



# THE 'BURNIAN

Vol. 9, No. 1 Sept 2013

## Meet President John Comerford

by Clayt Scheller

“I’m just John, man. It’s not a big deal.”

These words characterize Dr. John Comerford, Blackburn College’s 16th president. Far from the archetypical stuffy administrator, Dr. Comerford is eminently approachable. Let’s learn a little about the new president as he begins his first semester here.

Q: What about Blackburn first caught your attention?

A: I’m sold on the idea of the small, residential liberal arts college – I just think education happens here in a more powerful way than it happens in other places. That’s what led me to apply [for the job]. It also helped that Carllinville was about half an hour from my wife’s hometown. I’ll be honest: when I applied, I knew [Blackburn] was a work college, but I didn’t have any deep thoughts about that. I thought, “I don’t really know what that means, but fine.” But when I interviewed, I began to deeply understand how that’s distinctive and important ... It answers a lot of questions about the future of higher education. I accepted the job because [Blackburn’s] a great liberal arts college that’s trying to do things right through the Work Program. Blackburn has something to say.

Q: What are your impressions of Blackburn so



PHOTO COURTESY OF PR

Dr. John Comerford poses for a photo in Clegg Chapel.

far?

A: So far, a lot of things I knew coming in are bearing out to be true. This is a community where people care for each other and care about the institution. One thing that surprised me in a good way is how people are ready to have a conversation about how Blackburn can move forward. I anticipated meeting people

who would dig in their heels and say, “Everything’s perfect; we shouldn’t change a thing,” but the people I’ve met are excited to share their ideas about where we go next.

Q: Do you feel settled in yet?

A: Yes and no. Maybe this is just the honeymoon period and I shouldn’t feel at ease yet, but so far people have been

very welcoming, kind and open. I look forward to coming to work.

But there are some Blackburn things I don’t understand. There are a lot of committees, for instance. I’m still trying to figure out which one does what and why. I also don’t deeply understand some aspects of the school’s budget yet. I have some learning to do, but I keep playing the “new guy” card as much as I need to.

Q: Tell me about your family. How’s the McKinley House treating you guys?

A: I get a lot of comments about the play set in the yard – I don’t think that house has ever had little kids in it. My wife Rachel grew up in Waverly, Illinois. We both worked in Student Affairs at Ball State University in Indiana. When we had kids she decided to stay home with them, but Rachel is a stay-at-home mom who’s never at home. She taught classes at Westminster; I’m not sure if she’ll teach here or not, but she’s always on the go.

My son Garrett is in first grade. He’s very big into trains, so Carllinville having a train station is a big deal in his world.

My daughter Reagan is four. She thinks the McKinley House is this big castle. She wants to be a princess when she grows up, which

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## Matriculation: Coming of Age

by Matt Renaud/Zachary Daum

Matriculation: to enroll in an institution of higher learning in order to obtain a degree or other special certification.

Sunday, August 18, the matriculation of the class of 2017, along with many transfer students, marked the transformation from teenagers to young adults. Rob Weis, newly appointed Associate Dean of Work, was asked about the significance of the matriculation ceremony:



PHOTO COURTESY OF PR

New students make their way down a sidewalk on the Hudson quad as part of the matriculation ceremony.

“Many people see college as an extension of high school education, which simply isn’t true. This is the beginning of adulthood for these freshmen, and they need to realize its significance.”

New Blackburn President Dr. John Comerford began the ceremony enthusiastically. He highlighted that the little things really do matter and that although Blackburn is not a perfect school, it has teachers

and students that care. Students walked down the sidewalk to the front of Hudson Hall as the faculty and staff applauded, inducting them into the school.

All students who attended the matriculation ceremony recited and signed a pledge, promising to do their best during their time at Blackburn. The pledge was written by senior Professional Writing major Katie Ward with the hope that it would give students something to strive for academically and while on the job. This falls in line with Blackburn’s motto: Learn. Work. Earn.

Weeping parents said goodbye as the school year began, leaving the students to think about their futures. This marked the beginning of the semester and a new start for many students.

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## Contraception, voyeurism, and pregnancy, OH MY!

by Matt Renaud

August 19, C.L. Lindsay, a former New York City lawyer, spoke to Blackburn students in Bothwell Auditorium about both federal and state laws concerning sex crimes, do’s and don’ts and how students can handle difficult situations. Lindsay quit his job as an attorney to help those who struggle finding legal help: college students and professors. Now, Lindsay provides legal guidance to thousands of college students for free through his organization, the Coalition for Student and Academic Rights (CO-STAR).

Lindsay founded CO-

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## Alumn Daniel Huddleston passes away in his sleep

by Kayla Koyné



PHOTO COURTESY OF KAYLA KOYNE

Daniel Huddleston, a young man with a passion for dogs, writing and recording rap music, writing books and history—particularly World War 2—died Thursday, August 22 in his sleep. The 2013 Blackburn College alumnus was 24.

Daniel was born on April 11, 1989 in Kirkwood, MO

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Blessing of the Books: Erica Brown makes her debut

by Miranda Clark

August 20, Blackburn students and President John Comerford gathered in Clegg Chapel for the Blessing of the Books Ceremony.

Chaplain Erica Brown began the service reminiscing about her childhood memories. She discussed the preparation, excitement and anxieties that come at the beginning of a new school year. Two “songs of reflection” were played on tape by Ann Reed. Blackburn senior Jeanette Kelly read scripture from the book of Thessalonians on the importance of hard work and performing good works.

Towards the end of the service there was a group activity. Brown led the group with a yarn toss and asked everyone to say their name and if they wanted, to say something they are excited or anxious for during the upcoming year. Everyone held onto a piece of the yarn once he or she spoke and then threw the ball of yarn to another person. Once everyone in the circle spoke, Brown passed scissors around so everyone could cut a piece of yarn symbolizing the

connectedness to one another. Brown mentioned the throwing of the yarn was an activity she did when she met with women for food and fellowship when she attended the University of Chicago Divinity School. She thought it would be a fun and relaxing activity for the Blackburn community.

Brown said, “I wanted to kick off the year with a worship service because the night before the first day of classes there is a lot of anxiety for students. Particularly, first year students wondering what is going to happen and seniors who are wondering what is going to come next.”

Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and the event received good feedback from the students. Blackburn senior Megan Day said, “The throwing of the yarn symbolized how we are all going to cross paths with everyone from time to time being that Blackburn is a tight community.” Day added, “I really enjoyed the service and would come back for another one.”

On Sunday, August 25, Blackburn students were invited to attend a trip to the Festival of Nations in St. Louis, MO, sponsored by Blackburn’s Diversity and Inclusion Office.

Founded in 2000, the annual multicultural event features a variety of musical performances, ethnic food vendors, workshops and a marketplace. At Festival of Nations, people can learn to write their name in Japanese, sip Thai coconut drinks, listen to Korean drumming, or sample Greek baklava.

