted to connect. But he was a good writer, too, so he knew that words are always insufficient, waiting always to let us down.

“It does feel his life was too short. I think of certain lines in Shakespeare, lines about loss that contain both Craig’s beauty and our sadness, lines suggesting that love, and life itself, are “swift as a shadow, short as any dream, / Brief as the lightning in the collid night, / That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth;/ And ere a man hath power to say “Behold!”’ / The jaws of darkness do devour it up / So quick bright things come to confusion.’

“Yes, his life was short. But in the grand scheme of things, every life is short. I guess the question is what use do we make of the short time we have? In Craig’s case, he lived abundantly and well. He left us with poems that are artful, skillful, capacious expressions of the human spirit; he left us with writing that reminds us, as surely as it will remind future generations of readers, of the purpose and the pleasure of being alive.”

Bigger opportunities in a smaller setting

Douglas Vinzant spent the past 14 years at two of the largest state universities in the country. Now he’s taken over as the University of Wyoming vice president for administration at one of the smallest.

In fact, Vinzant, who started June 15, likes that aspect of UW’s community. On a campus with around 14,000 students, the day-to-day experience is more hands-on than on larger campuses at the Arizona State University and University of Illinois, where most recently he was senior associate vice president for planning and administration before moving to UW.

“If you’re interested in doing things, going from talking about things to actually doing things, this is a place where you can figure out what you need to do and actually set out to do it, and actually put it in place. In a lot of places that’s not true,” he says.

“There are so many layers of oversight and governance that it’s very difficult to actually do something.”

Vinzant has spent 23 years in higher education, mostly in administrative positions dealing with finances. He takes over the function of UW’s chief financial officer for Phil Harris, who retired earlier this year after 20 years at UW.

He enters his office at Old Main during challenging times for UW, as the university is adjusting to a budget cut. But he says UW’s financial difficulties are manageable thanks to the generosity of Gov. Dave Freudenthal and the Wyoming State Legislature, to mention the support the university has throughout the state.

“We’ve enjoyed several years of really strong prosperity, and the state has invested huge amounts of money into this institution,” he says.

“It’s going to result in dramatically improved facilities, endowed professorships—just a number of significant improvements.”
**NEWSBRIEFS**

**UW students create businesses, win cash**

Five student teams from the University of Wyoming received prizes and recognition for their business acumen in the recent Wyoming $10K Entrepreneurship Competition. Open to students from any area of study, the competition helps UW student entrepreneurs get their companies off the ground by awarding the teams cash prizes.

First place went to team United Plastics, composed of MBA students Rene Alber of Casper, Wyoming; Keegan Delaney of Jackson, Wyoming; P.J. Shumway of Laramie, Wyoming; and Michael Shirley of Evanston, Wyoming. The team earned the top prize of $10,000 for a web-based marketplace idea designed to catered to individual families. Sensor Technologies, a measurement system designed to measure the amount of wear on snowplow blades, was the third-place winner. Yekaterina Minacheva, a business administration student from Saratov, Russia, and Shriya Mehta, an MBA and finance student from Rajasthan, India, won the $2,500 prize. The team presented a system designed to measure wear on snowplow blades. 

Shumway says the idea came from Mike Kmetz of IDES in Laramie, who gave a presentation in one of his business classes. United Plastics, with support from IDES, takes into account sustainability and social responsibility, something Shumway says helped put his team’s project over the top. “It was always a part of the process as we worked through it to not only be green but efficiently use the resources we have,” Shumway says. “That was always part of it, and it was really a strategic advantage for us; but also, as far as the university’s goals to have zero emissions, that kind of worked toward that goal and is socially responsible as well.”

Olympus Mons Gear, made up of Olympus Mons Gear was a runner-up and earned a prize of $500. The team of undergraduates Katelyn Johnson of Sydney, Nebraska, and Tyler Gentry of Greeley, Colorado; and MBA students Chris Askin of Casper, Wyoming, and Amanda Pohja of Colorado Springs, Colorado, also had the best presentation, earning a cash award of $1,000. The concept of Olympus Mons Gear was an apparel company dedicated to providing extreme sports enthusiasts with apparel designed to withstand extreme weather conditions.

Another runner-up winner and the team boasting the most creative idea was Region Careers, a web-based business designed to bring employers and those seeking employment together. Business administration students Chris Cyr of Littleton, Colorado, and Alexander Landt of Ocala, Florida, won $500 as runners-up and $1,000 as the most creative company.

Winning teams received half of their cash prize immediately, with the other half promised after they turn in a detailed progress report to the competition judges.

**UW law students face off with peers from Harvard and other schools**

A team of students from the University of Wyoming College of Law earned honors in March at the National Environmental Law Moot Court Competition at Pace University in White Plains, New York.

The team of Temple Stevenson of Laramie, Maryt Fredrickson of Jackson and Christyne Martens of Cold Spring, Minnesota, advanced to the quarterfinals of the 72-team tournament, including preliminary round wins over Harvard, Penn State, Florida and Washington. The UW team narrowly lost in the quarterfinals to Harvard.

"The top environmental law schools in the country compete in Pace every year. It’s a very prestigious competition," Stevenson says.

In addition to advancing to the quarterfinals, two team members also received individual recognition. Martens was named best oralist in the second-round matches, and Stevenson earned similar best oralist honors in the third round. "Moort court is a mock trial competition for law students. The Pace competition is an appellate competition in which each team must prepare to argue three sides of the same case. This competition focused on a combination of environmental law, admiralty law, international law and cultural resource management issues, according to Fredrickson. She said the landlocked UW team did well, considering there are few opportunities to study admiralty law.

"It was a case involving sunken treasure that was partially within a national marine sanctuary," Stevenson says. "The salvage company that found the shipwreck wanted to dig it up, and the federal government was saying, ‘Wait, we have numerous environmental laws you must comply with.’ All the while the country of Spain was claiming ownership of the ship. So we were either the salvage company, the United States, or Spain.”

Stevenson, Martens and Fredrickson won an intraschool competition last October for the right to represent UW. In preparation for the Pace competition, they practiced their arguments in front of not only their law professors but also several practicing attorneys who donated their time.

Fredrickson says the experience showed the UW students are on par with their peers at bigger schools in terms of legal expertise and general knowledge.

"One thing we learned at the national competition was that the big schools are full of folks just like us," she says. "We are just as capable and armed with legal skills as they are.”

Stevenson, Martens and Fredrickson will team up again this year in hopes of a return trip to the Pace competition.

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Nicole Lebsack

Left to right: Rene Alber, Keegan Delaney, P.J. Shumway
**NEWSBRIEFS**

**UW bestows honorary degrees**

As the University of Wyoming considers honorary degrees for commencement, here’s a look back at the 2009 honorees. A Hall of Fame sports journalist, a Laramie resident dedicated to the service of her state, and a well-known Irish pianist received honorary degrees from UW.

Tracy Ringolsby, Mary Ellbogen Garland and Barry Douglas were given doctoral degrees during spring commencement.

Ringolsby earned a doctor of letters degree. The Cheyenne native has covered Major League Baseball for more than 30 years and spent the past 16 covering the Colorado Rockies for Denver’s Rocky Mountain News. Ringolsby joined two colleagues in starting insidetherockies.com, a Web site dedicated to Denver’s MLB franchise. In 2005 he earned the J. G. Taylor Spink Award, the highest honor a baseball writer can receive.

Garland graduated from UW in 1984 with a bachelor’s degree in marketing. A lifelong resident of Wyoming, Garland has worked tirelessly over the years to support the children, teachers and families of the Cowboy State through her work with various community, state and national programs. She received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree.

Douglas has performed at UW seven times since 1989, giving Wyoming music aficionados the chance to hear a pianist who routinely plays in big cities with major symphonies around the world. He also has performed in Cheyenne, Casper, Gillette, Pinedale, Powell, Riverton and Rock Springs. He received a Doctor of Music degree.

**Cowgirls take national title—again**

Behind top finishes from Nikki Steffes and Sarah Mulholland, the University of Wyoming women’s rodeo team won its second national championship in three years at June’s College National Finals Rodeo in Casper.

Steffes, a recent UW graduate from Vale, South Dakota, won the women’s all-around and was second in goat tying for the third consecutive year. Mulholland, a recent UW graduate from Richland Center, Wisconsin, won goat tying and was third in the all-around.

The Cowgirls scored 570 of their 690 points in the goat-tying event, finishing 110 points ahead of University of Nevada-Las Vegas.

“This one is a little sweeter because of the quality of the women that we have competing for us. We were knocking on the door last year, and it would have been nice to have it three years in a row,” UW coach George Howard said. “I hate to say it but they don’t usually come together like this, and that’s what makes it so special. I’ll probably never see another group of girls like this all at once.”

Steffes also took the Walt Garrison Top Hand Award, given annually to the individual who exemplifies the qualities of initiative, loyalty, tenacity, commitment, honesty, perseverance, integrity and leadership. The award is named for Walt Garrison, the former pro football player for the Dallas Cowboys, who was on hand to present the award to Steffes.

