Dear Center for,

Although most of the students are gone for the summer, life at WWU hasn't slowed down—think summer classes, research Sabbaticals, and campus improvements. Our Rosario Beach Marine Laboratory is in full swing too, and students are enjoying the pristine waters around Whidbey Island. You too can experience the fun of algae pressing, identifying sea cucumbers and orca watching (vicariously that is) through Rosario's Facebook page. The Theology Department also just returned from taking 40 students on a Bible Land Study Tour to Israel, Jordan and Turkey.

We here in the Alumni Office haven't had a moment to catch our breath either, between campmeetings, alumni dinners, and baseball games. Last Tuesday was our first ever Walla Walla Sweets WWU Alumni Night. Almost 300 alumni joined us for a fun evening of baseball at Borleske Stadium. Check out this photo of President John McVay with the team mascot! Be sure to read through our list of upcoming events so you don't miss out on what else we have planned this year.

UPCOMING EVENTS

British Columbia Campmeeting
July 30 | Hope, B.C., Canada
Come enjoy ice cream and fresh blueberries at the multipurpose tent on Sabbath at 5:30 p.m. There will be free Walla Walla Sweet Onions and alumni license plates while supplies last.

Boise Alumni Dinner
Aug. 12 | Boise, Ida.
Join fellow alumni for good food, networking, and hear what's new at WWU on Friday at 5:30 p.m. at the Old Spaghetti Factory on 610 W. Idaho Street. Please RSVP by August 8.

Rosario Alumni Sabbath
Aug. 27 | Anacortes, Wash.
P.S. Check out the Athletics newsletter to learn what's new, including upgrades to playing fields, changes in coaching staff, the Athletes of the Year and Most Valuable Players of 2011. You can also learn how you can get involved in athletics and make a difference in students' lives. Go Wolves!

Till next time,
Nicole Batton
Alumni Director
alumni@wallawalla.edu

ALUMNI NEWS

1989 Alumnus Receives Philanthropic Leadership Award
Business graduate Randy Haffner ’89 received the Adventist CEO Philanthropic Leadership Award in June at a special banquet during the Philanthropic Services for Institutions Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana. He received the award because he demonstrated knowledge, interest and ability in philanthropy. Haffner led his executive team in the philanthropic process, started a major campaign for a Multidisciplinary Cancer Center, demonstrated leadership in soliciting gifts, and became a major donor himself. His work in philanthropy was also demonstrated previously by his assistance in helping to obtain a $20 million gift at Florida Hospital. Read more about Randy here.

WWU Alumni Couple Impact High-Fashion
Two years ago Brian Meert ’02, a theology graduate, and Kristina Moreno-Meert (attended) launched handbago.com, a website that has

Join friends for a Sabbath at Rosario Beach Marine Station. Activities will include a worship service by President John McVay, Sabbath lunch, a nature walk with Professor Joe Galusha, sundown worship on the beach, and a bonfire with smores. Make it a weekend getaway by reserving a cabin or a RV spot. For more information or to reserve your accommodations, visit www.wallawalla.edu/rosario-sabbath.

Portland Alumni Dinner
Oct. 8 | Clackamas, Ore.
Join fellow alumni for good food, networking, and hear what's new at WWU on Sabbath at 6:30 p.m. at the Old Spaghetti Factory on 12725 SE 93rd Avenue. RSVP by Oct. 3.

Yakima Alumni Sabbath
Oct. 15 | Yakima, Wash.
Join President John McVay for a special Sabbath at the Yakima Seventh-day Adventist Church on Oct. 15. Lunch and an afternoon concert will follow the church service.

For more information about any of our events, call the Alumni Office at 800.377.2586.

RESOURCES

Give a gift to WWU

Reserve a guest room
become a dominating presence in the online high-fashion industry of handbags. Handbago.com not only sells couture, but also runs a blog and is a news outlet informing fashion handbag enthusiasts, or “bagistas,” on new trends and celebrity style. Since then, the Meert’s company has grown to eight employees and is now one of the top three designer handbag blogs in the world on Google. Read the full story here.

