

THE TALON



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The newly renovated dining room opened for business at the beginning of the fall semester. The open floor plan allows for more choices for diners in a more enjoyable atmosphere.



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**LARAMIE COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

on the cover

Det. Don Heiduck of the Laramie County Sheriff's Office doesn't let a very busy schedule keep him from offering his help and expertise to Laramie County Community College. Find out more about Det. Heiduck on page 8.



Laramie County Community College has a long history of helping students meet their educational goals. Student success is very important to all of us at LCCC, and we have many success stories like the one that is highlighted in this issue of *The Talon*. For more than 40 years, LCCC has been the college of choice for students wanting a better life for themselves and their families. Building futures for our students would not be possible without the strong support of our community, and we appreciate the

many ways in which our community is involved with LCCC.

We also are pleased to be able to bring nationally recognized cultural events to our community, such as two-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee Greg Mortenson, who will be with us in March. I hope that you will take the opportunity to take part in this event.

On behalf of the LCCC students, faculty, staff and Board of Trustees, I invite you to come visit our campuses to see the wide range of opportunities that are available. Whether you are interested in attending an event or want to update your skills, take a class or complete your degree, we are ready to help you. We look forward to meeting and working with you!

Sincerely,

Marlene A. Tignor,
Acting President

*For more than 40 years,
LCCC has been the
college of choice for
students wanting a
better life for themselves
and their families.*

DIGITAL
**COMMUNITY
COLLEGES** SURVEY
2010 Top College

According to a 2010 survey conducted by the Center for Digital Education and the American Association of Community Colleges, LCCC ranked first in the nation among mid-sized community colleges for its Smart™ classrooms, online services for students, online course management systems, scheduled technology upgrades and faculty and administrative technology to support online students.

Teaching Peace

By Ty Stockton



The centerpiece of the Laramie County Community College Foundation Cultural Events Series this year brings world-renown author and two-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee Greg Mortenson to Cheyenne for "Promoting Peace Through Education." This event is much bigger than the usual Cultural Events Series offerings, though.

"It's not just an LCCC event," says Sabrina Lane, the LCCC Foundation director. While planning the event, Lane found enthusiastic support from the Rotary Clubs of Cheyenne, Spradley Barr, Hathaway & Kunz, P.C., Laramie County School District #1, Laramie County Library System and Foundation, as well as several community members. "It's really a community event. One man is making a huge difference in the lives of many people, and we'd like to find out how we can instill that spirit in each of us."

In addition to the main presentation, the Rotary Clubs of Cheyenne will bring versions of

Mortenson's book to area public schools with the Read to Me program; Rotary Clubs of Cheyenne purchased books to be placed in LCSD #1 school libraries; Mortenson will present to several elementary schools, LCCC students and the general public; Laramie County Library is planning displays and events, including book groups and discussions; and LCCC is working Mortenson's writings into several courses.

Mortenson is a co-author of the No. 1 New York Times bestseller, *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace ... One School at a Time*.

He has dedicated his life to bringing education where few opportunities existed before. In 1996, he co-founded the Central Asia Institute with his wife, Tara Bishop, and since then has managed to construct 145 schools in the Middle East and bring educational opportunities to more than 64,000 students, including 52,000 girls.

Mortenson's extraordinary journey has had many hardships, but recently it also has brought



Photos by Greg Mortenson; composite graphic by Mel Jones

international appreciation. In 2009, he was awarded the Star of Pakistan, and he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in both 2009 and 2010.

Promoting Peace Through Education takes place at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 29, at the Taco John's Events Center. Mortenson will share insightful commentary and stunning photography to educate and promote awareness of the importance of primary education, literacy and crosscultural understanding about the remote regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Tickets for *Promoting Peace Through Education* are \$5 for students and \$15 for the general public. Tickets can be bought by contacting the Taco John's Events Center at www.cheyennecity.org or 307.433.0024.