Blackburn senior Justina Smiley described the event as a “taste of different cultures,” and also commented that the Festival of Nations allowed her to see that “race is not ethnicity.” Though often confused, race and ethnicity are not one and the same. Race refers to one’s physical attributes, such as the color of one’s hair and skin, whereas ethnicity deals with one’s beliefs, language and ancestry. The event is especially important to junior History and Political Science major DeArryka Williams, who has been attending for eight years. She said, “I got to experience parts of other cultures that I

A Celebration of Cultures

by Marissa Watson



Blackburn students gather for a group shot during the Festival of Nations.

otherwise wouldn’t have.”

New Diversity and Inclusion Director Jarrod Gray expressed the importance of the event, saying, “I believe the Festival of Nations provides students an amazing opportunity to witness, engage

and learn from cultures different than their own. My hope is to provide more cultural activities both on and off campus and to encourage more students to explore study abroad programs too.”

Event coming up you want covered? Contact The 'Burnian and we will send a reporter your way!  
burnian@blackburn.edu

Convocation: Paul Kline new student marshal

by Marissa Watson

Blackburn’s All College Convocation was held on Wednesday, August 21, in Bothwell Auditorium following the first day of classes for the Fall 2013 semester.

Blackburn’s new President, Dr. John Comerford, spoke with pride about the college, noting “at Blackburn there is a great deal to celebrate.” Others, too, expressed appreciation. Student Senate president Jacob Maag compared Blackburn College to a puzzle, suggesting each person finds a unique place and that everyone comes together to form one unit. Last year’s student marshal and current pharmacy technician Tim Erton explained several important qualities necessary for success at Blackburn.

Cleverly using BEAVER as an acronym, Erton suggested the importance of: Be yourself, Ethics, Academics, Versatility, Energy & Enthusiasm and Respect.

While many spoke about the future possibilities, others helped remind Blackburn of its past. College provost Dr. Jeff Aper explained the importance of the convocation ceremony and how it connects to Blackburn’s history. He gave a brief description of founder Gideon Blackburn



Dr. Sam Meredith, Dr. Victor (Jake) Miller, Nate Rush, and Chuck Sutphen sing and play a specially adapted Blackburn version of “This Land is your Land” at the all-college convocation on August 21.

and aspects of the school that have changed over the years. Many traditions, though, such as the gowns, mantle, baton and student marshal have been preserved. College marshal and professor Roy Graham explained the student marshal is one selected by faculty and staff who has not only displayed academic success, but has been highly involved in campus life.

Paul Kline, double major in computer science and math, was honored with the position of student marshal for the 2013-2014 school year. During his time at Blackburn Kline has been Student Senate president, Blackburn Christian Fellowship president, Volunteer Club co-president,

an officer for The Element and a member of Habitat for Humanity, Newman Club, Investment Club, Alpha Chi and Alpha Psi. In addition, Kline has participated in Madrigals, several plays, Track Club and cross country. As he humbly accepted the role, Kline explained how much Blackburn has given him, and that he is happy he can now become “part of its history.”

The annual ceremony marks new beginnings and reminds the college of its past. Sophomore transfer Sara Burchet said “the ceremony was very useful because it encouraged all new students to find their voice at Blackburn.”

HUDDLESTON, CONT. FROM PAGE 1

and his hometown was St. Louis. He attended Blackburn, where he majored in history and minored in psychology. “What I enjoyed most about Daniel Huddleston, in addition to his scholarly ability, was his sarcastic wit,” said history professor Dr. Jan Zimmerman.

In addition to his friends, Daniel was cherished by all that knew him. Fellow history major and Blackburn alumna Amber Foster reminisced, “Daniel was the type of person that would help anyone if they asked or offered him Jack in the Box. He even fractured his ankle helping me move. I’m going to miss giving him advice on how to keep his women in check. He was truly one of a kind.” When asked about Daniel, good friend Shelby Waltrip said, “We became friends because we had a lot of common interests; he reminded me of an older brother. He was a good friend because he was always there for someone when they needed him.”

His compassion for his friends was never-ending, as was his constructive advice, which will be greatly missed. Current Blackburn student Karissa Seago fondly remembers Daniel as “a great person and friend. He would sit down and listen to you talk for hours if that’s what you needed. He would listen to everything you had to say and then give perfect advice. I

always had a blast around him. Rest in peace, Daniel. I will miss you.” No matter how big or small the problem, Daniel would always be there for his friends with solutions, advice, humor, or a shoulder to cry on.

One of Daniel’s other passions was playing video games. Three of his friends, DeAaron Williams, Sawyer Burton and Brandon Mesey, reminisced about dueling, playing video games and Yu-Gi-Oh with him. Both Brandon and Sawyer’s favorite thing about Daniel was his “snarky attitude and sense of humor.” Agreeing with them was DeAaron: “He was not afraid to speak his mind. And sometimes you wish he was afraid to do so. If he had a joke, he would tell it no matter who was around.” In memory of Daniel, they decided that on the day of his pronounced death they would go to Jack in the Box and make it a point to do that every year in his honor.

Daniel is survived by his mother and father, Diane Kolocotronis Kaminsky and Richard Huddleston, and sisters, Natalie Huddleston and Amelia Huddleston Forbis. Contributions can be made to Camp Chaos Puppy Rescue in memory of Daniel. Donations may be sent to P.O. Box 23, House Springs MO 63051; credit card donations may be made over the phone at (636)-677-8555.



## What's new, Blackburn? Highlighted changes during the 2013-14 academic year

by Rachael Lancey/ Michelle Lee

This semester is an exciting time for incoming freshmen and returning students. Upperclassmen may have already noticed some major changes on campus. With the hiring of new president Dr. John Comerford, there have also been some important changes in faculty, staff, technology and buildings. You have most likely come across Tim Lucas, the new Sodexo General Manager. A trip over to Lumpkin Library will allow you to meet our new Head Librarian, Spencer Brayton. Student Life has also undergone some staff changes. Jarrod Gray is the new Director of Diversity and Inclusion and Rob Weis, former Director of Counseling Services, is now the Associate Dean of Work.

This semester has also seen faculty changes to many departments on campus. Following Dr. Terry Rainey's retirement, Dr. Brian Eberhard joins the professors in the Education Department. Dr. Kevin

Coogan is the new Computer Science professor after the departure of Paul Gross. New Spanish Department chair and professor Dr. Ruth Claros Kartchner has migrated the entire department from Hudson to Rahme. Last but not least, Dr. Christina McCurley is the newest member of the Business Department after Dr.



(Left) Head librarian Spencer Brayton and (right) Chaplain Erica Brown are among the new faces of Blackburn..

Hawley's passing last year.

While the additions to both staff and faculty have been numerous, the greatest changes have taken place in the Athletics Department. Be sure to see the Athletics page of this issue to catch up on all the new coaches and managers. The 'Burnian will feature new faculty and staff profiles throughout the year.