The UW men finished 47th. Their top performer was Merritt Smith, who placed ninth in saddle bronc riding.
Who Is “Anonymous”?

He was not a professional day trader and was untried in the world of stocks and bonds, but every day he would go to his local library and read the Wall Street Journal. He followed the work of investor Warren Buffett, and at one time his fortune grew to $130 million.

For the past 20 years, this individual gave part of what he made to the University of Wyoming, and only a handful of people knew his identity. The many students and faculty who benefited from his almost $4 million in gifts knew him only as “anonymous.”

Anonymous turns out to be the extremely private and charismatic Col. William Rogers, who died in Carmel, California, in 2003 at the age of 96.

“The Colonel wanted to create something that would be lasting for humanity and for the university, two things that he loved. He was a very unique character,” says Chuck Graves, his friend and lawyer for almost 30 years. In 2009, his estate will provide an estimated $1.2 million to programs at UW, but his generosity has benefited UW since 1991. That’s when Col. Rogers gave UW $109,000 for the Half Price Revolving Trust, a loan fund to help students. In 1997, he contributed $87,000 to establish the Gladys Crane Mountain Plains Film Festival. In 1998, he donated $1.6 million for the Crane Studio, a 4,000-square-foot state-of-the-art rehearsal hall and studio theater in the Fine Arts building.

In 2001, he supported the Matthew Shepard Symposium on Social Justice with $1 million, which was matched with $1 million from the state.

“Colonel Rogers is the most significant donor the Department of Theatre and Dance has ever had,” says Dr. Rebecca Hilliker, department head. “The Colonel was a brilliant man who thought with the right approach and enough money he could bring UW into the league with the finest liberal arts schools in the country,” says Graves. Rogers was born in 1906 in Newport News, Virginia, and earned a degree in mechanical engineering from Virginia Military Institute. During World War II, he served in Iran with the American Transportation Corps to help keep railroad supply lines open to Russia. He also served in Europe and Korea until 1962.

With his varied interests, Rogers was an intellectual who read and researched voraciously. That was his connection to UW—he spent time doing research in the archives of the American Heritage Center. He researched and published work on Calamity Jane, the Union Pacific Railroad, Mexico, windmills, and the Tarahumara Indians of northern Mexico.

His interest in UW soon broadened to include film, dance, social justice, forestry, wildlife, and campus beautification.

Rogers also believed in tolerance, and he was deeply affected by what happened to Matthew Shepard.

“For someone who came from a straight-laced Virginia family, he was very moderate. He was very liberal,” says Graves.

Book recalls ‘Rise, Fall and Rebirth of Wyoming Football’

As most Wyoming Cowboys football fans can recall the glory days and they’ll likely bring up Paul Roach’s teams of the late 1980s.

And, yes, those teams were very good. From 1987-90, the Cowboys won 35 of 50 games, earned three bowl bids and claimed three Border War victories against Colorado State University.

It was UW’s best stretch of football since, well, its glory days, the real glory days of the 1960s.

“My dad went to UW in the 1960s and he always told me stories about the football team, about winning three Western Athletic Conference championships and beating Florida State and going to the Sugar Bowl,” says Ryan Thorburn, a 1993 UW graduate and an award-winning sports reporter for the Boulder (Colo.) Daily Camera. “The football program was on the verge of becoming a national powerhouse.

“When I asked him what happened, he just said, ‘The Black 14 happened.’

Motivated by his father’s stories and his passion for UW’s football tradition, Thorburn wrote his first book, “Black 14: The Rise, Fall and Rebirth of Wyoming Football,” released June 17.

In the book, Thorburn relives the conflict between race, religion, authority, protest and football that sent the UW football program into a spiral that lasted until Roach took the coaching reins some 20 years later.

After winning 27 games from 1966-68—including a 28-20 triumph over Florida State in the 1966 Sun Bowl and a 20-13 loss to Louisiana State the next year in the Sugar Bowl—the Cowboys won their first four games of the 1969 campaign and appeared on the fast track to yet another bowl appearance.

Then there was controversy. Before the Cowboys’ Oct. 18 game against Brigham Young University, UW’s 14 black players approached coach Lloyd Eaton with their desire to wear black armbands to protest the policies of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which prohibited blacks to enter into the priesthood.

Not only did Eaton refuse, he dismissed the 14 players from the team. Although the Cowboys went on to whip BYU, they lost four of their last five games to plummet from bowl contention. It wasn’t until 1976 that UW again posted a winning record.

Despite its controversial subject matter, Thorburn says his book has garnered positive feedback from readers, including former UW player Larry Nels.

“He called me after he read it and told me that he really appreciated that somebody put the book out there and wrote it with the right perspective,” says Thorburn. “That really meant a lot to me.”

UW headed to New Mexico bowl

Thanks to a 17-16 win over rival Colorado State, the University of Wyoming’s football team is headed for the New Mexico Bowl. The Cowboys finished the regular season 6-6 and will play Fresno State in the game at New Mexico Stadium in Albuquerque starting at 12:30 p.m. Mountain time.

With the berth, coach Dave Christensen joins Paul Roach as the only UW football coaches to lead the Cowboys to bowls in their first seasons. Against Colorado State, freshman kicker Ian Scott made a 33-yard field goal with 1 minute, 27 seconds left in the game, and freshman defensive back Ghaali Muhammad sealed the win with an interception with 28 seconds left. Freshman quarterback Austyn Carta-Samuels, who was named the Mountain West Conference freshman of the year, had touchdown runs of 8 and 49 yards.

The Cowboys won the Bronze Boot, a monument to the rivalry with Colorado State. Each school has won the boot 21 times.

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Barbier says he hopes there is more collaboration between economics and other disciplines, but most fields are resistant to changes in policies.

“Every discipline is always conservative naturally,” he says. “By definition that’s how they keep their identity … by just keeping the consensus of what the mainstream view is. When you’re on the cutting edge, you’re well away from that mainstream, and as a result you’re not always appreciated by your own discipline as much as you are by others, who say, ‘Thank God, we finally have an economist we can talk to.’ Policymakers say, ‘Finally, we’re having answers to the questions that we think are important.’”

He says UW is the perfect place to do that kind of collaboration, as the economics department has hired faculty committed to interdisciplinary research and encourages its students to think through problems in many different ways. Barbier says more and more students expect to do this kind of work, and the university’s reputation for interdisciplinary studies in economics is growing.

“If you look at the Wyoming Web site you’ll see a ranking from a couple years ago showing that our department is one of the top in the world in environmental and resource economics,” Barbier says. “Also, I would say that we’re even higher-ranked in that ranking now because of what we’ve done in the last few years. It always takes a while. They’re based on past performance and from a few years before, so I think with the new additions of faculty we have, and with the growing reputation of the department, I think we’re going to see more and more [students and faculty] coming here.”

Jonelle Martinez

From her home turf at the Santa Fe Country Club in New Mexico to the Mountain West Conference golf tournament at Black Horse Country Club in Seaside, California, University of Wyoming’s Jonelle Martinez has never been too far from her roots.

The senior from Santa Fe, New Mexico, won last spring’s MWC golf championship, thanks in part to strong family involvement from an early age.

“Both my parents play, and they started my brother and I really young,” she says. “My sister’s starting right now; she’s only 7 but she hits it pretty far. We all started out really young, just being out there. During the summer I was at the golf course every day, either swimming and then playing or vice versa. So it was just a family activity.”

That family activity became her ticket to college after winning an individual state championship for St. Michael’s High School in 2006 to go with three straight team championships. Since coming to Laramie, she’s been a top competitor for the Cowgirls, culminating in the championship in April.

At the MWC tournament, Martinez made a statement with a first-round 70, a personal best for a round. She followed that with a 75 and a 76, holding on for a two-stroke win. She says she played as well-rounded a tournament as ever, from her distance off the tee and keeping the ball on the fairways to getting her iron shots close to the pin.

“My entire game in general was going really smoothly, everything from off the tees to hitting the greens,” she says. “I didn’t really hit beyond 30 feet [from the pin]. It sounds big, but those greens were huge and had hills, so I really placed it where I wanted to. It was a really good feeling to know my game went exactly how I wanted it to go. And I hope that feeling continues on for a few more rounds.”

Regardless of whether those rounds are in competition or just out to play a round, Martinez says she expects to bring her best game. She gives credit to her father, David, for being the best golfer in the family, though her mom also plays well, she says. And the gap between Martinez and her father is getting smaller every year.

“My mom is really good, but I can beat her. But my dad and I are close,” she says. “He can bomb the ball … so it’s always nice when I can say I outdrove him, or I beat him or whatever. Not very often, maybe twice a summer, when he’s having an off day, but it still feels good.”

Martinez says the goal is to keep up the high level of play she established at Seaside, California, in April, and to keep that hot streak going for as long as possible.

