

# The Dean's Almanac

## Traditions

*May 1, 2006*

One of the constant complaints I hear about UConn, from students, staff and faculty, is "we have no traditions." I don't agree. Here are a couple that I was reminded of this weekend that I think we should be proud of: SUBOG, an organization that for 55 years has been providing quality programming for students, ranging from the One-Ton Sundae to Late Night;



The Midnight Breakfast, which last night involved over 3000 students, many of you in your pajamas, wrestling with the existential question, "Why would anyone want to wrap a sausage in a pancake, anyway?" (For the record, those odd-looking little lumps were just a one-time tryout by our experimental friends in Dining Services). As I stood there, dishing potatoes onto your plates, listening to the music (including my first "a cappella tap dance" experience), I saw a lot of you just hanging around, doing that thing we all have in our various Division of Student Affairs mission statements: building community.

Yes, these are traditions. They may not involve hoop-rolling or running naked from one place to another, but they do the things that good traditions do: give us all a sense of being someplace special.

So thanks to the many individuals and groups who made MB so much fun, especially Dining Services staff, the hardest working folks on campus at this time of year.

The other highlight of my week? Seeing both the Blue and White Guy (sans body paint) and the Great Pick Guy (with upright bass instead of guitar) in the same room at a campus event last Sunday. I've missed them both since the women's basketball season ended.

Some interesting questions came in this week, some of them more complicated than one might expect.

"Why do we have NESN on our cable network, which is great for Red Sox fans, but not YES, which would allow us to watch the Yankees?" asked **Patricia**. As a Jersey Girl myself, one who idolized Thurman Munson (but thinks George Steinbrenner has brought shame on the franchise), that seemed a reasonable query. As Patricia noted, the campus is divided in its allegiance, so it only seems fair to offer both.

The answer is all about timing and dollars. When the current contract with Charter was negotiated, NESN was part of the package. At that time, YES didn't exist. It does now, but not as part of any cable package, because the aforementioned Mr. Steinbrenner will not sell it through

cable. It can only be seen through a satellite service, sold separately, and would cost us \$65,000 (see above gripe about Steinbrenner).

BUT...we're going to work on this. I'm hoping that in the Fall, a student committee can be formed to look at the whole cable package and figure out what channels students most want. Yankees fans aren't the only ones in dire need. Apparently, country music fans are a-fussin', too. In the meantime, we'll look into what it would cost to have YES added in the Fall.

**Dan** wrote in asking about Swan Lake (the one in front of the Chemistry Building), and what happened to the "fountain" that used to be in it. While I don't have absolute confirmation on this, it appears the fountain was replaced with a "bubbler" of some sort that may be providing aeration to the lake to keep the scum from getting too thick (gosh, I love this job). So that thing in the middle is not a fountain. But I'm still waiting to hear more about this.

The Myth of the Rules for a Late Professor was the subject of Zach's question. Can you really leave after ten minutes if your professor doesn't show up? Isn't that an official policy? **Zach** wondered. Sorry. No such policy exists, though that's the standard belief out there on just about every campus. The reality is, if your professor is late, and you leave, then it's really up to you and your professor to sort that out, depending on the circumstances. If a professor is chronically late, you should address your concerns to the appropriate department head.

Drop me a line if you have other myths you want to debunk: mysterious hauntings, sightings of students studying on Saturday nights, etc., or other questions related to topics as fascinating as cable television and pond scum. It's [Lee.Williams@uconn.edu](mailto:Lee.Williams@uconn.edu)

Study well and stay safe. I'll see some of you at Commencement. That's me in the bright red robe (Go Terps!).

*\*\*\*Coming soon: Why don't we admit fewer students so we can house everyone?*

*More dangerous than an unanswered question is an unquestioned answer. - unknown*