2006 Alumnus Helps Mentally-Ill in Local Community

Andy Hanson ’06, a psychology graduate, intended to spend his life in research. Volunteer work with Rising Sun Clubhouse changed his mind. Life experiences helped him realize that research does not suit his personality and he found instead that he thrived while working directly with people and volunteering with organizations that promoted psychological wellness. Read the full story here.

Have news to share?
Send it to us at alumni@wallawalla.edu.

More alumni news online >>

CAMPUS NEWS

Beloved English Professor Passes Away

Beloved English professor Nancy Cross passed away on June 27, 2011. She graduated from Walla Walla University in 1966 and came back to teach at WWU for 28 years from 1981 to 2009. During her time on

If you are an alum and have recently had a baby, email us your birth announcement. We will mail you a commemorative baby bib for your new little one. We want to help
campus she developed new classes in writing theory and non-fiction writing and made many other contributions. She received the Burlington Northern Award for Teaching Excellence in 1994. Cross impacted many lives during her tenure. As one former student Laurel (Smith) Rogers'95 says, "Her graceful, elegant, wise light will never be extinguished as it glows in the hearts and lives of so many students." Read the full story.

**Summer Science Program Utilizes School of Engineering**

The School of Engineering recently partnered with Sager Middle School in College Place to help young budding scientists learn basic engineering principles through an educational program called SeaPearch. Sponsored by Office of Naval Research and with the assistance of engineering faculty, students learned to build underwater remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) and tested them in the WWU pool. Read the full story.

**WWU Opens Community Garden**

This past spring WWU started a Community Garden for students, faculty, and staff. The garden, which was started by senior history major Jimmy Wilhelm, is located across the street from Birch Street Apartments. Wilhelm heads a committee that runs the garden. Garden plots are 10 x 20 feet and cost just $40 per year to manage. Read the full story.

**ALUMNI PHOTOS**

- Upper Columbia Campmeeting
- Washington Campmeeting
- WW Sweets Baseball Game

Click on the photos above to see more pictures from these events.

Did you miss the last issue of Alumni Currents? Don't worry, you can still read it. Visit the archives now to catch up on past issues.

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**BULLETIN BOARD**

- WWU on Tumblr -- We are reaching out to potential
students in a fun new way and we need your help. We are asking alumni to submit items on Tumblr to show prospective students what our grads can do. We are looking for photographs or digital versions of artwork (graphic design, watercolor, drawing, pottery, etc.), poems, or favorite quotes. Go to wallawallau.tumblr.com and click on the pencil/paper icon at the top right to submit your content. Thanks in advance for letting us highlight your creativity!

• **College Experiences Survey** -- Thank you to the more than 500 alumni who participated in the College Experiences Survey! In addition to providing valuable feedback to WWU, your responses will help Adventist church leaders improve the academic, spiritual and social experiences of students attending both Adventist and non-Adventist colleges.

• **New Database for WWU** -- As we are always looking for ways to improve our services to students, alumni and our campus family, we have undertaken the monumental task of transferring to a new campus database system. This system will provide support for accounting, human resources, academic records, student financial services, alumni, and donation management. What does this mean for you? We may be running a little behind as we transfer to our new system and learn how to use it. This means you may experience slight delays in service and correspondence. We appreciate your understanding and patience as we make this transition.

Share this eNewsletter:  

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*Alumni Currents* is a publication of the Alumni Association of Walla Walla University. It is emailed monthly to alumni and friends of the university who subscribe to it. For questions or concerns, email the editor at [alumni@wallawalla.edu](mailto:alumni@wallawalla.edu).

You are receiving this email because you are an alumnus or friend of Walla Walla University and have given us your email address for communication purposes.

