I was one of those kids who loved dirt. I loved the earthy smell; I loved plunging my hands into its gritty dampness; and most of all, I loved the discoveries that waited in plenty beneath the surface. Any find, be it a wriggling worm or a piece of speckled granite, was a treasure in my mind.

One of my favorite childhood memories involved “Indian Bead Hunting” with my dad in Northern California where my grandparents lived. As soon as it rained, we would go searching on our hands and knees through the mud for small, white beads that had emerged during the rainfall. If we were lucky, we might even find a rare black bead or the coveted red bead. In the midst of one search, I spied what looked like another white bead and pried from the ground … and in horror discovered that what I had thought was a bead was actually a human tooth!

I learned two valuable lessons that day: 1) I was unknowingly building my resume for grave-digging — The site we were using was actually a Native American burial ground, and 2) Dirt sometimes produced nasty, ugly things.

In spite of this, the process of unearthing is always worth it. I think that the more we search for truth, the closer to God’s heart we are capable of getting. Sometimes this entails learning about beautiful intricacies that remind us how amazing, diverse and perfect our Creator is. But other times, unearthing reveals the darkest sins of humanity and the level to which a person’s heart can be hardened. Those disclosures can be difficult and sometimes painful and often turn people away from searching beneath the surface.

Jesus, however, never shied away from the dirt. By listening to personal accounts of swindlers and prostitutes and knowing where they had come from, He was able to provide them with light and with hope. Until people are fully honest with who they are — the blessings and the depravity — they can’t grow. Illumination of those inner corners is necessary.

The Point staff affirmed that this theme of unearthing the obscure is one that should be very telling to the Biola community. From the fun and the fascinating to the dark and the shameful, we have given you a myriad of valuable insights we have dug up. Our cover story shares the experiences of three individuals who were each deep in pornography addiction, a battle that is rarely recognized. Three Biola professors from the cinema, art and psychology departments also discuss the thin line between art and pornography. Along with the cover story, we spend time with the Mohler family as they share how cancer has changed the way they view life. The Eagle also journeys to the university that should not be named (APU), and we discover that we might have more connections to them than we think.

In addition, we give you the winners from The Point’s chili cook-off and their recipes so you can recreate the flavors that won over DBC and the Biola campus. We also examine how social media has changed social activism, introduce three students with amazing stories that have gone under the radar, give the dos and don’ts of fashion etiquette, and reveal the top lost arts of our generation.

Jesus used dirt and spit to heal a man’s blindness. What else do you think He can do with dirt? There is both beauty and ugliness to be found, and He will use both. I hope that as you read this magazine, you’ll be encouraged by the obscure stories of others and examine your own story and how God is working in it. If there are areas that need revealing, I pray you will give them up. Remember, His love has no bounds.

Enjoy,
Karin Hamilton
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CURSIVE WRITING
As elementary school students, we painstakingly tackled this alleged shortcut in handwriting. We were told fanciful tales of teachers who would only accept work in cursive and that our college careers were at the mercy of our penmanship. Such myths were debunked as our fluid font was quickly replaced with typed text. Because professors are more concerned with the formatting of a paper than our personal penmanship, those tricky cursive G’s and Q’s are now mere memories.

MIXED TAPES
A mixed tape was a hug in the form of a cassette, encased in plastic and passed on to a best friend or a potential soul mate. Compilers carefully selected each song, using each ballad as means to a personalized message. MP3 players and their infinite playlists have now overshadowed this original form of music compilation. As these cassettes are exiled into the retired family of floppy disks, records and VHS, the mixed tape rests as the proud pioneer of homemade symphonies.

NAVIGATION
Many have invested in a GPS device as their constant co-captain. Map reading is a foreign jargon, and we are unaccustomed to finding North. Since a GPS will kindly recalculate routes when one strays from the original course, pulling over for directions has become unnecessary. Though the GPS has surely eliminated many a married squabble, it has also turned drivers into mindless driving machines.

Check out people who still practice the lost arts at pointmag.biola.edu
BEING A NEIGHBOR

The good-natured practice of being a neighbor has become obsolete, as fences have been built higher and attitudes more distant. Homeowners rarely open their front doors for fear of welcoming solicitors. The days of bringing plates of cookies to the new family on the street and borrowing a cup of sugar from the next-door neighbors are gone. Even in college dorms, students rarely venture past hasty hellos.