This year also promises an improvement in technology resources. Due to a number of issues with Blackburn's webmail system in the past, we have made the switch to Google Mail, which is much more efficient and is expected to come with fewer errors. Every dorm now has Wifi which allows all students to connect their devices to Blackburn's internet for free. Jewell, the all-freshman dorm,



PHOTOS COURTESY OF PR

now has air conditioning in every room (Stoddard and Butler are now the only dorms without air conditioning).

As senior Jeremy King pointed out, "Blackburn has held off on upgrading technology to the point where it has affected us negatively with enrollment numbers. Technology is life and if you don't keep updated you only fall behind." Senior Shaun Thrasher also weighed in. "I feel as though the recent improvements are all vital to the continuation of the college. Progress takes time, and Blackburn is taking a step in the right direction," he noted. These improvements and changes are only the beginning of an exciting new chapter in Blackburn's history, promising to get better with time.

## From DCC to Ding: 10 - 15 degrees of separation

by Traci Kamp

When walking into the dining hall from the lobby in the Demuzio Campus Center, students expect to be greeted by the smell of food. Lately, students have been met first by a blast of hot air instead.

Dinner cash register attendant Emily Rabida is usually the first person to hear complaints about the heat, to which she replies, "It's not Food Service's fault. They can't control the air conditioning."

The thermostat mounted on the east side of the dessert bar wall reads anywhere from 74-78 degrees Fahrenheit, the ideal temperature of the cafeteria. However, there was a 10 degree difference between the ideal temperature and the actual temperature, which was 85 degrees.

Physical Plant's HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) supervisor Bryon Meyer explained the likely cause. "Around the week

of [August] 12, a compressor in one of the [cafeteria] cooling units burned out and was replaced," Meyer said. "On hot days where the temperature gets to 95 degrees or more, things start to break down, but the heat in the cafeteria is not solely due to the regulated temperatures we set or to our equipment," Meyer stated.

Furthermore, the cafeteria serves an average of 250 students during its lunch time open hours, making it the busiest meal time of the day. The body heat of 250 active students coupled with the heat from the cooking equipment and solar heat that is already present creates a heat that is difficult for the cooling equipment to keep up with. Meyer suggested that simply closing the blinds and avoiding the cafeteria during its busiest times of day are the two best ways to decrease the level of heat that the cooling systems are trying to combat.

## Fresh First Impressions: new students dish on life

by Kayla Koyne

Coming to college is an exciting new chapter in every student's life. Every student remembers their first year here at Blackburn, from the craziness of the job fair to

because "it's a smaller school and my dream is to know everybody here."

The students also spoke of Blackburn's welcoming atmosphere. Transfer Kendra Armstrong praises her fellow students for being "really nice and really accommodating." Agreeing with her is freshman Grant Vander Hayden: "The community and the sense of connectivity and everybody together - it's really loving and I feel welcome."

In addition to the sense of community, the interviewees were also impressed by Blackburn's faculty. Freshman Lexie Barnett confessed that she was surprised because she "didn't expect the professors to be so laid back." Agreeing with her is Alexandra Callier: "The teachers are very nice and I can talk to them on a personal level and they don't judge me."

Overall, the consensus from new and incoming students is that they are glad they made the decision to join the Blackburn community. Together, Blackburn's small campus, welcoming atmosphere and down-to-earth faculty have made a welcoming learning environment for students. So congratulations, Blackburn, you've been given two thumbs up by incoming students. Keep up the good work!

## Move-in Day 2013: a behind the scenes look

by Rachael Lancey

It is perhaps the most anticipated yet most dreaded day of the school year ... move-in day. On Sunday

August 18, students made their way back to campus to unload cars packed full of their belongings. This year's move-in day was a little different from previous years. In the chaos of unpacking, returning students may not have had a chance to notice some of the behind the scenes efforts of Blackburn staff. While the Resident Directors (RDs) were checking students in and distributing keys in DCC, Resident Assistants (RAs) in every building helped students carry in their belongings, rearrange their furniture and answer questions. This was the first move-in day where RAs, RDs, Maintenance workers, the Business Office and Admissions all used walkie talkies to easily communicate and resolve any issues that arose. For example, if a student had a hold on their account, a problem with



PHOTO COURTESY OF PR

Wesley Phelps checks in on move-in day.

their room or received the wrong keys, the issue could be resolved by contacting the corresponding departments in order to quickly fix any problems. Students also had the option to register before move-in day in order to save time and avoid long lines.

Also contributing to a smoother move-in process were the Orientation Leaders and alumni who helped residents move in. Some upperclassmen felt as though the extra help was too focused on the freshmen. According to

sophomore Natasha Anthony, "When I moved into Jewell my freshman year, I had many people there to help me and welcome me to the dorm. This year when I moved into Butler the three RAs were there to help, but it took a lot longer to get settled because they were helping other people. I feel like the freshman dorm gets all of the extra help and upperclassmen are left to do it by themselves." While new students require more help on their first move-in day, many returning residents would like to have more people available to help them as well.

This year Blackburn houses 386 students on campus, 122 of whom are first time residents. We also have 140 commuters, including 42 new commuters and 19 part-time students. While on campus housing levels were expected to be lower than in previous years, many last minute enrollments boosted the occupancy rate to around the same as it was last year.



PHOTO BY KAYLA KOYNE

Interviewee Grant Vander Hayden shares his impressions of the 'Burn.

making new friends. Now, it's this year's incoming freshmen and transfer students' turn to give their opinions on what they think of Blackburn so far.

When asked why they chose to attend Blackburn, many of the interviewees answered that they did so because they had family go here, have family nearby or because it is close to where they live. Freshman Alexandra Callier chose this school



Blackburn’s Got Chaplain! Meet Reverend Erica Brown

by Jake DeRousse

When news broke last semester that Blackburn was looking for a new College Chaplain, a common reaction among many students was: “Since when did we have a college chaplain?” This was a valid question. In the past Blackburn has taken volunteers and had no permanent chaplain, but this year decided the position needed to be filled in a full-time capacity. Because of this, Reverend Erica Brown was hired in the position of College Chaplain/Pastoral Counsel.

Brown is originally from Warren, OH. She went to the University of Mt. Union in Alliance, OH, where she earned a Bachelor’s in English with a minor in Religion. Brown then moved on to graduate school at Bucknell University where she received a Master’s degree in Literature. During her stay at Bucknell, Erica decided that her true passion was not “teaching Chaucer and Shakespeare to students that don’t really even care” and instead felt called toward a career in religious service. This led her to the University of Chicago where she earned a Master’s of Divinity.

Reverend Brown has not always been supportive

of the church, as she began to question her faith while a senior at Mt. Union when family issues caused her to turn away from the church and ask the question “why would God allow \_\_\_\_ to happen?” At Bucknell, Brown talked to the chaplain, who put her back on the religious path and helped her cope with her issues. She says this experience is one of the reasons she wanted to become a chaplain, saying she would “like to be for somebody what others have been for me.”

