the free press

Louraine’s ‘One Blue Pearl’
Student directs organization for teaching about carbon credits

Mary Jones  Staff Writer

It all began on a boat, while Louraine Rudolph was cruising around one of Maine’s numerous bays.

“I was sitting there on the boat and looking at one of the most beautiful places in the world and knew we have to save this,” said Rudolph, a sophomore theater major.

That idea spurred a dream that is now becoming a reality. Rudolph is now the executive director of “One Blue Pearl,” a non-profit organization looking to save the world one person at a time.

“Our mission is to educate people about offsetting their carbon output,” said Rudolph.

Beyond the clash of civilizations

Brandon McKenney  Staff Writer

“My name is Daniel Pearl. I am a Jewish-American from Encino, California.”

In his last moments, Daniel Pearl could not escape the horror he had spent the better part of his journalistic career spotlighting. Following those forced final words, Pearl would be slain by his captors, a group of Islamic militants inside Pakistan. And so another chapter of the Arab-Jewish divide had been written. But his voice would not be silenced.

Spurred by the media attention surrounding his death, Pearl’s family would quickly find the Daniel Pearl Foundation in an effort to continue his work of fostering constructive dialogue between Jews and Muslims.

Part of that effort includes a lecture tour, featuring a dialogue between his father, Jedei Pearl, and Islamic scholar Akbar Ahmed.

The presentation will come to USM on Monday, April 7.

“The event will be a moderated dialogue with questions from the audience in an effort to create a frank and respectful discourse about a very fiery topic.

“It is one of the flashpoints of our 21st century,” says Abraham Peck, Director of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Studies at USM.

Peck believes students need to be engaged with issues such as this, if only for the simple reality that Americans are no longer immune to the bloodshed that has consumed so much of the world.

Peck is also confident that students will attend, citing crowds of close to 1,000 at two previous events.

See BEYOND page 13

USM’s Board of Visitors gives report on university’s future

Matt Dodge  News Editor

Just before campus cleared out for vacation, the USM Board of Visitors presented a report on the future of the university.

The report, called the “Southern Maine Imperative II,” calls on the local community to make a substantial investment in the university, which they think is in the best interests of both the region and the school.

The Imperative II comes eight years after the first Imperative. It has been called a “report card,” but it also redefines goals and sets new expectations, especially in light of the current financial hole in which USM has found itself.

The Board of Visitors serves as an ad-vocacy group for USM and includes members of the business, legal and educational communities in Maine. Many on the board are alumni.

Citing USM as the economic and cultural driver of the region, the 28-page report outlines how a “healthy USM leads to a healthier region, which in turn leads to a healthy state.”

Calling USM the “fuel in the engine of economic and soci-al growth,” the report presents right recommendations for the growth and health of the university.

These goals include increasing research and development, earning national distinction, and improving retention.

While the board offers some ideas for how these might be reached, it leaves figuring out implementation up to the university.

Despite current budget concerns, the Board of Visitor’s recommen-dations do not focus solely on getting the school back on firm financial footing. Rather, the report sets forth long-term goals which aim to boost the reputation of USM.

Investment from local businesses to ensure the success of USM can only help the university, according to Blackwood.

See VISITORS page 13

24 ‘weather events’ later

David O’Donnell  Staff Writer

In the final days of March, Portland’s snowfall total topped 100 inches for the season – that’s 30 above the yearly average, and a marked departure from last year’s mild winter.

So far, this has been the 14th snowiest in the city’s history, and USM has experienced plenty of delays, cancellations and annoyances.

But don’t blame it for any of our budget woes.

Last summer, Facilities Management began fielding bids from local paving contractors, who turn to plowing snow during their slow winter months. The bids constitute a fixed rate for the entire season, and are typically based on an estimated 15 snowstorms.

Regardless of what follows, the price sticks, and the lowest bidder walks away with the prize.

Over the winter of 2006-07, it was the contractors who clearly emerged with the better deal.

Not so this winter – so far, there have been 24 “weather events.” So the term “winning bidder” may be used lightly.

For the 2007-08 school year, Glidden Excavating & Paving was awarded the contract for the Portland campus, while Peter Pinkham Inc. handles Gorham.

See WEATHER page 13
Monday April 7
Free Press Budget Meeting.
Want to write? Want to tell us what we should be writing? All are welcome / 92 Bedford Street. Portland campus / 5pm-6pm / For more information email Sarah Trent at sarah.trent@yahoo.com.

Mock Interviewing with Employer Representatives.
Students will meet with employers individually to practice their interviewing skills. They will receive valuable feedback from local employer representatives. Open to all majors. School of Business, 113 Luther Bonney Hall. Portland campus / 5:30pm-7pm / Students must RSVP to Melissa Burns at 780-4669 or mburns@usm.maine.edu.

Book Signing with Author Suzanne Strempek Shea - Winner of the 2000 New England Book Award for Fiction/ USM Portland Bookstore/ 7pm-8:30pm/ For more information please contact Interfaith Chaplains at 228-8093 or interfaith@usm.maine.edu.

Douglas M. Schair Lecture: “Beyond the Clash of Civilizations”: Professor Joceda Pearl, father of slain journalist Daniel Pearl, and Ambassador Akbar Ahmed, authority on Islam, will speak about Muslim and Jewish cultural issues. This event is free and open to the public / University Events Twisters, Ockman Family Library, Portland campus / 4:15pm-6:15pm/ For more information please contact Dani Nesland at dneland@usm.maine.edu.

Free Press Writing Workshop - Weekly meeting / 92 Bedford Street, Portland campus / 5pm-6pm/ For more information email Sarah Trent at sarah.trent@yahoo.com.

Model United Nations Organizational Weekly Meeting - If you like global affairs and conference planning, please join us! 217 Abromson Community Education Center, Portland campus / 5pm-5:30pm/ For more information please email jelenaarenac@usm.maine.edu.

Wednesday April 9
Interfaith - Conversations about Real Life Issues: The Environment/ USM Associate Chaplains will model respectful dialogue across lines of differing belief systems/ Faculty Dining Room, Brooks Student Center, Gorham/ 4pm-6pm/ For more information please contact Interfaith Chaplain, 228-8093 or interfaith@usm.maine.edu.

Lecture: “Law, Justice and Love in Shakespeare’s The Merchant of Venice” - Regina Schwartz from Northwestern University will present this lecture that is sponsored by USM’s English Department. Free and open to the public / University Events Twisters, Ockman Family Library, Portland campus / 1:45pm-2:15pm/ For more information please call 780-4291.

Student Group STAND: Movie Night - “A Devil Came On Horseback” - Genocide in Darfur / 10 Bailey Hall, Gorham Campus / 7pm-9pm.

Thursday April 10
USM Job Fair - Sponsored by Career Services and Professional Life Development. Free and open to the public/ Sullivan Gym, Portland campus / 12pm-4pm/ For more information visit Career Services and Professional Life Development.

Safe Zone Project Orientation Session - Join us to learn more about the LGBTQ community at USM, gain support for being a safe and supportive ally / 107 Luther Bonney Hall, Portland campus / 3:30pm-5pm/ RSVP required by 4/8 Email sparkel-holmes@usm.maine.edu or call 780-5767 for more information.

Meditation Club Meeting - Please come to our weekly open meetings to learn and practice methods for fostering peace in yourself/ 208 Luther Bonney Portland Campus/ 2:30pm-3:30pm/ For more information please contact yoonlawson@hotmail.com.

Friday April 11
Model United Nations Organization Weekly Meeting - For more information contact Gillian Brit 207-775-2126.

Tuesday April 8
Club Volleyball Team, Guys and Girls - weekly meetings on Tuesdays and Sundays/ Hill gym/Costello Sports Complex, Gorham Campus / 7pm-8pm / For more information contact Dani Nesland at dneland@usm.maine.edu.

Classical guitarist Keith Crook performed at the Corthell Concert Hall on Friday, April 4th. Crook plucked and strummed his way through a genre spanning show of original and existing compositions.
Volunteer closer to home

Stefanie Dvorak  
Staff Writer

While many students took the MTV route and spent their spring break stumbling through the sand at such seaside destinations as Cancun and Daytona Beach, others donated their time to build houses.

Some 30 USM students and one advisor traveled to Slidell, La., where nearly 85 percent of homes and businesses were destroyed when Hurricane Katrina hit the area in 2005.

In Maine, students from McGill, Purdue, Northwestern Connecticut Community College, and SUNY Oswego have been working with the Portland affiliate of Habitat for Humanity to construct and renovate homes over their own spring breaks. Habitat for Humanity was founded in 1976 by Millard and Linda Fuller to provide people with affordable shelter. So far, the nonprofit organization has built over 225,000 houses globally, providing more than one million people with a place to live.

The program’s volunteers build suitable homes for low-income families. The mortgage payments and the sale of the homes go back into Habitat for Humanity to build even more homes.

