

Christmas Concert at the Fox



On December 14, over one thousand people attended UCA's eleventh annual Christmas concert at the Fox Theatre in downtown Spokane.

Gratitude

by Ellie Bunn

Gratitude is an important mindset to have. It is the state of being thankful for the things you have. Most people feel gratitude at some point in their lives—some more than others—but practicing gratitude is a good habit and can have many positive effects.

Being grateful affects your personality. People who are consistently grateful are usually less materialistic, more spiritual, and have increased self-esteem. This also affects how healthy you are. People who express what they are thankful for tend to live longer, sleep better, and have increased energy.

Gratitude also affects people emotionally. It makes them feel better about themselves, and it can relieve stress or depression. It also makes people resilient, relaxed, and less envious of others. This leads to a healthier social life. People practicing gratitude tend to be kinder and have more deep and meaningful relationships. Being grateful makes your attitude toward life change and gives you a better outlook for the future. So, let's all practice gratitude this New Year. What are you grateful for?



The morning after the Fox Concert after all the students had left campus, snow began to fall. The amount of snow set a record for December 15.

HAPPY NEW YEAR



Banquet night

by *Rachelle Santee*

This year Girls' Club was in charge for the annual winter banquet. They chose the theme "A Walk in the Woods." The cafeteria was decorated with many pine trees and little Christmas lights hanging from the ceiling. On each table there was a floral arrangement, a green table runner, plates with gold silverware wrapped in green napkins, and two candles. One candle was fake and the other was a real floating candle. It all had the feeling of walking into an enchanted forest on a cold winter night.

After everyone arrived and found where they were supposed to be sitting, the banquet began. A prayer was said to bless the food and tables started to be dismissed. While waiting for tables to be dismissed people went and tried out the hot chocolate bar or the fruit punch. Once a table was dismissed, they were able to go and try some delicious food. They served salad with blackberries, pomegranates, and mandarin oranges. As an entrée there was a garlic pasta, vegetarian meat roast, and roasted potatoes. Little cheesecake squares were served for dessert. Everyone was able to eat their fill of the wonderful food prepared especially for that night.

Besides eating, people were able to go and get their pictures taken with their friends and dates. This is fun for everyone to have an actual picture to help remember this special night. There also was a best dressed competition that everyone was able to vote on. Then part of the fun is just hanging out and talking with friends at the table, and cranberry fights and fork burning kept everyone entertained.

All too soon the night ended. After such a wonderful night it takes time to fall asleep but how good it is to fall asleep with the memories of all the fun everyone had with their friends at the banquet.

The Nutcracker

by *Kaitlyn Kramer*

Upon walking through the doors to the balcony of the Fox theatre, the finely dressed attendees were first greeted by the grand room itself. The adorned walls and ceiling rose high above the stage and the balcony vantage point enabled banquet-goers a full view of the event. Once settled into the flip-down seats, the anticipation began to build until the curtains finally pulled up to reveal the finely painted backdrop of the Stahlbaum's residence.

The ballet commenced with an exciting musical number that instantly raised the audience's excitement level as the characters came on stage. The first scene was littered with children dancing and playing in charming full evening attire. This, of course, came to an end when the gifts were given and the main character, Clara, received her nutcracker, the star of the show. From there the plot line picked up interest with a fight between the rats and the nutcracker, a dance with the Snow Queen, and a journey to the Land of Sweets with the Sugar Plum Fairies.

The dancing, iconic musical numbers, and beautiful stage displays did wonders to inspire the imagination and Christmas spirit. Not only was the ballet an enjoyable way to spend the afternoon, but it was also a cultured reminder that there is still wholesome entertainment to be found outside of the television world. Exiting the theatre, the attendees were filled with a new respect for the talented dancers and musicians and with excitement for the next event of the evening—Winter Banquet 2017.

Christmas doors

by *Elianna Srikureja*

Christmas Spirit is shown at UCA in many different forms. One of the most fun forms is the door decorating competition. Every classroom's door is turned into a special work of art as paper decorations, chimney-like box protrusions, puns, paint and even a tv are added to their exteriors for a fun, festive look.

