

The Dean's Almanac

A Legend in Storrs is Not an "Urban Legend"

September 5, 2006

Hello from the golden-domed Wilbur Cross Building, gateway to student services. I hope you all enjoyed your Labor Day break and took the time to thank your mothers for giving birth to you.*



Here in the Dean's office, we've been busy responding to students worried about their parents, parents worried about their students, students worried about one another, former students who've enrolled at other schools but neglected to withdraw from UConn, and students who haven't quite figured out that discretion is the better part of behavior when their behavior involves illegal activities.

I have noticed, I'm happy to say, better crosswalk attitudes. People look both ways. They occasionally smile and acknowledge drivers. Drivers smile back. It's like we're one big happy Husky family or something.

Speaking of happy Huskies, I had a great time at the football game last week, even though the outcome was pretty much decided by halftime and the only suspense was wondering how long it would take us to get to our car (a 25-minute walk) and get our car out to I-84 (another 25 minutes). And how about that fine marching band, the Pride of Connecticut, and their daredevil flame-throwing baton twirlers? Now that was worth staying in my seat at halftime for: great music featuring the sousaphone section and death-defying feats from women in sequins.

Which gets me to my first mailbag item. Last week I wrote that the reason we have such a small rec center at UConn is, in part, because recreation has not been a priority up till now. Building residence halls and academic buildings has taken precedence over a gleaming rec center full of beautiful equipment and a juice bar. So I got this question from **Adrien**: "If sports and recreation are not a 'priority' at UConn, then what the hell is that football complex behind South Parking garage??"

Adrien, it's...a football complex. You're exactly right. And it's a darn pretty one at that. But I should have been more specific in my response earlier. Recreation has not been a priority at UConn. The football complex fulfills the need of an intercollegiate athletic team, which, I suppose one could argue, tends to the interests of those students who are fans of that team. Recreation, club sports and intramurals are a different game, so to speak. We need a full-service, fully-equipped rec center (with a juice bar) to meet the needs of the hundreds of students who regularly work out, and the thousands of students who participate in intramural and club sport activities. That's what we'll be working on over the next few years. In the meantime, try and be

appreciative for what we have here. Back when I was in college (cue music), recreation consisted of slogging through the mud and dodging cars on my way to class. And if I had gone to class more often, I might have been in better shape. Oh well.

Speaking of being in better shape, after reading a few Instant Daily comments, you all need to not go overboard on the burritos and other offerings in the new Union. You might enjoy them now, but you'll regret them come Spring Break.

A related question from **Christine**: "I've heard that dining services puts laxatives in the food to prevent food poisoning. Is that true?" No, and Sprague Hall isn't haunted, and Mikey didn't die from eating Pop Rocks. Where do you people get these things? Since when do laxatives prevent food poisoning, anyway? But no, the only things Dining Services staff do to prevent food poisoning are to keep food fresh, serve it at the correct temperature, and keep their kitchens and equipment clean. However, local establishments do put laxatives in beer, so you should drink less of it just to be on the safe side.

Melissa asked, "How come the stores in the Union take HuskyBucks but the coffee shop in the Co-op doesn't?" The Co-op's café is run by the Co-op, which is an independent organization, not a UConn department or a business with a lease agreement with the Union like Panda, Blimpie's and Wendy's. So they're not under any obligation to participate in a program like HuskyBucks. And I guess they don't want to.

A Hilltop Suites resident, **Kyle**, who just transferred here, wants to know why there's no hot water, or much water pressure, in the morning when he tries to shower. Kyle, as much as I appreciate a student who wants to shower before heading to class, the harsh truth of residence hall life is there's never enough hot water at peak shower times. Why? Because we would have to have holding tanks as big as Gampel. So one key to a happy collegiate experience (which I figured out by sophomore year), is to shower at non-peak times, even if it means your hair looks stupid when you go to class in the morning. That's why baseball caps were invented, right?

And the other key to a happy UConn experience? Ask a freshman and they'll tell you. Every day, say this at least once: Know your Dean. Love your Dean. That'd be me.

I'll see you around campus.

Have a question? Heard a rumor? Just want to express your frustration? Send me a note at: Lee.Williams@uconn.edu.

*This is a joke, or at least an attempt at one. Please don't email me to share the history of the labor movement in America. I love unions, and that's why I show "Norma Rae" in my class each year.