



## Alumni Newsletter—January 2009

### C o o r d i n a t o r ' s   C o m m e n t s

Greetings! I hope this year's Recreation Program Newsletter finds you and your family well. As usual, there are several significant developments to share with you. First, this marks my 25th year with the Recreation Program. (A quarter of a century! I know; most of my classes felt that long!) More importantly, this is our first year without Jim Moore as an integral member of the faculty and the Phase. As many of you know, Jim retired at the end of this past summer. We had a couple of great retirement events to celebrate Jim's amazing contributions to the Recreation Program and Western Washington University. Jim and his wife, Jan, have taken a break to spend time with Jim's family in California. Jim has been taking advantage of the California sunshine to sneak in a few games of baseball. At last report, he's enjoying his surroundings, the company of family, and a glass or two of wine. Jim will be returning in the spring to continue his new career of playing baseball, enjoying his grandsons, and discovering new interests. He expressed his deepest appreciation to everyone who had a hand and kind thought during his "retirement tour" last year.

On a related front, Keith Russell, who took Jim's position on faculty, is fully on board and is doing a fantastic job. He's already made quite an impression with his splendid teaching, substantial scholarship, constant kindness, and enduring encouragement. Keith has great energy and many ideas that will enhance the Phase. You'll hear more from Keith later in the Newsletter.

It's been a busy year for the Recreation Program. Jill Heckathorn and I were joined by several students at the National Recreation Inclusion Institute in Eugene, Oregon during early September. Jill also accompanied students to the North American Ecotourism Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Not to be outdone, Keith traveled with students to the International Association for Experiential Education Conference in Vancouver, Washington. By all reports, students and faculty had a terrific time, learned a great deal, and made impor-

tant career contacts. By the way, we're able to make it possible for students to attend conferences and participate in other professional activities thanks to your donations to the Recreation Program. And needless to say, we appreciate your ongoing support so we can continue to involve students in these and other professionally-enriching opportunities.

Near the end of October, the faculty met with its Professional Advisory Committee. Attending was Mickey Fearn of Seattle Parks and Recreation, Brit Kramer of the Washington Parks and Recreation Association, Tammy Leland of Crooked Trails, and Larry Otos of Mt. Vernon Parks and Recreation. In the morning, the Professional Advisory Committee met with Phase 4 students to discuss professional preparation and getting ready to enter the field of recreation and leisure services. In the afternoon, the Professional Advisory Committee talked with faculty about ways to improve the curriculum, focusing on developing outstanding leaders.

Also, by the time you read this we will have completed our 21st Annual Phase 4 Senior Banquet, where 240 students, faculty, staff, family, and friends joined in celebration! Western Washington University's new President, Dr. Bruce Shepard, and his wife, Cyndie Shepard, also attended the Banquet. Dr. Karen Bradley, interim Chair of Physical Education, Health, and Recreation, also attended. Mr. Mickey Fearn, Manager of Community Connections for Seattle Parks and Recreation, was the inspiring featured speaker. As usual, Phase 4 students were fantastic. Several students were singled out for their accomplishments. Emily Malsack and Sarah McGloghlon received Academic Excellence Awards. Greta Olson was recognized with the Leadership Award for her contributions to the Phase. Finally, Abby Quarterman received the Outstanding Senior Award and delivered a moving speech. Capping off the evening, Morgan Olson, a Phase 2 student, performed a beautiful song.

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# News From Jill Heckathorn

I am watching the 12th inch of snow fall, which has slowed me down and allowed me the luxury of reflecting back on 2008. The year was certainly marked by Jim's retirement and I miss his presence around the office. But I also feel incredibly fortunate to have Keith's wealth of experience, good humor and team spirit helping us move into this new 'phase' in the program. Even in the middle of a fall quarter that Charlie pegged as 'the perfect storm', I felt fortunate to have such meaningful work and extraordinary colleagues to keep me on my toes. Katey continues to be my salvation on many fronts and she coordinated the biggest senior banquet ever; it was a great event. I can't overstate the importance of Charlie's unwavering commitment to quality leadership and his willingness to guide the department through the next four years. I count on Randy's humor to help maintain balance during stressful times and love the levity and fun that visits from his boys bring to our lives.

I had the good fortune of attending both the National Institute on Recreation Inclusion in September and the International Ecotourism Conference in late October. We had another extraordinary Camp TEAM during Phase I with some remarkable leadership from the TR students in Phase IV. The ecotourism class visited Neah Bay for the 6th year continuing the tradition of working with tourism planners, meeting with elders, and learning

about the rich natural and cultural resources of the Makah Nation. We also had the opportunity this year to paddle traditional canoes with the lead paddlers of the Tribal Journeys program.

A few exciting things on the home front: my mom turned a healthy and happy 90 in December and, as a first time voter, Jake took part in a history-making election. My husband, Glenn, is busily building yet another small wood boat; this time a two station rowboat. Deciding to use some accumulated frequent flyer miles, Glenn, Jake and I leave this Saturday for a two week trip to Peru....that is, if we can get to the airport!