“My goals are getting bigger and bigger as I continue on. I want to try and play, maybe start in Arizona on a mini-tour or something,” she says. “I’d really like to try and play as long as I can, try not to enter the workforce just yet. I have to hold on to my youth as long as I can.”
Joy Williams

Joy Williams will spend at least another year at the University of Wyoming, and her students might have a set of mud flaps to thank.

Williams, who teaches fiction writing in UW’s Master of Fine Arts program, spent the 2008-09 school year as the Eminent Writer-in-Residence. In April she announced at a reading at the UW Art Museum that she would continue in the role for the 2009-10 school year as well, thanking three of her students for bestowing upon her a most unusual gift. “Laramie will forever be special to me now, and my enthusiasm for the state will be announced during all my travels by two beautiful, vintage ‘Big Wonderful Wyoming’ mud flaps,” she says. “These appeared installed one cold and carefree night, a gift from three able-bodied, most creative mystery benefactors... I love those mud flaps.”

Beth Loffreda, the MFA program’s director, says having Williams on faculty for another year means an important voice in American literature will continue to speak to the next generation of writers. “It’s extraordinary. We have phenomenal writers on staff and the role for the 2009-10 school year as well,” she says. “That would be one. The other would be anything related to education, to make education stronger in this country.”

Fuentes says Dr. Stephanie Anderson of the political science department encouraged him to pursue the scholarship, while UW Honors Program director Dr. Duncan Harris helped prepare him for the rigorous interview process. Harris says the Truman Scholarship program is designed for students like Fuentes who want to make a difference in the world. “Truman Scholarships are designated for students committed to a career in public service, and nothing could better describe Rey. He is deeply interested in the political process and volunteered all of his time last fall to help coordinate [Gary Trauner’s] campaign,” Harris says. “Rey also served as an intern in the Wyoming State Legislature. Personally, he is as bright as they come; articulate and very well-read.”

He was selected from among 194 finalists nominated by 136 U.S. colleges and universities. More than 600 applicants were screened, representing 289 institutions. The recipients were elected by 17 independent selection panels on the basis of leadership potential, intellectual ability and likelihood of “making a difference.” Each Truman Scholarship provides $30,000 for graduate study. Scholars also receive priority admission and supplemental financial aid at some premier graduate institutions, as well as leadership training, career and graduate school counseling and special internship opportunities within the federal government. Since 1977, 2,670 students nationwide have received the scholarship.
2002, really is only as dry or not even as dry as some periods in growing population like the one in the American West. Trying to figure out how dry the climate has been in the past it was much worse thousands of years ago. So Shuman is revealing the current drought is nothing new. In fact, some inferences about what might happen in the future look back to see what has happened before and possibly make the future. Much of the emphasis on climate change centers on what's competitive in hiring the very best new faculty available.” Buchanan says. “It underlines the fact that UW has become very strong institution the size of Stanford,” UW president Tom Buchanan says. “It underlines the fact that UW has become very competitive in hiring the very best new faculty available.” The five CAREER award winners from UW are: • Mark Clementz, geology • Bryan Shuman, geology • Gregory Lyng, mathematics • Franco Basile, chemistry • Jan Kubelka, chemistry

Looking forward by looking back Much of the emphasis on climate change centers on what’s happening now and what will happen in the future. UW geology professor Bryan Shuman says you need to look back to see what has happened before and possibly make some inferences about what might happen in the future. Shuman’s studies of lakes in Wyoming and Colorado have revealed the current drought is nothing new. In fact, it was much worse thousands of years ago. So Shuman is trying to figure out how dry the climate has been in the past to see what effects a drought would have on a denser, faster-growing population like the one in the American West. Some of my research shows that the driest year we’ve had, 2002, really is only as dry or not even as dry as some periods in the past that were extremely dry and persistent for thousands of years,” he says. “We have evidence the Platte River, a key river for Wyoming, didn’t even consistently flow for several thousand years early on. Or several thousand years ago it ceased to flow for centuries to millennia. That’s how dry it was. The potential exists for things to shift over into this very dry climate for this region. That’s happened before so if it happens again, there would be huge implications for our economy and all the development that’s taking place in the region.” He’s also studying the beetle kill of forests in the Snowy Range in southern Wyoming and other places, hoping to find a fossil record of what happened to the forests in the wake of destruction. Shuman says having such a ready real-world application for his work likely helped him get the funding for his studies. During his summers off from teaching, he’ll do his research in northern Colorado, using a radar system to look at sediment on the bottom of several lakes to tell a story thousands of years in the making. He also says he’ll check out soil samples under various lakes throughout North America in hopes of mapping out drought patterns over a larger area. “The nice part is I get to float around on these lakes in the mountains, and look at what’s under the surface,” he says. “The rest of the time I’ll be writing up my results for publication.”

Off the beaten path In part, scientific study is about finding solutions to problems and possibly thinking differently about problems that have puzzled academe for years. Science also encourages its practitioners to take risks in their research, to present sometimes-dry scientific material in an accessible and engaging way.

It’s no surprise, then, that the NSF looks at proposals that suggest something unique to help educate people about the ways of science. Mark Clementz—like Shuman a member of the geology faculty—specializes in paleoecology, looking at how marine ecosystems have changed over time. Specifically, he studies how early whales made the transition from land to water 50 million years ago, and what pressures might have made that transition necessary. To bring this field of study to school children, he’s collaborating with Cecilia Aragon of UW’s theater department to write a children’s play about evolution, and part of his award will go toward expanding that aspect of his mission. “It’s also going to help us fund our educational program, too. The goal is to try to incorporate more different ways of learning with students,” he says. “We had written a children’s play (UWyo, Fall, 2007) that talked about whale evolution, and it went really well. Now we’re trying to expand on that, and possibly work on a children’s book or some other projects that may incorporate theater or the arts with the sciences, giving a fresh perspective to some of these questions we’re trying to ask.” Clementz says the NSF is helping scientists take risks in their research by funding proposals that take a different look at various aspects of science. “That definitely helped the success of the proposal. It was something outside the norm, and that’s what they like to fund,” he says. “I appreciate NSF taking a risk because any time you fund someone who’s at the early stages of their career you don’t really know how it’s going to pan out. I appreciate them taking a chance on me and funding me with this project.”

“These awards give us the money to really explore and take risks with our research, really develop the questions we want to ask about where we want to take our programs. But at the same time it’s got to be so much easier for recruiting. Grad students are going to be much easier to acquire because this gives us a little bit of prestige. It’s really going to pay off in the long run in terms of what kind of funding assistance we’re going to have and what future hires we’re able to make. It’s a good record to have.” Overall, Clementz says the awards are a major boon for UW, not just in geology but over all its scientific departments. “It’s something the University of Wyoming should be very proud of for the people they’ve hired because getting five of these awards in one round is incredible. The university’s doing a great job of selecting the right people and really building up its programs. We’re a research institution that’s taking off and hopefully—no, not hopefully, we are putting the university on the map as far as being a major center for geology and paleo research. Speeding up the scientific process While geologic time is measured in thousands and millions of years, scientists now have the advantage of looking back quickly to see how our world has progressed. UW chemistry professor Franco Basile earned his honors by looking forward just as quickly. He pioneered a process that speeds up the breakdown of proteins in a controlled and specific way, and this technique is being applied in his laboratory to quickly identify and study biological samples, including bacteria. Normally the process uses enzymes that take as long as a day to break down proteins into make enough smaller peptides to be easily detected, but Basile managed to accelerate this process by eliminating the use of enzymes while still maintaining the integrity of the experiment. What we’ve developed in my laboratory is several approaches that use no enzymes and no chemical reagents,” he says. “One uses microwave radiation to bring the protein solution to boiling temperature where proteins decompose by a unique pathway, and the other technique uses high heat—just plain heat like in your toaster oven—to heat the sample rapidly to 200 degrees Celsius in 10 seconds. What
we’ve discovered is when you subject proteins to that heating, they don’t just degrade randomly. They actually degrade following a set of very specific reactions, and my laboratory was first to discover those reactions.

“We also recognized quickly the utility of that information to mimic the function of enzymes. Our processes happen in a time scale of seconds to minutes. The improvement goes from digesting a protein overnight with enzymes to digesting it with our methods in a matter of seconds or minutes. With this ability to prepare the sample rapidly, now you’re able to think of doing this type of measurement in real-time, as in an environmental detector.”

Basile uses a mass spectrometer, an instrument that makes his lab look high-tech and futuristic. There still are test tubes, eye wash stations, and Bunsen burners in his lab on the fourth floor of the Physical Sciences building, but most of his instruments, like the mass spectrometer, require expensive parts and supplies as well as qualified staffing. The latter is something Basile says the CAREER award will help provide.

“Amazingly, the limiting factor right now in my lab is people. If I could put four more people in my lab right now I would be OK,” he says. “I find myself going up to my lab to do train and help students use the mass spectrometers, and I need to be there [in my office] writing papers and getting those out, publishing, which has slowed down quite a bit this year. I’ve had this [CAREER award] funded, I’ve had a Department of Defense funded project — along the same lines, application of our rapid sample processing techniques to potential bioweapons material to be detected eventually by other techniques Then I have another energy-related grant too, so I’m fairly busy these days.”