Reverend Brown has many goals for her new position. She hopes to hold worship services at least once a month, plans to be involved with the campus Christian clubs and wants to talk to churches who want a presence on the campus. She also wants to schedule counseling hours in the chapel so students can stop in for prayer or conversation with her. Her biggest passion is being available for students to come to for advice, or simply to talk. Brown stresses she would like to help people with all types of issues, secular or otherwise, and invites anyone to stop by her office in Hudson 202 for a talk.

Now introducing Katie Housewi - I mean Hazelwonder!

by Taylor Hess

Many see Blackburn’s General Manager Katie Hazelwonder around campus, but few know the woman behind the position. I got to sit down with the busy senior for an interview and learned more about her past three years as a Blackburn student as well as what she is looking forward to this year.

Katie, nicknamed Housewinkle by friends, is graduating this year with a major in Criminal Justice and a minor in Studio Art. In her free time she likes to eat, sleep, hang out with friends and go on walks. When asked what she wants to do with her degree in Criminal Justice, working with juvenile offenders or kids who are “at risk” was at the top of her list. But first Katie plans on going to graduate school, with Carbondale as her number one choice.

Katie climbed the Work Program ladder the way many freshmen aspire to. Starting out as a general worker in Campus Services her freshman year taught her a valuable life lesson. She explained, “Even if you start in a position you don’t want you can always use it as a stepping stone to get to where you want [to be].” Katie took her own advice and moved up to Assistant Manager of



PHOTO COURTESY OF TAYLOR HESS

Katie Hazelwonder was selected as General Manager of the Work Program during the spring 2013 semester.

CS her sophomore year. She continued on the management path as Manager of Campus Services her junior year and is ending her Work Program career here at Blackburn as General Manager.

While many students spend their four years at Blackburn in the Work Program, few ever get to experience the position of General Manager. Katie remembered filling out a paper about Work Program goals her freshman year. “I stated my end goal was to become GM,” she laughed. “It’s still in my file.” She expected that the job would be time consuming and that everyone would have high expectations of her.

She confirms both are true; however, she also went on to say that it is not as daunting as she once thought. A major part of her position as GM is handling discipline. Katie wants students to hear her out about the work warning system: “Most people see it as punishment when in reality it’s used to help most students get back on the right track.” She plans on approaching all disciplinary actions with a level-head and will hear both sides of the story before making a decision. She advises students, “Make the best of whatever department you get in. Don’t be afraid to step up or stand out.”

ARC migrates, collaborates with Lumpkin Library

by Clayt Scheller

Blackburn’s Academic Resource Center (ARC) has undergone many changes to improve its accessibility and visibility to students seeking academic support this semester.

Chief among these changes is the ARC’s relocation from the Rahme Learning Center to Lumpkin Library. ARC Coordinator Barbara Clark now works in a windowed room opposite the library’s circulation desk – a marked improvement from the well hidden Rahme office she once inhabited. Student Assistant Christa Lancaster is also more visible: she works at a desk outside Clark’s office.

“The new location has been working very well so far,” says Clark, who has already noticed an increase in foot traffic.

On Tuesdays from 6-8 p.m. and on Thursdays from 7-9 p.m., new ARC tutor Kay Lesage will host open, all subject tutor sessions in the library. The full tutor session schedule can be found in campus buildings and on the



PHOTO BY KAYLA KOYNE

ARC Director Barbara Clark and assistant Christa Lancaster in the ARC’s new office in Lumpkin Library.

student portal. Freshmen will also receive copies in their campus mailboxes.

Head Librarian Spencer Brayton looks forward to working with the ARC. “The library and ARC will be working in close collaboration,” Brayton says, “especially in terms of enhancing student support services and in making the library a center of knowledge on campus. I hope that students will come to see Lumpkin Library as a place

where the majority of their academic needs can be met. In my previous position, I not only facilitated library services, but was also involved with tutoring.” Brayton adds, “This helped with my vision of what the library could be if collaboration with the ARC took place. These are certainly exciting times for the library!” That last sentence almost sounds contradictory, but it’s true – merging the ARC and the library is a positive step forward for both.

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is something I’m trying to convince her is not the best use of her intelligence and skills.

Grant is one and a half and he doesn’t really know where he is yet. His main struggle so far is keeping up with all the stairs in the McKinley House. By the time he catches up with the rest of us, we’ve already moved to another floor.

Q: What are your goals?

A: If there’s one thing we can do for Blackburn in the short term – to make this the institution we all want it to be – it’s to grow enrollment. This is a campus that is built to house 750 or 800 students and we’re educating 550. We’ve got a lot of empty seats, but filling up those empty seats is eminently possible. At Westminster College, we grew enrollment by about 35% through financial aid and marketing while I was there.

Right now, we’re in the beginning phases of our next campaign to improve our recreational facilities and add more scholarship dollars. I’ll need to spend some time on

the road with the people who can write the checks to make that happen.

The Work Program is what makes us special, though, and I want to ensure that it is developmental for every student. By the time every student graduates, we want to make sure that they’ve led projects and had titles. Blackburn provides a liberal arts education that gets you a job. I think that’s unique.

Q: I can’t imagine that you have much free time, but do you have any hobbies you’d like to share?

A: When I have free time, it tends to go to the kids. If I have an evening free, we usually go to the pool or to their sporting events.

Q: Is there anything else you’d like to say to the student body as we start the year?

A: Bear in mind that we intend to change things and move forward. If students have ideas about how to do so, it’s important that they let me know. Feel free to approach me!



## Beavers get busy on the lawn

by Miranda Clark

On August 22 students, faculty and staff came out for a night of bags, cowboy golf and washers on the Quad.

Organized by the Athletics Department as part of Welcome Week, games on the lawn provided students with an opportunity to socialize, listen to music and have a relaxing night.

Among the attendees were Dr. John Comerford and his three children, Garrett, Reagan and Grant. He and his children interacted with everyone while playing games.

The Blackburn staff was also eager to be a part of the evening. Head Women's Basketball Coach Jen Windmiller said, "I like to interact with the students other than on the basketball court. I think this is a great opportunity for students across campus to get together and enjoy a relaxing night of athletic events."

Of around thirty students who attended the event, the majority were school athletes. Senior Franklin Bush said, "Games on the lawn provided us with the opportunity to come together with friends



PHOTO COURTESY OF HALEY WELCH  
Dr. Comerford makes an appearance at the lawn games event.

and play fun lawn games."

The games featured during the event had specific rules each player had to abide by. Bags is a game for four people. The players' goal is to make the square sandbags go into the hole or at least land it somewhere on the wooden platform to receive points. Washers is a game for two people who throw metal disks in the wooden box. The main purpose is to get the disks in the center cup for maximum points. Cowboy Golf is a two person game that involves one golf ball on each end of a string and a plastic stand. One player throws the ball in hopes of it landing on one of the three level stands.