COMPLETE SENTENCES

When social media confines our thoughts to 140 characters, we are often forced to sacrifice proper grammar for that coveted witty status of the day. These concise sentiments sometimes overlook the necessary noun and verb that were so mercilessly drilled into us as elementary school students. Texts are abbreviated, shorthand is common and trains of thought are incomplete. Though friends will understand each other’s semi-sentences, our former English teachers might be confused.

CARRYING CASH

Carrying cash is a practice that is considered both risky and inconvenient. Students who carry cash usually do so for laundry, as even vending machines on campus take debit now. Swiping is much more convenient than counting change. This causes the stiff grip on money to loosen and the already dollar-deficient student to continue a meager monetary cycle.

MENTAL CALCULATIONS

To the mathematically challenged, the mastery of this skill has always been a struggle. Thanks to cell phones, computers and iPods, even the simplest of calculations need not strain our grey matter. A few extra seconds punching buttons is easily more manageable than adding four and carrying the one. Why mentally figure out a restaurant tip when your cell phone is always happy to help?

TELLING TIME WITH A WATCH

The majority of our wrists bare no watches, as the most popular time-telling accessory is now a cell phone. Winding a clock is a habit of old, and even a quintessential analog becomes a foreign language to some. Students who watch the clock during class have always been very familiar with the face of the clock and its painfully sluggish hands — the remainder of our ticking timepieces.

COOKING FROM SCRATCH

Stomachs everywhere agree that cooking from scratch is most rewarding. Sadly, it has been replaced by takeout, its more convenient and less nutritious cousin. Though it can be more cost effective to cook from scratch, many are dissuaded by the daunting recipes. College students tend to find the microwave much more user-friendly than the stove.

HANDWRITTEN LETTERS

With e-mailing and texting, no longer do we press pen to stationery and write someone a handwritten letter. Written communication is often thought of as being reserved for grandmothers and lovesick ladies. Thank you notes are far and few between, and even Christmas cards contain nothing more than a scrawled signature on a preprinted 4x6.
Before you get comfortable with the familiar faces around campus, check out what these three students did before they arrived at Biola. Here are the stories of a record setter, a chaplain and an unsuspecting pageant winner.

The Record Setter

Amy Atkinson

Junior Amy Atkinson’s serene smile and calm demeanor hide the facts: this is the kind of young woman who can set records.

As the starting right defender for the Biola women’s soccer team and a Guam citizen, Atkinson not only plays soccer, but has also held as many as eight Guam Junior National running records from road races to track events.

“My dad showed me all these records, so...
I kind of made it my goal,” Atkinson says with a look of dedication in her eyes. “When I run, that’s when I feel most free. I’m very competitive.”

That could be an understatement.

Atkinson set junior records in the Guam Cross Island 10 Mile Run (1:10:00), Guam Koko International 20k Road Race (2006 Jr. Record), the Alley Oop 6.7 Miler (2007 Jr. Record), and the Tumon Beach Run 5.5 Miler (2006 Jr. Record).

In addition, Atkinson plays for the Guam national soccer team, continues to run races and is planning to represent Guam this summer at the Micronesian Games in Palau.

She’s also a full-time student working toward an undergraduate degree in liberal studies.

Atkinson, though, is one of those special collegiate athletes who puts all the emphasis back on her Savior.

“Knowing I trained and raced as hard as I could is the big thing, so that I can bring glory to God through that … When you set records, people are more willing to listen, and it gives me a chance to give glory to Him and be a witness,” she responds nonchalantly, her islander “chill” personality becoming evident.

Just as solid as her records is her fire and passion for Christ, which she exemplifies through hard work in her athletic abilities, as well as in her desire to teach and help people.

“God’s given me these talents and abilities, and I know He’s given me a passion for running and soccer, and I [want] to use those gifts to find success in Him and use that to lead others to Christ,” Atkinson says.

No matter where God may take her after her days at Biola, one thing is for sure – she will keep changing records, but in the future it will be the records in the Book of Life.

“My dad showed me all these records, so I kind of made it my goal. When I run, that’s when I feel most free. I’m very competitive.”
Jin Uk Jung arrives and calmly takes his seat outside the coffee shop as he pulls out his laptop and notes for the interview. Dressed sharply, he looks more like a businessman from downtown Los Angeles than a former Republic of Korea Army chaplain.

