

# The Dean's Almanac

## Adios, Amigos!

May 5, 2008

Where *does* the time go? Seems like yesterday I was writing an Almanac welcoming students to the new academic year. And now, here I am, signing off and sending our seniors on their way with affection and good wishes.

There's a song from my long-ago youth by one of the great songwriters of his generation, Jackson Browne, that I've been listening to a lot lately (he has a new acoustic album out), and as I've listened to it, it's put me in a graduation frame of mind (though, truth be told, he wrote it under very different circumstances). It's called "For a Dancer," and I think sums up well what I'd like to say to those of you graduating this week. Or sing to you, but really, who wins that way?

"Keep a fire burning in your eye  
Pay attention to the open sky  
You never know what will be coming down..."

There's a lot going on out there, and it's easy to just put your head down and focus on the job you're in, or graduate classes. But you'll miss a lot. The best advice I ever heard a young alum give a group of seniors was this: "Go out and be a citizen of the world. Learn how to live out there. Pay your own bills, make new friends, figure out how the world works, and then be part of it."

Or, as Jackson sings,

"Just do the steps that you've been shown  
By everyone you've ever known  
Until the dance becomes your very own"

Hopefully, you've gotten a good education here, both academic and in every other way— leadership, involvement, how to live with other people, how to take responsibility for yourself. A professor once said to me, "I really like teaching seniors. They're so engaged, so interesting in their own right, willing to really learn. I can't stand teaching freshmen. They just sit there quietly and try to figure out how to do whatever will get them the best grade with the least amount of effort." I pointed out that they're the same people, four years apart, and hey, that's her job— helping turn those freshmen into seniors (it's my job, too, and while it has its frustrating moments, it's a pretty great job). So take what you've learned from everyone here and turn it into your own amazing dance.



Ready for Oozeball

“Into a dancer you have grown  
From a seed somebody else has thrown  
Go on ahead and throw some seeds of your own”

We’ll be anxiously awaiting word of how that’s going. So keep in touch, Huskies. There are great dancers among you, and we can’t wait to see what you can do out on the dance floor now that we’ve set you loose.



A few answers to some final questions to wrap up the school year:

**Melissa** asked the eternal question:

What the heck is going on with I Lot? One quadrant of the lot has potholes deep enough to bury some one in, and it's filled with rust and oil stains. It makes some spots unusable/inaccessible, and I really don't have the funds to pay for a new axle if I happen to go over that area. Is it going to be fixed? Ever?

Parking chief Ann Denny agreed that this is a serious problem, and reported on April 18th that repairs had begun (they have to wait till the temperature gets high enough to re-pave). Hopefully Melissa and others find I Lot a less dangerous place these days.



Mud Management: VP Saddlemire and Dean Williams

**Kristen** wondered why we don’t have more benches on campus, especially when nice weather makes you want to sit outside. I’m happy to report that this is also a question several senior staff at UConn have been asking, and I think you’ll start to see more benches and sitting-appropriate walls around campus as some of our major construction and landscaping projects wrap up.

Water pressure problems have plagued **Johnathan**, who reports that the water fountains in the gym require serious slurping, always an attractive thing to do. I sent this note along to Patti Bostic, Director of Recreation Services, who forwarded it to Vaughn (no relation) Williams, Director of Recreation Facilities, who checked out the fountains and found them to be working okay, so it might be only an occasional problem. Patti says they do have water pressure issues with the sinks and showers, too. It’s an old geezer of a building, despite the nice equipment, so bring your water bottle (made of recycled plastic, of course) and leave the slurping to the other Jonathan-the one with white fur and four legs.

**Edward** had two questions, which is, by the way, a student's quota each year (or this is all I would do with my time): What's going on in the Student Union's first floor area (next to the lobby)? And why do our athletic teams use a variety of "C" logos on their uniforms?

- The offices of the Student Union, including reservations and conference services, will be moving to that space, freeing up space upstairs for some other offices to spread out a bit and offer better services to students.
- The University has a variety of "C"s that are trademark logos of the University of Connecticut, and Athletics uses several just to keep things interesting and their athletes looking sharp. Some teams and coaches prefer one type of C over another.

Well, you've done it. You've wasted another perfectly good fifteen minutes reading The Dean's Almanac. You *should* have been studying. But it's been nice spending the time with you. I appreciate your questions, your comments, your thank-you's, and whatever good buzz you create about your friends in the Dean of Students Office. Here's a shout-out to Assistant Deans Karen Bresciano and Gay Douglas, who answer more questions in a week than I do in a semester, to our incredible support staff, Lisa Lemaire, Jane Benoit-Bean and Ada Elderkin, who take good care of you and good care of us, too, and our student workers Sarah, Nicole, Brett, Mel, Michelle, Manuel and Lindsay. They answer the phones, smile when you walk in, file your paperwork, process your forms and spread the gospel of the Dean of Students all over campus. Our Community Standards staff shares our space, our mission, our refrigerator and lots of laughs. Thanks Cathy, Donta, Cinnamon and Kate, for the great work you do.

Check in this summer for an update or two. Otherwise, as my brother Bobby always signs his emails, see you down the road.