## We all sing for ice cream!

by Jessica Clements

On Wednesday, August 21 Student Activities hosted an ice cream social and karaoke competition in the Demuzio Campus Center to kick off the first week of school. What better way to relax and get back into the swing of things than to reunite with old friends, meet new faces and eat some ice cream to the soundtrack of your choice? Although there were some minor technical difficulties, like songs skipping and words not showing up on the wall, everyone had a great time belting out their favorite tunes in the hopes of winning some cash or, at the very least, letting loose and having a good time.

Some of the songs you might have heard coming from the Demuzio Campus Center included "This Love," "Super Bass," "Don't Wanna Miss a Thing" and "I Will Survive." Although there were many memorable moments, a stand out performance had to be Colin Gowin who sang Katy Perry's "I Kissed a Girl." Blackburn events never disappoint us in the area of



PHOTO COURTESY OF PR

Freshman Trey Sibley singing his first-place version of Neon Tree's hit song "Everybody Talks."

entertainment.

At the closing of the night the winners were announced for three categories: First Place, Best Duet, and Best Effort. First Place went to Trey Sibley with his version of "Everybody Talks." Best Duet was awarded to Lydia Collins and Brooke Kinroth who brought us back to our childhood with the song "Reflections" from the Disney movie "Mulan." Erin Huff showed she is a powerhouse

with "Cowboy Casanova" to claim Best Effort.

Congratulations to Trey, Lydia, Brooke, Erin and everybody else who got up to sing their hearts out and entertain the rest of us. Karaoke is always a good time, whether you are singing or watching, and I encourage everyone who did not come this time to attend karaoke nights in the future. You will not regret it.

## Five things freshmen should know about Blackburn

by Kayla Koyne

College can be a new and intimidating experience. New classes, a new living environment and new friends can make or break this transition. However, there are a few things to keep in mind that might make your fresh start at Blackburn a more positive experience.

1) Be cautious of rumor mills. What happens behind closed doors can quickly become everybody's business. Remember, nothing stays secret if you tell it. Finding good friends who you can trust is key- but not blasting information you don't want to be common knowledge is important as well.

2) Lock your door. Although the Blackburn crime rate isn't as high as some larger campuses, it is still a good idea to take the precaution of locking your door when you're going to be gone from your room for a long period of time.

3) Be considerate of others. Don't leave a mess that you would not want to clean up. Since Blackburn is student-run, any mess you leave will be cleaned up by other students. Therefore, do not leave food smeared on the tables in the dining hall or decide to TP a toilet stall. By being considerate, you make

other students' jobs easier and things will go more smoothly for everyone else.

4) Always wear flip flops in the shower. Unless you want a flesh-eating disease or some other unspeakable horror to take residence on your feet, flip flops are your best friend when showering.

5) Don't procrastinate. Yes, college can be difficult. However, if you stay on top of both your tuition work and your class work, your life will be a lot easier in the long run. Stay focused on what you came here for: your education.

Above all, have fun! Don't let the fear of a new experience stop you from enjoying your freshman year. Remember these tips, but have a blast and make the most of your time at Blackburn. Enjoy this new chapter in life – you'll only experience it once.

## Clubbin' at the 'Burn: annual fair draws crowd

by Zachary Daum



PHOTO COURTESY OF PR

Haley Cohan, Andre (Dre) Hoskins, and Rachael Lancey attend the community fair hosted outside of Demuzio Campus Center on August 21.

On August 21, Blackburn clubs searched for new members as booths opened on the Demuzio Campus Center patio. Students were given the opportunity to sign up for campus clubs and get special offers from local businesses. Students crowded around to join clubs and meet people with similar interests.

"The fair is well organized. Everyone is polite and friendly," said Brittany Schuett, a freshman

new to Blackburn. This was a common reaction from freshmen and transfer students as they searched for clubs that peaked their interest. Another freshman, Amanda Carroll, added, "It was a great chance to join in with activities in the Carlinville community." Many of the attendees at the fair were new students who seemed to enjoy the diverse choice of clubs around campus. New students also noted the lavish designs of many of the booths.

The Ignite booth was an attendee favorite for its notable design. It was larger than the other booths and had a small roof. Along with Ignite, clubs such as Habitat for Humanity, Blackburn Common Ground and Toms Club were also present during the fair.

New clubs and organizations also had a strong presence. The Equestrian Club, a recent addition to the campus clubs, focuses on horseback riding. It was started by Amanda Gerson and Cindy Roberg with the intention of catering to students who love horseback riding. The Psych club is also being started up again by Kallie Kahl.

Another new business addition to the fair this year was the Fringe Salon. Susan Walters was at the Fringe Salon booth giving away free gifts to students in the hopes of bringing in new customers. Overall, the fair garnered high attendance and was a success.

CONTRACEPTION, CONT. FROM PAGE 1

STAR in 1998 after his friend, a college professor, asked for legal advice. Since none of his friends or acquaintances in the legal field were experts in academic law, Lindsay decided to take the challenge himself and began research. Six weeks later he quit his job and launched into a life of educating and serving the American student body.

"Sex and The Law" educated Blackburnians about a number of touchy subjects such as contraception, public nudity, voyeurism, statutory rape, pregnancy, abortion, stalking and sexting. Lindsay kept the presentation light and comical as well as informative for the young adults these issues so often affect.

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Calling all Oompa Loompas!  
“Wonka” chosen by Summer Rep

by Jessica Clements

Summer Repertory Theatre at Blackburn College held auditions for their winter production of Roald Dahl’s “Willy Wonka” on Saturday, August 24 in Bothwell Auditorium. The auditions included dancing, reading excerpts from the script and singing excerpts from “Pure Imagination.” From there, callbacks were announced and held Sunday, August 25. The complete cast list was posted Monday, August 26 and rehearsals began the following night.

Roald Dahl’s “Willy Wonka” is based off of the novel “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,” also written by Roald Dahl. Five golden tickets were released into the world in the wrappers of Wonka Chocolate Bars. The five children who find the golden tickets will get the chance of a life time, a tour of the chocolate factory with Willy Wonka himself! Come watch as the five winners, Charlie Bucket, Veruca Salt, Violet Beauregarde, Augustus Gloop and Mike Teavee try to make it through this unusual

and kooky chocolate factory and learn a little more about our mysterious tour guide and owner of the factory, Willy Wonka.

For the Summer Repertory Theatre production of “Willy Wonka,” the main characters and actors portraying them are listed below.

Willy Wonka – John Heck  
Charlie Bucket – William Roark

Veruca Salt – Emma Gosnell

Violet Beauregarde – Lauren Summers

Augustus Gloop – Tim Conner

Mike Teavee – Joe Hardy

Performances for “Willy Wonka” will be held December 12 through the 15, so be sure to mark your calendars. You do not want to miss this! It’s sure to a fun time for people of all ages.

