Underwater class makes a big splash

By Davie Moore
Staff Writer

Have you ever had a professor deliver his lecture underwater? Having class under water is a regular occurrence for Union's SCUBA students.

"It's great! SCUBA diving is something that I wanted to do since I was a little kid," said sophomore Drew Mehta, youth ministry major.

This class has been offered at Union the last five years, but its attendance has grown rapidly in the last two years. Students learn the basic skills necessary to become SCUBA certified and also receive one hour of P.E. credit toward their core requirements.

"It's weird to breath under water because your natural instinct is to close your eyes and hold your breath, but when you open your eyes and realize that you can see and breathe, it's like being in a whole different world," said freshman Ashley Murphy.

Mike Crocker of H2O SCUBA Center in Jackson, Tenn., is the primary instructor.

"We touch on physics and ecology, as well as the techniques, to try to teach everything in a way that is not boring to the students," said Crocker.

Once students are familiar with the equipment and what they need to do to stay safe, Crocker often incorporates play into the classroom setting to help students become more comfortable with the skills they have just learned.

He has relay races with Ping-Pong balls, and even gets students ride on his motorized underwater scooter.

 Occasionally Crocker will bring his own remote controlled shark to class just to keep things interesting.

"SCUBA is a lot of fun and it's a noncompetitive sport that you can do for the rest of your life," said Crocker.

When students have completed all of the written exams and passed all of the skills tests in the pool they are ready to put their skills to the test in the open water. Crocker holds several trips a year to open water locations where students can take their final test; an open water check out dive in lakes, or even in the ocean.

These check out dives give students a chance to test their knowledge in a real life situation.

"The coolest thing about diving is just the whole concept of using machinery to go places that humans can't naturally go, and see how awesome God's creation really is in a way that most people will never experience," said Murphy.

Students: make statement with new sculpture

By Kasey Carty-Campbell
Staff Writer

"It's so big only God can see it." Senior Eric Botbyl, art major, is referring to the shape of the ichthus (or Christian fish, for those not in Greek class) that can be seen from an aerial view of Metanoia, the new addition to the campus.

While walking by the grove, students may have wondered what the Silvery Iris sculpture was.

This sculpture, about as large as the guard house, was constructed by Union art majors under the instruction of Roger Feldman, a West Coast graphic designer and sculptor.

Metanoia is a Greek word that can be translated into the English word obesiance, meaning bow out. It can be translated into the English requirement.

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