The program is made possible by the LCCC Foundation's Gerald and Jessie Chambers Speakers Series, Rotary Clubs of Cheyenne, Laramie County Library System and Foundation, University of Wyoming Foundation and Laramie County School District #1. ❖

Other events in conjunction with *Promoting Peace Through Education*

Throughout February

One Book/One Community – Laramie County Library facilitates book groups and discussions on *Three Cups of Tea*

Throughout March

Display in Laramie County Library of items related to Pakistan and Afghanistan

Display in LCCC library of items related to Pakistan and Afghanistan

Read to Me Program – Rotary visits area schools to promote literacy, using Mortenson's books

Pennies for Peace – Laramie County Library hopes to collect 494,592 pennies – the number of pennies it would take to cover 1½ schools built by Mortenson and the Central Asia Institute

Tuesday, March 22

11 a.m. – Film presentation of *The Kite Runner* in LCCC Student Lounge

6:30 p.m. – Presentation by Peggy Kelsey, creator of Afghan Women's Project, in LCCC Center for Conferences and Institutes

Wednesday, March 23

1 p.m. – Marianne Kamp, UW professor of history, will lead a panel discussion about issues in Central Asia in the LCCC Student Lounge

Thursday, March 24

11 a.m. – Film presentation of *Charlie Wilson's War* in LCCC Student Lounge

Friday, March 25

12:30 p.m. – Discussion of Mortenson's books. Students interested in participating should contact Jennifer McVay at 778.1182.

Tuesday, March 29

7 p.m. – Mortenson hosts public presentation at Taco John's Events Center

8:30 p.m. – Book signing, Taco John's Events Center

For more information, contact the LCCC Foundation at 307.778.1285 or visit www.lcccfoundation.edu

A perfect partnership

By Ty Stockton



Laramie County Community College is a great place to get an associate degree or a certificate of completion. The college also offers classes to people who simply want to increase their knowledge in a particular area but aren't interested in earning a degree. But what about students who haven't finished high school and think they can't possibly get a high school diploma?

The Partnership Diploma Program at LCCC exists to help those students. It provides a format that is customized to each individual student's needs in an effort to ensure student success.

Traditional high schools do a great job of preparing most students for life, work and higher education, but a number of students fall through the cracks every year. The Partnership Diploma Program helps those students whose responsibilities or challenges prevent them from succeeding in a typical high school environment.

The end result is much more than simply a diploma, though. Program Manager Martha Thein,

Assistant Program Coordinator Lori Lane, and instructors Vanessa Mancill, Gloria Edwards and Don Morris also prepare students for both the workplace and post-secondary education. Their project-based curriculum and assessments for the Wyoming Career Readiness Certificate give the students the skills they'll need to lead productive, successful lives after they leave the program. In fact, currently, there are seven graduates from the program working toward degrees or certificates at LCCC, as well as another seven who have moved on to the military. Many other graduates have joined the working world or gone on to other colleges and universities.

Edwards said housing the program at the college has an unintended benefit. "By having the program here, college is no longer foreign to the students," she said. "This is a safe place for them to come, so it makes the transition to post-secondary education much easier."

Thein agreed. "The (Partnership Diploma Program) has served as a bridge," she said. "It

allows students to make the transition out of high school comfortably and effectively. The personal impact on those students, who could have been lost through the cracks and become lifelong drop-outs, is immeasurable. The safety net of the (program) has kept the majority of those served from slipping through those cracks."

The reasons students come to the program are as varied as the students themselves. Alyssa DeLaTorre is on track to graduate in May. She said the rigidity of traditional school made it hard for her to focus.

"I would finish my schoolwork right away," she said, "and then I just wouldn't go back." She needed a program that would allow her to work at her own pace and give her the flexibility to work a job, too.

"I like that I can go to work and not worry about it," she said. I can work on something for a few hours, then go to something else, or go to work."

Austin Rhoades agreed that the program's flexibility helped, but for him, the flexibility meant being able to concentrate on one subject until he mastered it. "I can focus on one thing," he said. "I can focus on, say, history, and get it knocked out."

That flexibility comes with responsibility, though. Rhoades said there were times he had trouble balancing his coursework with his recreation desires.

"You have to want it bad enough to do it," he said. "Summers and hunting season are the hardest times for me."

The program is set up to allow for those breaks, as long as the students have the desire to complete their education, Mancill said. "They need to touch base with the teachers once a week, but they don't have to sit in a classroom eight hours every day," she said. "In a lot of cases, that's why they came to us. It didn't have anything to do with

understanding the coursework. They just didn't have the time to go to school all day, every day."

The "Partnership" part of the name is accurate. The program is funded by Laramie County School District 1. The district was concerned about the state's 79.5 percent graduation rate in 2007, and it recognized a need to give at-risk students another option to complete their high school education. That option has been appreciated by the 98 students, ages 17 to 21, who have participated in the Partnership Diploma Program to date. Many

of the 44 students who have graduated from the program have returned to their original high schools for commencement, and they walked across the stage to receive their diplomas. Others have graduated after the rest of their original classmates, or even before, and still others have gone on to earn their GEDs.

