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News Briefs

December 01, 2009

FLAMES BASKETBALL PART OF ESPN MARATHON

The Flames hosted their first-ever ACC opponent — the Clemson Tigers — in a packed Vines Center the morning of Tuesday, Nov. 17. The game drew even more fans than usual, as it was televised nationally for ESPN's second annual College Hoops Tip-Off Marathon, which featured 12 consecutive live college basketball games in 24 hours. Liberty's match-up was game six of the marathon.

Last season, the Flames went down to the wire with the Tigers in Littlejohn Coliseum, as Clemson edged Liberty 80-75. The No. 22 Tigers pulled away with a 79-39 win Nov. 17.

Students were excused from classes for the 10 a.m. game, and faculty and staff had the option to attend. The crowd exceeded capacity at more than 8,100.

On Wednesday morning, Chancellor Jerry Falwell, Jr. addressed the student body at convocation, thanking them for a great show of school spirit.

"I've always heard that our real strength is our students, and that came through on the television program yesterday."

He said although the Flames did not perform well against nationally ranked Clemson, "the real victory was the national exposure ... the world really saw what a Christian university is all about."

He said the ESPN announcers were impressed with the hospitality they received and with the opportunities Liberty athletes have.

One Liberty grad was more excited than most to be a part of the game. Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary graduate Eddie Verstraete mixed the audio for ESPN HD.

“It was a humbling and exciting experience to come back to Liberty and be a part of ESPN’s College Hoops Tip-off Marathon broadcast,” he said. “The producer, director and announcers were wonderful to work with and our crew did a wonderful job covering it.”

Verstraete, who graduated with his bachelor’s degree in 2004, M.A.R. in 2006 and M.R.E. in 2007, has been working as a freelancer for ESPN for four years.

ASTRONAUT TAKES PIECE OF LIBERTY INTO SPACE



Just over a year and half ago, Liberty University welcomed NASA astronaut Leland Melvin as a main speaker at a weekly convocation service. In November, the Lynchburg, Va., native took a piece of Liberty University with him into space.

According to Dave Young, dean of Liberty University’s School of Aeronautics, Melvin requested to take a token of the university with him on his second space mission, which launched Nov. 16 for the International Space Station. A School of Aeronautics patch was selected.

“The School of Aeronautics is honored that Leland chose our patch to take into space,” Young said. “He is a wonderful example to our students of what can be achieved through faith and hard work.”

Back in Lynchburg, the community — including Liberty University — has dubbed Melvin a “hometown hero.”

At Liberty's April 7, 2008, convocation, Melvin was honored by Lynchburg Mayor Joan Foster, who read a proclamation declaring "Monday, April 7, 2008, Leland Melvin Day."

STUDENT NON-PROFIT RECEIVES LARGE DONATION FROM CITY'S NEW THEATER



Liberty University's Students Behind Our Soldiers received a \$16,000 donation from Regal Entertainment Group on Oct. 8.

The student non-profit organization was chosen as one of the charities to benefit from a grand opening promotion at the new Regal theater at River Ridge mall in Lynchburg. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday that week, the theater held \$1 movie nights, with a portion of the proceeds going to a different local charity each night. Wednesday was Liberty's night, with every show sold out.

"We had the largest number out of the three charities that they donated to," said Mandi Forth, the group's founder and staff adviser. "And apparently these were the largest numbers ever seen for these charity days that Regal holds every time they open a new theater. It was very exciting."

Students Behind Our Soldiers started in the fall of 2007. The organization collects nonperishable food, videos, basic toiletries and other items for care packages to ship to soldiers whose names are submitted by students or community members. They also sponsor events for Liberty's Military Appreciation Week in November and other patriotic activities throughout the year.

LIBERTY ARMY ROTC CADET AMONG TOP 10 IN NATION



After almost four years of challenging academic and physical training in Liberty University's Reserved Officers Training Corp (ROTC), senior Alex Woody has been named one of the top 10 U.S. Army ROTC recruits in the nation. Out of 4,702 cadets, he ranked No. 8.

Between their junior and senior year, ROTC recruits are ranked nationally, based on college performance in ROTC training, GPA, professor evaluations, extracurricular activities, jobs and more.

Woody is currently Liberty's ROTC battalion commander and has earned both his Airborne and Air Assault wings. He also serves as a Spiritual Life Director on campus. He has a 3.96 overall GPA and is a candidate for the Marshall Scholarship.

Even as a child Woody knew he wanted to enter the Armed Forces. Although he can't quite put his finger on any one person or thing that inspired this goal, it was an ambition that remained unchanged when he graduated from his Bedford, Mich., high school in 2006.