The student-workers involved in the decorations made several trips to the colored paper dealer, Mrs. Starr, and then racked their brains for a way to make their doors unique. The first door to go up was Mrs. Lacey's door, courtesy of Molly Ahola, which featured the Polar Express Train. Other doors featured the Elf (Mr. Gladding), Rudolph in the Dark (Mrs. C), the Chemistry Tree (Mr. Hartman), a Fire Place (the Library), and the Star (the Café). There were many others.

Tuesday, December 4, was the day for the judging. Pictures were taken of each door in its final state, and students and staff received an email from Mr. Spano with a list of all the door available to vote for. ASB compiled all the votes and found winner.

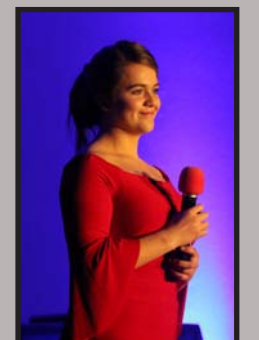
Students and teachers alike agree that the door decorations add a lot of fun and festivity to the final weeks of school before break. This competition allows for the creative side of many students and teachers to shine while at the same time makes the halls of the Ad Building an art gallery filled with Christmas Spirit. The tradition for door decorating was introduced last school year for the first time and hopefully will remain a fun part of the Christmas season for many more years to come.

Congratulations to Molly Ahola and Mrs. Lacey for winning the competition this year.



Amateur Hour

With rounds of Family Feud punctuating the acts, UCA's annual amateur hour was held late into the evening of November 18 during Parent & Grandparent Weekend.



The swell in Taco Bell

by Davis Wiggins

Those who have ever been on tour will know the complete pandemonium that unleashes as soon as we make a food stop. Through many tours over many years, Taco Bell has become one of the most favorite stops.

As the buses stop, students pour out in a seemingly endless stream. The smart students already have their plans made before even stepping foot off the bus. A large majority turn and run toward the tacos and burritos which seem to call their names. As the students run and push their way to the crosswalk they are hoping beyond hope to be the first to enter the fine eating establishment.

I can only imagine how threatening it must be for the workers, enjoying their quiet, normal day at work until 50 teenagers appear out of nowhere and unleash chaos, charging through the door, yelling, and destroying any sort of peace. But, then again, that is one of the few things we are really good at.

One by one, students walk up to the counter, knowing exactly what they want after doing all the necessary calculations in line, trying to maximize the seven dollars they are given for the meal without spending any extra. They order more food than is healthy and much more than they should be able to eat in one sitting. Silence slowly takes over as the students gorge themselves with cheap fast food which may as well be a five-star, three-course meal.

Hunger satisfied, the students wander back toward the bus one group at a time, excited to sit back down and sleep off the food coma that will no doubt follow before the day is over.

The struggles of winter driving

by Rachel Seeley

It's that time of the year again. The snow is falling, the ice is forming, and car troubles are starting.

Those who drive to UCA's campus can probably understand this frustration. Ice hardens on windshields, and takes FOREVER to scrape off. The car is too cold for hands, noses, feet, and every other part of the body that happens to be sitting in it, waiting for it to warm up. Frosty breath can be seen from a mile away. Windshields are unable to defog. The snow continues falling, making drivers use their windshield wipers excessively.

The traffic is even worse. It moves at a snail's pace on roads that are posted for 60 miles per hour. Slush makes changing lanes near impossible, and sliding on ice is frightening and hazardous. Yes, driving on the slick roads can be alarming and dangerous. Winter is a scary time for drivers, so don't forget studded tires and those winter driving skills!



Dorm traditions

by Chloe Paago

The girls' dorm has officially started their Thursday night minute activity. Thursday night minute activities are when each hall competes against the others in various events every Thursday night. Village girls who attend are allowed to pick which hall to join for the competition.

The first activity was the Fruit Roll-Up Challenge. In this event, each person takes a fruit roll-up and tries to eat it without using their hands. The first person to swallow all of it wins. But participants must be careful. If they drop it, they are not allowed to use their hands to pick up, only their mouths.

