Inside This Issue

College Ruled
The Future Looks Bright
Back to SUU: The McNaughtans
The New Parking Services

The Binding
I Believe in Alpha Phi
SUU in September

Bullet Points
Flight School Reaches New Heights!
Are There Shorter Lines in the Bookstore?
Changes in the Registrar’s Office
Welcoming Another Member to the Team

Between The Lines
Milestones
Highlighting Chris Ralphs
About This Publication
"Do you think we could turn around and just go home?" I asked my husband as we drove toward the LDS Church building. "I never get nervous before I speak, but I'm sick to my stomach." His response did not accommodate my request, "Now you know we can't do that. Relax, you will be just fine." We were headed toward uncharted territory. I was about to speak at the last Fireside of the year and having recently learned that I was the first non-Mormon to speak at such an event in at least thirty years, I was feeling some pressure and great anxiety.

For non-LDS members like me, a Fireside is an evening meeting of church members, Mormons. In this case, those attending were college-aged students, most of whom were enrolled at Southern Utah University (SUU), the institution where I serve as the Vice President for Student Services. SUU, despite its function as a state university funded by state tax dollars, is often perceived as a religiously affiliated institution because a majority of its students and its employees are members of the predominant faith in Utah, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. The invitation to speak at the Fireside was not a function of my role as Vice President, it was a function of some my experiences in a community that had, at times, made me feel excluded, devalued and marginalized.

I was about to speak to a group of students alongside a respected and valued church leader – a member of the Quorum of the Seventy – one of seventy men within the LDS Church charged with the mission of preaching the gospel to the entire world under the direction of the church's twelve apostles. For me, a liberal female from New York who was raised Catholic but is not a practicing Catholic, the anxiety I felt was real. My experiences on campus and in Cedar City had led me to believe that what I had to say would cause consternation and maybe do more harm than good. Having a member of the seventy next to me would certainly help but despite my knowing that, I was still nervous. My husband kept driving.
three years earlier when my husband and I moved to Cedar City, Utah. Having earned my graduate degree at a Utah institution, I was aware of the influence the LDS Church had across the state; however, the dynamics of living as a member of the minority culture in Southern Utah were very different than my previous Utah experience. “You need to bring a strong Mormon male to meetings if you want to have any influence on campus,” were words of advice I received, more than once, shortly after arriving on campus. Within six months of our arrival, I became aware of the opinions of me that were held by some influential and well-respected church members. Although they had never met me, they had heard enough to decide they did not like me. During one meeting with an influential property owner, an LDS Church member, I was told any subsequent meetings would only occur after I had “completed my homework assignments.” He wanted me to read certain chapters within the Book of Mormon; he even offered to bring me a copy.

Now for those of you who are awed by such overt behavior I have two things to say: such behavior is the exception and not the rule and, despite such insensitivities, I would not want to be living or working anywhere else in the world. While some people have been hurtful and insensitive, on a daily basis I am provided with the opportunity to help people see the world differently. I am in a position to challenge the status quo and to help others understand the world through a different lens. It doesn’t get any better than that.

The situation that led to my Fireside conversation was the result of an email and its unintended consequences. Campus programming, sponsored by several offices within the Division of Student Services, created a stir among conservative church leaders which prompted an email to the University’s President. I was copied on the email. Words have power; most painful for me, the suggestion that the University was being “culturally insensitive.” Considering that everyone copied on the email was a member of the LDS faith except for yours truly, I believed the criticism was directed at me and more importantly, I did not believe the statement to be even remotely true. I asked for a meeting and the author and some others obliged.

I began the meeting by acknowledging the power of
words and then outlined the steps I had taken to get input about the proposed campus events from members of the LDS faith. Within minutes I had an apology — a result of the realization of unintended consequences. And by the end of conversation, I was speaking at a Fireside. When it was first suggested, "You should speak at a Fireside." I quickly responded, "No I shouldn't." However, when the author of the email said he would stand with me and tell what he did, I wasn't in a position to say no because we, he and I, were in a position to teach some valuable lessons.

