

communiqué

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO - COLORADO SPRINGS

Dead serious about utopia

Utopia: any idealized place, state, or situation of perfection. As most English and history teachers will attest, that idealized state exists largely in books or as short-lived social experiments. But for a handful of students who took Ceil Malek's freshman seminar section this semester, utopia was real — as real as a bag of apples, a can of ravioli, or a bottle of shampoo.

A few days before Thanksgiving, Malek, who is assistant director of the Writing Program, and two of her students, delivered boxes of groceries to 17 indigent, mentally ill people living in a cramped Colorado Springs apartment complex. They did it simply because it seemed like the right thing to do.

The idea was a direct offshoot of the class Malek and co-teachers Sean Flaherty and Diane Harrison-Miller taught this fall about utopian societies — both in literature and in life. As part of the class, students were required to participate in community service projects. For one of those projects, her students cleaned the apartments of more than a dozen mentally ill people receiving treatment under the auspices of Pikes Peak Mental Health Center.

The experience left a lasting impression on Jennifer Hawkins, 18, a freshman from Rock Springs, Wyo. As

she cleaned the apartment of a man named Tony, she was horrified to discover the only food in his refrigerator was an orange juice can filled with bacon grease.

“That’s what really touched me,” Hawkins, who wants to be a medical doctor, said. “When you’re hungry, it makes you more crazy, you know? It really hurt that he was living that way. “I didn’t talk to him very much. He was a really nice guy but you could tell something was wrong. He lived in a tiny little box.”

She couldn’t stop thinking about him and the other people in the apartment complex. What were their lives like? How could she help them?

“After the trip, we talked about how we should adopt these people and do something good for them,” Hawkins said. “Throughout the whole freshman seminar, I kept thinking about this.”

As the seminar drew to a close, Malek realized there was about \$200 left over in money budgeted for the class, so one morning she broached the subject with her students.

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Holiday Schedule

Dec. 11 – Dec. 16	Final exams.
Friday, Dec. 15	Overlook Café closed at 2:30 p.m. for the holidays. The Lodge closed after dinner.
Saturday, Dec. 16	Semester ends.
Sunday, Dec. 17	Starbucks holiday hours begin. Open 7:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. Sandwiches and salads.
Tuesday, Dec. 19	Chancellor's holiday party, 3:30 p.m. in the Lodge.
Monday, Dec. 25	Christmas holiday. Campus offices & library closed.
Tuesday, Dec. 26	Governor's holiday. Campus offices & library closed.
Monday, Jan. 1, 2001	New Year's Day holiday. Campus offices closed.

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Hat's on

Construction crews install one of the final details of El Pomar Center, a cap on its signature tower, last week. Glass panels will be installed in January and the cap will be lighted.



Overheard . . .

“Either they’ll give it to me encased in plastic as a retirement present or I’ll will it to somebody when I leave.”

– Bill Smith, Admissions & Records, on his used staple collection.

Rates change for motor pool vehicles

In an effort to improve service, the university motor pool is changing its rate structure for using a state vehicle.

Beginning Friday, staff and faculty that use state vehicles will pay a mileage fee as well as a per-day rental charge. Previously, only a mileage fee was charged.

Though rates vary by vehicle, Larry Hiatt, supervisor, Physical Plant, used rates for a 1995 Ford Taurus sedan as an example. Under the new system, users will pay \$15 a day and 25 cents per mile traveled. A roundtrip to Boulder will cost about \$65, the same as charged under the current 32 cents per mile charge system.

The change, said Hiatt, was necessary because some people were borrowing vehicles for the day but driving them less than 10 miles.

“We have certain fixed costs in maintaining the fleet,” Hiatt said. “By charging a daily use fee, we’re assured that those basic costs are covered, which ensures that we have sound vehicles for people to use on university business.”

Additionally, the motor pool has instituted a \$40 charge for vehicles that are returned late. The charge will allow better scheduling of vehicles, Hiatt said.

For more information, contact the physical plant offices at 262-3314.