Little Sister and Big Sister is another tradition in the UCA Girls' dorm. It's when a senior or junior girl "adopts" a little sister (freshman or sophomore). Then, they can hang out and get to know each other. It gives the girls a chance to form closer bonds and for the dorm to feel more like a family. Choosing is on a first-come first-served basis. Multiple girls can also team up to adopt a little sister.

On homeleave nights, the Girls' dorm is bustling with people trying to clean up the dorm. Each girl is assigned a cleaning task. Whether it's vacuuming the dirty halls, scrubbing nasty toilets, washing filthy mirrors, or cleaning bacteria infected doorknobs, you will find a girl cleaning. Afterwards, a movie is played in the lobby and snacks are available.

It's the season

by Clair Barrutia

You know winter is coming when the cold nips at your nose or when the days are getting shorter. But in the girls' dorm, it is when the birds start flying in.

On a Thursday in mid October, four birds flew into the dorm looking for shelter from the cold. Some girls suspect they got in through the open windows with no screens. Girls tried to catch them without them getting hurt, but a few birds were dazed from hitting the windows while trying to leave the dorm. A few girls screamed as one of the birds flew straight at them, trying to reach the windows.

It took a while for the birds to be caught because they kept flying away in fear, but, in the end, they all left the dorm safely. So if you do not wish to have a bird flying through your humble home, close the windows that have no screens.

Last Friday of October

by Maddy Clark

The cool breeze blows through the orange leaves of the trees on campus. The leaves are being raked into piles. Students watch the sunset as they walk to their final class. A peaceful and content attitude is felt all over campus. And then the snow begins to fall.

No one saw it coming, considering it was only the end of October. The students had just begun to enjoy the peaceful scent of the fall air, but on that Friday afternoon the snow began to fall. It started with a pounding hail storm. Students sprinted through the grass to get to other buildings on campus before they were completely covered by the hail. Others waited under the cover of the buildings. After that, the snow began to fall continuously.

Many students were prepared to go home or to a friend's house for the weekend, and some lucky ones made it out before the roads got too slick. But for the people that left later, the road would greet them with lots of sliding. The students and staff made it to their destinations safely, but there were many accidents on the way. Police car lights flashed beside cars that had slid off of the road.

The snow continued to fall all weekend. It covered the ground, creating a clean, white canvas. Students went outside to build snowmen and have snow ball fights. The Christmas mood was felt possibly a little too early. Christmas music began to play and students were feeling the holiday spirit. Many were confused that the weather had changed so dramatically, but the snow was welcomed with open arms.

Many of us enjoy all different types of seasons. Many enjoy when the leaves are falling or when the sun is pounding down at 100 degrees. But many of the students were very thankful for the clean snow that fell on the last Friday of October.



October snowman builders

Stayin' awake

by Jonathan Terry

After daylight saving time, the days grow shorter, and a few unlucky people who have a 7:35 class go to class in the dark. Also, there are others who don't get out of school until 5:30, long after the sun has set. Sometimes, it is difficult to focus when it's dark. We feel more inclined to curl up into a ball. So what can we do to make sure we stay sharp and awake in class during these winter months rather than succumbing to the darkness?

1. Tug on your earlobes. This seems like a weird thing to do, but studies have shown that due to accupoints on your ears, it keeps your mind sharp and focused

2. Ask questions in class. This appears to be an obvious solution, but not many people do it. This is a great way to not only make sure you understand the lesson being taught but also to keep your mind focused on what's being taught rather than on sleeping.

3. Shed a layer. If it is warm in the classroom, your jacket will feel like a warm blanket around you. To combat this, take off your jacket in class and the cool breeze will most likely keep you focused.

4. Sit closer to the front. Not only will the sound of the teacher's voice keep you awake but the fear of getting caught sleeping will also be a motivating factor.

5. Don't slouch. Slouching causes unnecessary stress on your muscles and leads to fatigue. It is much harder to sleep if you're sitting up straight!

I don't know any of these tips will help, but give them a shot. Not only will it most likely improve your grades, but the teachers are also much more likely to enjoy teaching bright-eyed and wide-awake students. Remember, they might be just as tired as you are!