Best wishes for a playful 2009 - keep us posted on your adventures. — Jill  
([jill.heckathorn@wwu.edu](mailto:jill.heckathorn@wwu.edu))



Tom Feller and Phase I students—  
Adapted Sports Day 2008

## Greetings from Keith Russell

Hello, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to all of you. I was fortunate enough to be hired to replace the irreplaceable Jim Moore as he and his wife Jan have embarked on their new adventures in retirement down in the sunshine of California. My wife Sheri and my two little girls Alena (8) and Maysie (5) moved to Bellingham in July and have been enjoying settling into our new home, schools, playgrounds, and parks. We are beyond excited to be here after our journeys in New Hampshire for two years and Minnesota for three, where I was a faculty member and coordinator of the University of Minnesota's Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies program. We truly feel as though we have 'come home' to the Pacific Northwest, as my parents reside in Wenatchee and I have sisters in Seattle and Portland. We have already had several grammy and grampa visits, and Alena and Maysie have gotten to spend nice time with their three cousins down in Seattle. In our free time, my family and I love to explore wild places, including our annual trip to Idaho to float the Salmon River with our friends.



My specific area of research involves recreation and youth development, with a focus on how adventure-based programming in wilderness and natural areas can help augment and enhance treatment services for young people who have lost their way. I will be teaching many of the classes Jim taught over the years, including Adventure Programming, Human Relations, and Recreation Programming, and am enjoying my first quarter with the impressive Phase IV students. It is wonderful working and interacting with our engaged students and Charlie, Jill, Randy and Katey as we strive to uphold Western's reputation as one of the finest Recreation programs in the United States.

I look forward to meeting many of you in the coming months at events, conferences, and through our work in the program. Seems like every time I run into someone in the great state of Washington, whether riding my bike, having coffee in Winthrop, or talking to parents on the sidelines of my girls' soccer games, they are either a Recreation alumni themselves or know Charlie, Jill, Jim and Randy because of their service to the community and state. I hope to meet you all soon and wish you well. — Keith ([keith.russell@wwu.edu](mailto:keith.russell@wwu.edu))

## Hello from Randy Burtz

As I write this note I can't help but be amazed by how many things can change in a year. Veronica, my wife, was pregnant with our second child and the faculty were busy reviewing applications for Jim's impending retirement. Now my second son is 10 months old, and Dr. Keith Russell has made it through his first Phase IV. I can't imagine what another year will bring...many exciting changes I'm sure. I certainly hope this reaches you all doing well and enjoying life to the fullest. I know this may seem cliché, but please check in with us and keep us posted on your life. One of the many rewards of this job is getting to hear from alumni and finding out what you are up to. Take care and we hope to hear from you soon. —Randy ([randy.burtz@wwu.edu](mailto:randy.burtz@wwu.edu))

Carson holding newborn Hudson



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## Coordinator's Comments Continued

*(Continued from page 1)* We also want to take this opportunity to update you on fundraising efforts that support our students. As usual, we greatly appreciate your generous contributions to the Recreation Program Foundation. Your donations have made it possible for us to enrich students' education through resources, such as media and equipment, and trips to workshops and conferences. Taking students on fieldtrips where they can witness and engage in programs has made a huge difference in their development. There is also the Phase 4 Legacy Scholarship, which was started by 2006 Phase 4. The scholarship is intended to support deserving students during their internship. We're still growing the fund, and our plan is to make it a fundraiser for each group of Phase 4 students—a chance for them to contribute to the legacy of the Phase. So they've been busy raising money this quarter (no pun intended) and we'll let you know how they do. One other scholarship is the newly conceived Recreation Faculty Scholarship. It's common for departments to start scholarships in honor of a particular faculty who has retired. The faculty didn't feel, though, that this represented the way things are done in the Phase. We've always tried to submerge ourselves individually, emphasizing instead ourselves as a team of educators working together toward a common goal. So we decided to call it the Recreation Faculty Scholarship to honor all faculty members who have re-

tired from the Recreation Program. Right now that's Ron Riggins and Jim Moore (Jill and Charlie are hot on their heels, but students will have to put up with them for awhile longer). If you'd like to honor Ron and Jim for their outstanding work as teachers, we encourage you to make a special donation to the Recreation Faculty Scholarship. Again, your support for all of our efforts is greatly appreciated, especially during this fiscally difficult period when budgets are being slashed. Every little bit helps.

Well, Jill, Keith, and Randy will be catching you up with their busy lives next. You'll also be hearing from one of our standout students, Christine Bultedoab, and catching up on alumni news. I just want to express what I'm always privileged to state on behalf of faculty and students, which is to thank you for your support and commitment to the Recreation Program. Faculty and students are inspired to do our best because of the legacy of excellence that you have had a major hand in creating. We'll continue to do our best, knowing that our alums are behind us with their amazing support and achievements.