Jung, 39, is working toward a doctorate in intercultural studies here at Biola University. Previously, he spent three and a half years carrying more responsibility in ministry than some pastors will in a lifetime. Jung pursued being a chaplain in his native country of South Korea because he wanted to transition into a job as a pastor.

He also adds, “I had very little choice. A pastor recommended me, and my big brother and cousin were in the military.”

After going through a rigorous process, which includes a family history investigation, he was one of seven selected out of hundreds of applicants.

Once selected, Jung was thrust into the responsibilities and challenges of his position.

“I baptized around 3,000 soldiers,” Jung says. “Many soldiers wanted to commit suicide. I had to counsel a total of 2,500 soldiers face to face.”

In the Korean military system, the way a chaplain is promoted is by baptizing as many people as he can. That’s one reason why Jung chose to leave the military and seek other facets of ministry.

“I felt guilty doing it; it didn’t fit my faith or conscience,” he responds.

After leaving the military, Jung landed in the Philippines doing missionary work where he met a principal of a school with relations to Biola and Clyde Cook.

“He told me it was the ‘purest university in the world,’” Jung says with a laugh.

After a little more than a year, Jung, his wife and daughters all transitioned into the Biola family.

After finishing his master’s degree for pastoral work and counseling at Talbot, he is now looking to complete his second graduate degree.

As a full-time student, Jung still finds time to volunteer in youth ministries and to serve as the Chaplain Associate at the Anaheim Memorial Hospital, where he works directly with the Korean patients.

Jung hopes to finish up his schooling here and then follow the Lord’s next calling.

“I want to go back to the Philippines as a professor and as a missionary,” he says.
When senior Lindsey Pierce is greeted, she responds with a smile and a laugh, as one would expect from a former California Homecoming Queen, a part of America’s Homecoming Queen pageant.

Then you start to get to know her.

“My senior year I was the captain of the volleyball team. I only had two best friends in high school, and I wasn’t very popular,” she says with a big smile.

That doesn’t seem like the stereotypical homecoming queen: 5 feet, 9 inches tall, an athlete, not very popular?

“I knew a lot of younger girls from the freshman and junior varsity team, and they nominated me as a joke,” Pierce says. “I ended up on court with four cheerleaders, who are all under 5 feet.”

Then she won.

“It blew everyone’s mind. It was kind of a silly situation in the first place, and I ended up winning,” Pierce explains.

The next day in class, Pierce found an application on her desk, inviting her to the national pageant, America’s Homecoming Queen. Again, she and her friend filled it out as a joke.

“We’re laughing, putting down things like, ‘I’m interested in lacrosse and butterfly catching,’” she says.

A few months later, the joke once again became real as she received a letter stating she was a finalist.

Pierce went on to compete against girls who “made it their whole life to be there” even though she barely put any effort into it. Then, once again to the surprise of herself and her friends, Pierce won for the state of California and received a scholarship, which ultimately helped her come to Biola.

After state competition, Pierce went onto Nationals and once again won – however, a different award this time.

She was voted Miss Congeniality by her fellow pageant queens.

Pierce, a former R.A., has one piece of advice to girls at Biola.

“[Vanity] is just chasing after the wind,” Pierce says. “Consider your motivation, deepest desires, and it should be to invest in eternal purposes and lift others higher than themselves and trust what Jesus says about them.”
To many college students, fashion is an abstract idea, like eating healthy meals and getting enough sleep; it just doesn’t always compute. But surprising as it may be to some, the way you dress in certain circumstances actually matters. Whether you envision every social event as an opportunity to strut your stuff, or go for the “just rolled out of bed (literally)” look, there is something for you here! This simple guide is a road map of sorts, to help you navigate through a few social events in which it’s important to dress appropriately.
Interview

It’s true that your first impression is the most important, especially when it comes to seeking employment. You must dress professionally, competitively and appropriately. For both guys and girls, remember that your idea of trendy might not match the interviewer’s perspective on what’s fashionable, so err on the side of dressing conservatively when you interview.

**Guys**

**DON’T:** Be lazy. Cutoff shorts, deep V-neck T’s, flip-flops or TOMS will not impress your potential employer. They are best kept amongst the Indie band crowd.

**DO:** Invest in a good set of dress pants and at least two nice button-up dress shirts. Be sure at least one coordinating tie is on the radar.

**DON’T:** Forget your socks. Although you may glean some particle of manliness through straight up skin to sole contact, no one — especially a potential employer — likes stinky bare feet!