The program accepts 30 students at a time, and Thein said there's always a waiting list. She said the customization allows students to finish at their own rate, which means some students finish and others start at any time during the year.

"The format and funding for the (program) only allows for 30 students at a time," she said. "This is both a strength and a challenge.

The challenge is that there is always a waiting list for entry into this program. The strength is the ability to serve students one-on-one."

Thein credits the students themselves with the success of the program. "It's not that this system is so good that they can't fail," she said. "They just do so much better than they would have imagined, and they succeed because they realize they can." ❖

Applications for the Partnership Diploma Program are available at students' home high schools, where a counselor or principal may make the referral.

For more information about the Partnership Diploma Program, call Martha Thein at 307.432.1602.



Paying Back

By Ty Stockton

“Our fingerprints don’t fade from the lives we touch...”

Don Heiduck says he owes a lot to Laramie County Community College. From the college’s perspective, he’s paid it all back – and then some.

Heiduck is a detective with the Laramie County Sheriff’s Department, where he serves as the senior crime scene investigator. At least, that’s the main hat he wears.

His official duty is diverse and exciting. Exciting enough, in fact, that there are a slew of hit television shows based on the things Det. Heiduck does. He may be called upon to dress in a protective suit and pick his way through a methamphetamine lab, collecting toxic or volatile substances along the way. Some days he examines fingerprints to link a perpetrator to a crime – or to prove that an accused individual wasn’t involved. Other days, maybe he’ll be tasked with visiting the scene of a homicide to attempt to piece together the chain of events that led to the unfortunate outcome. Then again, being a court qualified witness for the examination of inked fingerprint impressions, he may be called upon in

court to identify the victim of a death investigation or to confirm the identification of the habitual criminal who will serve the remainder of his life in prison for crimes he had been convicted of. Or maybe he gets to visit the local schools to explain the potential health dangers of alcohol, methamphetamine or other legal and illegal narcotics, to provide kids with information so they may make good choices for themselves to prolong their lives. These visits also serve to let kids know that an encounter with a law enforcement officer is more often a positive experience than a negative one, and often a bond of trust is established.

“One of the hardest things about my job is dealing with kids (when something bad has happened),” Det. Heiduck says. Programs like DARE in the grade schools and the program he carries into the junior high and high schools are a lot better way to meet them than it would be years later, if they’ve committed a crime.

“Law enforcement programs and interaction in the schools are good ways to get the kids to think

about the negative consequences beforehand and even develop relationships with the students,” he says. “And it’s nice to see students I’ve met through my junior and senior high program later on, to see where they are with their lives and see the successes they’ve obtained in reaching their personal goals that they have set for themselves.”

When he’s not photographing crime scenes, collecting and processing evidence, processing items for latent fingerprints, collecting DNA samples, testifying in court or conducting the many other duties a crime scene investigator is called upon to do, he shares his knowledge of law enforcement with students at LCCC.

Det. Heiduck has returned to the college where he earned his associates degrees in Anthropology (1978), History (1985), and Criminal Justice (1990). He also completed his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Wyoming (1992) in Administration of Justice, as well as being a graduate from the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy. Det.



Det. Don Heiduck laughs as he explains fingerprint analysis at his lab in the Laramie County Sheriff’s Office.

Heiduck has been an adjunct instructor at the college since 1990. He teaches Criminal Investigations I and Criminal Investigations II, and he also has led courses in Bank Security, Basic Firearms Safety, Principles of Banking and Applications of Banking.

Det. Heiduck’s passion to pass on the knowledge and information he has collected over a thirty-plus-year period during his career in law enforcement also extends to the peers in his career field, where he is recognized as a Certified Practitioner Lecturer sanctioned by the Peace Officer’s Standards and Training Commission for the State of Wyoming to instruct courses that include Basic Crime Scene Technician, Crime Scene Management, Inked Fingerprint Basics and CPR/ Standard First Aid to name a few. Det. Heiduck has served as an instructor for other entities including the Cheyenne Police Department, the Wyoming State Park Rangers, the Laramie County Fire Districts, Cheyenne-Laramie County Health Department and the AMR Medical Response Ambulance Company. He views not only his career, but life in general, as a never-ending experience in learning and carries that philosophy to his own life, where he continues to take courses related to his career field through the Sheriff’s Department and also at LCCC and the University of Wyoming extension program.