Winter Music Tour

by Daniel Stratte

On the afternoon of Friday December 1, UCA Choraliers, Octet, and String Quartet left for South Hill's annual Journey to Bethlehem to sing and play. For two performances, all three groups sang and played. Once finished, the group of music students headed back to UCA for the night.

Early the next morning, the bus, driven by Charles Hartman, left again with the same groups, but to Summit Northwest Ministries in Post Falls. The students performed for two services, and many people were blessed by the music. After a quick lunch, the bus headed out for Colville to sing for Music on the Menu, hosted by Shelley Bacon.

For those unfamiliar with Music on the Menu, families come to eat dinner in the Bacon home in Colville, and pay \$100 to hear a song by Choraliers, Octet, String Quartet, or another vocal or piano performance. The money then goes toward a good cause, such as a medical clinic in Ethiopia or tiny homes for people in poverty.

All of the songs prepared were sung and played, and, yet again, many people there were blessed as others will be blessed with the proceeds. The bus then headed back to UCA and arrived safely that night.

Locked Doors

by Zoey Shim

The Deans told all the girls on Monday, November 6, that the outside doors to the chapel would finally be open again since being locked during second semester last year. However, considering the shooting at Freeman High School, the deans made the decision to lock them again.

After the new decision was announced in worship, several girls were upset and asked why the doors couldn't remain unlocked. The reason is for dorm safety, to keep out intruders who could enter those doors unseen. However, the deans said that an exception would be made when Sabbath School is held in the chapel. At other times, the girls will have to continue to walk around to the main entrance to get into the dorm. Using the doors by the chapel will bring a \$25 fine.

A lot of the girls are frustrated that they have to take the long route around to the cafeteria, ad building, and music building; but in this case, safety is more important than convenience.

Closed tracks

by Thomas Warren

The summer inhabitants and day workers of UCA had a problem this last summer: The railroad tracks that cross Spangle-Waverly Road on the west side of campus were closed for four days, making travel to and from campus difficult. Multiple alternate routes were available, but most required a vehicle with significant ground clearance and, preferably, all-wheel-drive.

So by the time in October when the railroad crossing was closed again, the seasoned summer workers were prepared to find a way around the blockage. Students and families that had not dealt with this particular problem before, however, were not so ready. Many day students had to walk on to campus from Hy-mark, or were forced to find an alternate route to campus. These alternate routes mostly consisted of summer roads which are unmaintained field access roads, usually difficult to navigate without a suitable vehicle.

From this event we can learn three important life lessons. First, always read road signs. Second, be prepared and have a backup plan. And third, it's good to slow down and take a backroad once in a while.



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Tours!

by Elianna Srikureja

Some of the best times of a school year are tours. They are a great way to get to share your musical talents with other people, spend time with friends outside of class, and recruit other kids to UCA. This November, Band, Orchestra, and Choraliers joined for a Friday/Sabbath tour to Moses Lake and Yakima. The tour began early Friday morning with bleary-eyed students loading their hastily-packed belongings on to one of the two buses. After claiming a seat, the students waited patiently for Mr. Kramer and Mr. Hartman – the bus drivers – to deliver their safety speeches and get on the road.

The drive to Moses Lake was approximately 2 hours long, which many students found was enough time to take a quick nap. After they arrived, a cumulative rush to the bathroom facilities ensued, followed by warmups for each group and a prayer for all to do their best. The performance itself was a learning experience: follow the conductor, count, and don't rush.

For lunch that Friday, all students were provided with \$7.00 to buy whatever they wished to eat. They were dropped off at the nearest Walmart and left to their own devices. Then it was back on the bus for the two-hour drive to Yakima. That evening, the performance started with a number from the Band, followed with beautifully arranged pieces from both the Orchestra and Choraliers. After the performance, a quick load up of the instruments, and the drive to the church (where the families with whom the students were staying that night were waiting), the students grabbed their luggage and went to their respective houses for a good-night's sleep. Sabbath morning found them back at the church for yet another performance.