**DO:** Get your shoes shined! A pair of sleek black dress shoes will score big time. Opt for a loafer style shoe like a Sperry brand (knockoffs welcome!) or a classic shiny black dress shoe.

**DON’T:** Think that everyone appreciates the “natural” look. Make sure to be well groomed: tidy hair on both your head and your face. Shave the night before so you don’t have to rush in the morning. But if you’re the “5 o’clock shadow at noon” type, leave enough time to shave the morning of your interview.

**Girls**

**DON’T:** Use this as an excuse to buy a Bumpit. Keep the teasing to a minimum and be sure to tame the rat’s nest to an inhabitable level. A future employer does not want to hire someone who can hide things in their hairdo.

**DO:** Go retro. Think back to a time when hemlines and necklines existed and emulate that. Most professional employers are still somewhat old-fashioned. Your winning wardrobe should include a basic colored skirt that allows you to sit comfortably (and appropriately) and a nice blouse or dress shirt. Present yourself as a responsible professional adult.

**DON’T:** Think high fashion. Frill, shimmer and glam are definite strikeouts. This is not the place to demonstrate your hidden talent for eclectic garment pairing.

**DO:** Step it up with a classy pair of heels. Ross, Target and Wal-Mart offer affordable and fashionable interview appropriate shoes. Go for a closed toe with either a kitten heel or medium height heel. Use this as a chance to add a little color to the outfit.

**DON’T:** Go stiletto! Death-defying height is not the objective here. The taller they are, the harder they fall.
Casual Date

Whether they are on a GYRAD or a real date, college students tend to misunderstand the term “casual.” Guys might view this as an opportunity to institute a “Date Shirt” – a hideous neon mess that each male is required to wear on a first date – while ladies often interpret this word to mean a mini fashion show where the world is her catwalk. The idea here is to understand that your attire directly demonstrates your intentions for the date. So dress wisely, my friends.

Guys

**DO:** Decide for yourself. Wear your favorite T-shirt, whether it’s a V-neck, polo or a band T. If you feel comfortable in it, you’ll act like yourself, and it will demonstrate a bit of your personality.

**DON’T:** Be a fool. Leave the “Date Shirt” at home. This funny joke among guys does not translate well to the female population. Any over-the-top T-shirt with neon, spray paint or creepy cartoon characters is best left with the guys … where it belongs.

**DO:** Flip out! Break out those flip-flops, TOMS and slip-ons. You may have had to ditch them for the interview, but these puppies are perfect for the kickback atmosphere of a casual date.

**DON’T:** Trust the sniff-and-go test; it almost always fails. Rubbing a dryer sheet over your shirt and spraying on some cologne will only mask the stench that tends to hover around the male habitat for so long.

**DO:** Consider a nice pair of jeans. These will help set the casual tone while still allowing you to be comfortable. Just be sure to keep the rips and tears to a minimum.

Girls

**DO:** Feel comfortable in your own skin! What outfit do you feel the most like yourself in? Wear that! Your favorite pair of jeans is the perfect item for exuding confidence and uniqueness.

**DON’T:** Dress to impress. Magazines overemphasize “glam” and “chic” in casual dressing. Short, tight skirts, sequins and boots with the fur are best left for the fancier dates in the future.

**DO:** Rock the kicks! Depending on the date activity, decorative flats or simple boots will show you put effort into getting ready but didn’t overthink the outfit.

**DON’T:** Start a fire! Hairspray is flammable so consider how much your hair will require, then use about half as much. Stray away from any hairstyle that calls for helmet head proportions of your Aqua Net.
Day Trip to L.A.

The wonderful land of Los Angeles holds many opportunities for excitement, adventure and spontaneity, but much like Disneyland, it requires walking endurance and the motto of the Boy Scout: “Be prepared!” L.A. has two sides – the daytime sightseeing and the high fashion nightlife – so dress creatively.
DO: Break out your “Sunday Best” jeans. A pair of dark wash casual jeans is great for exploring the wonders of Los Angeles by day and then exuding your classy fashion for an exclusive nighttime museum exhibit.

DON’T: Sell yourself short. Shorts are not always the best idea. The temperature typically drops drastically at night, so you’ll find yourself shivering instead of stylish. Apply the same principle to overly holy jeans as well.

DO: Bring along a blazer or nice sweater. This will be crucial in transitioning your daytime garb into appropriately classy eveningwear.