[Unsubscribe](mailto:ahc@andrews.edu) from this list.
Walla Walla University Athletics seeks to develop the mind, body, and spirit of student athletes. We provide students with a setting to glorify God through the development and exercise of personal character, sportsmanship, self-discipline, and athletic ability.

Our coaches believe they have been called to excellence in teaching their game and in living their lives for Christ. They do not divide their athletic performance and their Christianity.

They give their all, all of the time, seeking to impact the world for Christ using the tool of athletics.

You can help us continue our tradition of athletic excellence by supporting WWU Athletics through a monthly gift. We’ve made it simple with EasyPay. Now you can sign-up to have your monthly gift automatically deducted from your checking account or credit card. That means $5 or $10 per month over the course of the year turns into $60 or $120. Those dollars help to fund athletic equipment and program needs.

Perhaps while you were a student at WWU you personally benefitted from the Athletics program. If so, I encourage you to support Athletics through EasyPay and help current and future students receive the same benefits you did. You can make a difference in a student’s life with as little as $5 per month.

Thank you for all you’ve done and will do to support WWU Athletics through your time, talents, prayers, and treasure.

God bless!

All our recent athletic improvements and new fields have been the result of gifts from generous and thoughtful alumni and friends of WWU Athletics. At WWU we know it isn’t just about playing and winning; it’s about providing our players with a strong, healthy, spiritual environment where we can share Christ through the athletic skills He has given each of our players. We hope you will join us in continuing this tradition.

Sign up for EasyPay today!

https://www.wallawalla.edu/apd

NEW FIELDS MADE POSSIBLE BY ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

2008 Soccer Field
2009 Hebbel-Janke Softball Field
2010 Volleyball Sport Court
We experienced a huge answer to prayer this year when our new softball field came in at $50,000 and it could have cost up to three times more. Head coach Mike Jimenez is back for another year and will lead the Lady Wolves for their second full season on the new field.

Head soccer coach Troy Fitzgerald has done an excellent job recruiting players for the 2011–12 season. He continues to motivate his players to be the best athletes, on and off the field.

Volleyball coach Don Hepker continues a strong volleyball program and is enjoying the new sport court. The $17,000 upgrade was funded through donations from parents and other supporters. We look forward to another great season.

Our new head women’s basketball coach is Mike Patterson. Athletic Director Tim Windemuth says that “Mike is as enthusiastic a coach as we have ever had and has a great basketball IQ.”

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ATHLETES OF THE YEAR 2011

Tristan Greenidge
Men’s Basketball

Natalie Wilkening
Women’s Volleyball

Tristan Greenidge
Men’s Basketball

Sierra King
Women’s Basketball

Amber Davin
Women’s Softball

Ashley Martinez
Women’s Softball

Sonja Kelsay
Women’s Softball

Torrey Haddad
Women’s Volleyball

Heather McFadden
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Meet our administrative team

Todd Folkenberg
Carrie Koh
Sharon H. Pappas, RN, PhD, NEA-BC
Randy Haffner
Dianne McCallister, M.D.

Randy Haffner

Chief Executive Officer

Randy Haffner joined Porter Adventist Hospital as CEO and president of the South Denver Hospital Group in 2009 and provides strategic vision to advance the mission of Porter Adventist Hospital.

Prior to his joining Porter Adventist Hospital, Mr. Haffner served Florida Hospital as Chief Operating Officer of the Orlando campus. In this role, he provided leadership and oversight for the operations of 896 inpatient beds and ancillary services as well as direct oversight for the Cardiovascular Institute. He was also the CEO of Volusia Medical Center in Orange City, Florida.