For more information, contact Summer Rep by emailing [info@blackburnsummerrep.org](mailto:info@blackburnsummerrep.org), go to their website [blackburnsummerrep.org](http://blackburnsummerrep.org), or go to their facebook page at [facebook.com/bbsummerrep](http://facebook.com/bbsummerrep).

Comedian turns in solid performance despite heckling

by Clayt Scheller

Comedian Seaton Smith is a likeable guy. During his Friday, August 23 performance in Bothwell Auditorium, he delivered jokes with an energy as explosive as his hair.

Early in the performance, Smith interacted with the audience via a drug joke (this is college, after all). Unfortunately, the interaction backfired – up front, several students loudly responded to Smith’s initial punch lines and continued to do so throughout the show. What could be better described as verbal diarrhea than heckling, was distracting and embarrassing for everyone involved.

Eventually, Smith paused his routine and tore into the offending parties. It was satisfying to watch him outdo



PHOTO BY FITSUM BELAY

Comedian Seaton Smith during a stand up routine.

them at their own game and then continue where he left off.

Much of Smith’s raunchy material covered perennial topics like race, drugs, rejection and relationship quirks. His insights and lively delivery ensured that nobody sat through much dead air. From there, all it took was an occasional dong joke (Vietnamese currency is a comedic wellspring) for the show to be a hit.

As Smith left the stage, he somewhat tersely invited the audience to follow him on Twitter (@SeatonSmith). He came across as a little annoyed when he said this, but it’s easy to see why.

Seaton Smith’s introduction to Blackburn might have been a little shaky, but hopefully we haven’t seen the last of him.

Imagine Dragons: Toronto Style!

by Taylor Hess

Last year I was able to share my love for the band Imagine Dragons through an article in The 'Burnian. My luck continued when I found out the band would be playing a show in Toronto, Canada while I was vacationing nearby. I hurriedly got on Ticketmaster and purchased a few tickets for me and my Canadian friends.

The concert was an amazing experience. It took place outdoors in an amphitheater in downtown Toronto on a cool, beautiful evening. The opening bands were two I had never heard of: The X Ambassadors and The Neighbourhood. While both were enjoyable I became increasingly excited to see the main show as the evening went on. Their stage presence was everything I had hoped. They used their space with a wild energy that increased as the show went on. Their performance was backed by a giant screen that displayed images pertaining to each song. During the song “Amsterdam” the screen behind them displayed a sped up tour around the city of Amsterdam. While it was awesome to see the band

perform some of my favorite songs, I have to say that the best aspect of the concert was the realization that Imagine Dragons is a group driven by the love of their fans.

Another interesting aspect of the Canadian concert experience was the drinking. I am not legal in the States just yet. However, the drinking age in Canada is 19 so I decided to experiment with my new legality. While the few drinks I had were good, alcohol is extremely expensive in Canada and even more so at concerts. Two cans of beer were sixteen dollars! The bartenders were also perplexed by my American ID and had to consult an identification book. Imagine standing there while a couple of bartenders are bent over a book, squinting back and forth between the page and your ID. Can anyone say “awkward?”

Heads up, fans! The band is playing in St. Louis on September 14 at the Verizon Wireless Amphitheater. I have already purchased my tickets and hope to see some BC students there!



PHOTO COURTESY OF TAYLOR HESS

Taylor Hess and Carley Bellissimo snap a photo at the Imagine Dragons concert in Toronto, Canada.

Fez: Art ≠ Artist, or something

by Clayt Scheller

By now, French Canadian game designer Phil Fish has been called every name in the book. His comments regarding the gaming industry’s current state – Like “[Japanese] games just suck” or the perennial “PCs are for spreadsheets,” for instance - don’t usually go over well. He hasn’t made many friends on Twitter, either. There, Fish’s responses to critics and gaming journalists range from hostile to downright vitriolic. (Video games are deadly serious, in case you were wondering.)

Somehow, though, he isn’t completely indefensible. All eyes were on Fish, programmer Renaud Bédard and “Fez” – a game the two spent five years developing – after they were featured in the successful 2012 documentary “Indie Game: the Movie.” Part of the film follows an anxious Fish - imagine a worried-looking halibut for a minute - agonizing over the last stages in his game’s long and problematic development.

Legal hurdles and coding pitfalls nearly prevented “Fez” from ever being finished, but Fish’s opus was finally released on the Xbox Live Arcade in early 2012 and on PC in May 2013. It has received high praise and numerous awards, but it’s not for everyone.

The player takes control



PHOTO BY KATIE WARD

'Burnian staff writer Clayt Scheller gives us his thoughts on the game Fez.

of Gomez, a rectangular-headed man who dons the titular headwear and sees his previously two-dimensional world in three dimensions. Wearing the hat allows Gomez to horizontally rotate the world in 90-degree increments, thereby giving him four different 2D perspectives of his surroundings.

The game puts this mind-bending mechanic to excellent use. It forces players to account for shifts in perspective as they figure out how to run and jump from place to place, collecting goodies along the way.

Interestingly, “Fez” places

few conventional obstacles in the player’s path. Even in the rare cases where Gomez meets his end, there’s no penalty for falling to one’s death or being sucked into a black hole – Gomez just stands up totally unfazed a second later. The game also makes minimal use of legible text; many of its puzzles can only be solved if the player is clever enough to decipher three separate codes.

Unfortunately, this part of the game is so esoteric that completing it without a guide (and a decent phone – a few solutions only become apparent when the player scans in-game QR codes) can be very difficult. After solving all the obvious puzzles, it’s possible the player will be unable to progress without outside assistance. Unlike some modern entries in the platform-jumping genre, the game’s level design is balanced around puzzle-solving instead of precise control or quick thinking.

At its core, “Fez” is a slow-paced platform-jumping game focused around thoughtful exploration, beautiful ambience and cryptography. As an unusual, innovative and visually striking medley of game design, it’s a relaxing and satisfying experience.



## Why I chose “Fabulation” for the fall play

by Dr. Kate Roark

I understand that some people are disappointed about the choice of “Fabulation” for the fall play because the roles are limited to African American actors. I’d like to take this opportunity to explain my reasons for choosing this play. Currently, there are five African American theatre majors, and four of them are seniors, so this fall is their last chance to perform together. I believe I have a responsibility to offer all theatre majors the opportunity to perform in as many different kinds of plays as possible, and to offer them experiences in as many styles as possible during their Blackburn career. I also have a responsibility to the larger Blackburn community to offer as diverse an array of audience experiences as I can. So I decided the time had come for Blackburn to put on a play written by an African American playwright.

I actively looked for plays with mixed-race casts, but I didn’t find any. Some people suggested I consider “colorblind” casting



PHOTO COURTESY OF PR

“Fabulation.” The problem with casting a white actor in a role written for a black actor is that it invites comparison to the harmful stereotypes of the blackface minstrel-show tradition. If that seems unfair, maybe we should take a step back and see how few acting opportunities African American actors - and all actors of color have in comparison to white actors. Also take a look at how few African American writers work in Hollywood, and how few stories are told from an African American perspective.