Basile also hopes to get Wyoming’s high school chemistry teachers in his lab to work with this high-tech equipment. By proxy, he says he hopes it will inspire their students to come to UW and study chemistry—and possibly work with these professors at Wyoming’s community colleges.

“That will build and strengthen our mathematical network in the state, in addition to getting them involved in research and getting them on campus a little bit so when their students transfer and come here—I hope they’ll be excited by the research but I also hope they’ll be better able to tell their students what to expect and what kinds of things they can get into when they come to Laramie,” Lyng says.

While Lyng will continue to work on his projects, he’ll still help his graduate students get the word out about UW’s math department, and the opportunities an education in math can present. He says the NSF wants faculty equally committed to educating and researching, two roles he takes seriously.

“When the NSF puts out the call for this, it says, ‘We want people who are teacher-scholars.’ They want people who are doing good research, but my impression is that’s not quite enough,” he says. “You have to be good at both things. You have to do something that’s going to position you as a young faculty member at the forefront of these issues, going for a career. ‘We want to do good research, but we want to get people involved in it too.”

Science for science’s sake

UW chemistry professor Jan Kubelka is pioneering research that could offer better understanding of the fundamental biochemical processes in all living organisms, but also bring many applications arising from design of new and functional proteins that would parallel or even surpass those of the genetic engineering. Protein folding research is also crucial for understanding of how Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s diseases take shape ... and, therefore, for prevention and treatment of these diseases, as they result from proteins not folding properly.

But Kubelka seeks a broader, less-focused, mission from the world of science.

“The mission of science is understanding things,” he says. “Everybody always asks about real-world applications, but I don’t think that necessarily is what we’re after or what we should be after. Understanding that world that we’re living in—that’s what we should be doing.

“Everything has applications eventually, right? Somebody said there’s no basic or applied science; it’s all applied. The difference is only that some is short-term and some is long-term. But I don’t think that real-world applications should necessarily drive all of this. We should be interested in understanding what’s going on, and if there are applications but we don’t see them right now, who cares? We should be figuring things out.”

Kubelka got interested in physical chemistry in graduate school at the University of Illinois-Chicago. He also worked at the National Institute of Health for three years, where he worked with Bill Eaton, a member of the National Academy of Sciences and chief of the laboratory of chemical physics there. Kubelka also gave credit to Jim Hofrichter, whom he called “an experimental lab wizard.”

While he says working in such an important and recognized field inspired him, there were some tough times. He says he applied for numerous other grants that were rejected, and he wondered at times if his path was the right one. The NSF CAREER award, he says, validates his work.

“A lot of people kind of change when they think, ‘OK, it doesn’t look like this kind of research is going to bring in any money. Maybe I’ll try to do something else.’ I was actually trying to tap into this energy stuff, applied to the Petroleum Research Fund with some ideas I had about petroleum refinement. It never got funded and now I am actually glad it didn’t. I do not have to do any petroleum research. I can focus on my proteins. It’s a tremendous boost in every way.”

Franco Basile
Shana Wolff, an undergraduate researcher at the University of Wyoming, stepped out of a blue bus and into a different world. A quick look around revealed a sea of green with clouds trapped in the tree canopy. Wolff was clearly not in Wyoming any more. Instead, she stood in Yanayacu (yah-nuh-YAH-koo), a remote biological field station in Ecuador. The research opportunity of a lifetime beckoned in the eastern foothills of the Andes Mountains, approximately four hours’ drive east of Quito, Ecuador’s capital city.

Wolff, along with seven other undergraduate researchers in UW’s honors program, had come to discover new insects and research new ideas under the guidance of Scott R. Shaw, UW professor of entomology, and Greg K. Brown, professor of botany.

Their journey to Ecuador illustrates UW’s commitment to undergraduate research and demonstrates the vast research opportunities offered to UW undergraduates. Undergraduate research at the University of Wyoming is one of the best-kept secrets of higher education in the country.

“One of the great things about Wyoming is that undergraduates can get involved—and are encouraged to. The small class size makes it easier for students to get to know a teacher and drop in to discuss research,” says Barbara Kissack, the Senior Project Administrator for the state of Wyoming’s National Science Foundation’s (NSF) Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) Program.

“It is not only that we are small, but it is part of Wyoming culture,” says Duncan Harris, director of the UW Honors Program. “We take undergraduate education seriously, and it is a major commitment of the university. Other research universities have different priorities.” Harris helped set up

Out of the Lab
and Into the Wild

Story and photos by Sarah Wolff
Shaw, if you have [an] idea, UW will support it. There is never that feeling of frustration. This atmosphere encourages innovation.

UW provides undergraduate students the opportunity to follow a research project from proposing the idea to presenting the results at a conference. Many other universities just let faculty members, graduate students or professional researchers see the big picture of research. Not so at UW, where undergraduates participate in the entire scientific process. Undergraduate research gives students a set of skills that makes them more competitive as they seek jobs or graduate schools. UW gives students an opportunity to experience hands-on research. This is different from learning in a classroom or learning in the lab,” Kissack says. “Undergraduate research allows students to experience what it is like to be a professional researcher.”

In Ecuador, 10 UW undergraduate students participated in one of the many unique research opportunities offered through the university last summer. These students traveled from Wyoming to the dense and lush Ecuadorian rainforest to study entomology, botany, biodiversity and ecology. Seven of the undergraduates, including Wolff, participated in an Honors Program class on cloud forest ecology. Shaw, curator of the UW Insect Museum, and Brown, head of the botany department, designed this interactive course to engage critical thinking and research skills.

Five other undergraduate students received NSF money from a Research Experience for Undergraduates grant (REU). Shaw and Guinevere Jones, Shaw’s graduate student, applied for this NSF money to involve students in entomological research. Jones and Shaw say they feel passionately about engaging undergraduates and started the entomology club at UW to excite students about insects.

The Yanayacu biological field station provides these researchers relatively untouched ecological niches and the organisms that fill those niches. Shaw’s primary research interest on this recent trip focused on Braconidae, or parasitic wasps. Approximately 12,000 species of Braconidae have been described so far, but Shaw says there might be between 30,000 to 40,000 species of undiscovered Braconidae in the world.

Once at Yanayacu, Wolff’s morning started with a 7 a.m. wake-up call from a rooster at a nearby ranch. She donned a black rain suit with matching rain boots and set out to discover new insects. She brought along an arsenal of insect-catching devices: a butterfly net, several small plastic vials, plastic bags and small yellow pans. She filled plastic yellow pans with water and a dash of detergent and placed them around the forest floor to attract insects from the top of the tree canopy. Insects are drawn to the color yellow, and when they flew into the pans, they were trapped in the water for later collection and identification in the Yanayacu lab. In some cases, Wolff collected live caterpillars and brought them back to the field station to be stored and studied in the máquina, a shed located 100 feet from the eating and sleeping areas where studies of the caterpillars’ development could be accomplished.

Kathleen Meyers, one of the undergraduate fellows, started each morning in the máquina—meaning “the machine,” because insects were turned out as if they were being produced in a factory. She looked at the live caterpillars in the approximately 100 to 200 plastic sacks hanging in the shed to see if anything had happened. One of three things could have emerged: a butterfly, if nothing parasitized the caterpillar; a parasitic fly; or a parasitic wasp, which Shaw hoped was in every caterpillar. Each caterpillar turned into an ecological surprise, but it sometimes took months to see the end product. When Shaw finds a new species of parasitic wasp, he preserves it, brings it back to the United States, and then describes it in a scientific journal. He has discovered approximately 40 new species of parasitic wasps at Yanayacu, which means “black water” in Quechua.

The undergraduate researchers collected a large number of Braconidae for Shaw to study and describe. One undergraduate researcher, Mary Centrella, continues to work in Shaw’s lab to help him analyze some of the new species. She and Shaw plan to co-author articles about their findings.

“It’s pretty cool to think that I might have a publication before I graduate,” Centrella says.

Publishing is a “great thing on a résumé and makes our graduate students competitive on the market,” Kissack says. Other undergraduate researchers from UW discovered and researched topics of their own interest while in Ecuador. Dale Novotny, an environmental natural resource and international studies major, researched the natural resources and environmental sustainability of the biological field station. The field station is a model in environmental sustainability because it has pure drinking water, environmentally sound sewage disposal and power from a hydroelectric source. Novotny wrote a report on his findings, which is now posted online.

Wolff and botany major Samantha Stutz focused their independent research on bromeliads, a family of New World monocot flowering plants, which includes Spanish moss and pineapples. Wolff and Brown are currently collaborating on an investigation of the possible anti-microbial effects of the clear mucus found between the seeds of a Bromeliad species.

As an undergraduate, Wolff has helped create the study, collect the sample and plan the analysis with the hope of presenting her work at Undergraduate Research Day.