Here is some of what we talked about:

There is more that brings us together than drives us apart. Think about it. At the core of all religious doctrine is Love thy neighbor as thyself.

Words have power. Use them wisely, cautiously and responsibly. Words can build people up just as quickly as they can bring people down. Words can hurt. Words can heal. Words can teach.

Perceptions and assumptions can be dangerous and very unfair. Elder Ballard of the LDS faith wrote, "Surely good neighbors should put forth every effort to understand each other and to be kind to one another regardless of religion, nationality, race or culture." He was right. And if we truly want to be inclusive and welcoming, and not be dangerous and unfair with our perceptions, we need to add "sexual orientation" and "gender" to his list.

Corrupt communication takes all forms — written, email, body language, voice. If you can't look in the mirror and be proud of what you have done or said; if you would not feel good having what you said or did on the front page of the paper; if your grandmother would not be pleased with your actions, then don't do it. If your communication is not AIR — articulate, informed and respectful — change your tune.
Love one another unconditionally. There will always be differences among us. Differences are what make life interesting and allow us to seek and learn about alternative ways of knowing and being. Imagine if we were all made from the same mold. The world would be a boring place. Love one another. Be kind to one another despite our deepest differences. Treat one another with respect and civility.

Anger is seldom productive. Every one of us chooses how we respond to a situation. If I spoke ill of SUU and disliked Cedar City, most would understand why. I have not always been treated with respect. Despite the assumptions and the criticisms, I have found great reward in my Cedar City experience. I believe that everything happens for a reason and I believe I am in Cedar City to challenge the status quo, to encourage folks to view the world through a different lens and to help others who are not members of the majority population. I could be angry about how I have been treated but festering in anger would not lend itself to change in my community. I am not angry. I am encouraged.

I thought the campus program that created significant anxiety among church leadership would be my demise at Southern Utah University. While SUU is a state institution, my perception was the LDS Church in Cedar City held all the power. I figured I was a “goner.” I could not have been more wrong.

The campus program that created significant anxiety for me evolved into a highlight of both my professional career and my own personal journey. If you believe all things happen for a reason, then I am in Cedar City and working at SUU because the conversations about faith and its place on our campus and in our community need to happen. Faith is no longer “the elephant in the room.” It is a topic of conversation when it needs to be but it no longer influences decisions in ways that are detrimental to our role as educators – we are becoming a microcosm of the larger world – and while that creates discomfort for some, it is a role we must assume, preserve and protect.

I’m glad my husband kept driving and I am fortunate that my life was challenged and enriched by the opportunity to be heard. We are headed in the right direction. The future looks bright.
Four months after graduating from SUU, and only two days after getting married, Jon and I packed up as much as we could fit into our Buick Century and headed towards California. The only thing for certain was that Jon would be attending Stanford University. Other than that our housing, jobs, finances, and happiness were all on an equal level of uncertainty.

There were a few cultural changes we had to adapt to in California, first and foremost being that we had no choice but to welcome a third member into our family: our GPS. Our heavy reliance on the little contraption, combined with our fear of all the traffic, honking, and cyclists resulted in an easy transition to the “hands-free calling while driving” law in California. It turns out that our inherent desire to multi-task by talking/texting while driving was at an all-time low as we fought to stay alive on the savage streets of the west coast.

The traffic adjustments for me were nothing in comparison to the classroom adjustments for Jon. His one year accelerated master’s program proved to be no small challenge. I’ll never forget the first day Jon came home from his classes at Stanford. I found him lying on his back on our bed staring up at the ceiling. I asked him how his classes went. His only response, while keeping a steady, wide-eyed gaze on the ceiling, was “I have a lot of words to look up.”
Despite the challenges, we both quickly adapted to life in California, and loved every moment of it. Since the program was accelerated, after only three months Jon was looking for jobs for after graduation.