In fact, I think the most unfair thing to do would be to NOT offer the current African American theatre

majors the opportunity to act in a play written by an African American. For even though I have “color-blind” cast most Blackburn productions, the truth is most theatre, television and movie casting is not “color-blind” but type-cast. It is a fact of life for actors that despite their talent and ability, there will be many roles they will never get the chance to perform. The African American theatre majors deserve at least one chance to perform in a role written expressly for African American actors.

Finally, I want to emphasize that the fall play is NOT the only opportunity for students to act/perform at Blackburn this fall. The Performing Arts department is also planning the annual Madrigal Feast skit, and all students are invited to audition for the annual “Blackburn’s Got Talent” show. Of course, I hope all students, faculty, and staff will support the talented cast of “Fabulation” on October 17-19 in Bothwell Auditorium.

## “Fabulation” or segregation? The controversial casting of the fall play

by Haley Welch

When I heard Blackburn’s Performing Arts Department would be putting on a production with a strictly African American cast I had two reactions. The first was a happy “well, that’s nifty,” which then quickly shifted to a more uncertain “ummm wait....”

At an institution where students are taught equality and inclusion, here is a situation where the color of your skin blatantly dictates a student’s ability to participate in a school activity.

Granted, there are legitimate reasons behind the decision to narrow the casting choices. Due to the large number of African American theater students who are seniors this year, Professor of Theatre Dr. Kate Roark set out to pick a show to highlight these young performers. “Fabulation: or the Re-education of Undine” was chosen because it was written by African American Lynn Nottage and intended for a cast of African American performers. Roark described that to her knowledge a play written by an African American has never been done at Blackburn before, another reason “Fabulation” was selected. Roark went on to describe that it was not her intent to put on a show with no roles for white people, and that

## The Freshman Fuzzies

by Sarah Collman

*Where am I? Is this Hudson? What floor is my class on? Wait, this building has an elevator? Oh my God, the chapel is on the second floor? I thought it was on the first floor. Well, I guess this way it’s closer to heaven. Am I here at the right time? Where is everyone? Who is my teacher? The door is closed; should I knock or just go in? Oh whatever, I’ll just go for it. Wait, there are people in there. Are they from the last class or are they in the class I’m going to? Why is this so hard?!*

As a freshman, this kind of inner turmoil rattled around in my head almost constantly. The amount of doubt I had surpassed anything I’d ever felt. However, taking into consideration just how unsure of everything I was, things turned out pretty good, and I attribute that almost exclusively to the amount of support on campus. From the professors to your fellow students, the positive energy given off by Blackburn is impeccable. No, I’m not just

saying that.

Everyone is here to help you succeed in your college career. Your RAs are in your dorm to help you with your living situation. Your professors are legitimately concerned about whether or not you do well in their classes. Your advisor is set in place to get you into the classes you need and make things go as smoothly as possible. If you have any problems, counseling services are there for you at no cost. If you are in sports, the coaches are approachable and team captains are always willing to help. If you are curious, there is always someone around who is willing to answer questions.

One of the best parts about being on such a small campus is that you matter as an individual. And even more than that, people treat you like you do. So when your mind starts to wander or your doubts start to rise, just remember that you aren’t alone. Everything will be okay. Keep your head high and have a great first year!

## Welcome Week: smooth transition or awkward initiation?

by Rachael Lancey

We have all been through it--the ceremonies, speeches, events, icebreakers and all of the activities that make up new student orientation. Welcome Week is designed to provide new Blackburn students with a positive adjustment to college life. In order to accommodate the adjustment, Director of Student Activities and New Student Orientation Abbey Hardin carefully planned a series of events new students were strongly encouraged to attend. Events this year included comedians, an ice cream social, a karaoke night and more. Events were also designed to inform and entertain students on topics such as drinking and sex. For example, “Sex and the Law” gave a humorous spin on Illinois laws concerning sexting and more.

Do these activities actually help students adjust, or would they be better off having free time the first few days? “My first few days here were kind of hectic. I wasn’t sure if I was required to attend all of the events or not. I ended up going to a few of them with some people I met in my dorm, but it would have been more helpful to have that time to get settled and explore campus,” noted junior transfer student Jordan Range.

Sophomore Maggie Anderson experienced the same kind of stress during her first few days of campus life last year. However, she went on to say, “I was worried that I wouldn’t make any friends, but all of the programs and events that the school had planned made me feel more at ease.” This is one of the main goals of the Welcome Week experience. As Hardin explained, “Despite the fact that it often feels like a bit of a tedious misadventure to students, it is really important, and I’d guess many of them don’t realize how deeply they connect to the campus during that time.” Hardin went on to note that the connection that students form during this process allows them to meet new people, get involved in campus activities and organizations and not feel homesick.

Whether you had a positive Welcome Week experience or you were ready to pack up and move back home by day two, your first few days are a rite of passage into the Blackburn family. Like most experiences here at Blackburn, Welcome Week is what you make of it. If you take advantage of every opportunity, you will receive the many benefits that Blackburn has to offer.



PHOTO BY KATIE WARD

she did look very hard for a play that would allow for a diversity of performers. Unfortunately, she felt the plays fitting that criteria focused too strongly on skin tone. However, while the decision to have a strictly African American play is backed with good intentions, the undertone of the message feels slightly off. To flip the scenario, imagine the reaction if a Blackburn production demanded an all-white cast and refused to allow those of another race to even audition. This would most likely be deemed unacceptable, as it should be. But switch the color and it becomes a production of pride, not segregation.

“Now Haley,” you might say, “Blackburn has put on many plays written by Caucasians with large Caucasian casts, what is so different about ‘Fabulation?’” While this is true, were other races denied the right to audition during any of these productions? The answer is no.

While “Fabulation” may be easier to cast for the seniors this year, the most equitable choice would have been to pick another play that would allow a greater range of students to participate. Undoubtedly, some characters may seem to fit a certain race better than others (making color-blind casting difficult at times), but for the sake of fairness everyone should at least feel welcome enough to try for a part. If someone is picked who may not be the spitting image of the written character, there is the option of omitting or editing lines expressly describing their appearance. College is, after all, a great time to bend the rules.

Sadly, it is true that when performers enter the “real world” of acting they will be subjected to type-casting. However, right now we are in college and theater students are paying the school for the opportunity to act and participate, not the other way around. For the sake of learning everyone should have the chance to gain as much experience here as possible, especially young theater students building a portfolio. Denying someone the right to do so in an educational setting goes against the purpose of this institution.



Blackburn soccer takes on Lincoln Land Community College

by Jake DeRousse

The 2013 fall sports season for the Blackburn Beavers kicked off on Saturday, August 24 with a soccer exhibition between the Beavers and the Loggers of Lincoln Land Community College. More like an exhibition than a competition, the purpose of the match was to get the players used to game-action, including giving the team’s freshmen their first taste of college soccer.