Steel a staple in Admissions and Records



Bill Smith

As achievements go, perhaps this one is a little dubious. Bill Smith, administrative assistant, Office of Admissions and Records, has a mind-boggling collection of used staples in his office. Yes, you heard right: used staples. Smith started collecting the staples after he quit smoking in 1992. Instead of using his ashtray for cigarette butts, he used it for used staples.

His collection is now about six inches high and about four inches in diameter. The used staples probably don't merit an entry into the Guinness Book of World Records, but they do represent a sizeable amount of papers that have crossed Smith's desk. They're also a testament to one man winning the war against nicotine, which, come to think of it, is quite an achievement after all.



Better use for an ashtray.

What makes Traci run?

It almost sounds like a made-for-TV movie. One day, Traci Dworshak was a mom jogging through the park. The next she was a fulltime college student, representing the women's cross-country team in a national meet. And, just like in the flicks, it all started through a serendipitous encounter with a persistent stranger. In Dworshak's case, the stranger was CU-Colorado Springs' indefatigable coach Graeme Badger.

Dworshak, now 36, bumped into Badger about two years ago when she was running with a group of women in Monument Valley Park. Badger wasn't alone either, but running with his own group: the CU-Colorado Springs women's cross-country team, the Mountain Lions.

Badger and Dworshak became acquainted after they kept seeing each other on the trails. In time, Dworshak asked Badger if he would informally coach her and her running buddies, giving them pointers on how to increase their speed and stamina. Badger agreed, and it wasn't long before Badger was recruiting Dworshak. He promised her a sports scholarship if she'd come to the university and join the cross-country team. It was tempting but Dworshak — who had just taken a job as a meter reader for Colorado Springs Utilities — wasn't ready to take the plunge. Going to college in her 30s filled her with apprehension.

Badger kept, well, badgering her.

"He just kept telling me to go for it," Dworshak recalled recently as she sat in University Center. "He said I shouldn't be intimidated about my age, whether it had to do with school or running. I think he saw potential in me and he knew I wasn't that happy with my job."

That's an understatement. During her first month as a meter reader, a dog bit her. As the winter wore on, Dworshak found herself slogging through some formidable storms and snowdrifts. On a typical day, she'd walk 12 miles. The job took so much out of her she did not keep up her running. She resigned from CSU after six months.

Still, Dworshak admitted she was nervous about such a drastic lifestyle change. "I was afraid to start school at this point. I'd been out of school for 17 years," she said.

She was intimidated by the idea of running against women who were younger and faster than she. She worried she might stand out in class because of her age. But her fears



were unfounded. On the cross-country team, she found camaraderie and support with her teammates. In the classroom, she found her intellectual peers.

Academics and sports seem to be a winning combination for her. On Nov. 18, the Mountain Lions finished 10th in the NCAA Division Two Cross Country Nationals in Pomona, Calif. Dworshak, who was ill, finished 104th out of 180. Although she was disappointed with her performance, she has no plans of easing up, partly because her teammates have got her motivated.

"They're so young and so dedicated and they work so hard," she said.

Dworshak says she has no regrets about tackling a college education in her 30s.

"It's been a great experience," she said. "I didn't expect the confidence I've gained in myself by going back to school."

She's taking four classes and earning As and Bs.

Asked about her long-term goals, such as a course major, Dworshak seems apologetic.

"You know, I'm 36 and I don't know what I want to be if I grow up. Do you think that's terrible?"

Holiday Schedule, cont.

Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2001	Overlook Café opens at 10:30 a.m.
Sunday, Jan. 14, 2001	The Lodge reopens for lunch.
Monday, Jan. 15, 2001	Library closed.
Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2001	First day of classes for spring semester. Begin regular hours at Starbucks.

Library Hours for Finals and the Holidays

Dec. 10	10 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Dec. 11	7:30 a.m. - 11 p.m.
Dec. 12	7:30 a.m. - 11 p.m.
Dec. 13	7:30 a.m. - 11 p.m.
Library holiday hours Dec. 16 - 24	
Mon. - Fri.	8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sat. and Sun.	Closed.
Library hours Dec. 27 - Jan. 14	
Mon. - Tues.	8 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Wed. - Fri.	8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sat. and Sun.	Closed.