Globally, Habitat for Humanity is located in more than 90 countries. Additionally, those persons wishing to volunteer are able to do so in any state in the United States.

What happens now that spring break is over? Do USM students have volunteer opportunities here in their own backyard?

“Absolutely,” says Andrea Thompson-McCall, the director of community service at USM. Alternative Spring Break offered local options for those who could not travel, and her office allows for plenty of other chances throughout the year for students to work on projects here.

Students can get involved with the PIRG of find volunteer work through the office for community service and civic engagement, which Thompson-McCall runs. “Opportunities are available for students who don’t want to leave home or can’t,” she says.

Over the years, these volunteer projects have been recognized by the Student Volunteer Service Awards, the President’s Volunteer Service Awards, and the Governor’s Volunteer Service Awards.

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Consulting on personal financial issues, retirement planning and withdrawal strategies, investment portfolio consultation, development of tax management.

The Free Press  |  April 7, 2008  3

Why go so far, when there’s work to be done at home?

Alternative Spring Breaks are common among collegians in the U.S. In the Slidell area, students from New Jersey, Washington State and UCLA participated alongside USM students. There are many similar volunteering opportunities in the Greater Portland area.

According to Dan Wallace, Construction Manager for Habitat for Humanity-Greater Portland, their volunteers come from many walks of life, including companies, retirees, high school and college students alike. Students as young as 14 may volunteer, and there is really no age limit as long as you can pick up a hammer.

Currently, Habitat for Humanity-Greater Portland is working on improving building practices by “going green.” Soon volunteers, including students from McGill and Purdue, will begin construction on four new homes on Domers Street in Portland.

Volunteers don’t have to be skilled carpenters to work; “anyone who can lend a hand” is welcome, according to Wallace. The challenge is that when working, “you’re never going to know how much is going to get done.” There’s a lot of teaching involved, so you just have to take it one day at a time.

When asked about students volunteering in local areas instead of down south, Wallace believes that USM has been very gracious in working with Habitat, helping out with projects whenever needed. He recognizes that there is a national need, and USM seems to be “doing it all.”

He adds that volunteering your time in a foreign place is a great chance to “visit and learn about a new place.”

It’s always great when you can do both.
Ben Taylor takes SGA election by a landslide

Matt Dodge
News Editor

Experience paid off for sophomore Ben Taylor. The current vice chair of the USM Student Senate won the recent SGA Presidential race carrying a commanding 44 percent of the vote.

Taylor’s term as president will officially begin at the end of the semester, at the same time that next year’s 12 elected senators are officially seated so that they can approve the budgeted allocation of the Student Activity Fee.

The other two presidential hopefuls, Adam Royer and Ben Skillings, garnered 27 and 23 percent of the vote, respectively. The remaining 5 percent went to write-in candidates.

However, these numbers might not be representative of the more than 10,000 students at USM only 345 voted in the presidential race.

This year, several students involved in student government cite the timing of elections as the reason for the low turn-out. In past years, candidates were allowed a full week of campaigning after announcing their candidacy.

This year, due to deadline extensions, campaign week went by without much notice.

Next week, we’ll look more at what happened, and feature profile of your next student body president.

If you’re interested in learning more about student government, stop by their office in the Woodbury campus center or attend the next Student Senate meeting, this Friday from 2:30-4:30 in 403 Woodbury Campus Center.

Laura Fellows
Intern

The University of Southern Maine’s sustainability program is being brought to the next level: USM has been selected as one of about 90 colleges nationwide to participate in the pilot stage of a new rating system.

This Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) is being developed as a means to measure and compare sustainability progress throughout college campuses nationwide.

While similar to the LEED rating system (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), a program that has awarded USM only a handful of USM buildings, STARS is a program that takes into account the sustainability processes of the entire campus, from building materials to food, curriculum, finances and more.

STARS is being developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), and has been launched to the testing stage this semester after approximately two years of preparation.

Ultimately, the completed program will give college campuses a system on which to base their sustainability measurements. Once this common system is in place, schools will be able to compare ratings and progress – even between schools that are very different from each other in all other aspects.

STARS works by creating a series of categories and subcategories in which the school can earn points based on its sustainability data. Some of these categories may change substantially before the testing is complete, but that’s why this testing phase is so important.

“It’s about involving people and finding out which processes work and where the barriers are,” says Dudley Greeley, USM’s sustainability coordinator.

These categories and points will become the standard upon which schools will base their ratings.

Greeley says that STARS will help USM to collect and control its data. “It’s important,” he says, “to create a common baseline by which you can compare your own situation from year to year; that’s the way it’s most useful.”

Once implemented, STARS will allow USM to eliminate waste and track its own sustainability information more efficiently.

“We’ve had problems with how to measure our ability to recycle, or buy more responsible flooring, or paint our walls with less problematic paint, and get some policies and systems developed, and this process is going to help move that forward, help formalize it, and help get more people involved.”

The testing phase began this semester. In order to participate, USM needed to be a member of AASHE, which carries a $1000 annual price tag. Due to a donation, the university was able to join and sign on to the STARS pilot stage.

While there are plenty of other “green” programs going on around campus, Greeley believes that this one has the potential to help organize the other campus efforts and create more community. One of the long-term benefits would be to keep sustainability programs on track as students come and go over the years.

Right now, Greeley and other faculty and staff are involved in coordinating the data, much of which is gathered by students.

Travis Wagner, assistant professor of Environmental Science & Policy, is getting students from his 300-level class involved in gathering data for the STARS project. Most of them are helping with the environmental categories of STARS, but others have looked for information from food services and other areas.

“This has been a difficult task, actually trying to find this data,” Wagner says. “You would think it’s pretty readily available and it’s not.”

Moving toward a more sustainable and environmentally “green” campus can be difficult, says Greeley, because “it’s not going to change overnight. Measuring a campus’s sustainability indicators is not an easy task.”

Eventually, however, he believes that not only will this program help USM become a more sustainable campus, but it will also allow all participating schools to learn more efficient processes and be able to compare notes more easily.

“Ultimately,” Greeley says, “it’s about culture change. This process is saying, ‘let’s start to measure more than just the money.’”

Measuring the ‘green’
(And we’re not talking about money)

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On Wednesday, March 19th, a group of USM students, staff, and faculty traveled from the Portland campus to the Lubin School of Business (LAC) to participate in a discussion titled “The Place of Ideology in the Classroom.” A part of the Gloria S. Duclos 2008 Convocation on Academic Freedom, this was uniquely a student-led event.

USM staff members Gabe Demaine and Pat Finn organized a “Freedom Bus” to travel from Portland to LAC for the event, and one of my professors, Dr. Wendy Chapkis, decided to take our Politics of Difference class along for the ride.

Here I present a journal I kept to document the experience.

4:13 p.m. - We “Freedom Bus” riders are gathering in the Woodbury Campus Center amphitheater. Dr. Chapkis had our class write brief essays on an assigned historical “Freedom bus,” and we’ve been asked to read them aloud. Me and the other woman who wrote about Rosa Parks and the Montgomery bus decide to stand, so I sense that small-group discussions will be a prominent aspect of the event.

4:42 p.m. - We’re on the bus — a cushy VIP coach — and Dr. Chapkis is getting things going by describing one of her own bus experiences. In 2003, she and other activists protesting the beginning of the war in Iraq were arrested for civil disobedience in Cumberland County jail in a bus. I feel so fortunate right now to be in a learning community in which many professors are politically active, and I think that this is an important aspect of academic freedom, which is what today is all about.

Employees of the university can participate in actions against what they see as injustice, without fearing the loss of their jobs.

5:23 p.m. - We have arrived at LAC and people are mingling. I have been staying close to people I know.

5:30 p.m. - Everyone is settling in their seats. Chairs are set up in comma-shaped groups of about seven, so I sense that small-group discussions will be a prominent aspect of the event.

5:45 p.m. - For the last fifteen minutes, various administrators and people involved in the planning of this event have been outlining the history building up to tonight. In fall 2006, USM closed the “Can’t Jail the Spirit” art show.

Some reactions called the closure an act against academic freedom. The Gloria S. Duclos convocation committee, which chooses a theme for a series of focused presentations each year, decided to center on academic freedom this year. LAC students organized to create tonight so that students, too, got a voice in the series. Tonight’s discussion will focus on silenced minorities in the classroom, and the student-professor power imbalance this causes.

6:10 p.m. - We have been divided into small groups, as I anticipated.

7:00 p.m. - The LAC organizers made two video “vignettes” to stimulate conversation. The first is a scene showing a political disagreement in the classroom, and difficulty students can face if they find their opinions in the minority and in disagreement with views held by a professor. The second explores student rigorous convictions, and the ways in which they also can be silenced in the classroom.

After each “vignette,” the facilitators passed around discussion questions to grapple with in our small groups. In the first discussion, I was the first to speak up, but the facilitator’s body language sent the message that he was uninterested in what I was saying. Self-conscious, I hadn’t said much since.