“UW has the ability to inspire a happy learning environment,” Wolff says. “I feel academically appreciated. I can go on a trip like this and have professors ask about my ideas and encourage them. My favorite quote is from Scott (Shaw), when I was talking to him about my research in geology and plants. He said ‘I’m excited that you’re excited.’ Although he wasn’t personally interested in the topic, he encouraged me to continue my research.”

The most important thing from this research experience is that students leave with a positive feeling and have learned something,” Shaw says. “I am most interested in teaching the next generation of scientists.”

Indeed, Wolff says she plans on finishing her undergraduate studies in chemistry, followed by a master’s in geology and a Ph.D. in paleontology, continuing the love of research that started at UW.

(Left) This wasp lays her egg inside a parasitic fly larva that is already inside this caterpillar, and is just one of the new species Shaw discovered with students in Ecuador.

(Bottom) Drew Townsend, UW alumnus and manager of Yanayacu biological field station, collects caterpillars with his research mentor Shaw.

For more on the research station at Yanayacu, go to www.yanayacu.org
As long as there has been a University of Wyoming, there has been a Geological Museum in one form or another.

In the coming months, fans of the museum will know what its next form is likely to be. Since late summer, a task force of UW faculty and administrators has been evaluating the museum’s potential. The result of that work was an application to the American Association of Museums for the Museum Assessment Program. The program helps museum officials to develop plans for the best possible museum. If the application is accepted, the Geological Museum will embark on its next life.

On June 30, few of its fans could have predicted that. Budget cuts at UW, driven by declining state revenues, closed its doors.
When Wilbur Knight took over in 1894, the paleontological collection was growing rapidly, with donations and acquisitions of plant and reptile fossil specimens from around Wyoming, which was rich prospecting for fossil hunters. In the collection were six newly discovered species of dinosaur, along with some of the first plesiosaur fossils from the Jurassic Period found in the United States.

By 1917, Knight’s son, Samuel Knight, became the head of the University of Wyoming Geology Department and the Geological and Paleontological Museum, as it was called then. In the 1920s, a devastating steam and water leak in the exhibit area damaged specimens that were held together with water-soluble glue, as well as most of the paper records. The damage, as recounted in a history of the museum, was so great that many of the exhibits were dismantled. Over the next three decades, only the bones of the museum stood until UW allocated funds for new exhibits. That brought new life to the museum. Many of the most identifiable attributes of the museum were developed or supervised by Knight, including the bas relief terra cotta Stegosaurus and Triceratops, which adorn the front of the building.

During his career, Knight also built UW’s geology department into one of the nation’s best. Knight retired in 1963, but continued to work in the museum until he died in 1975. The building that houses the museum at the northwest corner of the Laramie campus is named for Knight, and the people of Wyoming named Knight the Citizen of the Century in 1999. The building that houses the museum at the northwest corner of the Laramie campus is named for Knight, and the people of Wyoming named Knight the Citizen of the Century in 1999.

Bridge to the future

Brainerd “Nip” and Anne Mears have a direct connection to Knight. Both New Englanders, they came west to Wyoming for one of Knight’s summer science camps—and Nip built his own career as a professor in the geology department.

In September, the Mearses announced they were donating $570,000 to the Anne C. and Brainerd Mears Jr. Excellence Fund for the University of Wyoming Geological Museum. Matched with Wyoming state funds, the gift creates a $1.14 million endowment that will elevate the museum’s national prominence in geological research and education.

“It is continuing his legacy because he is Mr. Wyoming Geology,” Anne Mears says. “A surprising number of people have gone through here and this museum has been something that has been almost an icon. Continuing his legacy I think was important to a great many people.”

At about the same time, another endowment—this one a memorial fund—was created in Knight’s name so that anyone who wants can make donations to support the Geological Museum. The initial gifts to the S.H. Knight Memorial Fund were made by John and Susan Masterson of Casper, Wyoming, and the Friends of the S.H. Knight Geological Museum, a nonprofit community organization formed in the wake of the museum’s closure to raise funds and awareness to reopen the museum. If the fund reaches at least $50,000, it can be matched by Wyoming state funds up to $750,000.

“Geology and geosciences in general have changed dramatically in the last 50 years, and I am sure that S.H. Knight would want his museum to be at the cutting edge of the geosciences,” Snoke says. Snoke leads the task force to reimagine the Geological Museum.
Real-world experience is the prescription

By Dave Shelles

For most first-year medical students, practicing medicine seems an eternity away.

Students are buried in anatomy, physiology, neuroanatomy, and other courses, spending 25 to 30 hours a week in class and two to three hours more per course hour outside class on coursework. With 150 classmates, personal attention from professors and advisors is rare, as are pre-exam review sessions.

With all that work, there’s precious little time to pursue any kind of medical work-related experience.

That’s your average first year of medical school.

The WWAMI medical program on the University of Wyoming campus, however, is anything but average, as first-year students get real-world experience, that better to prepares them for their careers—and to give them a taste of their goals.

WWAMI is a cooperative program that allows Wyoming students to receive his or her M.D. at the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle, rated as one of the best in the country. The acronym represents the five states that participate in the program—Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho.

“The first year, when you’re in your home state, the students are each assigned to someone who’s practicing medicine in the community,” says Dr. Jonna Gies, a WWAMI graduate and an emergency room physician at Laramie Memorial Hospital. “Because the students are here in Laramie, [they work with] people who are practicing in the Laramie community in a variety of different specialties. So those students work with those physicians four hours a week—about a half-day a week.

“Because it’s hard when you’re stuck in a classroom to remember why you’re doing this, and what it eventually means. So it’s a way to bring back that idealism and get people exposed to patients and get them excited about what they’re doing. Not only does it hopefully provide a good experience for them, but also helps them see the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel.”

The program started in 1997 with eight UW students participating. Currently, 16 students are enrolled in the program. Dr. W.G. “Jerry” Saunders, director of the UW medical education and public health programs, says the first-year experience and small class size distinguish the program from other medical programs.

“[Other medical students] don’t really get exposed to what medicine’s all about [in their first year]. It’s a nice contrast for our students to have the little clinical exposure,” he says.

“One of them caught me in Wal-Mart yesterday—’Oh, I got to see a C-section!’ She was so excited. It looks like maybe
there’s a light at the end of the tunnel, because they work so hard those first two years in classes. To see these kinds of things, it helps them realize, ‘This is why I got into it in the first place.’

“So if I’m a nice leg up for our students here.”

Living proof
As a WWAMI graduate, Gies can attest to the benefits of the program. Recently she passed along what she learned to Haleigh James, now a second-year WWAMI student from Rock Springs, Wyoming. Gies served as a preceptor (a medical professional who supervises a first-year student’s work experience) to James in emergency medicine last year and says she was a step ahead of her classmates when she headed to Seattle to take her second-year classes at Washington.

“I think that experience probably was irreplaceable, because at most of the places I went, I was the only medical student there,” Gies says. “So I had a lot more responsibility. I had a lot more autonomy to make my own decisions to decide what I wanted to do with people. They gave me a lot more responsibility than I would have had at other places, which subsequently led to me having a lot more experience than a lot of the people I started residency with, who had always been around a lot of other medical students—a lot of other residents—and hadn’t really had to take that responsibility for themselves.

“I felt that just from that experience I was a little more prepared for residency than I would have been if I hadn’t. Just because of that exposure, I saw a lot of things that a lot of other people in medical school hadn’t been exposed to. So I got a wide variety of experience that, even now, I can sort of reflect on and say, ‘Oh yeah, I remember that. I saw that in medical school in this state.’”

For James, the hours spent in the ER at Ivinson meant she could understand what being a doctor is like, and sooner rather than later. What she learned in the ER with Gies helped make clear some of what she learned in class, she says.

“It’s definitely nice in that sometimes you can correlate what you’re learning in class with the things going on, like different lab tests and cases,” says James, who earned her undergraduate degree at Washington. “Sometimes class can get discouraging because of the amount of information we are hit with, which doesn’t always seem relevant, but I think that being able to see patients and learn in the hospital makes things in class seem more applicable. It also gives us a way to practice interacting with patients and reminds us why we chose to go into medicine.”

Matt McEchron, the director of the program at UW, says the small class size makes offering the preceptor experience possible for WWAMI.

“There are a lot of degrees of freedom you have when you have a class of 16 students,” McEchron says. “The word that we get from the students who are in the program now in Seattle is that first year on this campus was pivotal, because they might not be sure if they have received the same education as the Seattle students. But when they get to Seattle, they realize ‘Wow, I’m way ahead of everybody. I’ve really received an outstanding education.’

“The other advantage that we have is because we’re a smaller region, we can provide clinical training for our first-year students here. When you’re in Seattle and you have to provide clinical training for 150 students, it’s impossible. So we pretty much get to have preceptor clinical exposure ... almost from Day One, once a week, so our students have seen a lot of what they need to see clinically and adjusted to the professionalism issues they needed to adjust to from the beginning.”

