Summer is finally here and with it Graduation Weekend. Congratulations to all the graduates for their years of hard work and welcome to their friends and families.

Thank you to everyone for sending in stories and announcements, keeping the conversation going. I will not be the editor next year, but I’ve had a fun time keeping up with campus news and familiarizing myself with almost every bathroom on campus.

We hope everyone has a marvelous summer and look forward to meeting again in the fall.

Campus Announcements

- The Commencement service will be at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, May 6. It has been scheduled an hour later than in past years to avoid the Lincoln Marathon, which passes the college on 48th street.

Campus News

- Don Abbey, Michael Huckabee, Jeff Joiner and Lorri Merchant will leave Union College at the end of the current semester. Abbey, professor of biology, and his wife, Janella, will move to Thailand to be field directors for the Asian division of Adventist Frontier Mission (AFM). Huckabee, program director, physician assistant program and professor of physician assistant studies, will leave to head the PA program at University of Nebraska Medical Center, the only other PA program in Nebraska and the school from which he received his degree. Joiner will return to work full time as a nurse at St. Elizabeth’s hospital in Lincoln before moving to California to join his wife, Judy, in helping to care for their grandson. Merchant, director and associate professor of social work, is going to join faculty at Southern Adventist University.

- Charles Freidline will formally retire at the end of this school year. He has taught chemistry for more than 40 years, 30 of which have been at Union. Freidline will continue to teach upper division classes as an adjunct and be involved in chemistry research in the Division of Science and Mathematics. He will also still be involved in the kindergarten Sabbath school class he teaches at CVC.

- Pablo Colindres will be the new ASB Clocktower editor for the year 2012-2013 and Deanna Morgan will be the new social vice president. She was appointed by the president and executive officers upon Emily Mastrapa’s decision to not return to Union after a change in major.

- Gary Bollinger, Malcolm Russell and John Wagner attended the annual meeting of the Association of Adventist Colleges and Universities at Walla Walla University in March. The vice presidents concentrated on policies of the Adventist Accrediting Association, the branch of the General Conference that evaluates Adventist colleges and universities.

- Malcolm Russell attended the Higher Learning Commission annual meeting in Chicago, April 1-3, to learn how Union will be affected in the next few years by significant changes to accreditation. Regional accreditation provides recognition of the college’s degrees and enables students to receive federal grants and loans.

- The Division of Nursing is pleased to announce that official approval has been received from the Nebraska State Board of Nursing for the new curriculum plan. Faculty are now moving forward with the course development and approval process, and the first class in the new curriculum will begin spring semester 2013.

- On April 30 the Computer Coordinating Committee approved the installation of a new wireless system for Prescott, Culver and Rees Halls. The installation will begin immediately and the new system will be operational this summer. It will consist of 119 access points, seven switches and a management component, replacing the current system that was installed 12 years ago.

- The Union College 2010 General Conference recruiting exhibit has won the prestigious 2012 Gold Quill Award for Excellence in business communication, presented by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). The project was designed by Steve Nazario, director of visual communications at Union College, with the help of Vision Exhibits, which handled the logistics of the project. The 20x60-foot exhibit featured a 25-foot high climbing wall with a VW microbus as the main attraction, allowing parents and prospective students to “Experience the Spirit” of Union.

A Major Addition

Eric Bing knew he wanted to stay at Union and he wanted to be a doctor, but he couldn’t find a course of study that fit him. “I loved the environment and the people, but I just didn’t feel like any majors were right for me,” said the junior pre-med student. “I left Union for a while to go searching. While I was away, I solidified my dream of becoming an ER doctor and realized that Union really is the best place for me. I’ve been to a bunch of different schools and Union is by far my favorite.”

Now, thanks to the work of Bing and several other students and professors, Union College is launching a new degree for people like him who are interested in pursuing biomedical science, the study of sciences that pertain to the human body and medicine. Currently at Union, and in many parts of the country, those planning to attend medical, dentistry or other biomedical professional schools have to take their prerequisite science classes as electives in an unrelated degree or choose a completely science-focused degree program such as biology or chemistry. Frankie Rose, assistant professor of biology at Union College, and a group of pre-professional students hope the new biomedical degree will help fill the gap for students who are forced to compromise their passions in pursuit of a profession.