In November, President Benson and Provost Brad Cook came out for the Stanford vs. Notre Dame football game. As we enjoyed visiting with them, President asked Jon about jobs he had applied for. Jon rattled off the few he had been interested in, and after a thoughtful look at Brad, President responded, "I bet we could arrange an internship for you at SUU. You could split time with me and Brad." Surprised by the offer, Jon was told to think about it, and when spring rolled around to consider SUU as one of his options.

Of course we hesitated to return to our alma mater so soon, but many of Jon’s advisors said it was the best offer he had on the table with the most quality work experience, and urged him to pursue it. So here we are, back in Cedar City. For the next two years, Jon has his time split between Donna Eddleman, Stuart Jones, Brad Cook, and President Benson—spending six months with each. He’ll also work half time as the Associate Director of the Leavitt Center. Meanwhile, I’ll be working as the Coordinator for Student Services in Donna’s office; at least until Feb 25, at which point a little McNaughtan will hopefully be joining us (and we’re not talking about the GPS this time). My future in higher education is a little more uncertain after that, but for now both of us are very excited to be back home at SUU.

The New Parking Services

By Abe Hunt

"You have just entered the Twilight Zone", I think I heard that at least once on my first day, or at least I should have. Joining the student services team has been a roller coaster. Over my first month I have had two offices, a package I could have sworn I didn’t order, and a few odd looks in my direction. I am sure the odd looks will become all too common since my duties tend to make people so happy. With a job like this I will have to get used to the ups and downs of parking emotions, as long as I don’t have to move more than once a month. As matter of introduction I am a Southern Utah native raised in Beryl. You might say, “Where is Beryl?” I might say, “That is why I usually just say I’m from Cedar”. I attended middle school through college here in Cedar graduating in December 2007. I majored in Mathematics with a minor in Physics, which to most people translates into “Horrible Nightmare and worse to top it off.” I however can’t complain because in the quest for my degree I met my wife, Jane, in Discrete Math with Derek Hein, he still claims to this day that he can’t be held accountable for anything but the course materials. My wife and I are coming up on our fifth anniversary and we are both still sane despite our daughter’s efforts. Gwendolyn is three and a half and hardly stops to take a breath, she is super sweet and quite a funny kid.

Since graduating in 2007 I have worked in a variety of office and computer related positions. One of my favorite things I have done in that time is learning to program for iPhone and creating an app for the Utah State Parks. I was more than a little surprised when I got a call from the Vice President’s office to interview for a job that I hadn’t applied for, and quite excited when I was offered the position as Parking Services Supervisor.

As most will know Parking Services was previously supervised by Public Safety, we are now our very
own department located in the Vice President for Student Services office in Sharwan Smith Suite 201. For everyone familiar with the transition you all know how distraught Public Safety seemed to be at losing parking services—let’s just say I have a sneaking suspicion they wouldn’t take it back, even if asked nicely. For the first year of the Parking Services Department we are going to try and not change too much on everybody, but we can’t make any guarantees. One of our most exciting changes is the ability to apply for parking permits on the mySUU portal. Parker Grimes in IT has worked wonders with our permitting system. We are also excited to be streamlining our document processing this year.

By the time this article gets “printed” you will hopefully have a glimpse of what we are trying to accomplish with parking services this year and in the future to help craft a better experience for everyone involved. I also anticipate that our website, suu.edu/parking, will be accurate with the most current information about the transition and anything new we are cooking up. I can’t guarantee the site will be pretty by then, but we are working on that too. Any questions regarding parking services can be directed to our office at ext. 8388 or by email at parkingservices@suu.edu.
“I believe in Alpha Phi.”

By Jeni Burt

This is the exclamation point at the end of the sorority’s creed, and never was the statement more fitting as it fell from the lips of its SUU Theta Sigma chapter sisters than when they accepted the international Order of the Lamp award in recognition of standout excellence among the sorority’s 149 active chapters worldwide at the 68th Biennial Convention of the Alpha Phi International Fraternity in Miami, Florida.