He does all this in addition to his duties at the Sheriff’s Department, where he serves as a member on the Cheyenne – Laramie County SWAT Team, the Critical Incident Stress Management Team, the Department Community Liaison, the Fire Investigation Team, the Traffic Fatality Team, the Honor and Color Guard, the SERT Team, the DCI Clandestine Lab Team, as well as being a Department Firearms Safety Officer and a Department Personnel Recruiter. Just when it seems way too much for one person to balance, you find more duties assigned to him. In addition to his department responsibilities, he also serves as a Laramie County Deputy Coroner, a post he was originally selected for by his late friend Bill Ryan and currently by his childhood friend, Laramie County Coroner Marty Luna. Det. Heiduck’s sense of compassion was a primary reason for being chosen. He is a member of the United States Marshal’s Warrant and Sex Offender Verification Task Force and employs his fingerprint examination

background for the case investigations for the special agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; Wyoming State Division of Criminal Investigation; and the Drug Enforcement Administration. But Det. Heiduck does it all, and he does it with enthusiasm.

“Don’s a great guy, and he does all his jobs well,” says Lt. Joe Hartigan, who is Det. Heiduck’s boss as well as his friend. “That’s probably why we keep giving him more to do – everything he does, he does well. Lt. Hartigan recognized his contributions to the community and nominated him for the award he received as the Laramie County “Community Hero Award” in 2008.

Det. Heiduck’s students at LCCC echo Hartigan’s approval. Criminology majors line up for any class taught by Det. Heiduck, because they know they’re learning from one of the best in the business.

He’s an instructor who is still out in the field every day, rather than gaining his knowledge from a textbook alone.

Better yet, he still teaches like a man who is excited about what he does.

The greatest benefit to Det.

Heiduck of being an adjunct

instructor is the personal

relationships and later

friendships that have developed

out of the classroom. Many of

his students are now his

coworkers in the law

enforcement or forensic science

professions today –

Det. Heiduck’s sense of

accomplishment is that maybe,

just maybe, he played some small

positive role in either their personal

or professional lives. Thus the

reflection of his personal life’s

philosophy that was echoed in the line of

a recent movie, “our fingerprints don’t fade

from the lives we touch.”

“I teach because when I first started my career, there wasn’t a lot of formal training,” he says. “They gave us our badge, uniforms, some informal training, assigned us our patrol cars and sent us out on the road into the community.

“I teach to make these students better in their careers than what I have been in mine, and I try to

prepare them for what they’re going to feel with their emotions and physically see (on the job). My assignments can be gruesome at times – autopsies, death investigations – as well as heartbreaking, when you have had to place the lifeless body of child at a scene in a body bag and then have to deliver the death message to the soon-to-be grieving parents. The opportunity to teach gives me a chance to lighten things up a bit.”

If you think a person couldn’t possibly do any more, you’re wrong. Det. Heiduck’s focus is paying it forward in the community as well, participating in law enforcement’s support of Special Olympics Cops-n-Lobsters, Tips for Cops and Cops-n-Jocks; Salvation Army’s Happy Christmas; the WTE Empty Stocking Fund and Newspapers in

Education programs; the Post Office’s Stamp out Hunger food drive; the March of Dimes Jail-n-Bail; NEEDS Dine for Hunger; Guns-n-Hoses blood drive; the Project Lifesaver program, and an endless list of other charitable activities.

Along with the current fifteen community boards,

associations, and committees

that Det. Heiduck volunteers

on, since 1999, he has also

served on the LCCC

Foundation’s Board of

Directors in the Finance and

Development committees.

But Det. Heiduck doesn’t

settle only for giving his

time. He has initiated or

assisted in establishing 24

scholarships at the school

through the LCCC Foundation,

including three family

scholarships – one of which is the

Heiduck “Never Give Up” family

scholarship. And he says he’s not done

giving yet. Det. Heiduck has been nominated

for “Outstanding Board Member” in both 2004 and 2009, as well as being nominated by the Foundation for the Community Service Award in 2010.

