

The Western Spirit

On The Internet: www.westernchristian.org/covina/students/journalism

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WCHS Alumni Receives National Honor

BY STAFF WRITER
Lauren Langley

Tracy Weamer was awarded "Freshman of the Year" by the American Volleyball Coaches' Association (AVCA) N C A A Division II. She goes to



Cal State San Bernardino and has been playing volleyball since she was in the sixth grade. For two weeks in a row, Tracy was also awarded CCAA, AVCA National Player of the Week. She was awarded Freshman of the Year shortly after she had received Player of the Week twice. She was second player ever from CSSB to win this award two weeks in a row. She was ranked thirteenth by the CCAA in hitting with an average of .266, thirteenth in digs with an average of 2.82, and ninth in kills with an average of 3.29. Tracy first heard about the news from her dad after coming home from seeing the new Harry Potter movie. She said, "It was pretty exciting. I screamed a few times. I could not stop!" The AVCA banquet for this award was held in Kearney, Nebraska. There were eight elite teams that got to go, including All Americans, and the Freshman of the Year. Tracy was very excited about not only receiving her award, but also getting the chance to fly for free to Nebraska. "It was snowing in Nebraska and



Staff photo by Beka Valle

'Tis Better To Give Than To Receive

BY STAFF WRITER
Sarah Ortega

When one shares the gift that Jesus has given mankind (grace, peace, love, and joy), one has the opportunity to take part in His plans. The varsity girl's soccer team and students in Mr. Ramirez's Spanish 2 class will be going on a missions trip to Colima, Mexico on December 17 through December 23. There are 38 students in all who are going. They will be going to the Colima Orphanage to distribute toys to 56 orphaned children. This is Mr. Ramirez's first year coordinating a missions trip.

"We are very excited to help out needy children. We will give them a white Christmas," Mr. Ramirez said. "This will be a lifetime experience for the students of Western Christian because it will let them see how blessed they are here in America compared to other parts of the world. They will learn to appreciate America more," Mr. Ramirez said. Why Colima, Mexico? "It is the safest place in the world. I was born there so it will feel good to know that I am giving back to my home place. It will give me a special feeling," Mr. Ramirez explains. The students will be missing an entire week of Christmas Break

to go to Colima to help out. While they are down there they will not just give out toys but also visit a village and build a soccer field. They will provide new nets, soccer balls, and everything else that makes a good soccer field. The soccer girls will also play 3 national soccer games against local high schools. Senior soccer player, Katie Mullen said, "I am very excited to help out kids that are less fortunate and it will be a good experience for all of us to see how other parts of the world live." It will be very exciting to see the outcome of the Spanish 2 classes' and the soccer girls' missions trip.

very beautiful," she said, "It was so much fun. There was free food at the banquet, including chocolate mousse, which was really good." Tracy was very excited about the whole experience and yet she still

remains down to earth and thankful. To those who might want to play volleyball in college, Tracy says, "You have to stick with it and practice a lot. There

are lots of other people who are practicing just as much as you, so you need to be willing to step it up. You have to be willing to sacrifice."

WESTERN LIFE

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Mrs. White Shares Words of Wisdom

BY STAFF WRITER
Katrina Tuason

Toni LaZurs White is truly one of a kind. She was kind enough to share her interesting life story with the *Western Spirit*.

Born in New Orleans, Mrs. White graced the world with her presence on May 7, 1962. She is an only child and she laughed as she described herself as being "somewhat spoiled". She spent many weekends with her dad, but lived with her mom most of the time. "I was a pretty good kid up until my teens," she said. Mrs. White went to West Covina Christian School during her early years and went on to attend Wilson High School. She found that Wilson, being a public high school, was less restrictive. Because of this, she "kind of grew up" during these four years.

In high school, she already knew the Lord. In fact, she came to

know Him as her Lord and Savior when she was only nine years of age. Her home church was Mt. Moriah Baptist Church, and she was very active there. She was involved in choir, mission work, youth group, and bible studies. However, she experienced an important stumbling block when she transitioned into college. Mrs. White left home for the first time to go off to college.