How odd that at a discussion of academic freedom, I feel silenced.

The LAC professor in my group seems very concerned with the issues raised, and asked us students what she could do to ensure that students feel comfortable to freely express their opinions in her classes. I was really touched by this, as she seemed to genuinely value our suggestions.

7:10 p.m. - One of the problems expressed by members of my group is the tendency for some professors to call on students with minority opinions to express THE conservative viewpoint, or THE liberal perspective, and so on.

This habit not only causes these students to feel as if they are being picked on, it also falsely oversimplifies matters.

In reality there is never a single conservative, liberal, or whatever opinion on an issue, but rather many, sometimes similar views held by those that identify within these categories.

Professors can improve by not preventing opinions in this flattened manner, but rather recognizing and approaching viewpoints as multifaceted.

7:20 p.m. - We’re in a planning session for future action in light of our discoveries tonight. Someone just mentioned the importance of being an ally, and this is something that has been emphasized in my Politics of Difference class as well.

One can act as an ally by standing together with someone who is being marginalized, regardless of whether one personally identifies with him or her.

In the university, this seems like an especially useful tool in building more comfortable spaces for expression, as allies can act to shift the power imbalance students face in the classroom.

7:25 p.m. - We Portlanders are back on the “Freedom Bus” and I am thinking about how impressive tonight’s program was. The LAC students organized the event successfully as an engaging dialogue, although, as in my case, which might demonstrate part of the problem, discussions may not have been as open as would be ideal.

The next convocation event, being an ally, and cancellation of Tom Manning’s “Can’t Jail the Spirit” exhibit, will take place this Friday, April 11, in the Talbot Auditorium.

It will feature Svetlana Mincheva, the art director of the National Coalition Against Censorship Arts Program; Dan Chard, a senior history major; Marie Follayttar, a senior art major; and G. Bug Swenson, a renowned Kemebnd artist displaying his “academic freedom” art work.

They will reevaluate the cancellation of the controversial exhibit and look at its implications for academic freedom for USM and beyond, based on new research into the forces and events influencing then-President Richard Pattenauke’s decision.

7:32 p.m. - Everyone is settled in their seats. The room is dark and quiet, with the exception of occasional groans about the event successfully as an engaging dialogue, although, as in my case, which might demonstrate part of the problem, discussions may not have been as open as would be ideal.

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Riders get ready for the Freedom Bus to leave Portland. They drove to Lewiston, hearing along the way of historical freedom buses, in order to attend the most recent event in USM’s Gloria S. Duclos Convocation. The event on the LAC campus was about the treatment of minorities in classrooms.
Why are they doing so well? They’re the primary source of essential, local news. While I respect and admire the people working at the Press Herald — because they’re doing what I aspire to do — I have to admit that I wouldn’t choose to read their newspaper.

Why do I need to read the AP wire stories that saw yesterday on your Yahoo! News wire? Do I need to re-hash the story I saw on last night’s news? And I’m not asking for more breaking news content on their website, because they seem to have begun doing in response to the news “crisis.”

Red Hat Society members, of all people, should know the feeling. Portlanders “Buy Local.” They eat local, want to read local.

As editor of the Free Press, I have learned to think on an ultra-local scale. We cover USM. We feature our students — my peers; our professors — my teachers and friends.

And though I’m hardly in a position to judge our content, since I help create it, they are who I am, and I think you want to be reading about.

I have two issues of the Press Herald pinned to the bulletin board above my desk: one is folded to show Beth Quimby’s Jan. 25 story, “Faucilyigrads call USM President. Why do I keep it? I’m quoted on page four.

The second I’ve kept is only two weeks old. It’s the story in which I told Justin Ellis about newspapers.

When I took over as Sports Editor last semester, I did so with the intention of improving what I thought was the weakest section in the paper. As a former USM athlete, I knew how much it sucked. It wasn’t the sports section in the paper. As a former USM athlete, I knew how much it sucked.

I think it is important for all of us, and for our community, to support our local newspapers. So often, I am asked what local newspapers are, and it is hard to define them. I can’t say openly is growing.

I think it is important for all of us, and for our community, to support our local newspapers. So often, I am asked what local newspapers are, and it is hard to define them. I can’t say openly is growing.

When I took over as Executive Editor this semester, I had the same goal on a larger scale.

PARIS, Maine (AP) — Donning my red hat (and gloves)

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Donning my red hat (and gloves)

Letter to the Editor

Marie Allen

Columnist

“When I am an old woman I shall wear red hats that don’t go and don’t suit me.” — Jenny Joseph

I have three dogs. One of them, Princess, always showed the potential to be a great dog, even after she ate the seat belt in our car during my driving test.

She is an old lady now. She wears a big red hat, and has gone from never thinking about entering the dining room during dinner to bringing the biggest mooch in the house — because she knows she can.

She is a woman, a human, she would be a member of The Red Hat Society. When I signed up for it, I thought it would be very different. I wasn’t, and I hate it.

It had potential though. Friends, for me, filled with possibilities and potential. I don’t have to worry about what to wear when I grow up, because I am, by legal standards, a grownup.

I am rarely without anything to say — just like Princess. While I don’t object as loudly to the existence of squirrels, I am aware that the list of things I can say openly is growing.

For example — I hate my Philosophy Class. There, I said it and I do feel better.

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College Democrats

There are a couple of errors in the article “College Democrats” (3/17) which deserve public correction. First, in the column titled “Equal opportunity,” the accurate reporting and an informed student body.

First, in the discussion reported on by David Stremling, “economic equality” was never mentioned as a value held by any group member. What was mentioned was equality of opportunity.

“Economic equality” sounds synonymous with communism, a system that commonly breeds equality of poverty and not one advocated by any Democrat.

Equality of opportunity, on the other hand, is something far different both philosophically and in practice.

People’s interests and abilities will always vary; some people will choose more arduous work for the financial benefits it entails, others will choose a more leisurely existence.

Incentives for hard work need to remain.

What seems most just then, is to establish policies that allow a person adequate choice in how to live his or her life. This means, at the preliminary level, ensuring that educational opportunities are available that allow for upward social mobility.

Bill Clinton may have been a controversial leader, but his policies of his administration allowed millions more people to attend college than during the last eight years of Republican rule.

Second, I cannot recall any group member denouncing “free and open debate.” I do recall second in value to anything: we cherish it as the fundamental component of good government.

We share Learned Hand’s view that “opinions are at best provisional hypotheses, incompletely tested. The more they are tested...the more assurance we may assume, but they are never absolutes. So we must be tolerant of opposed opinions.”

Jeff Doucette
Senior College Democrat

Request for the “Right”

I am writing to commend Dustin and his column. In the three years I have been at USM, no one has been able to stir up as much debate as this column, an achievement in itself.

What disappointed me though, was the lack of mention of the flag in the list of things in his column (March 11). Dustin believes in the flag as the representation of the living country.

The lack of discussion of flag code and the numerous violations visited upon this important symbol was a real oversight. For a person claiming to be a patriot both United States, they should be sure to be familiar with these important laws.

The not-punishable nature of flag law has meant people, on a daily basis, get away with insinuating the very symbol designed to represent them.

I call on Dustin to address this serious oversight in a future column.

David Brown
Senior College Democrat

To Whom It May Concern:

This fall, I will begin my senior year at the University of Southern Maine and for the first time I have not been granted Federal Work Study. When I reviewed my award, I thought there had been a mistake.

As a full-time student, I rely on work-study to help pay my bills so I can continue my education unhindered by a full-time, off campus job.

After communicating with the Financial Aid office, I learned that the information I had was false that, due to new policies, I had not fallen within the parameters of the work study award. This happened despite my standing as a senior, having financial need greater than the past and applying well before the priority deadline.

I soon realized that I was not alone. Many of my peers have received substantially smaller aid packages than ever in their academic career, and very few have been granted work-study, despite having previously received and utilized it.

USM is in a financial crisis. This has led to budget cuts and widespread layoffs, which influence campus morale.

As students, our peers and I also feel the affects of the administrative decisions made.

Not only are we bothered about how to support ourselves while taking classes, but also subject to employees of the university taking their frustrations out on us.

While trying to figure out how to pay my bills next semester, I was interrogated and dealt with callously by a financial aid officer. I understand her frustration, but I deserve better than this.

I chose to come to USM for many reasons, and as someone paying to be here I believe I deserve as such.

A co-worker, currently a USM undergraduate, has been forced to reevaluate her plans to attend USM for her graduate school education due to a poor financial aid package.

Finally, the university’s situation is severe, especially given the fact that student enrollment and retention are major issues. But without extra support, you don’t have a chance.

We need a positive environment to learn and work in, and without that, we will look elsewhere.

Financially in need,

Hilary Manual
Junior

Media Studies

Granny’s writes

The following response to “Mourning the big burrito” (Feb. 11) was written last week on our website edition:

A friend offered me a quote one day when I was frustrated by the incredibly inaccurate balladrum rumors I had heard about myself.