DON’T: Break the bank. Just because L.A. has the stigma of high fashion, do not feel obligated to purchase a completely new set of clothes to feel accepted.

DO: Slip it on. Chuck’s, Vans, TOMS or any other kind of slip-on shoe is great for walking around L.A. and is also easy to convert into a dressier outfit for a nice evening dinner.

Guys

DO: Layer it up. Wearing several layers will allow you to adapt to your environment, whether it gets warm, cold or fancy. Versatile clothing is the best option for L.A. Opt for a darker wash pair of jeans that can easily transform into high fashion at night. Bring along a cardigan or blazer to put over your top for the nightlife scene.

DON’T: Dress like a celebrity. Most Los Angeles websites emphasize the casual nature of the city. Avoid high heels and fancy dresses during the daytime.

DO: Accessorize. Sunglasses, bracelets, earrings, scarves — all of these items are small, fun and easily interchangeable. A scarf is perfect for browsing street vendors by day and glitzy earrings for a fancy dinner by night.

DON’T: Settle for flip-flops. They won’t provide the protection or comfort your feet are going to need when walking around the grimy streets of L.A. Plus, they won’t work so well if you decide on an impromptu dinner at a classy café.

DO: Keep it small. Bring along a small purse or cross shoulder bag large enough to fit your phone and point-and-shoot but small enough to not stand out.

Girls

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Pornography is all the rage. That’s what Roxxanne Bliss, a bold, blonde 29-year-old adult film star says.

“Everybody does this,” she remarked at the 2009 AdultCon Expo in Los Angeles. As an escort, Bliss claims she has seen every sort of customer “under the sun” — including the Amish and a few rabbis. Bliss, who began her career with dancing at age 10 and practicing striptease by age 14, has now spent almost a decade in the porn industry.

Resident Director (R.D.) of Hart Hall Ryan Low, 36, saw his first Playboy magazine at age 7. Low struggled with pornography for years, but now lives free from it. Bliss, on the other hand, fosters hopes of getting deeper into the industry. She has tried to get out, but says she always goes back.

“I’m a sexual addict,” she admitted blatantly. “I don’t know when to quit.”

Some students at Biola know precisely what Bliss is talking about. Pornography has consumed their lives to the point where they can’t — and don’t — imagine a day without it. Life at Biola does not guarantee an escape from sex-soaked America, after all. Sexual images emerge by the thousands from the music we listen to, the movies we watch, the books and magazines we read and the lingo we use every day.

Surrounded by so many images, identifying what is pornographic can be difficult. The word “pornography” has Greek roots and originally meant “to write about prostitutes.” Today, the public understands pornography as any depiction of erotic behavior — pictures or writing — intended to cause sexual arousal.

Psychology professor Gary Strauss says pornography fits into the “larger category of erotica, which is basically all depictions of sexuality: verbally, orally and visually.”

Like Low and Bliss, cinema professor John Schmidt was also exposed to pornography at a young age. In 7th grade, he recalls hiding in his friend’s attic to peruse a collection of Playboys.

“I remember my mom coming to pick me up and honking the horn, and it freaked me
out, and I just rushed down there and hoped that I looked normal," he says.

Schmidt suggests that pornography’s influence has recently intensified in our culture, as television and especially the Internet provide people with privacy and unending choices as to how, where and when they access content.

Child exposure to pornography has skyrocketed since the rise of the Internet. Ninety percent of children ages 8 to 15 have seen porn online and 80 percent of 15 to 17-year-olds have had multiple exposures to hardcore porn online, according to Top Ten Reviews Online. Those who encountered pornography at a young age are not alone. In fact, they are among the majority.

Sophomore Jose Palos “grew up around pornography.” As a child, his only role models were ungodly men.

“There’s a sense of comfort and satisfaction you get,” Palos says, recalling his experience with porn. “It’s deep; it involves imagination. It’s kind of like worship. You engage with your mind, your body, your emotions and your soul.”

Palos, 28, has now been free from pornography for more than five years. He became a Christian nine years ago, but continued in his struggle even after his conversion. He finally recognized that the desire to view pornography was primarily lust that stemmed from the heart and mind. Palos was freed from the bondage of pornography when he cried out to God and brought his struggle out into the open.

“Jesus gets all the glory. He loves to be the healer,” Palos says. “He loves to be taken into those messy places.”