She went to San Diego State, a well-known party school and her grades plummeted. "I had a ball, and barely went to class." At this time in her life, Mrs. White's mom did something drastic. She took it upon herself to have her daughter transferred to Cal State Fullerton. She went to Mt. SAC every summer and even took night classes to make up for the poor grades she earned as a freshman at San Diego State. Thanks to God and her loving mother, she graduated in January

of 1985 with a major in Criminal Justice and got her masters degree in Social Science.

Mrs. White is still very involved in activities today. For those who do not know her, she teaches U.S. History and American Government/Economics to the international students. She also teaches Geography on the main campus. Upon being asked to comment about her experience at Western, she replied, "I love it. I love having prayer in first period, and I love having chapel. Also, we have really good kids."

Other than being a teacher at WCHS, Mrs. White is a part of a sorority called Delta Sigma Theta. They do things such as helping the homeless and giving scholarships. Other than time spent with the sorority, she is busy working at her church.



She currently attends St. Stephens and encourages students and staff from WCHS to check it out. There she teaches Wednesday night Bible Study and a New Members' class for children in kindergarten to 8th grade. She spoke fondly of her church, and her smile only grew bigger as she began to speak of her family and home life. She is happily married, and has twin daughters.

Through the Eyes of a Shepherd: A New View

BY STAFF WRITER
Aimee Legind

It was a bright and beautiful night and many silver stars gave light to the otherwise darkened sky. Despite the fact that it was nighttime, everything was still clear and radiant. To me, the stars looked like little glistening jewels like those on a crown. It is on nights like these when special things start to happen; I could feel it. I was sitting back watching my flock of sheep (I am a shepherd)

Suddenly, I heard a loud noise like many people singing. It sounded like it was coming from

the night sky. As I looked up, I saw a brilliant light shining down upon me. The intensity of it was so great I had to cover my eyes in order to regain my sight. When I recovered from this surprise, I noticed a great assembly of angels. I thought I was in some kind of a dream. When I realized it was reality, I became tremendously terrified. Next, one of



the angels told me not to be frightened. He said they were from God in the highest heavens and he also told me he had excellent news to share with me. The next thing I knew, the angels were gone. I was standing in my empty field, almost in a daze.

Just like that, the assembly of angels had disap-

peared as fast as they came. The sky from Heaven had closed and gone back to the original peacefulness. I did not know what to think; I felt lost.

I decided to follow the instructions that the messenger of God revealed to me. I looked up in the sky and searched for a sign. Finally, I found it. There it was, a sparkling star waiting just for me, a sign from God Himself.

The brilliance of the star amazed me. It shone so bright, almost like it was made of pure white fire. It lead me across my field and through many towns.

Then, what I saw I could not

The Western Spirit SPORTS

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Coach Mercy and Boys Soccer Remember Reason for Season

BY STAFF WRITER
Beka Valle

"First and foremost we are ambassadors for Christ, our school, and our athletics program. Being ambassadors of Christ, we also expect them to put all they have into becoming the best soccer player they can become," said Coach Mercy.

The coaching staff this year is Danny Perez and Mr. Mercy, teacher at Western. They have very high standards for this year's soccer team on and off the field.

So far, a total of three games have been played. They won one against Summit View 7-2 and lost to Maranatha and Upland Christian.

The upper classman's main goal is to leave an impact on the underclassman players and to beat

Ontario Christian. Juniors Ashkan Motamedi and Johnny Malette said, "We would like to leave the underclassman players with the ambition of always striving for excellence and to really make a difference." Senior and Captain Eric Williams said he would like to leave with them "Aggression, passion, good workmanship and a real sense of team and unity."

As with any team, unity and the ability to trust one another is a big part of success.

This year's team is well on its way to becoming joined together



in unity. Soccer is one sport that is very crucial for the outcome of the game to be able to anticipate the next move of their teammate. In order to succeed, the team must support one another. This is very important and

reassuring to a team.