Best wishes, Charles Sylvester  
Still the Uncoordinated Coordinator ([cdsyl@wwu.edu](mailto:cdsyl@wwu.edu))

### Phonathon — February 2

The WWU Foundation's student callers look forward to speaking with you this year when we begin the Recreation Program phonathon on February 2, 2009. Your gift will fund student activities, the Phase 4 scholarship, and equipment and materials that the University is unable to provide us. These resources enrich student learning. Thanks in advance for answering the call! And thank you to all of you who have so generously donated in the past!

**Hard to get a hold of? No problem, you can make your gift online at [www.wwu.edu/give](http://www.wwu.edu/give).**

## Alumni News

After two years of being an assistant principal at Silverdale Junior High School, **Susan Jung ('99)** is serving as interim principal at Silverdale for this year. Susan reported: "I immensely enjoy the challenges, learning opportunities, and rewards of running a school of 940 adolescent students and 80+ staff members; running a school is almost identical to recreation programming, so I feel very well equipped for the position."

**Claire Mosher ('04)** is currently a first year veterinary student at Michigan State University and says she is quite famous among her classmates for having the most unique undergraduate degree! Her background as a Recreation major turned out to be an asset for her during the application and interview process. They were impressed at the array of courses she took as a Recreation major, including human relations, management, evaluation, etc.

**Beth Griffin ('05)** is enjoying a career in the Boston area working year-round for a summer camp company as the coordinator of their sponsored non-profit camp for kids who lost a parent

through the attacks on September 11, 2001 or who lost a parent at any time in the line of duty (America's Camp). She also helps coordinate the alumni efforts for 12 summer camps in their company; it's a big task! She says Boston is great but she really misses Washington, especially Bellingham.

**Ryan Huetter ('06)** instructs mountaineering courses for Outward Bound in the Sierras, lives 20 minutes from Yosemite, and has climbed El Capitan twice this season. He is currently on a 3-month Patagonian climbing expedition, on which he will be attempting several summits in the Cerro Torre group of Argentinian Patagonia. Next year's plans include further professional development with Outward Bound, soloing an El Cap route, and winning the lottery.

**Brett Upchurch ('07)** recently moved to Jackson Hole to snowboard for the winter. He and a friend drove out there for a job fair and were offered jobs. With the job at the resort comes a season's pass! He plans to be there until at least April...longer if he finds a full-time job.



### UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION

If any of your contact information has changed recently or you haven't filled out an information card in awhile, please go to the Alumni Information Form on our website where you can send Katey an email with your updated information:  
[www.wwu.edu/pehr/Recreation/alumni\\_info\\_form.shtml](http://www.wwu.edu/pehr/Recreation/alumni_info_form.shtml)

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alumni\\_info\\_form.shtml](http://www.wvu.edu/pehr/Recreation/alumni_info_form.shtml)*

## More Than Just Yo-Yos and Dodgeball

As Recreation majors, we get used to defending our studies and our field. In Phase I, my response to the barrage of pre-assumptions from people who had never heard of the field of Recreation and Leisure Studies usually came out a little sheepishly. At the very least I would babble on about inherent human rights or Aristotle and then just awkwardly laugh. Now, nearing the end of Phase IV, I look at how the program has challenged me academically, socially, and personally. I wonder, how do I feel about 'defending' the field of recreation now?

The Recreation program has challenged me academically with the practical education we receive through the infamous Fern- dale project, the community neighborhood project, lectures on critical thinking and ethics, and the battle all of us in Phase IV are now fighting which is that of term papers and budget presentations.

Due to the structure of the Phase cohort system, socially the Recreation program has encouraged lasting relationships: different people, different backgrounds, different opinions, but all with the same passion for people, recreation, and leisure.

Finally, the program combines academia and sociality to affect us personally, challenging us to think outside the box, build a foundation for our beliefs, and encourage our growth both professionally and as a quality human being.

After the completion of almost four quarters as a Recreation major, I have come to grow stronger in my convictions and grow as a person. I believe recreation has the ability to fill in the gaps that traditional therapies may lack. You would be hard pressed to find any line of work that can bridge the diversity of the Catholics and Protestants in Ireland by having a surfing camp for kids, or unite refugees in a war-torn country through the universal language of football, or boost moral in an office by playing goofy get-to-know-you games like recreation can. Recreation can apply to the broadest of populations and reach to the most marginalized.

Yes, this is why I am proud to be a Recreation major and defend the phase/the recreation field in general, even if not by words, then by deed. It seems to me that recreation professionals—whether in tourism, community, outdoor or TR—are unsung heroes. We are the glue that holds the world together through our knowledge of leisure. I feel that the way I defend the Recreation Major now isn't necessarily more proud or less sheepish than when I started the program, but rather, it is rooted in a deep confidence that I am doing what I believe in. Even if we as Recreation professionals are unsung, I would rather be unsung than no hero at all.

—Christine Bultedaob, Phase IV 2008