“Great minds talk about ideas, good minds talk about events, weak minds talk about people.”

It is so much easier to project weaknesses and faults towards others than ourselves.

I was not talking about connecting alcohol and drug abuse to the restaurant business is a big stretch, but I do believe you do have any concept of how expensive it is to run a reasonably priced and socially responsible business in this world?

Walking in shoes and then make your assumptions.

Christopher Gedin
Owner of all the blame for the demise of Granny’s Burritos

The Declaration makes no guarantees

I am unsure which “left” or “right” perspective first made this mistake in the February column of the Free Press. I caught it in the most recent issue, March 17, in Laura Ashworth’s column. “Some food for thought.”

The following snippet is incorrect:

“The Declaration of Independence, which guarantees every American citizen the right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

The Declaration makes no such guarantees.

The Declaration is a condemnation of British rule of the colonies and makes the case for separation. It is a document that sets out our rights as citizens of the United States.

The Constitution sets the framework for, and the Bill of Rights (Bill of Rights) sets out our rights and the limits on our government.

Stephen Houser
Professor of Computer Science
Director of Information & Technology
Now where are the laws?

Elisabeth Atsulsher
Contributing Columnist

Sitting at home over February break, I was flipping through the channels until I landed on the news, which was reporting on the shooting at Northern Illinois University.

Listening in awe to the details that were being given, I was immediately brought back to when I flipped through the channels at my grandfather’s house close to nine years ago.

At that time, I, like the rest of country, was learning of the massacre that had taken place at Columbine High School, where on April 20, 1999, two students opened fire on students and faculty; killing twelve and wounding twenty-three before taking their own lives.

Though I remember being frightened by what I was hearing, the gravity of the situation didn’t really set in until I turned to the news on February 14, 2008 and saw that a gunman had un-leased fire on students and faculty at NIU, killing five and wounding sixteen.

I think the passage of time and growing older has given me a new outlook on the rash of shoot-ings that have happened in the past year (and decades).

For me it is no longer a situ-ation where shootings happen elsewhere; they happen at our schools and in our hometowns.

This fear has expanded in me, and it seems that it is expanding in others as well.

In a letter to the Portland Press Herald, Sacopee Valley High School teacher Ralph K. Ginnorvo voiced his opinions on mass shootings.

He believes that “in a world where madmen murder school-children, we must select, train and arm volunteer, well-trained teachers so that they might be their students’ protectors.”

Though I empathize with his desire to protect students and fac-ulty from those wielding guns, an article in The New York Times titled “Gun Control” puts forth something that he makes more sense: “practical steps the nation can take that would make it more difficult for dangerous people to obtain deadly firepower.”

One of these steps is that background checks should be required for every gun purchase. That means closing the egreg-i-ous loophole that permits un-licensed dealers to sell firearms at gun shows without conducting any background check,” the ar-ticle states.

That is to tell if tougher gun laws come to fruition, and in the meantime what the public is left with are sorrowful reminders of the tragedies that have occurred.

A “let-in” to commemorate last year’s shooting at Virginia Tech will take place in Portland (and at other locations nationwide) on April 16th from 11:45 to 12:15 p.m., and I plan to attend.

The in-feature will have thirty-two people dressed in black, to represent the thirty-two victims of Virginia Tech, lying down si-multaneously.

Seeing this will not only remind us of past shootings, it will also show us how far we have to go.

Do you tend to favor modern philosophers more than the ancients?
No. I actually teach ancient philosophy, and I’ve taught it since I came, so it still remains one of my favorite subjects. I’m very much indebted to people like Socrates and Plato. I think that many of the issues that arise in Plato still have relevance today.

Do you agree with him about poetry?
Initially Plato says things like “philosophy is right and poetry is wrong” but Plato himself was very much a poet. So I conclude from that that for Plato there’s good and bad poetry, and good poetry doesn’t pretend to be more than it is.

In some ways I think there are close affinities be-tween the philosopher and the poet. I think there’s something ironic in the fact that Plato himself is a very poetic philosopher. And when push comes to shove, he’s inclined to turn to things and meta-phors to get at the essence of reality.

Were you a philosophy major as an undergrad?
No, I was a Russian major. Russian and Soviet studies. I was doing something supposedly practi-cal. Then I took an intro to philosophy class and the instructor said, “I don’t have the answers, but I have interesting questions” and I became hooked, or bewitched.

Did people ever ask you why you’re doing this?
Yes, it’s generally a good way to stop a conversa-tion - “what do you do?” “I do philosophy.” Generally it gets turned into “oh, psychology?”

In some cases I think there are close affinities be-tween the philosopher and the poet. I think there’s something ironic in the fact that Plato himself is a very poetic philosopher. And when push comes to shove, he’s inclined to turn to things and meta-phors to get at the essence of reality.

What would you say to students who are study-ing what they love, and getting the same ques-tions?
It’s important, because the issues that you’ll have to deal with have been dealt with by some of the great philosophers.

It’s a kind of dress rehearsal. It’s a way to express yourself logically and succinctly. It’s also a way to take back issues you’re going to have to face anyhow.

For example, one of the courses I teach is “Death and Dying,” which I’ve done for about 20 years, which is a humbling experience. It’s one that I can’t say is necessarily boring, it’s good to do, because sooner or later everyone is going to have to deal with it.
Fans save Anime Boston 2008

Jake Cowan
Contributing Columnist

Anime Boston invaded Beantown’s Hynes Convention Center over Easter weekend, and just like Christians flocking to midnight mass, anime fans from all over the East Coast made their yearly trek to this nerd-Mecca. While home in Massachusetts for Spring Break, I set out early Saturday morning, accompanied by my friend Al, to indulge in the prolific art form that is Japanese animation. Neither of us had attended an anime convention before, and unfortunately, neither of us will be attending Anime Boston again.

Being super-negative isn’t usually my bag, but taking part in Anime Boston was like waiting in line (for four hours!) to see a unicorn and then when it is your turn to finally see the mythical steed, it turns out to be a giant ugly horse. There will never be enough space to go into detail about what went wrong, but here’s a brief rundown: due to an understaffed crew, a juvenile registration system involving thousands of fans and four computers, and unprofessional organization all around, my Saturday at Anime Boston almost became the worst day of my life. In traditional Anime Boston fashion, the show was postponed an hour. While seething and waiting for The Pillows, we were treated to a special opening performance from Japanese pop group, Luv & Response. Listening to Japanese pop stars lip-synch and dance to carbon copy American-pop group, Luv & Response. Listening to Japanese pop stars lip-synch and dance to carbon copy American-pop-ditties for 45 minutes is only entertaining after finally bobbing our heads to a few of our favorite Pillow’s tunes, we entered a conference room that was treated to a special opening performance from Japanese pop group, Luv & Response. Listening to Japanese pop stars lip-synch and dance to carbon copy American-...
Tyler Jackson  
Staff Writer

On April 12, the USM School of Music will host their 31st annual honors recital. Each year, a jury of faculty and outside guest judges select six to twelve of the finest solo performers the school has to offer.

She or he can be a freshman, junior—it doesn’t matter. Nor do grades matter,” said Mary Snell, the arts promotion director for the university. “What’s important is their talent in performance.”

In 1978, the faculty of the music department first selected the best solo performers in the music student body, which at the time included about 50 music majors and music teachers in public schools, students who went on to perform in major military ensembles and orchestras, women who have careers in major opera companies in New York, Colorado and Santa Fe, and some who have founded vocal ensembles and jazz groups in New England.

“There’s no reason to believe that many of the students performing this year will not do just as well,” said Snell. Teachers of individual instruments nominate the students, which gives them an audition before the panel of judges.

Students can perform alone or with piano accompaniment. This is the event through which we honor excellence in solo performance,” said Scott Harris, the director of the music school. “This year’s program is especially varied and ranges from opera arias to jazz to musical theatre to contemporary concert music.”

The university distributes tickets personally signed by Harris, informing parents, relatives, and former teachers that the students have achieved the honor.

The audience is always filled with those who have been supportive over years of practice and learning.

“Every year, I hear from the panel of audition judges that the selection of honorees from such a deep talent pool of nominees is a real challenge, and this year was no exception,” Harris said. “It is my favorite concert of the season.”

The 31st Annual Honors Recital will be held at 8 p.m. Saturday April 12, in Corinthell Concert Hall on the USM Gorham Campus. The Recital is free and open to the public, and reservations are being taken. Call the Music Box Office at 780-5555.

Tyler Jackson  
Staff Writer

An honor in brass (or bass)   
USM Honors Recital performers chosen

Twelve students will perform in this year’s honors recital, out of dozens who were nominated. The annual recital — in its 31st year — features the USM School of Music’s most talented students in solo performance. They’re nominated by faculty and then chosen by a panel of judges made up by faculty and outside guests. Here are a handful of those chosen.