Back home in Cedar City, the SUU campus is proud to laud the accomplishments of a student organization that has established itself as one of the best. According to Jake Johnson, assistant director of SUU Student Involvement and Leadership, “The Theta Sigma Chapter of Alpha Phi consistently enhances the college experience of their women and continues to exceed the University’s expectations for fraternities and sororities.”

A model student organization, the Theta Sigma chapter of Alpha Phi takes pride in their successes as they defy standard perceptions of sorority girls.

In fact, the chapter leads the SUU Greek Community in academic achievement, maintaining an average grade point average (GPA) of 3.14 – which is higher than the University’s all-women’s GPA. Alpha Phi has also placed more students on the Dean’s List than any other fraternity or sorority at SUU.

Every year, the sorority provides hundreds of hours of community service – more than any other Greek organization on campus – through monthly service projects, an annual philanthropy week, various fundraisers, student and community events and blood drives. Through such efforts, Alpha Phi has developed a positive presence in the campus and local community and established a reputation as champion of breast cancer awareness and women’s cardiac care.

Alpha Phi’s SUU members … champion student life among their fellow students by hosting various dances, socials and an the annual Move your PHI’t 5k Fun Run. And in 2009, Alpha Phi received the Organization of the Year award at the annual Thunderbird Student Awards.

The sorority’s campus advisor, Kathleen McDowell,
credits these successes to the girls’ commitment to their campus and their sisters. “The chapter’s greatest strength is their ability to communicate and share responsibility,” she explains. “They are committed to succeeding as a team and take time to identify and praise the talents each of the girls brings to the table.”

It seems, more than just believing in Alpha Phi, the Theta Sigma sisters believe in one another.

And, according to Yoshimoto, every one of the girls continues to believe in the chapter’s potential. She explains, “This award shows us that although we may be imperfect individuals, when we work hard together, as a sisterhood, something near perfect is brought to fruition. We have room for growth and there is hard work ahead, but together, we can continue to succeed at the highest levels.”

The Alpha Phi Order of the Lamp is awarded just once every two years to standout Alpha Phi chapters who excel in all five areas of the fraternity’s evaluation, showcasing creativity and commitment in their administration of the chapter’s recruitment, finance, citizenship, size and retention, and advisory board.

In addition to receiving this prestigious international award, the Theta Sigma chapter of Alpha Phi garnered recognition for the outstanding loyalty and support of its alumnae when Chapter Advisor and SUU Alpha Phi alumna Kathleen McDowell was honored with the Michaelanean Award of Alpha Phi.

H
SUU In September

September is a good month for SUU! September of 1897 SUU opened its doors for the first time. It was closed only two months later, with the Attorney General insisting that the law required that the school have its own building on land deeded to the state for that purpose. They were given one year to complete the task, or else lose their school. And thus started the building of Old Main through the winter, which was completed the following September in 1898.
Flight School Reaches New Heights!

We’ve completed another successful year of Flight School to welcome our new students to SUU. As a new addition this year, we included a transfer Flight School and specific Flight School events for International Students. Thanks goes to all of Student Services, we all played important parts in helping Flight School fly by smoothly.

Are There Shorter Lines in the Bookstore?

The bookstores credit card system underwent a major upgrade to meet government regulations on credit card security. Known as PCI, this system not only adds enhanced security to credit card users in our store, but also processes the cards more quickly. Approval on most cards now runs approximately 2 seconds instead of 5 or 6. It may not sound like much but those lines move along more quickly!

Changes in the Registrar’s Office

Lindsey Brown departed in July to take a position as Dean of Students/Registrar at Montana State University Northern. After a successful search, John Allred, current Registrar at University of Alaska-Anchorage and former Registrar from Weber State University, has accepted the position and will arrive on campus October 4th. We’re anxiously awaiting his arrival as we work hard to keep up with the demands in the office.