“Community boards and teaching give me

something personally rewarding to do,” the

Cheyenne native says. “I actually initially quit school

after my first semester at the University of Wyoming

“The college gave me purpose and instilled the heartfelt passion to give back to the community...”

and went to Yoder, Wyoming, and worked on a farm. When I came back to town, I still had the honor scholarship that I was awarded upon my graduation from Cheyenne East High School. I realized that I needed to obtain an education to reach some of my goals in life, so I started back at LCCC. The personable instructors and the comfortable atmosphere at the college made school interesting, fun and challenging for me at the same time."

My life would be a lot different if it hadn't been for LCCC," he says. "The college gave me purpose and instilled the heartfelt passion to give back to the community through my professional career and my personal life, as well as now a mechanism to pay back to LCCC as a student, an instructor and a Foundation Board Member for these invaluable opportunities that the college has provided me during my life's journey." ❖



Students in Det. Heiduck's Crime Scene Investigation class at Laramie County Community College lift latent fingerprints off a coffee mug in the college's crime scene lab.

The Laramie County Community College Radiography Program continues to offer cutting-edge instruction with the addition of new direct and single-phase X-ray units.

Main photo: Mandy Kapptie adjusts the new single-phase X-ray unit in the radiography lab at LCCC as Vanessa Padilla assists and Abby Bailey plays "patient." Below: Tom Burdette positions fellow student Katie Stieb as he would for a chest X-ray using the new single-phase unit. Lower left: Rebecca Errington views images produced by the new direct-to-digital imaging equipment in the radiography lab.



RIDING HIGH

By Ty Stockton

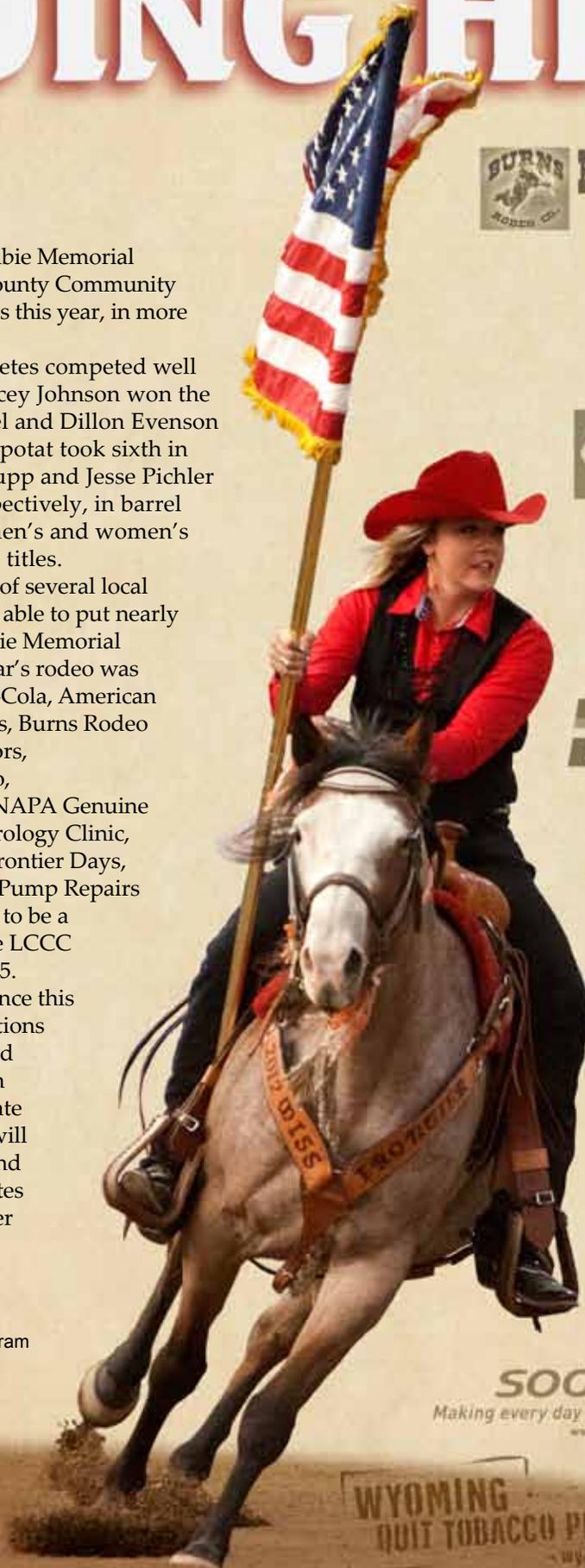
The annual Shawn Dubie Memorial Rodeo at Laramie County Community College was a huge success this year, in more ways than one.