Maya Chapman

Maya Chapman already holds a degree from USM — in social work. Her concerns for humanity lead to the second degree she’s now pursuing in piano. Unlike her fellow music education majors, she is a piano pedagogy major, which means that rather than wanting to teach general music and learning many instruments, she will master her own instrument in the hopes of one day owning her own private studio.

The twist, stemming from her social work degree, is that she dreams of teaching special-needs children.

She took a year after her first graduation to retrain her own piano chops before coming back in full force to master the craft.

She has already started down the path toward a full teaching studio, and she’ll be working with her second special-needs student this month.

Piano, she hopes, will help improve his fine motor skills.

Besides also working in the School of Music Box Office, she earns her keep as a waitress in Palmouth.

To relieve stress from a jam-packed schedule? She jogs, when it fits in.

As for the stress of auditioning for the honors recital, “it’s kind of scary—I mean, (the judges) are nice, but you walk in, say hello, and start playing in this huge hall. Sometimes they cut you off. I prepared two pieces, and after the first piece they smiled and said ‘that’s all the time we have today.’”

A couple days after walking off the stage, her piano teacher called to tell her she had made the cut.

It was same woman who nominated her, and the tight-knit pair rejoiced over the phone at the accomplishment.

Alexis Hardy

Alexis Hardy sells vodka. She also works in a costume shop. On school breaks she takes care of kids at a daycare.

Despite her various jobs at Cold River Vodka, the USM theatre department, and the Portland YMCA, this 22-year-old simply wants a career in musical theatre. Which is what she is going to be performing at Saturday’s recital.

She initially saw herself getting a degree in English. However, doing musicals in high school, her love for musical theater grew with each show, and today she is working towards a bachelors degree in music with a minor in theater.

With the help of a voice teacher and musical theatre coach, the Lewiston native has risen to the top of the heap and made her way into this year’s Honors Recital.

Her audition, she said, was perhaps the most nerve-wracking, and she didn’t even perform in front of the judges.

“I had to do my auditions via videotape,” she said, “and I wasn’t allowed to stop the tape. You know, if you mess up in person you can just ask to start over, but on video, I couldn’t do that. I was nervous, it is completely different, there is no leeway.”

She had another audition that same day, in Massachusetts, for the New England Theater Conference. In front of paid professionals, “you have three minutes to sing or dance or act, or do whatever you want. Basically,” Hardy said. In her three minutes, she sang the piece she will perform at the Honors Recital, along with another selection, and has gotten a few callbacks so far. In her industry, this is a good sign.

It is also a good sign that Hardy has been in every single musical theatre production USM has put on in the four years she has been here. From “Titanic” to “Spirit of the Reindeer,” she has graced every show.

Hardy said that it’s different to perform musical theatre for an honors recital that only showcases up to 12 students, with judges looking for proper technique like you’d have in opera or classical music; she had to show her technique for the first time.

Her singing has been hopping around between schools for some time, looking for the right place for her talent and needs.

She began college at Stonehill in Massachusetts, but there was no music concentration, she went on to Washington D.C. to the Catholic University of America, where there was a great music program, but no music education major.

She arrived at USM in the spring of 2006, and says with a tone of relief that it is here she will stay.

This year’s audition was scheduled for March 14, but when a snowstorm closed campus that day, the try-outs were postponed for two weeks, and rescheduled for March 15.

Cassie Gray

Proud to be unique. Cassie Gray represents a minority of performers at USM.

In a department that is dominated by classical vocalists, she sings jazz.

“I’d say I’m breaking through tradition,” says Gray. “As far as I know, I’m the first jazz vocalist ever to make the honors recital.”

Generally, she explains, its classical voice included in the recital, and the attitude is that that should be the focus of the vocals in the show.

The jazz vocalist has been hopping around between schools for some time, looking for the right place for her talent and needs.

She graduated from USM. She has been hopping around between schools for some time, looking for the right place for her talent and needs.

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Cassie’s junior recital was on the night of March 14.

Because she’d been so concentrated on her work for that show, the two extra weeks to prepare for the honors audition seemed a welcome gift.

The morning after a night performance to showcase her talent, she got up and showcased it again.

You’d think that might be a conflict, but not for Gray.

“I enjoyed it,” she says. “I felt like I was getting a taste of a ‘real’ musician’s schedule. Really, whether you have one day or five days to prepare for something like this, if you’re not ready in one, you wouldn’t be in five. It’s about how much you’ve cumulatively prepared.”

It can be assumed that this woman was quite prepared. To break into a recital as old as this one, within a traditional department, showcasing a different kind of sound — well, it must’ve been quite an audacity, and would make for quite a performance on Saturday.!
Two under-the-radar, new-release DVDs engage in head-to-head combat. You don’t have the time or money to go to the theater. Here’s some help sorting through that daunting wall at the front of your friendly, local video store.

**The Amateurs**

Raygun Productions

Starring Jeff Bridges, Tim Blake Nelson, Glenne Headly

Andy Sargentee, a struggling divorcee and parent, comes to the conclusion that the only way to finally do something with his life is to get his entire small town to produce hardcore pornography.

The lone voice of dissent takes the tone of, “I’m no choir boy, but if we’ve made a porno, we’ve made a porno.” Andy is played by Jeff Bridges, and his dear townie friends include Ted Danson (*Cheers*), Joe Pantoliano (*The Sopranos*), and William Fichtner (everything else). There is no good explanation for the steady stream of familiar faces - this is the kind of film you usually see at the start of a major actor’s career.

Andy’s thought process is simple: he needs to become relevant and successful. Sex is always relevant and lucrative. A quick glance at the escort ads in the newspaper, the sight of a busy strip club across the street — it all makes way too much sense.

The middle of the film is where it gets tantalizing, because it finally gives the actors a tiny little air-bubble of breathing room. Unfortunately, it doesn’t let itself be just about men reacting to the pornography business (though those are its funniest moments).

*The Amateurs* is actually about a town coming together in the most unlikely (and implausible) of situations, with the overarching theme that pleasant surprises almost always result from taking chances you would initially disregard as too foolish, ambitious or ridiculous.

This goes for everything from the production of a porno movie to asking the hot saleslady at a furniture store if she’ll have “hot lesbian” sex on film.

**After Sex**

Nala Films

Starring Mila Kunis, Mark Blucus, Zoe Saldana

*After Sex* is a high-concept movie about high-concept relationships. It’s a series of short vignettes unified by a common theme — the way in which people are temporarily unhindered after they’ve just gotten their rocks off.

Freed from their libidos, they can finally confront one another with all those honest revelations that probably would have prevented them from shacking up in the first place.

*After Sex* puts up a “diverse” assortment of couples — closeted college lesbians, elderly swingers, detached adulterers — with the arrogant notion that the filmmaker just needs some sincerity and a gimmick to give them dignity.

Contrary to what the film wants to do, it ends up wheeling them out like a parade of freaks, ready to knock down your prejudices with edgy dialogue.

The only time we’re not offered the hint of an elaborate backstory is when we’re dealing with a couple of white, attractive, heteroerotic thirty-somethings at the very beginning.

They don’t need any explanation, and all they’re worried about is coming to grips with their feelings.

After that “normal” couple is out of the way, we can dive into the gay frat boy with puppy-dog eyes being coaxed out of the closet by an overbearing sex demon.

I’m not sure if I was insulted for the white thirty-somethings, or for everybody else.

But that’s just the annoying part of the movie — the rest is simply half-naked people talking dirty and angrily to one another while trying to catch their breath. It looks pretty slick.

If you hadn’t read this review, you’d get the surprise of cameos from Dr. Quinn: Medicine Woman and Mr. Jones from the *Friday* movies.

By the end, you’re left only with a renewed appreciation for the art of storytelling. Letting us know that characters have had stories, at one point in their lives, isn’t quite enough.

**The Winner…**

On a technicality, *After Sex*. Mostly because most of its actors haven’t starred in much better movies, and it’s watchable.

I would almost genuinely recommend it for those days when you’re seriously ill and propped in front of a TV, popping in and out of consciousness. Especially if you’ve always had a crush on Jackie from *That 70’s Show*, or spry old Mr. Jones.
I bought the album, played it endlessly and put the songs on just about every tape I ever made for a girl.

Waiting for Kozelek

Tyler Bussey
Columnist

After high school, most of my friends – scratch that, all of my friends – went off to college. I started a band.

Didn’t turn out to be much of a long-term commitment; we broke up after a highly tumultuous year of only a handful of concerts, a couple of demos and one radio session to show for it.

On the other hand, I could go on forever about the songs we wrote, traveling we did, shows we played, and all the incredible music we discovered together that year.