Haffner is a graduate of Walla Walla College in Washington and holds a Masters in Business Administration from Roy E. Crummer Graduate School of Business at Rollins College in Winter Park, Fla. In addition, he earned a Ph.D. in leadership studies from Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Mich.
Alumni Central

WWU Alumni Have Style

WWU grads run successful business

By: Andy Hanson

Two years go Brian Meert ‘02, a theology graduate, and Kristina Moreno-Meert att. launched handbago.com, a website that has become a dominating presence in the online high-fashion industry of couture handbags. Handbago.com not only sells couture handbags, but also runs a blog and is a news outlet informing fashion handbag enthusiasts or, "bagistas," about new trends and celebrity style.

Brian and Kristina dated at Walla Walla University the year he was OPS (men’s club) president and she AGA (women’s club) president. They went their separate ways after graduation, but found each other again on a social networking site and started dating again when she moved down to Los Angeles where he was already working. They were married in 2009. Brian describes their union, "First comes love, then comes marriage, then comes a baby in the baby carriage...and that baby's name is Handbago."

Neither Brian nor Kristina ever dreamt they would find their calling in the fashion industry. After graduating from WWU, Kristina attended Loma Linda University in Loma Linda, Calif. for Occupational Therapy, and Brian acquired his master's degree in business administration at La Sierra University in Riverside, Calif., focusing on online marketing.

Kristina quickly discovered that occupational therapy was not her calling, so she moved her career from what she called the “soggy wetlands of Birkenstocks and R.E.I” and made her way into high-fashion accessories and footwear with companies like CCSKYE and Rock and Republic. At the same time, Brian founded an e-ticket system for advance movie screenings, a system which is now utilized by Disney, Warner Bros., 20th Century Fox, and Sony. He also oversaw the United States e-commerce division at Panda Security.

The idea for Handbago.com was born when Kristina had no luck looking for a quality, top-of-the-line dog carrier. "I remember asking, 'Isn't there one site that displays all the hand bags in the world?'" and the answer was, surprisingly, no, says Brian. Although there were high-fashion sites for shoes and other accessories, nothing like that existed for handbags. Hence, Handbago.com was born, and the idea has only grown along with the company since then. They currently are one of the top three designer handbag blogs in the world on Google and now have eight employees.

The website was a perfect blend of their skills and previous work experience. The couple has found that social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to be instrumental in creating connections.

In addition to the business side of things, Handbago.com works in conjunction with In True Fashion, a program that helps teens work toward their dreams of designing bags. "We love watching the kids get excited in the program,” says Kristina. “Their inspiration inspires us.”

Handbago.com has an active internship program in which interns gain real world experience with fashion and internet marketing. They have helped over eight interns find jobs in the fashion industry and have two more currently working with them.

"The time we spent organizing, networking, and advertising for different OPS and AGA events while attending WWU taught us a lot about leadership and public relations," says Brian. "Even though our careers took a different path than what we expected, we're happy with our entrepreneurial path."

"Students with entrepreneurial interests should surround themselves with successful people, seek out internships, and travel as much as possible to gain a wider perspective on the world," Kristina advises.

The couple also encourages recent graduates to keep pursuing their dreams even when times seems uncertain.
“Uncertainty can also be a driver of motivation, as nothing in life is guaranteed,” says Brian. “If you're willing to work hard and focus on surrounding yourself with people that are doing greater things than you are, and are open to new adventures, you're on the right path.”

“Being open to wherever God wants you to go is also important,” Kristina adds. “God gave us all specific talents and He wants us to be satisfied in our work. We believe that following your dreams is in God's plan, but we also realize that God can guide us in the direction that will bring us the most happiness.”

Links:
Visit Handbago.com
<- Back to: Alumni News
Andy Hanson works with local organization

When Andy Hanson ('06) was studying psychology at Walla Walla University, he had planned to continue into an advanced degree program in psychology research, and spent some time in graduate school in this endeavor. Life experiences helped him realize that research does not suit his personality, and he found instead that he thrived while working directly with people and volunteering with organizations that promoted psychological wellness. Organizations like Rising Sun Clubhouse in Walla Walla.