The LCCC rodeo athletes competed well at their home rodeo. Loncey Johnson won the bull riding; Canler Sterkel and Dillon Evenson won team roping; Ty Taypotat took sixth in bareback; and Philicia Hupp and Jesse Pichler were fifth and ninth, respectively, in barrel racing. In addition, the men's and women's teams each won the team titles.

Due to the generosity of several local businesses, the rodeo was able to put nearly \$10,000 in the Shawn Dubie Memorial Scholarship fund. This year's rodeo was sponsored by Swire Coca-Cola, American National Bank, Big O Tires, Burns Rodeo Company, FCI Constructors, Kaelin Excavation, Sodexo, Wyoming Quit Tobacco, NAPA Genuine Parts of Cheyenne, The Urology Clinic, Kaiser Corp., Cheyenne Frontier Days, Frontier Refining and PK Pump Repairs & Sales. If you would like to be a rodeo sponsor, contact the LCCC Foundation at 307.778.1285.

The increased attendance this year, along with the donations from the sponsors, resulted in a profit of \$4,946, which will be matched by the State of Wyoming, and \$9,892 will go into the scholarship fund to help future rodeo athletes realize their goals in higher education. ❖

Sami Jo Heitsch is a student in the LCCC Equine Studies Program and the current Cheyenne Frontier Days Lady-in-Waiting.



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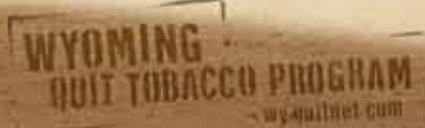
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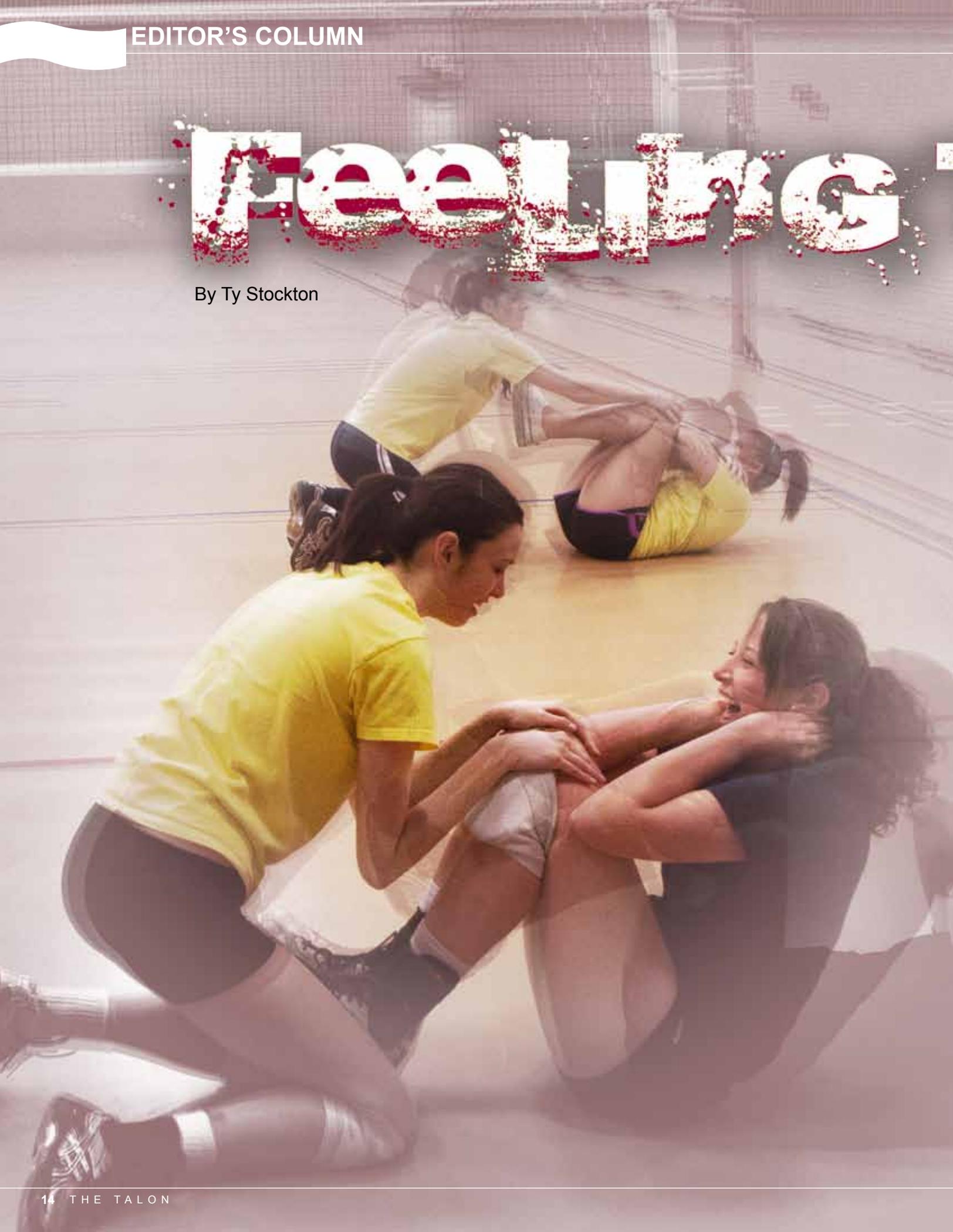