Most of the returning players have been playing for ten years or more and know what exactly a good team is. After playing these past games, the team agrees that they have the potential to make it

farther than last year's season. Being that the new head coach Danny Perez is in the military, he is used to rigorous training and discipline. He and Coach Mercy expect no less from their team.

With Christmas just around the corner Mr. Mercy felt that, "Christmas is one of my favorite times of the year (like so many others). It is also a humbling time of year for me. Too often do we forget what Christmas is all about and you choose to forget what it's all about and choose to focus more on our presents than we do on God's presence here on earth. God humbly and selflessly became a human here on earth so that He could suffer for our sins so we can be free, yet we become selfish during a time that we should become selfless."

Girls Soccer: "The Good Samaritan Team"

BY STAFF WRITER
Vy Ngo

The Western Christian girls' soccer team should be known as the "Good Samaritan team". They will be headed towards Mexico, during Christmas break, on a mission trip. The team will be distributing many gifts, from which Western had donated towards their toy drive. Of course while down there, they will be participating in a few games. "I am so excited about going to Mexico. It's going to be so much fun!" said Marissa Reggio. Ryanne Mullen added she is also very excited. Upon leaving Mexico, the girls will know they have done great things for Christ during His birthday. What a way to

celebrate Christmas. Before the mission trip though, the girls had played in an, what some may call, "easy" defeat against Covina High School. The captains, Thereasa Broad, Katie Mullen, Danae Bitolas, and Meagen Reggio, led their team in an 8-0 win over the Colts. "It was a good game because we were able to see everyone play," Coach Ramirez said. They played with great intensity and unity. The Girls' soccer, also like the volleyball team, is known to do well. Year after year they succeed and advance into playoffs. This year Ramirez's expectation is for the girls to do as well or better. "I want them to play good soccer and win as many games as possible," he said. They have eight returning players coming back,

who have had a little taste of the playoffs last year. They are expected to go into the playoffs this year. So those players will, along with the ten new players, head on the road to success. "This team is a very dedicated team," said Ramirez, when asked what he thinks Western should know about his team.

Staff Photo By
Ryan Salwak



OPINION

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The Wolff Who Saved Christmas

BY STAFF WRITER
 Silas wolff

This Christmas season BEWARE, you might get in trouble for wishing somebody “Merry Christmas!” Because Christmas is a religious holiday, some say you can’t wish others a Merry Christmas. It’s now referred to as the “holiday season.” For many it’s just “the holidays” and it doesn’t have any religion in it. It seems as though Christmas is no longer what it was. It’s simply become just another time to receive gifts from one another. The real clincher is that if you say Merry Christmas in some work places you get in trouble because that has religion tied to it. But this is the same workplace that is all decorated for what they like to call “the holidays”. Decorated? What’s there to celebrate? When you can’t wish someone a Merry Christmas because it has “religious connotations”, you know that you’ve slipped into the twilight zone. Christmas is a religious holiday and that’s what many people do not get. They get too lost in the gift giving and over-decorating to see what Christmas really is about. It is a remembering of Jesus Christ’s birth and his death. The actual phrase Merry Christmas is stated to help you remember Jesus Christ’s birth and death. People seem to think that this is the season for giving and receiving, and it is! However, the primary goal should be to celebrate our Lord’s birthday.

Have you ever attended church during Christmas and witnessed a population explosion? You come in and your church is twice as full as it has ever been, and you see people you have never



seen before in the church. It is crazy! These new people come twice yearly: for Christmas and Easter. Apparently, even these people realize there is something more to Christmas than just presents, lights, and decorations.

The term happy holidays has become a way for lumping together New years, Christmas, and many other holidays going on at the same time. You have

Kwanza and Chanukah also around the same time. Thus, people say happy holidays so as not to offend anyone. But what harm have you done by wishing someone a merry Christmas? I know I wouldn’t be offended if someone wished me a happy Chanukah!

This Christmas season feel free to tell people “Merry Christmas!”, “Happy holidays!”, or

“Merry Chrismahanukwanza-kas!” It’s good to be sensitive to the lives and experiences of others, but not at the expense of denying the reason for our hope. Don’t let anyone take the joy out of your Christmas, or Jesus out of your season. As Christians, this is a time to for us to celebrate!