On the ride back to their home-sweet-home (UCA), many felt the happiness that comes when they share the gifts that God has given. Countless people were blessed by the music, and although the students were exhausted from the trip, all would agree it was worth it.

COMING UP

Rec Ski

January 5 - SWOP Retreat

January 18-20 - UCA Band Clinic

January 25-27 - WWU Friendship Tournament

February 1-5 - Home Leave



Unappreciated Blessings

by Caleb Nelson

Every ten seconds a child dies from hunger. Today, more than 815 million people don't have enough to eat. This means more than eleven percent of the world's population suffers from hunger, and one in every three people is malnourished. Nearly half of the deaths in children under the age of 5 are linked to malnutrition. This equates to roughly 3.1 million children who die from hunger every year.

"Ugh, I hate the cafeteria food. When will they ever get anything good?" I've heard countless comments like this for years. Cafeteria food has long been the butt of many jokes and a classic boarding school complaint, yet I think we should stop for a moment and think about what we're really saying.

Many of the cafeteria staff work tirelessly to plan, prepare, and provide food for us two hundred picky teenage students. Some of the cafeteria staff get up as early as 4:00 a.m. to be able to have breakfast ready for us on schedule. Much goes on behind the scenes in the cafeteria. The staff don't simply make and prepare meals. Innumerable hours are spent planning the meals, trying to cater to two hundred and thirty different students' tastes all the while keeping meal costs within their budget. Food, cleaning supplies, and other utilities must be ordered, shipped, sorted, and stored as well. The cafeteria must be cleaned, bathrooms maintained, and weekend shifts organized.

Food preparation may seem simple enough, but it consumes countless hours. Staff must prepare multiple meals every day and clean up between every meal. They also have to consider those with dietary restrictions and make sure there is another option available for them. This can be a massive challenge in and of itself as some people's diets are extremely restrictive, leaving the cafeteria with very few options, yet the amazing staff still manages to care for them.

All the while, we simply walk into the cafeteria, surrounded by food, and complain that we don't like it. How can we do this while nearly 20 percent of the world's children are undernourished? Sadly, many of these children will die, and those that don't will never reach their full potential. Malnutrition physically damages their bodies so much, they cannot ever grow or learn to their full potential. The majority of these children are forced to spend the rest of their lives, as well as most of their limited strength and resources, simply trying to get the food they need to survive. They will be plagued with recurring illnesses, developmental disabilities, and low productivity. How can we complain and throw away our food when saving just one fourth of the wasted food across the globe could feed approximately 870 million people? Hunger kills more people each year than AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined, yet many of us don't even think of simply saying thank-you for the food that surrounds us.

Thankfully, some do recognize the hard work put in by the staff and appreciate the food they so graciously provide for us. If you appreciate the cafeteria staff and work they put in, take a moment to let them know. A simple thank you can really brighten someone's day.



The library doors were especially festive before Christmas

An important Anniversary

by Jared Wallen

October 31 was the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther nailing his 95 theses to the chapel doors. This sparked the reformation of the Catholic Church and the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. Commemorating the anniversary, the Upper Columbia Conference held meetings in the Spokane Convention Center. The presenter, Woodrow Whidden, a college professor from Andrews University who is well versed in the life of Martin Luther, believes Luther's character was "delicious." Because of the special nature of the event, UCA students were bussed to the Convention Center for the meetings on Sabbath morning.

The meetings began on Thursday night and went through Saturday afternoon, with a total of five meetings. Whidden started with a history of Martin Luther's life, how he came to oppose the Catholic Church, and how he translated the entire Bible into German. He talked about how Luther helped a group of runaway nuns find husbands among his Bible students, how he ended up marrying one himself, and how he was constantly on the run from the Church. Throughout the remainder of the meetings he covered the five Solas of the Reformation: Sola Gratia, Grace Alone; Sola Fide, Faith Alone; Solus Christus, Christ Alone; Soli Deo Gloria, Glory of God Alone; and Sola Scriptura, Scripture Alone. He also shared several other points including how the church and society should interact, the importance of people being able to read and understand for themselves what the Bible says, the responsibility of government leaders, and how individuals can know how to understand the will and ways of God.