At the top of that list is Mark Kozelek and his many incarnations – formerly as the Red House Painters, and now as Sun Kil Moon, whose new album Waiting for Kozelek

Sun Kil Moon's April drops just in time for spring

Brandon McKenzie
Staff Writer

I’m not a big fan of Shipyard to begin with, so I grabbed this six-pack with a bit of hesitation and low-expectations.

Shipyard puts out a Brewer’s Choice Special Ale each year – a limited edition recipe from their in-house brew team. Typically, limited editions of anything tend to be a little better than their established counterparts, so I hoped this ale might be an improvement on some of Shipyard’s more bland offerings (you know, and their IPA come to mind).

The beer pours out to a golden amber color with a medium head, typical of an English IPA.

Like most offerings from the year’s Brewer’s Choice, it is nothing I would seek out, but is a decent performer in its style.

Brandon likes beer. No kidding.

If you want him to test the waters before you drop cash on your next six-pack, send review requests (or brew-related questions) to freepress@maine.edu with the subject: Beer.

State woes, Portland wails
State Theater closing impacts quality, quantity of music

Jeff Beam
Columnist

There is a buzz in the musical-ly inclined city of Portland, and it is one of pain. The city is hurting from the loss of its medium-sized music venue.

Hurtling badly.

The State Theatre formerly served as the provider of quality entertainment to Portland. It wasn’t as big as the Civic Center, but bigger than any club or bar. It could hold about 2000 people, and often, it did.

The kind of bands that played the State Theatre were usually up-and-coming acts on their first tour, or bands whose creative boundaries stretch further than mainstream radio.

A number of highly popular acts have also graced the stage, including Jimmy Eat World, the Foo Fighters, and Ray Davies of The Kinks.

The venue was also a great chance for local acts to play for a larger audience than usual.

More love could be transmitted between performer and audience, as there could be more audience, more stage. And imagine the band’s delight: more people, more dancing, more audience telling a friend the show was great (more fans, more shows).”

The State Theatre closed in 2007.

Many, myself included, believed the venue closed due to fire code violations, but the state fire marshal’s office instead cites a management dispute.

For some time, the State Theatre is sorely missed.

When it closed, the number of concerts in Portland dropped off immediately.

Bands had a dramatically different, much smaller, even drearyer choice of venues – they either had to cram their national tour into a small club, or they’d have to fill the 9000-seat Civic Center.

Maine has a hard enough time convincing acts to head north of their usual travel route. Acts that come to Maine usually aren’t on their way to anywhere else. When they’re done playing Portland, they turn around and go back home.

Whether the State Theatre is reopened or a new place is built, Portland needs a medium-sized venue.

This would boost the Maine music scene, increase state revenue, and create an overall heightened sense of excitement in the city.

A rumor floated recently that Kevin Spacey considered buying the State Theatre, as an investment, as he’s been known to do around the country.

The story goes that he came to take a look, and it looked like it would take too much money to shape the place up – coming from a multi-millionaire.

If not even a movie star can save the State Theater from rotting on Congress Street, Portland and its musical heartbeat may be in trouble.

Shipyard Brewer’s Choice Special Ale 2008

Brandon McKenzie
Staff Writer

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Student turns idea into a carbon-credit program

From LOURAINE page 1

An excess of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases is one of the leading causes for global warming, the increase in the average temperature of Earth’s atmosphere, according to their website. Another way to reduce your carbon output is to purchase carbon-offsets also known as carbon credits. “A carbon credit is a stock in research and funding towards taking carbon out of the atmosphere or preventing carbon going into the atmosphere,” said Rudolph. Many major companies, such as Expedia, are providing this option to customers to help offset the company’s carbon emissions.

Other organizations include the Chicago Climate Exchange, “the world’s first and North America’s only active voluntary, legally binding, internationally traded carbon trading system to reduce emissions of all six major greenhouse gases,” according to their website. Right now, One Blue Pearl, is made up primarily of Rudolph’s family members. But she has enlisted the help of friends and fellow student Kelly McCormick to create a marketing scheme.

“Louraine has a good heart, people will gravitate toward her,” said McCormick. “She’s always working for a good cause.”

This year’s winter pined on the snow, but didn’t deepen the budget crisis

From WEATHER page 1

The only time USM has had to deviate from the bid is to have snow physically hauled away, which is no small task. It forces the contractor to use a fuel-hungry, tri-axel machine, costing the school an additional $10,000 for all the equipment and hours required. Ten or so years ago, that process was both more common and less costly. It was more common because students at the Portland campus were once so dependent on outdoor parking, before the five-story garage on Bedford Street opened. It also cost less, because they could dump excess snow just down the road along the Back Cove. The EPA has since put a stop to that, when melting snow was determined to be a major cause of water pollution.

In recent years, the agency has required that surplus snow be relocated to certified dumpsites. Dave Early has been director of facilities for nearly two decades. Early disagrees. “I don’t think it didn’t deepen the budget crisis,” he said. “It would have, but we had to do it.”

Board of Visitors gives report card, and to-do list

From VISITORS page 1

“We just need to make sure other programs don’t suffer as a result,” Lapping said.

The Board has also tasked themselves with trying to figure out where USM ranks among peer universities, hoping to parlay high rankings from the U.S. News and World Report into local investment as a means to build the reputation and quality of the school.

The report recognizes that finding an appropriate and comparable set of similar universities can be difficult. It suggests the 90 schools of the Coalition of Urban & Metropolitan Universities (CUMU), of which USM is a member, as a starting point. Board Chairman and USM Alumnus Bob Blackwood presented the report to the USM community in late March.

“The Board of Visitors acts as the eyes and ears of the community, telling USM want the southern Maine community wants,” said Blackwood, “we act as a sounding board for program changes.” They do not, however, have the power to create new programs, according to Blackwood.

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including a visit from Paul Rusesabagina, the subject of “Hotel Rwanda.”

These marquee programs can bring a school a simulcast of the dialogue. They are providing this option to customers to help offset the company’s carbon emissions. Other organizations include the Chicago Climate Exchange, “the world’s first and North America’s only active voluntary, legally binding, internationally traded carbon trading system to reduce emissions of all six major greenhouse gases,” according to their website.

USM has received the same 24 percent of the appropriation since the 1970 despite having nearly doubled in size.

The report also discusses the possibility of forming “programs of distinction” at USM. In theory, a nationally recognized program could attract out-of-state students (and their out-of-state dollars).

These marquee programs can bring a school a simulcast of the dialogue.
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news

Student Body President Chalifour gives first “State of the University Address”

Ashley Oliver
Staff Writer

On an evening before the spring vacation, students and faculty filled the seventh floor of the Glickman Library to hear the first annual Student Government Association’s “State of the University Address.” Student Body President AJ Chalifour spoke about the university in both a critical and approving manner as he outlined the faults and triumphs of the cash-strapped school.

Areas of discussion included USM’s total tuition cost, student events, budget concerns, and lack of student involvement. He noted that, in comparison with Colby and Bowdoin Colleges, USM students end up with much more debt after graduation. His remedy for this trouble was to reach out to non-residents by offering them more scholarships based on GPA and SAT scores.

Chalifour explained his plan’s benefits. “This could serve to raise our revenue by increasing enrollment, while not requiring scholarship dollars to offset tuition rates.”

For students with outrageous loans after graduation, Chalifour added his support for Opportunity Maine, a recently implemented program in which students can get tax credits to pay off their student loans.

On the subject of the University of Maine System, Chalifour had some less applauding words. Aimed at the allocation of funds amongst the Maine universities — from which USM has gotten 24 percent of the allotment since 1970, despite nearly doubling in size — Chalifour said “it’s unfair, it’s illogical, and it’s about time something is done about it. We cannot continue to run such a large university with such an essential mission in this state, while remaining so dependent on student tuition and fees.”

Chalifour said that the current system needs to be challenged. “Southern Maine legislators need to take ownership of USM and its importance to their own constituents as well as the state. They need to advocate for USM, and the University of Maine System in August.”

He further explained that state legislators in Augusta need to realize that one of USM’s primary advantages is its location. Graduating students will have more professional opportunities in southern Maine than in areas around other universities in the Maine system.

“Students would appreciate seeing improvements in three main areas: the right hardware, logical and useable instructional technology, and space that is conducive to learning and teaching,” said Chalifour.

As an example, he cited a drying-seagull-sounding heating unit in Luther Bonney and the ever-changing climate of Bailey Hall, which, as he points out, may actually “serve as an advantage for our earth science majors: it’s hard for other students when they have to predict how freezing cold or unbearably hot their classroom will be on any given day.”
UPCOMING GAMES

Opponents names written in capital letters means the game will be played at home

Monday April 7
Women's Lacrosse vs. CURRY @ Fitzpatrick Stadium  7 p.m.

Tuesday April 8
Softball vs. ST JOE'S (double-header)  3:30 p.m.
Men's Tennis vs. RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE  3:30 p.m.
Men's Lacrosse vs. COLBY @ Fitzpatrick Stadium  3:30 p.m.