Woody, a Biblical Studies major, feels called to serve as an Army chaplain and plans to enroll in seminary upon graduating in May, along with 15 other Liberty Army ROTC cadets.

There are currently 126 cadets in Liberty Army ROTC, which operates as a satellite of University of Virginia ROTC. Woody's ranking is the highest ever for a Liberty or UVA cadet.

SGA HOSTS PRO-LIFE CONFERENCE



The Student Government Association held its first-ever pro-life conference in November called R.O.S.E. – Reclaiming Other’s Sacred Existence. In response to the 50 million lives that were ended before taking a first breath, students at Liberty felt called to take action and educate others on the significance of the tragedy in hopes that their generation will be the force to put an end to abortion.

The conference kicked off with a convocation dedicated to the pro-life cause featuring special guest Norma McCorvey, who was the plaintiff “Jane Roe” in the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court case of 1973. McCorvey, who was an active abortion proponent in her early 20s, has since become a Christian and dedicated her life to overturning the very case she originally won.

As part of R.O.S.E., LU welcomed Congressmen Bob Goodlatte (R-VA-6th District) and Trent Franks (R-AZ-2nd District). The two representatives spoke at a “Politics of Abortion” seminar in the Schilling Center, where they gave updates on abortion-sensitive legislation circulated in Congress and participated in a question-and answer session.

DR. JERRY FALWELL HONORED IN CHRISTIAN HALL OF FAME



Dr. Jerry Falwell, founder of Liberty University, was honored in an induction ceremony for the Christian Hall of Fame on Sept. 23 at Canton Baptist Temple in Canton, Ohio.

Pastor Mike Frazier of Canton Baptist Temple presented a large portrait of Dr. Falwell to Jonathan Falwell, son of Jerry Falwell and pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church.

The portrait will hang in the halls of Canton Baptist Temple among 124 enshrinees.

For many years, Canton Baptist Temple was one of the 10 largest churches in America. In 1966, Harold Henniger, then pastor, felt there should be a hall of fame in the United States to recognize the influence of the great heroes of the faith throughout the centuries. (The Football Hall of Fame for the National Football League is located in Canton). Today the church's Christian Hall of Fame is a broad-based representation of history makers and those who influence the world today, including the Apostle Paul, Martin Luther, John Wesley and Charles Finney, among others.

"Jerry Falwell, Sr. is honored for having been one of the great heroes of the faith in the last century and this century until his death May 15, 2007," said Frazier.

The induction ceremony was held during the annual meeting of the pastors of Baptist Bible Fellowship.

Jonathan Falwell spoke in appreciation for his father, noting the great lessons he learned while serving with him at Thomas Road Baptist Church. Jonathan Falwell was also the featured speaker that evening.

SNOWFLEX CENTRE FEATURED IN U.S. AIRWAYS MAGAZINE

Liberty University's Liberty Mountain Snowflex Centre was highlighted as a unique part of Lynchburg recreational life in the November issue of U.S. Airways in-flight magazine. The magazine featured the city of Lynchburg's historic sites, unique restaurants, shopping and outdoor recreational opportunities in its "Keys to the City" section.

The article included a centerfold two-page photo of LU student Luke Fosse in the air as he did a back-flip at Snowflex. The photo, taken by Becki Falwell, was the same one that appeared on the cover of the October/November 2009 Liberty Journal.

Chancellor Jerry Falwell, Jr. told the magazine that Liberty strives to offer "all the events and programs that are available at major secular public and private institutions."

The article also noted Liberty's state-of-the-art School of Aeronautics facilities, which are housed at the Lynchburg Regional Airport and can accommodate up to 500 students. Go to www.usairwaysmag.com/city_profiles/city/lynchburg to read the articles in their entirety.

STUDENTS ATTEND SEE YOU AT THE POLE - A DAY EARLY



Nearly 3,000 Liberty University students gathered in the Vines Center on Sept. 22 for the annual See You At The Pole (SYATP) rally to pray for their schools, leaders and nation.

Hundreds of thousands of students gathered around flagpoles on school campuses around the country on Sept. 23, marking 20 years for the student-led movement.

Liberty maintained its tradition of holding its own event the day before to make it easier for students to attend classes on time. It also gives them a chance to pray for those who will be gathering the next day.

“People keep telling me that this is so creative,” said Liberty’s Vice President of Spiritual Development Dwayne Carson, who has been organizing the event for about 20 years. “We don’t just have a quick prayer over one or two things. We are praying over the multitude of different aspects of this university.”

Liberty students from every state and from China, Africa, Brazil, Mexico, Australia and Europe came to pray for America’s government, Liberty’s administration, staff and the U.S. Armed Forces.

Chancellor Jerry Falwell, Jr. and his wife, Becki, attended the event.