James says the small class sizes also allow students to get to know each other and to help each other with studies. In a group of 16 people, getting together to study is easy, she says, which is important because students receive hours and hours of information in a short period of time.

“It’s just the amount of information you get. It’s hard to absorb it all, but I’ve been able to keep up with it so far,” James says. “And our class is really good in terms of working together. We have a really good group. When we were thrown into anatomy—because we do a block schedule of anatomy in the beginning where that’s all we’re doing—we got to know each other pretty quick there. We had to work together to get through it, because it’s more of an intense part.”

Onward and upward
After the first year, WWAMI students head to Seattle for more classes, joining their peers from the other four WWAMI states. That’s where the true value of the first year in WWAMI’s medical program emerges.

Naturally, in medical school, students coming from various undergraduate programs compare notes on how they got to where they are. In the case of the WWAMI program, when all the second-year students from all five states hit Seattle, the comparison of their first years begins. And Wyoming’s students quickly learn they’re a step ahead.

“As a medical student on an OB/GYN rotation in Washington—I had mine in Rock Springs—you get to deliver every baby that comes through the hospital for a month. How many medical students can say that?” Gies says. “Most of the medical students I worked with, before they came to residency, they may have delivered one, and that was with somebody pushing them out of the way while they were doing it. You got much more personal exposure to a variety of things.

“Being a medical student from a small state like Wyoming, you get that one-on-one time with people that you went into medicine to find. You really feel like, as a medical student, you’re helping people even though you don’t know a lot at the time.”

“You just don’t get those opportunities in a large, urban setting with 50 doctors and 50 nurses running around,” McEchron says. “There aren’t as many hands-on opportunities for a medical student in those situations, so that’s an advantage.”

Further, the students are never too far from the support of the WWAMI staff. In terms of education, McEchron says he makes sure the students are prepared for the rest of their medical education, but he also says the program helps students after they leave the classroom.

“Another part of my job is to make sure the education these guys get their first year is better than anybody else’s, if I can do it. That’s tough to do,” McEchron says. “I need to bring in resources from microbiology, behavior, nervous system, biochemistry, anatomy—you name it. So we need to bring all those resources together and have them coordinated academically in a fashion that’s appropriate for the students.

“After that, what we do is we hand that baton off to Seattle, but we’re still here. That’s the important part of the program—we’re still here when those students need us while they’re in Seattle. If they have an academic problem, a family problem, a financial problem, a physical problem, we are still a resource for them when they’re out there and they’ve left Wyoming. And we still want them to come back.”

First year
Students do their basic coursework in Laramie—anatomy, biochemistry, neurology, microbiology, etc. They are also paired with a local physician, called a preceptor, to observe a physician’s day-to-day work. This is unique in that most medical students don’t get experience in a clinical setting until their third year of medical school.

Second year
Students go to Seattle for a year of studies at the University of Washington School of Medicine. These classes are organ- and system-based, and are shorter and more intensive than first-year courses.

Third year
Students do a clerkship in the five-state WWAMI region. A clerkship is a hands-on educational experience where students rotate and train between various clinical disciplines, spending six weeks in each discipline (i.e. family medicine, OB/GYN, pediatrics, psychiatry, and surgery). During the clerkship rotations, students get hands-on experience with patients in various disciplines of medicine and at the same time receive instructional training from experienced physicians. Students take an exam after each clerkship rotation.

Fourth year
Students do a combination of required and elective clerkship rotations in the fourth year. These courses can be taken at different sites around the WWAMI region.

Residency
After earning the M.D. degree, a typical residency lasts three years and covers an area of specialty of the physician’s choosing.

Practice
WWAMI graduates are required to practice in Wyoming for three years or pay back the money that the state of Wyoming pays to the University of Washington for their education.

Who’s eligible?
Any Wyoming high school student whose parents have lived in the state for five years is considered a Wyoming resident and can apply to the program. It’s also open to people who went to high school elsewhere, as long as they are Wyoming residents for five years before applying to the program.
Seize the play:

Heyoka/HokaHey urges cast to just go for it.
In December 2008, each student auditioned for the show by bringing a 2- or 3-minute piece of his or her own creation, and successful auditioners received an e-mail with some of the information on those words. He called the cast “actor/creators,” since the students brainstormed and conceptualized the show, from the lighting crews and performance pieces to the costumes and set design. Obviously, the cast embraced its expanded role in the production of the show, bringing any and every possible idea to the table. Though some of those ideas didn’t make it into the roughly 90-minute show, every idea—no matter how off the wall—was given due consideration.

“It really goes with the sense of ownership,” says Jaime Cruz, a recent theatre graduate from Evanston, Wyoming. “It feels like it wasn’t just one person’s show. We all contributed just the same, or so it feels.”

“It was a very positive atmosphere. You can try and you can fail, and it was awesome,” says Lindsey Neinast, a recent theatre graduate from Arlington, Texas.

The source material pushed the performers’ abilities to their outer limits. The scenes contained in the sketch-driven show drew from disparate sources, such as Native American myths, Sherwood Anderson’s short stories from the early 20th century, and mime.

Still, there was nothing in the show so heavy that it completely took away a child-like sense of fun. The performers, while working five long weeks in preparation, never forgot the fun of being other characters.

“It’s kind of a nice escape, because you get to come spend three hours, hang out with your friends, and be a kid and play,” Neinast says.

It also gave the performers a chance to branch out. Cruz says his focus is on writing plays, while Neinast and Higgins concentrate on their acting. Every actor/creator used multiple talents with “Heyokah/Hokahey.”

“Heyokah” is devised theatre, where the cast and crew make it up as they go. By the end of the five-week project there was a script, but everything in the show came from the minds of 16 students, UW theatre professor John O’Hagan, and Bowers, UW’s Eminent Artist in Residence—“16 students and two grown-ups,” as Bowers described it.

Bowers, a native of Missoula, Montana, and a well-known mime who now resides in New York City, came to UW with the words “Heyokah” and “Hokahey,” and some reading material on each. In December 2008, each student auditioned for the show by bringing a 2- or 3-minute piece of his or her own creation, and successful auditioners received an e-mail with some of the information on those words. He called the cast “actor/creators,” since the students brainstormed and conceptualized the show, from the lighting crews and performance pieces to the costumes and set design. Obviously, the cast embraced its expanded role in the production of the show, bringing any and every possible idea to the table. Though some of those ideas didn’t make it into the roughly 90-minute show, every idea—no matter how off the wall—was given due consideration.

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“With this we all get to dance, we all get to sing, we all get to act.”

Bill Bowers and Leigh Selting, Chair of the Department of Theater and Dance, share ideas for a scene with the cast.

Bill Bowers came to Laramie in January with “two words and a box full of information.”

He left with a production unlike anything seen at the University of Wyoming.

And the student cast came away with a unique theatre experience.

“This is different from anything I’ve ever done,” says Billy Higgins, a recent theatre graduate from San Francisco. “I’ve done some weird shows in the big city and here, but I guess I’m thinking more from a process point of view.”

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Bill Bowers makes notes and rewrites after a night of rehearsal.

What is Heyokah?
A Heyokah was a kind of clown in Lakota Indian culture, a contrarian whose purpose in life was to show society its opposite. In some cases the Heyokah walked backward, dressed backward, and mimicked people to (as Bowers explained) show the world a different way of looking at things.

What is Hokahey?
In his research, Bowers found the word “Hokahey” and liked it in part because it seemed to mirror the word “Heyokah.” Indeed, the two reflected each other on posters for the performance. “Hokahey” is another Lakota word, this one a battle cry translating to “Today is the day to die.” In the context of the show, Bowers took the meaning to be “Go for it. Be your true self. Carpe Diem,” which is Latin for “Seize the Day.”

What was “Heyokah/Hokahey”?
It ended up being a series of vignettes about being an outsider, from a representation of common people going about life in uncommon ways. As the Heyokah was an outsider to Lakota Sioux society, the outsiders are urged throughout the show to “go for it,” and to show their true colors while those watching the show are encouraged to look at things in new ways.
DORM FRIENDSHIPS REMAIN

by Tom Lacock

When a 29-year-old John Melton took a position as an assistant football coach at the University of Wyoming in 1957, the job description offered more than drawing up plays and recruiting. For two years the young coach acted as manager of the athletic dorm, where he kept track of nearly all of the male athletes on campus.

Melton coached for UW in Laramie from 1957-62 under legendary coach Bob Devaney before following him to the University of Nebraska. Devaney wanted Melton to be an assistant, with Devaney as well as with Tom Osborne, until 1990.

“We won a few games,” Melton says, tongue-in-cheek.

While Melton’s coaching career spans five decades, his dorm manager position lasted just two years.

“I was the dorm manager for two terms,” Melton says. “That just came as part of my job. I was just married, and it worked out pretty well for us. Those years were a lot of fun for us.”

During his time as manager, Melton oversaw the athletic dorm, which housed athletes from the football, basketball, wrestling, swimming, skating and baseball teams, creating a bond that has lasted to the present day.