Wednesday April 9
Baseball vs. HUSSON  3:30 p.m.

Thursday April 10
Baseball vs. Salem State  3 p.m.
Men's Tennis vs. THOMAS  3:30 p.m.
Men's Lacrosse vs. UMASS BOSTON  4 p.m.
Women's Lacrosse @ Rhode Island College  6 p.m.

Saturday April 12
Women's Track @ UMass Lowell Invite  10 a.m.
Baseball vs. EASTERN CONN  12 p.m.
Men's Tennis vs. WESTERN CONN  12 p.m.
Men's Lacrosse @ UMass Dartmouth  1 p.m.
Women's Lacrosse vs. UMASS DARTMOUTH  1 p.m.
Softball @ UMass Dartmouth (double-header)  1 p.m.

Sunday April 13
Baseball @ UMass Boston  1 p.m.
Softball @ Colby (double-header)  1 p.m.
Adam Ross

Year: Senior
Major: Health Fitness
Sport: Baseball

FP: How old were you when you first started playing baseball?
Adam: I was probably 4 or 5. I have a terrible memory though so I may be wrong.

FP: Do you just pitch, or do you play other positions as well?
Adam: I’m strictly a pitcher. Once I got to college they took away my hitting privileges.

FP: What other sports did you play in high school?
Adam: I played basketball and soccer.

FP: What made you want to pursue baseball further after high school?
Adam: It was what I was best at and most passionate about. Plus as kids we all have pro aspirations, but I guess Division III baseball suited me just fine.

FP: How many different pitches do you throw?
Adam: I throw three: fastball, change-up, and curve.

FP: Do you have any rituals you go through before a start?
Adam: No. I’m not really a superstitious person. The one thing that may be thought of as a ritual is going through the exact same stretching and warm-up routine.

FP: Who’s your favorite nation team and player?
Adam: My favorite team is the Red Sox, and my favorite player is Josh Beckett, and I’m not ashamed to say that (Derek) Jeter comes in a close second.

FP: Is there anything you want USM to know about the “real” Adam Ross?
Adam: What you see is what you get, as boring as that might sound!

Mike Tardiff
Columnist

This is not a public service announcement, just a cautionary tale: be weary of betting on sports.

No, I didn’t squander away thousands of dollars in student loans to write this column, but I did put myself into a precarious situation at the hands of my own curiosity.

On my way back to Biddeford on the Saturday of the Elite Eight, I heard an ad on the radio claiming that this guy had a free tip on the biggest upset of the night in college basketball.

Hardly able to contain myself, I dialed the toll-free number and wanted to hear the booming voice of God declare Memphis or some other school dead in the water. What I got instead was the thick New Jersey accent of a man talking a mile a minute about betting and handicaps and spreads.

The guy talked as though he had already watched the game happen, as if he, sitting in his probably dusty office somewhere in Jersey, actually had the power of God. He spoke with conviction and certainty. He wanted me to make sure I put down a good bet.

And I could have — if I’d had the inclination to gamble away the only thing keeping me from the streets of Biddeford — made myself a lot of money thanks to this tip.

But I didn’t. I don’t bet. But plenty of college students do, which is why I’m telling this tale.

U.S. Census statistics say that between eight and 20 percent of college students have dealt with a gambling problem, and 18-24-year-olds as showing the worst forms of disordered gambling at a rate two to three times higher than all other adults.

Heck, I have a few buddies who heavily supplement their income by living at virtual poker tables, using off-shore accounts to accrue pretty thick wads of cash.

On Monday, I got a call from the same mobster-sounding, used-car-salesman that I had spoken to a few days before.

“How did the game go, Mike? Did you make some money?” he asked, hoping that his tip had led to my astronomical winnings and that I would want another.

But I hadn’t put any money down. When I told him, he went crazy. Obscenities ensued and I had no idea what I had gotten myself into. Slamming down the phone he told me never to call that number again (with a few expletives inserted at his discretion).

Fair enough.

For the next three days, I got phone calls from the same omni-omnious New Jersey area code.

Over and over they called, pushing me to sign up for their service.

What would have happened had I placed bets and won something? Would they have felt entitled to my winnings?

Would I have been indebted to some Tony Soprano clone six hours away?

No matter how curious I am to know who is going to bite the dust or carry home the gold, I will never call a hotline again.

These sorts of things start off innocently enough. The guy gives you a stone-cold-dead-in-the-water tip, you place a bet, and don’t pay “the man.” Worse yet, you win a ton of money and don’t pay “the man.”

When do the phone calls give way to the doorbell? When will the harmless trip to bodog.com become a real problem?
Athletes travel for their tan-lines and the first grass of the season

Staff Writer
Mike Tardiff

Spring break: to most college students it means minimal activity and maximum inebriation, but to athletes at USM it means something a little different.

Whether it’s a trip to New York to finally play on a grass field or a cross-country trek to Arizona where cacti and baseball rule the day, athletes and coaches from USM spend their spring breaks away from the classroom, but still with the university.

For freshman pitcher Jimmy Knicknair (Glenshaw, PA) got her first taste of the Big Apple when she traveled with her cohort of softball players on a three-day trip to New York to an area near and dear to her heart: her home state of New York.

Knicknair and her baseball team are not alone. The softball, women’s lacrosse and women’s track and field teams all took spring break trips going at least as far as Florida.

Freshman Erica Higginbotham (Winthrop, MA) got her first taste of the Big Apple when she traveled with her cohort of lacrosse players on a three-day trip to New York, where they grappled with lacrosse powerhouse Manhattanville and SUNY-Farmingdale, and spent some time hanging out in the city.

“The subway was the best part,” she said. “It frightened some people, especially the freshmen, and the trips gave them the chance to get used to playing their sport at the collegiate level, as well as some time to get to know their teammates better.”

“I knew a lot of the girls from ice hockey, but I got to know the rest,” said Higginbotham. “All of the girls are awesome and there are a lot of different personalities.”

While Higginbotham and the lacrosse team marveled at the Statue of Liberty and the pace of life in Manhattan and Ground Zero, Knicknair, all the away across the country, was struck by the greenness of the grass, the flatness of the deserts and the professionalism of his teammates.

“I learned a lot by just watching the older guys and the way they approach different situations during the games,” said Knicknair of his collegiate debut.

But all of these great experiences do not come easily. The planning and logistical end of spring break travel is placed largely in the hands of the players and coaches.

In order for the softball and baseball teams to make their trips to Florida and Arizona a reality, each athlete was responsible for raising $1,000 dollars to foot the cost of airfare, hotel and other expenses.

While Coach Bonny Brown-Denico of the softball team jokingly calls the whole process “a pain in the butt,” she is quick to point the importance spring trips.

“Team building is huge,” she said, “trying to figure out what personalities go well with one another is important. It’s fun to watch the excitement building up before the trip. The girls all have a big countdown when our preseason starts in January.”

For well-established programs like the softball and softball teams, fundraising has become part-and-parcel of the spring trip. Coach Ed Flaherty and his baseball team sell advertisements in their media guide, write letters to local businesses soliciting money and hold a raffle in order to reach their fundraising goals.

But for teams like coach Sue Frost’s women’s lacrosse team, only in its seventh year of existence, the task can become a little bit more daunting, which forces more realistic expectations.

With the funds to travel to warmer locales lacking, coach Frost took her squad to an area near and dear to her heart: her home state of New York.

But just because they didn’t travel by jet or enjoy the luxuries of tropical temperatures doesn’t mean that the trip was any less successful.

“I brought them to my house and my parents made us all dinner. We pulled up in the big coach bus and we were the talk of the town,” Frost said.

The trip to New York, though modest, is a benchmark for the program’s progress.

Just two years removed from having their spring trip located in the Costello Sports Complex, where the then-first-year-coach Frost orchestrated a speaker on sports nutrition, a self-defense class and held double-session practices, the team is happy with their progress.

When asked about her friends on the softball team, Higginbotham was quick to point out a few discrepancies.

“They all come back wicked tan, so I made sure that I got my tanning bed minutes in,” she said with a smile.

Regardless of the effort involved and the sacrifice of a “traditional” spring break, athletes and coaches alike are happy to forego Cancun and Panama Beach for a chance to grow closer as a team.

Brown-Denico tells the story of her softball players dressing up in hideously old-fashioned clothing bought at a nearby thrift shop, and Frost says that she showed plenty of videos on the bus that gave the new recruits a glimpse of what her team is all about.

“Pulling out a scrapbook modeled after the “Burn Book” from the movie Mean Girls, Frost demonstrates that athletes do have a spring break. It’s just a little different.
Student athletes help each other and community

Mary Jones
Staff Writer

Youngsters are given a chance to play games with college athletes and then watch “the big kids” play in their own collegiate match.

Other kid-oriented activities in which the group participates include visits to the Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital in Portland and a backyard skate fundraiser started by 11-year-old Gorham resident, Mick Manser.

It is very important to the committee to consider their positions as role models.