CHEYENNE FRONTIER DAYS



Feeling

By Ty Stockton



The Pain!

Early in the fall semester, in a moment of idiocy that somehow surpassed my usual moronic tendencies, I asked Laramie County Community College volleyball coach Travis Ward if I could work out with the team. I had in mind a story that would demonstrate the athleticism and dedication to the sport these young women possess.

What a stupid idea that was. I could easily have written that story had I based it just on the games and practices I'd attended. Those women worked hard on the court. They jumped, dug, spiked, set, ran, dove, spun and flew. And that's just on one play. They did that repeatedly throughout a practice or a game, which is a good reason they were ranked as high as seventh in the nation among junior college volleyball teams at one point in the season. They had talent and skill, but they backed it up with heart and determination.

So I didn't have to subject myself to the torture of a morning workout with the team, but for some stupid reason, I did anyway. Worse yet, the morning I started turned out to be the team's abdominal day. If you've never seen me, I should probably set the stage for you. I'm a 36-year-old former football player who has put 40 pounds on since the last time I participated in any organized sport. Those pounds aren't the beneficial kind. And at least 30 of those pounds set up shop just a bit above my belt line.

I trundled into the gym that morning carrying my sit-up mat and what I quickly realized was a false sense of optimism. It only took about 30 seconds of v-ups and leg-lifts to figure out I was way out of my fitness league. I knew going in that I'd never keep up; I did think, though, that I wouldn't completely embarrass myself. It turns out I was very, very wrong.

As the team worked through a set of hip flexor exercises (about a minute into the workout), as I was straining to get into the starting position and the team members were on their 20th rep, Ward explained the importance of this muscle group.

"Studies show more than 90 percent of ACL injuries are the result of weak hip flexors," he said.

If that's the case, it's a wonder I haven't destroyed my ACLs just by walking, because I'm pretty sure I don't have any hip flexors at all.

Then we switched to a different exercise.

"Keep your stomach tight," Ward urged. Yeah, right. The last time I was able to flex my stomach was 1993.

And that was still 45 minutes from the end of the workout. By the 30-minute mark, I was curled up on my sit-up mat in the fetal position, alternating between hoping I would survive and wishing I would die.

I did survive, if only barely, and limped back to the office. I thought about writing this column, but it didn't happen that day. The flabby lumps of squishy flesh that pass for my stomach muscles had contracted, and I couldn't get uncurled far enough to allow me to sit at my desk comfortably.

The next day's workout was scheduled to be an upper-body day, so I made an excuse to Travis and didn't go to the gym. I figured if that workout made my arms feel the way my mid-section did after ab day, there'd be no way I'd be able to lift them up to the keyboard, let alone get my fingers to find the right keys. My fitness regimen would have made me unfit to work.

After my first morning of workouts with the team, I understood completely why the LCCC Golden Eagles Volleyball Team was such a power in the NJCAA. That workout was brutal, but they plugged through it with no complaint. Athleticism and talent carried them a long way, and their work ethic took them even farther. The team cruised to the finals of the Region IX tournament and even beat the top seed, Northwest College. Northwest rallied to win its way back through the consolation bracket, though, and narrowly edged the Golden Eagles twice to win the title and a shot at nationals.

Many of this year's athletes will be back next year. If they keep working as hard as they did this year, they should be unstoppable. It's a long season, though, and I realize titles aren't given to teams just because they work hard in practice and the weight room.