CALENDAR

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Coir Brings Good Tidings of Great Joy!

BY STAFF WRITER
Kaleigh Scott

Deck the halls because Western Christian's annual choir Christmas concert came and went!

Mr. Bradley, the choir conductor, and the students performed on Tuesday, December 13 at Neighborhood Christian Fellowship in Covina. There was a wide variety of Christmas songs, some for fun and some displaying the awesome message of Jesus' birth.

Do you love to hear those solos? Well, there were many and they include Jordan Doolittle, Megan Mulder, Scott Doolittle, Scott Hilton and many more. Concerts usually last about a half hour and Christmas concerts might last a little bit longer.

A song they performed at the concert is "Wise Men Still Seek Him," which has incredible meaning. Geneva Canseco, a freshman in choir, says her favorite song is "God is Great." "It is true. He really is great and he always will be," says Geneva.

Mr. Bradley says he has seen many lives changed by their songs. Year after year they see people's spirits lifted. People have even renewed their faith after listening and attending.

"I think scripture through music is the best way to get the message across to people," says Bradley. Geneva commented, "The people listening at concerts, even adults, see these high students telling them about Christ through music. It's awesome." There are even



Photo Courtesy of Frank Canseco

people with terminal illnesses that come to concerts and are given more hope by the smiling, young, talented students.

On that note, Mr. Bradley says choir is going very well. Geneva added, "There are a lot of us and it's really fun. Knowing that I'm going to choir makes me smile when I walk in the room." There are approximately 72 students in the choir this year. That is more than some of

the most popular and famous choirs throughout California! Mr. Bradley has a lot to be proud of. "After my ninth year at Western, I still love interacting with the students and working with the choir," Bradley says with a smile. He loves both the choir and Hilltop Faith.

Hilltop is a very special choir. There are only 16 members in the group, which makes it easier for them to have more concerts and they do not have to worry about transportation.

They have already performed two additional concerts this year at NCF. Mr. Bradley says a tour is coming up hopefully by the end of April or early May. The location is to be determined, but they are all very excited. The whole choir has worked really hard to get this far and through their music, indeed we can see their work has paid off.

Q&A

The Western Spirit decided to ask the student body a question as a means of learning more about the hearts and minds within the school. Our question: **What are some of your favorite Christmas traditions?**

Below are some responses organized by class.
Column by Aimee Legind



Freshman:
Andrew Angelerie:
 “At Christmas, I love to open a lot of presents with my family and friends because it’s fun to see what I receive.”

Sophomore:
Stephanie Barrois: “I love to go ice skating and also bake lots of cookies!”

Junior:
Jessica Chavez: “I like to spend time with my family and all my friends, and I like to go to church on Christmas Eve night.”

Senior:
Scott Doolittle: “At Christmas, my family and I have a gift exchange. It’s really fun to open presents with all of them.”

Shepherd Continued from B

believe. It stopped on a dirty, old, and run-down stable. Surely this was wrong. I waited...it still did not move and I did not understand. Could this be the place the angels were talking about? I then realized the star could not be wrong and it had lead me to the right place. When I got inside, what I saw astonished me. The wonder of God’s gift to us struck me as incredible. There, lying in the manger

in soft, white linen was a little baby boy. Despite all the sheep, donkeys, and horses, he was not crying. He was so humble and peaceful. He looked at me with warm eyes; I’ll never forget that look. The little infant was so precious, and as I looked up through the roof and into the sky, I saw the same angel that spoke to me before; and he too, was smiling down at me. It’s surprising that God chose me, just a meek shepherd, to witness the greatest gift the world will ever know – the

beginning of a changed world or rather, the birth of Jesus, our Savior. Today, as I look back on that miraculous night, I realize that the little baby who seemed so simple and ordinary was, in fact, the greatest man who ever walked the Earth. The tiny baby in the manger was the One and Only Prince of Peace come to save all who accept Him. His name was, is, and always will be Jesus, the Lamb of God.

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