“So as athletes, kids look up to us, for no other reason than the fact we can play a sport better than a lot of people and put on a USM jersey,” says Tyler Ravlo, a senior hockey player, exercise physiology major, and vice president of SAAC. “You’re a role model whether you like it or not.”

Upcoming events for SAAC include the Husky Ball, a semi-formal dance for athletes to be held at the Eastland on April 12, and a food and clothing drive to benefit the Preble Street Resource Center in Portland. Boxes for the drive can be found in the dorms and sports complex this week.

The group also participates in the many events on campus, including homecoming and the spring fling. They are trying to have representation in as many aspects of university life as possible—hoping to bring a little spirit back to USM.

For athletes and sports teams, SAAC provides an invaluable service.

“At Division III we don’t have the kind of budget as D-I schools, and we do have issues that need to be taken care of,” says Ravlo.

Kynoch adds that these issues “cover everything from if teams feel they’re being overlooked by the athletic department to troubles with food service and transportation.”

The committee is made up of students from almost all of USM’s 22 athletic teams.

Some of the teams currently unrepresented are the tennis teams, women’s track, and men’s lacrosse.

According to Ravlo, this is something the committee is set on changing.

Whatever the reasons for their lack of involvement, Ravlo says that it’s easier to help teams and athletes out when they’re represented by SAAC.

“If you’re a student athlete and are interested in joining SAAC, their next meeting is Sunday, April 13, in the ice arena classroom in Gorham at 7 p.m. You can also contact Tyler Ravlo at tyler.ravlo@maine.edu.

Assistant coach takes life’s failures as reasons to keep pushing

From FARRELL page 20

“USM had challenged me emotionally, but it hadn’t yet chal- lenged me physically,” he said, so in the fall of 2006, Farrell began getting his body and skills back in tune, practicing in the fall off-season with the men’s lacrosse team.

“I knew I wasn’t going to be an All-American,” Farrell said, starting to laugh, “but this was my ‘Rudy’ moment.”

But the NCAA wasn’t quite so sure. Though Brian didn’t know it yet, the NCAA deems players ineligible after their 10th semester of being a matriculated student.

It didn’t matter so much that he was ten years the senior of his freshmen teammates — that spring was his 11th semester, so the administration was forced to cut him from the team.

Still Brian persevered — and head coach Malcolm Chase asked him to become an assistant coach.

Brian, feeling honored, accepted, and has this year entered his second season on the team’s staff.

Meanwhile, he was pressing on with what had become a never-ending college career in the eyes of his peers. To surprise them all, he graduated in 2006 with a degree in history (and came back the following year, to no surprise at all, to take a second degree in political science).

He finally finished in 2007, but through lacrosse, has maintained his presence on campus.

Most people go through the clichéd trials and tribulations of life without gaining much, without knowing what they should do about them, or what they’re capable of doing.

Despite all of his failures, Brian remains unsatisfied until he reaches heights he once thought impos- sible, regardless of where they place him.

“If I can push myself as far as I can go,” he said, “then I haven’t failed.”

Fresh out of college and less than a month after his 30th birth- day, Brian has found himself coming around the bend for yet another lap on the racetrack.

And if the last lap is any hint toward the future, he will race again. And he will win.

“I knew I wasn’t going to be an All-American, but this was my ‘Rudy’ moment.”

-Brian Farrell

HUSKY HIGHLIGHTS

Baseball
Huskies take 8 wins in Arizona

4/5 - Of the 16-game opening to their season, the Huskies have only lost four, including one very close match to Wheaton on Saturday, which ended 5-6. They started the sea- son in Arizona with three losses in a row to William Paterson and Suffolk, but rallied to finish their spring break trip with only one more loss — and eight wins. After several postponements due to snow-covered fields, the Huskies are scheduled to open at home versus Husson on Wednesday. For an updated schedule, see the athletic de- partment website.

Softball
Coach Brown-Denico earns 300th win

5/3 - The Huskies took a 7-4 win to split a double-header with the University of New England and earn head coach Bonnie Brown-Denico her 300th win. Brown-Denico was last year named the Little East Confer- ence coach of the year, and has a 300-215-5 record over 13 years of coaching for USM. The Huskies lost the first game of the double-header 4-5, after the Nor’easters took two quick runs at the bottom of the seventh inning. In the second game, the Huskies trailed 1-2, but completed five runs on six hits in the fifth to seal their lead and the win.

Women’s Lacrosse
Catlin Albert leads 14-5 win over Western Conn

4/5 - With a game-high five goals, junior Catlin Albert (Scarborough) lead the Huskies to their second win of the season against conference rival Western Connecticut. It was their second consecutive win, bringing their season to 2-5. They came out fast and hard against the Colonials, taking a 6-0 lead before their opponent were able to score. Other big scorers included sophomore Ashley Knott (Presque Isle), freshman Kristy Kendrick (Waterboro) and senior Justene Dor (Gorham).

Softball
Community Halloween party on October 28, 2008, athletes supervised games

The Free Press | April 7, 2008
SPORTS

Brandon McKenney
Staff Writer

The women’s lacrosse team grabbed its first win of the season in a 20-3 trouncing of St. Josephs last Wednesday night. The win brought the Huskies to a 1-5 overall record going into the weekend.

Sophomore Jessica Knight (Alfred) and Freshman Kristy Kendrick (Waterboro) combined for 11 goals.

Knight seemed particularly energized to be playing alongside Kendrick, her former Massabesic teammate, sprinting all over the field on her way to 6 goals.

“It felt good to get our duo back together,” said Kendrick. “Jess is one of those players that pushes you to get better and I’m glad she’s my teammate for another 3 years.”

The chilly weather at Portland’s Fitzpatrick Stadium—where the game was relocated because snow still covers the field in Gorham—didn’t seem to bother the Huskies as they dominated the first half, heading into half-time with a 13-1 lead.

Each goal looked easier than the last.

Sophomore Erica Robertson (St. Albans, VT) added another 3 goals while teammate Amy McNally (Waterboro), racked up two of her own.

Senior Goalie Katie Quartuccio (Poughkeepsie, NY) seemed pleased with her teammates, as she only had to make 7 saves for the win.

“Any success I have in goal is because of my defense,” she said.

Although their first win came against a relatively inexperienced St. Josephs team playing in their first varsity season, the Huskies seemed content to take it.

“I don’t feel it was bittersweet at all,” said Knight. “A win is a win.”

Laxer’s relax with their first win
Huskies take 20-3 victory versus St. Joe’s

Senior Shannon Kynoch (South Burlington, VT) uses her height to her advantage on a draw versus St. Joe’s. At right, junior Georgia Hurd keeps warm, looking to pass. The Huskies swept St. Joe’s 20-3 for their first win of the season.

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After watching his father die — and come back — Brian Farrell found himself back on track

John Forrestell
Staff Writer

“I’m gonna race again, I’m gonna win.”

As the words of Brian Farrell’s father stumped off the hospital room walls and found their place inside Brian’s head, and the head monitor beside the bed began to ech its sound across his ear-drums: a long line…a beep. A long line…a beep. A long line…a beep.

When his father’s heart stopped, Brian had thought for sure his dad was gone. But he’d fought through it.

While his father, a harness racer at Scarborough Downs, was in nine-out-of-10 pain, the pair had reached toward each other and locked hands. Looking toward his son, as if to assure him that he was actually breathing and alive, he said, “The pain feels good.”

After years of struggling through high school, working himself toward self-destruction, and being unsure of where he was headed — which was looking like nowhere — his father’s second chance at life inspired Brian to make one for himself.

Brian grew up in Cumberland and went to Greely High for one year before moving to South Portland and South Portland High School for his last three years. He considers both his alma maters.

While at Greely, Farrell picked up lacrosse, but was forced to give it up when he moved because South Portland didn’t have a team.

High school didn’t impress or motivate Farrell, and he graduated from South Portland in 1996 with what he calls a D-average.

“I wasn’t even thinking about college when I graduated high school, I didn’t even bother taking the SAT’s,” he said.

Nonetheless, he began attending the University of Southern Maine as a non-matriculated student, taking a couple classes each semester while juggling four different jobs.

“I was working 80 to 100 hours a week. I would go from one shift to the next,” Farrell said.

For the next few years, Farrell continued to work and take classes with no forward movement towards a degree and no career aspirations outside his regular employment.

It seemed as though he was bound to live up to everyone’s expectations that after high school, he’d go nowhere.

In 1999, when his father came back to life, things changed.

To say that Brian found direction would be an understatement.

By 2001, he had been accepted to USM and began his first semester as a full time student with the help of financial aid.

By 2002, he had been accepted into the Honors Program and named the student representative for the honors faculty council.

In 2004, he became the assistant director for “Words and Images” an annual art and literature magazine published at USM.

He held that title for four years, but Brian’s involvement with everything USM didn’t stop there.

See FARRELL page 18