Experience was about the only consolation that the Beavers could take from the game. LLCC, coming off a 14-7 season, seemed to outplay Blackburn in every phase of the game, with the possible exception of goalkeeping, as Blackburn junior goalie Shane Rogers made multiple impressive saves whereas LLCC’s goalies did not have many chances. LLCC ended up winning 5-0.

Lincoln Land scored their goals in the 9th, 19th, 22nd, 78th, and 83rd minutes. Blackburn did have a few chances, though, including a missed shot by Alex Miller in the 43rd minute just inside the box and a fast break in the



PHOTO COURTESY OF PR  
Sophomore Ben Hoover tries to maneuver the ball away from a Lincoln Land opponent during August 24’s game.

53<sup>rd</sup> minute when Miller’s shot from a Michael Stephenson pass was blocked by the keeper.

While the final score does not look good from a Blackburn perspective, the results are probably a little deceiving for many reasons. As a community college, LLCC can offer athletic scholarships to their players and is also an attractive destination for any player who thinks they may be able to play Division I with some improvement. For these reasons LLCC is able to recruit players who have more talent than Blackburn will regularly see at the Division III level.

LLCC also had the benefit of time. When the Beavers had their first practice on August 17, LLCC had already played in a scrimmage on August 14 against Springfield Benedictine. Assuming that the Loggers had at least a few practices before their first game, they would have had a two-week head start on the Beavers this season. This could explain why LLCC’s passes seemed much more crisp and their players in better shape, and we should expect a different looking Beaver squad once conference season rolls around.

The fresher the better?

by Christian Gragnano

With a new Athletic Director, new coaches, and the 2013-14 season underway, it is important to examine the direction the athletic program is heading, and the most effective ways it can be improved upon. The quintessential element of success for the college is recruitment. It’s quite simple, actually--you bring in good recruits you win, you bring in bad recruits you lose.

However, I’m not evaluating how “good” an athlete is purely on his or her athletic ability. I judge athletes on a combination of their physical and mental dexterity, especially at the Division III level. That being said, I would propose recruiting transfer students from the community college as opposed to incoming freshmen.

Yes, there is a high turnover rate when recruiting transfers and they typically only have two years of eligibility remaining. However, the upside of this tactic is obvious. You bring in more experienced and developed athletes who have proven themselves worthy in

the athletic arena as well as the classroom. Moreover, coaches will avoid the headaches that freshman and sophomore immaturity can bring. The natural maturation process will have already taken place in the transfers. There may be talented freshmen overlooked but it’s not necessarily about recruiting the best athlete - it’s about recruiting the right athlete.

The by-product of this proposal could be a positive reputation. Blackburn may become a powerhouse and have a competitive advantage over other schools in the conference, thus bringing visibility to the school. Furthermore, community college coaches would take notice of this tactic, helping Blackburn develop conduits by which talented transfers could be siphoned to the athletic program.

Oftentimes a school is judged through the lens of its athletic program. If athletics are sub-par, then so is the school (to the outsider). Transfers very well may be a solution to that problem.

Off-season changes

by Christian Gragnano

Entering into a new season is one of my favorite times of the year - it’s like Christmas and my birthday all wrapped in one. Hope is abounding and zeal is flowing through the veins of coaches, players and fans alike.

One of the aspects I find most intriguing is the prospect and potential impact of new coaches acquired during the off-season. That being said, the landscape in coaching personnel has experienced a seismic shift this summer with the departure of the golf coach Zach Wilhelmi, softball coach Paula Cummings, men’s and women’s soccer coach Aydin Gonulsen and cross country coach Mark Hopping. For their replacements, John Malin was hired on as the golf coach, Suzannah Behnken as the softball and volleyball coach, Rob Steinkuehler as the men’s soccer coach, Tim Gould as the women’s soccer coach and Jason Baribeau as the cross country coach.

Some faces are new, while others have only moved from one position here at Blackburn to another. At any rate, it will be exciting to see where the vision of these new coaches’ leads Blackburn athletics in the 2013-14 sports season.

Blackburn College’s fall sports: A look at what lies ahead

by Jake DeRousse/Vinnie Birk

Cross Country: For the first time in recent memory, the Blackburn College men’s cross country team is coming into a new season with some continuity and experience. The Beavers return their top six runners: senior Christian Gragnano, sophomore Nathan Speckhart, senior Drew Rowe, senior Jacob DeRousse, junior Seth Tonsor, and senior Paul Kline. The Beavers also are bringing back sophomore Nathan Wagner and have added promising freshman Mitchell Elliot. The women return only sophomore Elizabeth Meehan and senior Jodie Rains. Luckily the Beavers added four promising freshmen: Tavi Wallace, Brooke Boston, Nicole Bonnell, and Keragan White. Under coaches new (Jason Baribeau) and old (Mark Hopping), the team is hoping the experience of a senior-laden men’s team and the youthful energy of the women’s team will allow great strides to be made this season.

Volleyball: The 2013 volleyball season marks the beginning of the Suzannah Behnken era in Carlinville - who will also be coaching softball - and is hopefully also the start to a new winning culture for the program.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PR  
The 2013- 2014 Cross Country team poses for a team photo on the bridge near the Olin science building.

Coming off a disappointing 1-28 season with nary a win in conference play, the Beavers are hoping to lean on the leadership of co-captains Patrece McLain and Allie Matt, as well as the experience of seniors Jessica McClelland, Jamie Russow, and Amanda Miller. Other returners include junior Amy Jo Walton, junior Brianna Starck, and sophomore Alison Gartner. New faces joining the team are Meghan Ude and Alexis Platto. The volleyball team will play their first home match on Tuesday, September 17 against Principia.

Women’s Soccer: The women’s soccer team will have a new coach this season in Tim

Gould. The Beavers are trying to improve on a 4-10-1 season, and will be relying on some key returners to help them do so. One of those players is senior goalkeeper Shana Sewick, who is coming off of a season where she led the SLIAC in saves (148), was third in save percentage (.791), and won the team’s MVP award. The offense will be led by junior midfielder Allison Guerra, who is the top returning scorer, having scored six goals last season. The first home game of the season is scheduled for Saturday, September 7 against Robert Morris of Springfield.

Men’s Soccer: The Blackburn College Men’s Soccer team is entering the

2013 season under new head coach Rob Steinkuehler. “The transition from assistant coach has been good because as an assistant I had a lot of responsibility, including the fact that I was mostly in charge of recruiting, so most of the current players are my recruits,” said Steinkuehler. Returning junior goalkeeper Shane Rogers is primed for another huge year. Rogers led the conference in saves last season, and was second with a save percentage of .774. Junior Julian Valencia will play all over the field due to his versatility and, along with co-captain Rogers, brings outstanding leadership to the team.