"During my senior year at WWU, I took Abnormal Psychology from Lee Stough," explains Hanson. "As part of the class we had to volunteer time in a community service project that had something to do with mental health. I chose to volunteer at RSC."

His role there changed as his situation did, and included weekly lectures and discussion leading on topics pertinent to mental wellness, as well as coordinating a fundraiser for the organization. The topics he presented on ranged from the importance of religion and spirituality in mental health to good ways to handle panic or anxiety attacks. Over the next couple of years, Hanson worked with RSC members while working as a mental health case manager for Walla Walla County, and again in the last year as part of the requirements for a leadership training course.

"I use the skills I learned while attending WWU all the time when preparing information to lead discussions and give presentations," says Hanson. "My WWU education was instrumental in helping me understand the unique needs and psychology of people with mental illnesses."

Hanson's interest centers on psychological wellness, as opposed to the more negative topics often covered when studying psychology.

"I like to focus on setting positive goals, developing methods of maintaining happiness, optimism and the psychology of well-being," he says. "All of these are topics I found an interest in while studying them in college, so it's pretty much been my focus all along."

While he is not currently working with RSC, Hanson does regularly volunteer there. His hope is that the RSC will be able to move into a new and improved location that could support more activities and members.

"The clubhouse is a very close-knit group and they keep an eye on each other and look out for each other," says Hanson. "Social support is a key element in mental health recovery, and the clubhouse provides many opportunities to congregate."

Hanson has enrolled in the Master's of Counseling Psychology at WWU and will begin the program in the fall. He plans to continue to be involved at RSC.
Farewell to Nancy Cross

Former English professor passes away

By: Becky St. Clair

Nancy Cross, former professor of English and chair of the English department at Walla Walla University, passed away on Monday, June 27, surrounded by friends and family. She is survived by her husband, Carlton, retired WWU professor of engineering, and her adult children, Jeff and Tara, both WWU alumni.

When Nancy arrived at Walla Walla College in the early 1960s as a student, she expected to find mentors to challenge her mind, and who would stimulate her spiritual and intellectual growth. What she didn’t expect was that her experience would one day bring her back and keep her here.

After she graduated in 1966, Nancy returned to then WWC in 1981 with her husband, Carlton, who had come to teach engineering. Nancy joined the English department and began a 28-year career that included contract teaching, acting as college writing coordinator and director of the writing center, and eight years as the department chair.

During her time as professor, Nancy developed several new classes in writing theory and non-fiction writing, and put together several directed reading courses, including Holocaust autobiography, nature writing, and the American woman’s experience. She also helped develop the writing workshops for North Pacific Union teachers and also conducted the workshops at La Sierra University (Riverside, Calif.) and Southwestern Adventist University (Collegedale, Tenn.).

“Nothing could be more exciting than teaching writing,” said Nancy. “Nowhere does a teacher learn more about students than when reading about their life experiences.”

Ever the student herself, Nancy continued her own studies in writing theory and presented her work at the Council on College Composition and Communication and the National Council of Teachers of English. She received the Burlington Northern Award for Teaching Excellence in 1994.

Nancy will be well-remembered for her leadership, wise counseling, and attentive listening skills. Those who knew her knew she was an excellent diplomat, a trustworthy counselor, and a strong speaker on behalf of issues she felt were important to the university.

After her retirement in 2009, Nancy was honored as Alumna of the Year by the Alumni Association of WWU for her role in advancing the discipline of writing and her influential role as a professor and chair. The acknowledged her for her exemplary commitment to WWU.

A memorial service for Nancy was held on Sunday, July 10, at the University Church.
Summer science program utilizes School of Engineering

By: Becky St. Clair

Though many students leave the Walla Walla University campus for the summer, things are by no means slow at the university. In addition to WWU’s summer classes which began June 20, there was recently a group of young future engineers exploring robotics on the College Place campus.

