Cancer Research Wins in Snow Bowl

Columbia’s lacrosse and softball teams faced off at Lawrence A. Wien Stadium on Jan. 29 for the inaugural Snow Bowl, a flag football game designed as a fundraiser to benefit the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. The big winner of the day was the foundation—the teams donated more than $5,000 from the event.

The Snow Bowl is the brainchild of head softball coach Kayla Noonan and head lacrosse coach Kerri Whittaker. Each player raised a minimum of $100 for the foundation, which has been a global leader in the fight against breast cancer through its support of innovative research and community-based programs.

“It’s really a cause where if it hasn’t touched you or somebody in your life, it will at some point,” said Noonan. “So, as women, we’re just trying to do as much as we can to help.”

The number of new cases of breast cancer has increased by about 1 percent each year in the United States since the 1940s and has only recently shown signs of leveling off, according to the foundation’s Web site. An estimated 216,000 new cases of breast cancer were diagnosed in American women in 2004 alone.

Whittaker hopes this will become an annual event. “I think after this year it will build momentum and, each year, get a little bit bigger and better,” she says. “Hopefully there will be an increase in the interest and effort invested in the fundraising each year. I think it will be inspiring for each player to be part of a group that’s sending a $5,000 donation to the Susan G. Komen Foundation.”

The Malman School of Public Health has ongoing research into environmental exposures and genetic susceptibility to breast cancer and recently has found that there may be a link between a cell’s ability to repair damaged DNA and cancer risk within families. For the full story, see page 4.

SOA Celebrates All Divisions with ‘Panoply’ Exhibition

Dodge Hall buzzed with excitement Jan. 27, as the School of the Arts kicked off its inaugural interdisciplinary exhibition, “Panoply.” The event, conceived by the Graduate Arts Council, presented an evening of art from all divisions—Film, Theatre, Writing and Visual Arts—and was designed to increase collaboration among the disciplines.

Introducing the performances, Pancho Gutstein, president of the Graduate Arts Council, explained that the Greek word ‘panoply’ denotes a colorful array—a fitting moniker for the eclectic event—but also can mean “the armor of a warrior.” Armor for Gutstein, is a metaphor that duly connotes the sense of urgency artists have been feeling recently, as they continue to communicate, fight for and defend their work. School of the Arts Dean Bruce W. Ferguson said that “Panoply” was another step forward on his mission to foster collaboration among departments. He explained that artists in graduate school are oftenironically separated from their colleagues in other mediums for the first, and often last, time in their lives. Ferguson emphasized the importance of creating a strong network of artists, both as students and alumni. Both Gutstein and Ferguson thanked SOA students Jennifer Estaris, a fellow Graduate Arts Council member, and Nikoletta Moschidi for their roles in organizing the event.

Dave Breman, assistant dean of student affairs and admissions, and adviser to the Graduate Arts Council, echoed the dean’s remarks. While this isn’t the first interdisciplinary festival within the School of the Arts, it’s the first one in recent memory. Many students and faculty see the value in collaboration and are creating more student-driven cross-disciplinary events. Both the creation of the council and the resulting interdisciplinary festival are opportunities students have devised to share work and meet folks from other divisions and concentrations, thereby enriching their SOA experience.

The performances ranged from performances by actors in the Theatre Division of work by playwriting students, screenings from students of the Film Division and readings of work from Writing Division students. The Graduate Arts Council was created in 2003 and is composed of three members from each division. According to its mission statement, the council “promotes dialogue, collaboration and a sense of community for students in the School of the Arts with the hope that they will not only look to each other as resources during their studies but leave with a network of peers in disciplines beyond their own.” The exhibition “Diverse Grounds” in the LeRoy Neiman Gallery was held in conjunction with the event. It will run through Feb. 11. The installations—a mix of paintings and multimedia presentations—are works from artists of all the divisions.

Selections from “Diverse Grounds,” from left: Visual Arts’ Natalie Frank “Ceremony”; Film’s Lei Ming “Untitled”; and Visual Arts’ Miguel Cardenas “When We Were Kings.”