Welcoming Another Member to the Team:

Upward Bound has a new Asst. Director, Andy Burt. He started earlier this month and is replacing Merilee Ford who resigned to follow her husband Colby to Murray UT where Colby has his first teaching job since graduating SUU in spring.
Milestones

Welcoming New Baby Thunderbirds:

JAMIE ORTON (Financial Aid) had a baby boy in July: they named him Gary Marshall

NICOLE FUNDERBURKE (Welcome Center) also welcomed a new addition to her family: a new baby girl

And Sending Wedding Congratulations to:

SHAUNA FAY (Financial Aid) who got married in July and
HEATHER HUSSEY Shober who was married in August
## Highlighting Chris Ralphs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Full name:</strong></td>
<td>Christopher Wayne Ralphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preferred Name:</strong></td>
<td>Chris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place of birth:</strong></td>
<td>Blackfoot, Idaho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date of birth:</strong></td>
<td>My lawyers have instructed me not to answer this question, so you will have to settle for “The Dawn of Time”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Where did you grow up?</strong></td>
<td>Iona, Idaho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What did you want to be when you grew up?</strong></td>
<td>Space Cowboy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is your favorite memory?</strong></td>
<td>Wandering the Louvre</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What is your favorite TV show?</strong></td>
<td>Deadwood was a great series on HBO, but I’d settle for any football game on ESPN.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How about your favorite movie?</strong></td>
<td>If I could only choose one...The Empire Strikes Back</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What is your favorite book or magazine?</strong></td>
<td>The Agony and the Ecstasy by Irving Stone</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What kind of music do you listen to?</strong></td>
<td>Alternative Rock, Classic Rock, and Classical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What are your hobbies?</strong></td>
<td>Reading, painting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pets?</strong></td>
<td>I work for University Housing. I have been indoctrinated with “No Pets, ever”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What are your pet peeves?</strong></td>
<td>People who leave colored paper in the copier. But the therapy is helping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What ambitions do you have?</strong></td>
<td>Leader of the Free World, but I would settle for Dictator of Small Tropical Island</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Notebook is an electronic newsletter published bi-semesterly for the Division of Student Services at Southern Utah University. It includes the following four sections:

College Ruled
This section emphasizes continuous personal and professional improvement by featuring articles that provide insights into the world of higher education. It also contains an article from the Vice-President for Student Services office and articles related to the improvements realized by Student Services departments.

The Binding
This section celebrates the purpose of Student Services: SUU and its students. Each issue features an article revealing obscure SUU history and culture. Surrounding articles focus on student achievements, reinforcing the connection between SUU students and Student Services.

Bullet Points
Content within this section is administrative and professional related. Division announcements, upcoming events, departmental news, professional achievements and department recognitions characterize Bullet Points.

Between The Lines
Focusing on individuals within the division, this section announces personal achievements/milestones, anniversaries, birthdays, special non-professional recognitions, etc. Each issue also features an article highlighting a division member.

CONTENT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES
The Notebook is designed to be relatively informal; however, in an effort to foster clear communication, please consider the following guidelines and suggestions when submitting content:

- Differentiate personal from professional information (i.e. A co-worker experiencing two events—1) receiving a professional honor and 2) celebrating a marriage—requires two separate articles).
- Announcements excluded, article submissions for Bullet Points should report significant administrative or professional events (e.g. major promotions, honors, departmental advancements, etc.).
- Use full names
- Use specific dates or time references
- Employ 3rd person point of view when articles are of a more professional nature. For personal related articles, 1st person point of view is suitable, but not required.
- Include pictures when possible (except photo directory pictures, which are already filed)
- Submit the article to Dina Nielsen (NielsenD@suu.edu) in an electronic format (word or text document, email, etc.)

For assistance or clarification with content submissions, please contact Liz McNaughton (lizm@suu.edu) or Ty Jewkes (JewkesT@suu.edu).

SUBSCRIPTION REQUESTS
To request The Notebook for yourself or a co-worker not currently receiving issues, please email your name, department, and email address to Liz McNaughton (lizm@suu.edu).