Partnering with WWU’s School of Engineering, Sager Middle School in College Place used a program called SeaPerch to build underwater remotely operated vehicles (ROVs). Sponsored by the Office of Naval Research and managed by the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers, SeaPerch was created by the MIT SeaPerch Grant College Program in 2003 with the goal of generating interest in underwater studies.

“Once they build the vehicles, students try to complete several challenges in the water,” explains Darin Durand, math and science teacher at Sager. “Challenges include maneuvering, retrieving diving rings, retrieving floating devices, completing an obstacle course, and various simulations including a treasure hunt, oil cleanup, raising the Titanic, soda can cleanup, and a handicapped ROV.”

Students build their ROVs from kits comprised of low-cost, easily accessible parts, following a curriculum that teaches basic engineering and science concepts with a marine engineering theme. The school’s partnership with WWU went beyond simply utilizing the university pool for the project tests; Brian Roth, assistant professor of engineering, helped the students fix electrical problems with the ROV control systems and participated in the daily ROV challenges from the poolside.

“I also presented to and discussed with them many of the neat connections between their project and aerospace engineering,” says Roth. “Alan Hendrickson, a junior engineering major here at WWU, also spent many hours with Darin and his colleague Michael Anderson, planning and implementing the program.”

This is the fourth summer Sager has offered Summer Academy. Each year Durand and Anderson arrange a theme to focus on for the two to three week program for middle school-aged children.

“Our goal with the Summer Academy is to combine math, science, technology, and engineering skills into a fun challenge that connects to real world jobs in the field of science,” explains Durand.
This was their first time using the SeaPerch program, and were glad to have access to a large pool in which to conduct their final ROV testing.

“WWU has always been gracious in working with us,” says Durand. “The School of Engineering was fabulous in that both faculty and students were willing to get involved on their own time and they integrated very well with our learning goals. I love being so close to a university, especially one like WWU with such a high emphasis on community involvement.”

“Darin and Michael have an enthusiasm that is contagious,” says Roth. “It is exciting to grow WWU’s partnership with Sager, and we are currently on the lookout for more opportunities for collaboration. Programs and partnerships like this present a real learning opportunity for both WWU engineering students and local kids.”

For more information about SeaPerch or WWU’s School of Engineering, click the links below.

Links:
   SeaPerch
   WWU’s School of Engineering

<- Back to: News
WWU Opens Community Garden

Student-run garden plot a success

By: Emily Sunken

Walla Walla University has gone green! Recently a special and unique attraction on campus has sparked excited discussion amongst students, staff, and faculty alike. What is this new attraction? This past spring WWU started a Community Garden in which university folks can grow fresh food.

Jimmy Wilhelm, senior history major, started the project last school year and heads the committee that runs the garden. Since then the little oasis on campus has become very popular. The garden is located across the street from Birch street Apartments, north of Mt. View Apartments.

Plots, which are 10 by 20 feet, cost $40 per year to manage. People are encouraged to grow whatever they like (with the exception of illegal/toxic substances), and are allowed only to harvest their own food unless they receive permission from others. The garden is open year-round and there is no limit to how many plots an individual or group may rent.

Currently there are 10 to 12 plots available for use. Most of the garden has been rototilled so there are many great spots to choose from. However, there is some more rototilling to be done, and interested parties are welcome to rototill their own plot.

University staff and faculty interested in renting a plot will receive a 50 percent discount.

Marissa McFarland, senior mass communications major, was ecstatic to rent a plot in the community garden, and has been maintaining her plot since May.

McFarland lists what is currently growing in her garden plot: “Zucchini, yellow summer squash, tomatoes, red onions, corn, eggplant, strawberries, cucumbers, broccoli, rosemary, cilantro, lavender, peppers, sunflowers and succulents.”

For more information or to rent a plot check out the Walla Walla University Community Garden Facebook Page by clicking the link below.

Links:
  WWU Community Garden on Facebook

<- Back to: News