Miracles do happen

by Jordan Judge

Many people today believe the miracles of the Bible actually happened, but most think that miracles like that don't today. Well, on a November night this year, I experienced that God was looking out for me.

Two of my friends and I decided to leave school and drive to Cheney to pick up snacks. We arrived in Cheney did our grocery shopping, returned to my car, and began heading back to dorm. As soon as we left Cheney, my car began to have problems. The speedometer was not working, the headlights weren't working, and the car began to die. I looked for a place to pull off the road and pulled into a driveway just as the car died. We got out of the car, called Dean Hess, and began our expert diagnosis of the problem. The car would not start: the battery was dead.

We saw people were home in the house at the end of the driveway and decided to ask if they could jump-start the car. They agreed, and as they were connecting the cables, we found out one of them was an auto mechanic. He looked at the car and said that the alternator was bad and would have to be replaced. Since an alternator charges the battery and provides the electricity for the car to run, he told us that we would not be able to make it back to school: the car was going to die.

Dean Hess had arrived, and we decided to try driving back to the school with him following just in case the car died. We thanked the men and started back down the dark Spangle-Cheney Road, knowing we would run in to more problems. We made it all the way to the cafeteria, but as soon as I turned off the car, it refused to start again. As we walked back to the dorm, we counted our blessings and realized that God had performed a series of small miracles for us. My car had died in a convenient location where people were friendly and helpful, and one of them was an auto mechanic who knew what was wrong with the car. If we had traveled one mile further, there would have been no cell phone service, and to top it off, the car made it all the way back to school without a problem. We were humbled, and prayed together in front of the Administration Building to thank God for watching out for us and caring about us.

It was an amazing experience and let us know that God has our back in every situation. He cares about you too. Call out to Him when life is awful and stressful, and He will be there.

Dealing with stress

by Rachelle Santee

How does one deal with the constant stress of life? At school, teachers are constantly giving tests, quizzes, and assignments; and on top of that are music performances, big weekends, family problems, plus all the drama students find themselves trapped in. So what is the key to not lying on the floor crying every day because it's just too much? UCA promotes a personal relationship with God, but this almost seems hypocritical considering how busy school life is. But life doesn't get easier after high school, so it actually is good preparation for the future. If students don't learn to put God first now, it won't be any easier to do later. Sometimes we just have to pray and ask for God to give us the strength just for the moment. If God is first on the priority list, everything else will end up falling into place. God will give the peace needed to get through the test there was no time to study for. He will help us handle the drama, the homework and the performances. True strength is found in weakness—when we are on our knees. Life can get overwhelming and sometimes people break down, but just because someone falls doesn't mean they can't get up again. The goal in life isn't to fall the least but to get up every time.

Five o'clock blues

by Kaitlyn Kramer

With the sun setting as early as 4:00 pm, it can be easy to think that our days of seeing it are behind us. Greeted only by darkness after leaving 11th period has a way of giving us the impression that it is much later than it is. It can become all too easy to lose motivation for anything that doesn't include lying horizontal, snuggled in copious numbers of blankets; after all, it was only a few short centuries ago that humanity's signal to sleep was the setting of the sun. However, in this modern age of technology we are forced to carry on even when it feels like the middle of the night comes five hours too soon.

All inconveniences aside, the disappearing act of the sun can have a detrimental effect on our mood. This is known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), and it is a very real concern for anyone in the Northern Hemisphere. Its main claim to fame is that it is a form of depression caused by a vitamin D deficiency hitting home around mid-fall and staying throughout the winter, causing us to feel moody and sapped of energy. It also can have all sorts of unfortunate side effects such as weight gain, oversleeping, fatigue, and a general sense of hopelessness.

SAD is a strong opponent, but it can be beat. Simple things such as keeping a gratitude journal, thinking of something positive every day, talking about how you're feeling with friends, getting up earlier so you can get some time in the sun before class, eating oranges, drinking plenty of water, and exercising regularly can be a big morale boost. Don't let the darkness bring you down, but if it does, try to remember that this happens every year and that no matter how much it feels like the sun has moved on to a greener pasture, it will return in the spring.