In 1963 the NCAA encouraged its member schools to house their athletes throughout the campus, signaling the bond that has lasted to the present day.

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The reunions for the residents of the old athletic dorms started in 1984 and were the brainchild of former UW football players and Wyoming high school coaches Stan Popek, Ray DiFelice, George Johnstone, and Vince Zimmer—and their wives.

“Our wives noticed how much we liked to get together and asked us why we didn’t make it a yearly thing and bring in other old players and friends,” Johnstone said. “They were the drivers of this.”

Originally, the reunions were limited to residents of the athletic dorm from 1957-63, but have since grown a bit to include windows. We called it ‘the night of the runs.’”

You run into the bathroom and there is someone already hanging out. We had a common bond of great kinsmanship.

“Walden made a name for himself as the head football coach at Washington State and Iowa State, but he is best known around the Cowboy State as one of the most successful Cowboys quarterbacks on one of the most successful teams in the program’s history. Walden came to Wyoming from Itawamba Community College in Mississippi. “The Mississippi Gambler” led the Pokes to Skyline Conference titles in 1958 and 1959, and he was named third-team All-American, and was the Skyline Conference Player of the Year in 1959.

“My biggest credit is that we have every few years since 1984. We’ve enjoyed each other as players and cared for each other as people,” Walden says. “We loved each other in terms of hanging out. We had a common bond of great kinsmanship.

“The dorm itself—it was a melting pot of wonderful. I always said I was in a fraternity at Wyoming and in a fraternity of athletes, not a football dorm, but an athletic dorm, and it was a wonderful potpourri of getting to know basketball players, hackers, skiers and all sorts of other people.”

Walden made a name for himself as the head football coach at Washington State and Iowa State, but he is best known around the Cowboy State as one of the most successful Cowboys quarterbacks on one of the most successful teams in the program’s history. Walden came to Wyoming from Itawamba Community College in Mississippi. “The Mississippi Gambler” led the Pokes to Skyline Conference titles in 1958 and 1959, and he was named third-team All-American, and was the Skyline Conference Player of the Year in 1959.

“I was just a little squirt in high school, and I had two offers—to Memphis State and Mississippi,” Walden says. “Coach Devaney came to an All-Star game while I was in junior college and showed me a brochure with all the bucking horses and broncos, and I thought that seemed like a nice place. I think my mother just about fell over when I told her I was going to Wyoming.”

Drawing members of the football team set up the original reunions, neither the reunions nor the memories are limited to former gridiron greats. The English 101 project is a running assignment for all former athletic dorm residents. Each former resident answers a series of questions about what they are doing these days and what is new with their families, as well as memories from their days in the dorm.

Johnstone, the group’s unofficial historian, houses multiple stories about the former athletic dorm cook, Willie Walden. Stories about the former athletic dorm cook, Willie Walden, are the most common and best summed up by Walden.

“Walden was nearly as good as he could be, and he just loved every- body,” Walden says. “I don’t know if he was a good cook or bad, but whatever he threw out there we’d eat.”

“Walter had served some gravy, and it had gotten a little on the rank side, I guess. At one point in the night there were less than 10 percent of the guys who didn’t have diarrhea. You run into the bathroom and there is someone already there, so you had guys running out the dorm and jumping out windows. We called it ‘the night of the runs.’”

Bad gravy aside, to a man, dorm life was entertaining and led to one of the golden eras of Cowboy athletics. The football team was dominant under Devaney and his successor Lloyd Eaton, winning four consecutive Skyline Conference championships and winning the 1958 Sun Bowl over Hardin-Simmons. From 1958 to 1960, the Pokes were a combined 25-6 overall. Everett Lutz was named NCAA Wrestling Coach of the Year in 1959 on his way to one of his 11 Skyline Conference wrestling titles. Five future UW Hall of Famers were on the court for the UW men’s basketball team, while the UW swimming, baseball and ski teams also were recognized nationally.

“It was so much fun sometimes to wake up on a Saturday morning and cross over to the Hall Acre Gym to watch a swimming meet, then a wrestling match in the field house that afternoon. Then we’d go out and eat and go to a basket- ball game that night. It was a nice group, and we were all very supportive of each other,” Walden says.

Coach Glenn (Bud) Daniel was the chief of the Wyoming baseball team and athletic business manager at the university. During his time with the Pokes, he won Skyline Conference titles in 1954, 1955 and 1956. It was in 1956 in which the Cowboys advanced to the College World Series. Daniel, who also played baseball at UW in the 1940s, says the ability to have all of his athletes in the same place made for a very close knit UW community.

“Here you were at the time because there were very few schools that had a program where all the athletes were housed in one building,” Daniel says. “It was really a great thing; it developed the thing that still exists—football players rooming with football players, and those bonds still exist. The dorm situation and the Lander reunions are probably the most unique thing in all of college athletics.”

“It was the dorm that created the bond,” Johnstone says. “When you live together, eat together, sleep together, bleed together, and you are living together to support each other, there is something that develops, and it still exists.”

That bond was on display in September. This year, unlike the usual Lander reunions, the former athletic dorm residents met in Laramie on the same weekend as the season-opening football game. In future gatherings, the men plan to honor one of their own—former UW baseball coach and player Daniel.

“I look forward to just seeing the guys—just listening to the stories. It never gets old,” Walden says. “We appreciate it now more than we did earlier. We were all busy when we were younger with our careers and raising families. It means more to us now.”

“I haven’t been back to Wyoming to a football game in 15 years,” he adds. “The last time I was at Wyoming I was trying to beat them [as coach at Iowa State], but I didn’t get that done, either.”
Defying convention
Jessen Wheat Farms produces organic wheat and alfalfa
Story and photographs by Tom Lacock

Unconventional might describe Pine Bluffs, Wyoming, farmer and University of Wyoming farmer Clint Jessen to a tee. That’s because some unconventional methods have helped him and his family stay in the farming business for four generations.

Take, for example, the story of how Jessen’s great-grandfather came upon what is now the family farm in 1946. Morris Jessen emigrated from Germany in the early 1900s and farmed most of his adult life near Lodgepole, Nebraska. When Clint’s grandfather, John, came back from World War II, he found out he too was going to be a farmer.

“My great-grandfather gave him 1,000 acres, $10,000, a tractor and said, ‘Here, now don’t call me again.’ He did that with all four of his boys, and the farms are still being operated in some form by the family,” says Clint, John’s grandson and a 2000 UW graduate.

Unconventional and tragic might be the words to describe Clint’s own story of taking over the family farm. Toward the end of Clint’s senior year at UW, his grandfather died in April, followed by the death of his father in October of that same year. That left Clint with the decision of whether to sell the farm or take it on himself.

“I always wanted to be a farmer; I just didn’t think it would be that soon,” Clint says. “So for me when everybody passed away and I had a choice, I decided I would commit to it [running the farm] for 10 years, and then if that didn’t work out, I would be young enough to go out and get another job.”

The 10-year anniversary of that pledge comes in two years, but it is safe to say Clint and his family will still be riding John Deree’s through his wheat fields in 2011 and beyond.

Clint attended UW on a track scholarship after winning the 200-, 400-, and 800-meter runs as well as running a leg on the 4x400 meter relay for Cheyenne East during the 1995 Wyoming high school state track meet. As a freshman at UW he finished seventh in the 400 meters at the Western Athletic Conference meet, but a calf injury shut down Clint’s track career after his sophomore season and helped him focus on a career he had always known.

“I had several offers to go far away, but I never wanted to leave the farm,” Clint says. “UW was perfect for that. The great professors at the College of Ag were fantastic and understanding of my life.

“When I told them I couldn’t be there at class on Friday because I had to help plant wheat, or I missed syllabus day or the first five days of class because I was planting wheat on the farm, they were super understanding in terms of what I was trying to accomplish. They knew why I was in school, and farm work had to be done. As long as I got my school work done, they were very understanding.”

Family business
There is nothing conventional these days about the crops the Jessen family is growing. Jessen and his wife Jessica, a 2001 UW graduate, are overseeing 10,000 acres of organic wheat near Pine Bluffs. Jessen Wheat Farms, LLC, opened in 2000 and earned organic certification from the USDA and the Global Organic Alliance in 2001 after being offered a premium for a yet-unplanted organic wheat crop. The farm will increase to 18,000 acres next year, and going organic has as much to do with environmental forces than market forces.

“We’ve always been organic,” Clint says. “It was an economical approach to farming. Out here with the little rainfall we get, if you spend a lot of money on fertilizer and it doesn’t rain, the fertilizer doesn’t carry and it burns the crop. Here, the yields are very comparable to a conventional farm operation. We decided it was worth doing all the paperwork and all the extra work for the premium.”

The decision to take over the farm came with a steep learning curve. Clint says he was an “operator,” and had to learn the business side of the farm on the run.

“It was do or die, so to speak, and we figured it out pretty fast. I didn’t have a choice,” he says.