'HANDS OFF MY HEALTH CARE' RALLY HELD AT DEMOSS HALL



The Virginia chapter of Americans for Prosperity and former Gov. George Allen held a grassroots rally in DeMoss Hall Oct. 14.

The group's red, white and blue-colored tour bus, clad with "Hands off my health care!" and "Joinpatientsfirst.com," rolled into a dark and rainy DeMoss Hall lot, but stepping into the DeMoss lobby Allen and crew were met by an enthusiastic crowd that shared their concerns about health care reforms.

Allen was joined by Virginia Del. Kathy Byron (R-22 District), candidate for Virginia House of Delegates Scott Garrett (23rd District) and Ben Marchi, Virginia state director of Americans for Prosperity. Chancellor Jerry Falwell, Jr. also attended and addressed the crowd.

The group solicited support for an initiative that would limit government control of health care reform.

Allen said they wanted "to make sure that the people — the owners of the government — have a say, not just the sanctimonious social engineers in Washington or the United Nations."

CREW TEAM FARES WELL IN 1ST COMPETITION



On Sunday, Oct. 25, the new Liberty University Crew Team took one giant stroke toward establishing a successful rowing program at Liberty. The men's and women's teams placed in their first regatta, Head of the Lafayette, in Norfolk, Va.

The teams competed in four events: Collegiate 8+ (both Men's and Women's) and Collegiate 4+ (Men's and Women's); "4" and "8" denote the number of rowers in the boat. The Women's 4+ team took third place; the Men's Collegiate 4+ team finished fourth, three seconds behind the College of William & Mary. In the 8+ competition, the men's boat finished fifth behind Old Dominion University and beating out a crew from William & Mary.

Liberty University Crew formed as a club sport in March. At the helm is coach Mark Furler, an experienced rower and alumnus of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, N.Y. The teams are also coached by Ashley McCowen Botterill. A graduate and former coach at Princeton University, Botterill helped the Tigers capture an NCAA title in 1997.

LU crew members have been undergoing a variety of workouts in and out of the water since spring.

Students are able to use LU's Ivy Lake, located just outside Lynchburg, for training. When not on the lake, the athletes practice on the upper level of LU's LaHaye Ice Center on rowing machines called ergs.

Crew is just one facet of Liberty's Club Sports Department. For more information about Liberty Crew, email crew@liberty.edu.

LU STUDENT YOUNGEST TO FINISH 100-MILE ULTRAMARATHON



Students at Liberty University find every way possible to be Champions for Christ. Junior Math major Scott Taylor proved his champion qualities this fall when he became the youngest competitor to finish this year's Grindstone 100-mile Ultramarathon in the Shenandoah Mountains of Virginia.

The Grindstone is known as the hardest 100-mile ultramarathon on the East Coast, covering 100.2 miles.

Taylor started training in May, running 80 to 90 miles a week and maintaining a strict diet. His five months of training paid off with a 43rd finish out of the 62 participants who were able to complete the race; there were 83 runners in all. Taylor began running at 6 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 2 and finished at 1:55 a.m. on Sunday, Oct. 4 for a total of 31 hours and 55 minutes.

Taylor had great support from Liberty. His Advanced Running teacher, Dr. David Horton, known around Liberty as "The Runner," came out at mile 66 to cheer him on. His friend Jaime Azuaje ran the race as well, and three friends from Liberty assisted by running alongside him and offering food, drink and clean clothes. The rest of the time all Taylor had was a headlamp and the light of the moon to keep him company over the mountainous terrain.

"Grindstone was really the start of something that I hope to continue," Taylor said.

Taylor, originally from Michigan, ran three years for his high school's cross country and track team. His first marathon was the Richmond Marathon in November 2007, after which he declared to never run again because of the excruciating pain. His love for the sport kept him going, however, as he ran the same marathon the following year.

Upon coming to Liberty University, Taylor decided to continue pursuing his passion for long-distance running with Horton's help. He enrolled in Horton's class, which is known for being extremely demanding. As part of the class, all students are encouraged to run a 50K.

"Dr. Horton's class made me love running again, and that was what it was about for me," he said.

SHOWSHOE OPEN DRAWS LARGE CROWD TO SNOWFLEX

Liberty Mountain Snowflex Centre hosted the first Snowshoe Open on Friday, Nov. 13, drawing more than 70 skiers and snowboarders and more than 700 spectators to Liberty University's new year-round ski slope.

The event, sponsored by Snowshoe Mountain Resort in Snowshoe, W.Va., began with an afternoon Open Jam Session. A panel of judges selected competition finalists from the crowd throughout the day. Event finals began at 10 p.m., with skiers and riders competing in both Big Air and Rail Jam competitions.

The event was filmed by Fuel TV for its College Tour 2010.