The proposal for the new degree contains a large section of study devoted to another field, or supporting area, outside of science. Students, with the help of advisors, will be able to choose classes or possibly an entire minor in other areas of study. “Our initial idea was to make it just about science,” said Rose. “The key turning point was when Ben Herzel, junior IRR pre-med major, was working with me in the lab. He said the core of the degree should be science related to medicine, but that another component should be elected purely by the student in another area of interest.”

Rose emphasizes that this major will not replace any other degree, but instead fill a gap for students who don’t feel like they belong in other programs. “Some programs, such as International Rescue and Relief and business, have gone out...
of their way to help students integrate their medical or dental school prerequisites,” he said. “This degree is not meant to tip what they have or take away from them at all, it is just another option.”

The development of the new degree is timely as it coincides with changes in medical schools’ requirements and the construction of the Science and Mathematics complex. The high-tech labs and increased lecture space of the new building will be important in making a biomedical degree at Union possible.

“The improved facilities are really vital for this new major,” stressed Rose. “We need to continually progress and evolve our programs to match the facilities that are being created.”

Changes to the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) in 2015 will also coincide with the development of the new major. The adjustments add a section on social and behavioral science and modify other parts that test students’ critical thinking, placing even greater emphasis on students’ well-roundedness. “The topic of biomedical science is broadly important because of how changes in the content of the MCAT will affect the recommended courses taken by pre-med students,” said Malcolm Russell, vice president for Academic Administration.

The new degree will be featured in the 2012-2013 academic bulletin. This means students who meet all the requirements could be eligible to graduate with the degree as early as the coming academic year. “Amazingly, everything has gone very smoothly,” said Rose. “I keep expecting there to be barriers, but so far every door has opened wide.”

The idea of a biomedical degree is not original, but the setup of Union’s will be unique in the U.S. as far as we know. “It’s important to slow down for just a minute and take a look, otherwise we might miss. It’s important to slow down for just a minute and take a look, otherwise we might miss.”

McClelland Art Exhibit

As a class gift, the senior class of 2012 commissioned a painting by Union College alumnus Randall May to hang in the lobby of the new Science and Mathematics Complex. The four-by-five-foot piece will be unveiled after the commencement service on May 6. Other works by May are currently on display in the McClelland Art Gallery and will show until May 20.

May came to Union College his freshman year in the 1980s and studied under Jim McClelland, but was unable to return the following year for financial reasons. “I didn’t know how to seek help at the time,” said May. “Even though I didn’t graduate from Union, I’m still very fond of it and consider it my school. My children, Isaac and Olivia, are both freshmen there and there are others, such as Helena and Jamison Howard, who are like my own children.”

Jamison Howard, senior class president, asked May if he would be willing to make the senior class gift and outlined certain themes they wanted to depict. “I put some drawings together and gave them a sketch to look at,” explained May. “The people on the committee liked it and asked if I would do the painting and show my work in the gallery.”

The painting will combine elements of science and Union College, tied together with a spiritual theme. “I had a lot of input from others,” said May. “I didn’t share what I was doing with many people, but those who knew had a big impact. Isaac and Olivia both gave me ideas as it was progressing and a lot of ideas were inspired by God and given to me through others. I’ve put a lot of work into this painting, it’s an honor for me to have a piece in the new complex.”

In his works, May focuses on the brief moments in life that often pass us by. “I try to catch those little slices of life that you otherwise wouldn’t notice,” he said. “There’s a painting in the exhibit called Swirl from when my family and I were on a canoe trip. I just sat there and observed the patterns my paddle made in the water. There are things that happen around us all the time that make us happy or provoke thought that we often miss. It’s important to slow down for just a minute and take a look, otherwise we might walk past something really beautiful.”

Students and faculty participating in the IRR semester abroad in Nicaragua returned safely to Lincoln on Friday, April 13. This was the last time Jeff Joiner led out in the overseas semester as Aaron Kent will head the Nicaraguan program spring semester 2013.

Students and faculty from the Division of Science and Mathematics attended the Nebraska Academy of Sciences on April 20.