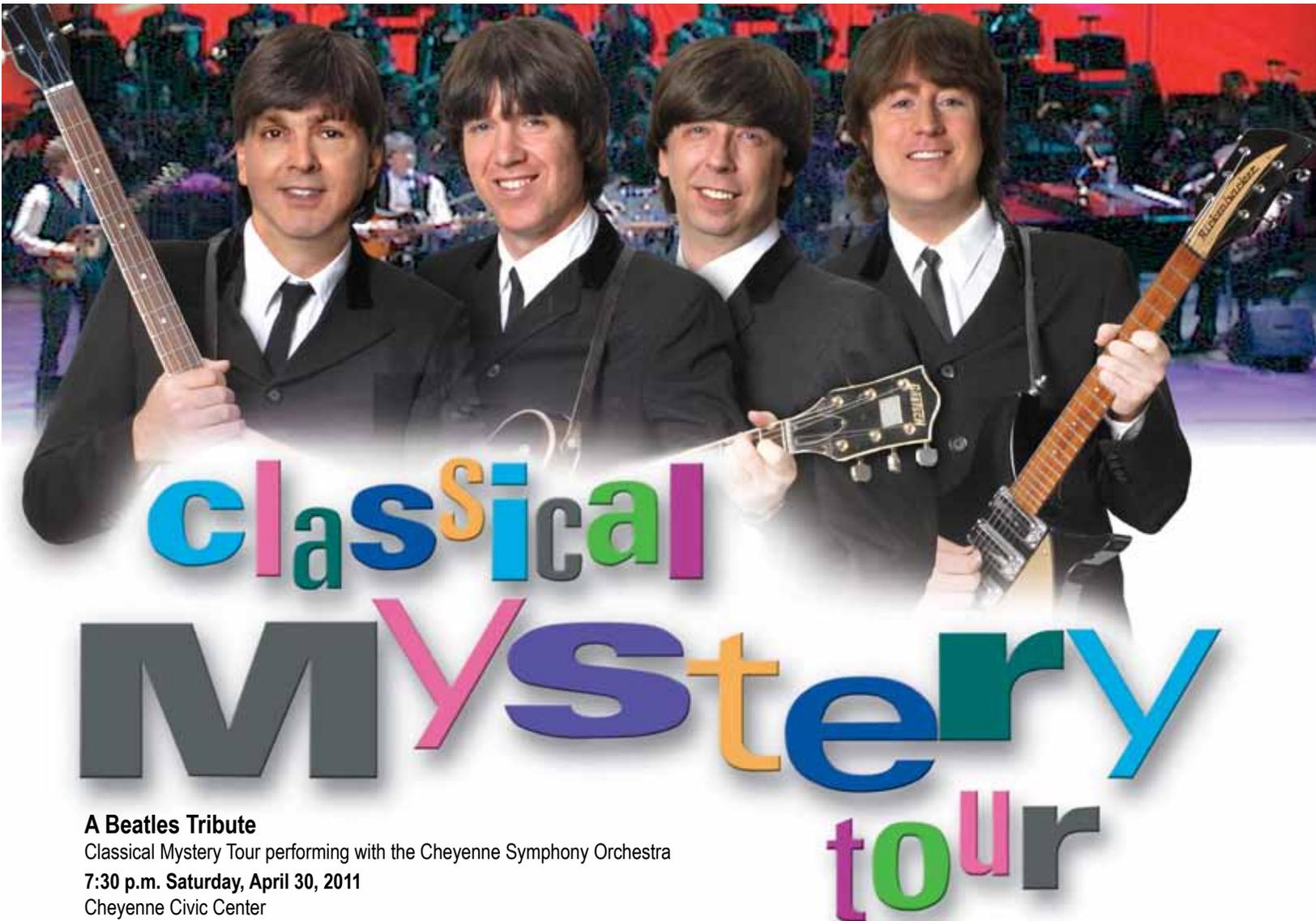
One thing's certain, though: if I ever get back to working out with the LCCC volleyball team, I'll get in shape, or I'll die trying. If you see someone else's byline as editor on the next issue of the Talon, you'll know the outcome of my foolhardy idea was the latter. ❖



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Classical Mystery Tour performing with the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra

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Cheyenne Civic Center

Tickets range from \$10-\$36 and can be purchased online at
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registration begins
April 5.**

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