Jessica, the farm chief financial officer, says despite the family’s eight years on the farm, the decisions remain critical and difficult.

“I think it is extremely scary,” Jessica says. “We have to make all our decisions and weigh our options. We have to weigh the benefits, but we also have to be realistic about what we can do and not have mom, dad, or grandparents to rely on. That makes our risks even bigger risks.”

Forming an association
After a disastrous year and lack of demand for organic wheat in 2000, Jessen went with the Wyoming Business Council to the All Things Organic Wheat show in Chicago. He found four other farmers in the same position—sitting on bushels of organic wheat they weren’t willing to take to the co-op and sell as conventional wheat. The result was a coffee club marketing group called the Wyoming Organic Wheat (WOW).

The group controls nearly 300,000 bushels of organic wheat, opening new markets for themselves among some of the most recognizable brand names in the world.

“Kellogg’s liked it because they can make one phone call and get 300,000 bushels of wheat,” Clint says. “They call me, I call the rest of the owners in the group and say, ‘This is what we are offering.’ Volume became another niche within a niche. It really opened the doors to the amount of big business we found.”

In addition to his organic wheat, he also sells 200 tons of certified organic alfalfa to Horizon Organic Dairy and Organic Valley of northern Colorado. He also sends some alfalfa to Wyoming Pure, an organic beef operation in Wheatland.

Chance meeting
“Unconventional” also describes how Clint and Jessica began dating. The two were locker partners at Cheyenne East High School as juniors and actually went out on a date.

“I would say we were maybe casual friends in high school. We went to school with 500 people,” Jessica says. “Clint was more of the party type than I was, and we went on one date. When he dropped me off he says, ‘Thanks, Jessica, but you aren’t the kind of girl I date in high school, you are the kind I marry later.’ I took offense to that and didn’t talk to him much more than that.”

They lived next to each other off campus in Laramie, but they never crossed paths. Instead, they reacquainted in 2000 when high school friends talked them into meeting again. Eight years later they have three children—Collin, 4; Cameron, 18 months; and Carlin was born May 28. In addition to her work with Ark of Laramie, a non-profit that provides services to the developmentally disabled, Jessica also works at the farm’s office on Mondays and Tuesdays.

“I couldn’t ask for anything better,” Jessica says. “It has a special relationship to be able to work with someone, and we are happy to have that. We just have that, and we don’t ever take that for granted. We see so many of our friends who have 9-to-5 jobs and their kids in daycare, and we don’t get home until after 7 p.m. We are so glad for what we have.

“Different is good sometimes,” she says, laughing.

Pine Bluffs farmer Clint Jessen looks over organic wheat produced on his farm as it comes out of a bin.
Every few years the University of Wyoming Art Museum organizes an exhibition from the Peter W. Doss Crow Indian Artifact Collection. The most recent of these was on view at the Art Museum from May through November and was titled, *Adornment: Native American Regalia.* Independent curator Barbara Stone selected daily attire and ceremonial wear of Plains Indian tribes for the collection. The exhibition featured clothing and regalia richly decorated with beadwork in complex patterns and designs. It included beaded vests, feather fans, beaded belts and moccasins.

Peter W. Doss began collecting Northern Plains Indian artifacts after his tour of duty with the United States Army Air Corps. Upon his return to Billings, Montana, he entered into a partnership with his father at the Bill Doss Second Hand Store.

“When customers visited the store they often would ask, ‘How much for the Indian artifacts on the wall?’ To which he replied, ‘Nothing on the walls is for sale,’” says Penny Doss Isaak, Peter’s daughter.

A member of the Crow nation, he dreamed of establishing a collection for his people and of establishing a museum for the objects.

In his later years, Peter and his children, Isaak and the late Dr. Michael P. Doss, sought to place the collection in a museum. In the early 1990s, the Centennial Complex was being built to house the University of Wyoming Art Museum and the American Heritage Center. They contacted then-Art Museum Director Charles Guerin, and the artifact collection was accepted on a long-term basis. It was moved to the University of Wyoming in 1993. Peter saw the first exhibition from his collection, *Spirit of the Crow,* before his death in 1995.

Culturally and spiritually, the artifacts keep intact the legacy of the Crow nation.

“In keeping with this legacy, we have always protected the spirituality of the collection by having our spiritual leader, Mr. Heywood Big Day, cedar the collection on an annual basis to ensure that the collection is kept safe and spiritually happy,” Isaak says. Cedaring is a ceremony that protects both the objects and those who are charged with their safekeeping.

After Michael’s death last year, the collection came to Penny, who continues to stress the importance of the unique artifacts.

“This collection meant a great deal to my brother, Mike, and our father, and also means a great deal to me and my family....Having the collection at the Art Museum means that it is safe and can be shared,” Isaak says.

The artifacts continue to be an educational resource for all ages of museum visitors. Previous exhibitions have focused on beadwork and also on objects of daily life. The Art Museum plans to curate future exhibitions from the collection, further highlighting important artifacts and aspects of Plains Indian culture.

“Imagine learning from the masters” is a guiding principle of the UW Art Museum’s programs.

The museum is located in the Centennial Complex at 2111 Willett Dr. in Laramie. The museum and Museum Store are open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Hours on Mondays are extended to 9 p.m. during the fall and spring semesters. Admission is free. For more information, visit the museum’s Web site at www.uwyo.edu/artmuseum or blog at uwartmuseum.blogspot.com.
"It can't get any better than camping in the remotest parts of the Central Rocky Mountains, hours from the nearest paved road, breathing fresh air, having unobstructed views of the night skies, no cell phone reception, and discovering some of the oldest human artifacts in the Americas!"
Thursday, November 12
7:30 p.m., UW Jazz Ensemble I and Vocal Jazz Ensemble, Arts and Sciences Auditorium

Friday, November 13
7:30 p.m., Rebel baroque ensemble, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Saturday, November 14
10 a.m., Amnesty International Film Festival, Classroom Building Room 129
7:30 p.m., Faculty Recital Series: Medieval to Modern, Fine Arts Auditorium

Through November 14
Monday 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Adornment: Native American Regalia, UW Arts Museum

Sunday, November 15
2 p.m., Snowy Range Piano Competition, final round. Fine Arts Concert Hall

Tuesday, November 16
7:30 p.m., Civic chorus and community band, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Wednesday, November 17
7:30 p.m., Theatre, “Six Songs From Ellis,” Fine Arts Main Stage (through November 21)

Thursday, November 19
3 p.m., Reopening of Coe Library
7 p.m., Cowgirl volleyball vs. Nevada-Las Vegas, UniWyo Sports Complex
7:30 p.m., UW Symphony Orchestra with Lise de la Salle, piano, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Friday, November 20
7:30 p.m., Lise de la Salle, piano, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Saturday, November 21
Noon, Cowboy football vs. Texas Christian, War Memorial Stadium
7:30 p.m. and 8 p.m., UW Symphony Orchestra Holiday Gala, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Monday, November 22
7:30 p.m., Theatre, “Six Songs From Ellis,” Fine Arts Main Stage (through November 21)

Thursday, December 3
7:30 p.m., Symphonic Band, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Friday, December 4
Last day of classes
6:30 p.m., Fall commencement, Arts and Sciences Auditorium

Sunday, December 6
3 p.m. and 8 p.m., UW Symphony Orchestra Holiday Gala, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Monday, December 7-11
Final examinations

Monday, January 11
First day of classes for spring semester

Monday, January 18
Martin Luther King Jr. Day / Equality Day, no classes, offices closed

Wednesday, January 20
7:30 p.m., Faculty Recital Series: Continental Trombone Quartet, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Thursday, January 27
7:30 p.m., Faculty Recital Series: Let Evening Come, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Friday, January 28
7:30 p.m., Dance, “Pilobolus,” Arts and Sciences Auditorium

Sunday, January 31
7:30 p.m., Chamber Orchestra, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Thursday, February 4
7:30 p.m., Escher String Quartet, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Thursday, February 11
7:30 p.m., Faculty Recital Series: Summit Chamber Players, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Thursday, February 18
7:30 p.m., Festival of Winds: Wind Symphony and Symphonic Band, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Friday, February 19
7:30 p.m., Festival of Winds: Jazz Ensemble I, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Saturday, February 20
7:30 p.m., Festival of Winds: Final Concert

Tuesday, February 23
7:30 p.m., Escher String Quartet, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Thursday, February 25
7:30 p.m., Festival of Strings: Symphony Orchestra and Choruses, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Friday, February 26
7:30 p.m., Festival of Strings: Summit Chamber Players with Mary Cowell, violin, Fine Arts Concert Hall

Saturday, February 27
3 p.m., Festival of Strings: Final Concert

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Our blend of features, news, and photography highlights members of the university community, its alumni, and friends who make the university a leader in research, teaching, service, and outreach.

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LOOK AHEAD TO UWyo

UW grad student Sara Brown’s indomitable spirit
Pete Simpson Jr. returns to UW’s stage
and much more