Palos said God worked especially through the people in his life who prayed for him and kept him accountable. The shame began ebbing away as he developed deeper relationships with others and a real intimacy with Christ.

“You have to die; you have to kill the flesh,” Palos says. “It gets better. It’s hard, super hard. I tossed away my movies, magazines, whatever. I was still feeling lust, still masturbating. [But] I was just desperate for the Lord.”

“I hate how it seems so obviously evil, that if you struggle with it, you’re all of a sudden less of a man or less of a woman or less of a Christian.”
Palos says he just tried to be real with God, telling Him how badly he wanted to get out of porn. “There’s no easy way out,” Palos says. “But you know, there’s success.”

A woman

Biola student Tracy began watching porn and masturbating at age 14 after reading increasingly sexual romance novels. Due to the especially sensitive nature in this culture of females involved in pornography, Tracy wishes to remain anonymous.

Romance novels fed Tracy’s sexual and emotional appetite throughout her teenage years. In 7th grade she bought an FBI novel from the school’s book fair to satisfy her interest in crime stories, not knowing that it contained a love story and a sex scene. Tracy says the book was her first encounter with reading about explicit sex. After that she was hooked and continued to read similar novels, flipping through just to get to the next sex scene.

“That wasn’t enough for my sexual appetite,” Tracy remembers. “So I bought more romance novels … stuff that had sex scenes all the way through.”

Romance novels led to late night TV surfing for skin and eventually masturbation to late night porn. With her dad asleep and brothers gone, she watched whatever she wanted, always keeping her finger on the LAST button just in case anyone came in. Now, five years free from pornography, Tracy talks about porn’s effect on the individual.

“For women,” Tracy says, “I think we are addicted to romance.” Sigma Chi R.D. Michelle Santis can attest to this being an issue for Biola women as well.

“I think there are a lot of women who struggle with fantasy; a lot are fantasizing about men in their minds,” Santis says.

Communications professor Tim Muehlhoff identifies the fantasy aspect of pornography as one of its key dangers. For men, he says, pornography presents a woman who is flawlessly beautiful, always available, and always attracted to him. A woman may find a similar draw in a celebrity or story character, like recent heartthrob Edward Cullen of the Twilight series. The same is true for a woman carrying into her marriage a fantasy built up from years of romance novels and steamy flicks.

Romance novels, while not explicitly labeled pornographic, still capture their reader’s attention through sexual scenes. Regardless of the author’s intent, Tracy’s real concern is for the reader. What is the consumer’s intention? Do people pursue sexual materials for arousal and therefore, create their own porn?

“I just didn’t see sex like God sees it,” Tracy says. “I saw it the way the world sees it, and I loved it, but I hated that I loved it, so I hid it.”

Tracy remembers crying out to God. “I want to stop,” she begged, but anytime she turned on the TV, the temptation got to her. Now, she is five years free. Tracy says she doesn’t watch much TV anymore or flip through magazines because it just brings back bad memories and temptations.

“I hate how you’re not allowed to talk about [porn],” Tracy states, frustrated. “I hate how it seems so obviously evil that if you struggle with it, you’re all of a sudden less of a man or less of a woman or less of a Christian.”
In junior high — years after his first exposure to porn — Low started watching pornographic videos regularly with his friends, logging in hundreds of hours.

In high school, he was able to quit cold turkey after getting more involved in his youth group, but pornography reappeared in his life as easily as it had vanished. While Low was studying at Talbot School of Theology, he fell to his temptations again because he never dealt with the real issues behind his habitual consumption of sexual images, he says.

“Pornography is more about medicating something in life you’re trying to escape from,” Low says.

What tempted him to spiral back was the same magazine that started it all: Playboy. Low had stopped at a 7-Eleven on the way home from Talbot and saw the magazine sitting along with other popular titles.

“I was lonely, burnt out, and I hated myself and blamed myself because my [youth] ministry wasn’t succeeding how I wanted it to,” said Low, remembering his thoughts on the way to the convenience store.

Low justified picking up that Playboy because of the pain in his life. He says he thought to himself, just this once. But “just this once” turned into every day.

“It was a really intense, daily kind of thing,” he says, recalling the relapse with porn during his time at Talbot.

Low’s struggle went on for six months. During this time he had difficulty staying pure in his relationship with future wife Alyssa Snow, now Mrs. Ryan Low.

Low broke down and confessed his struggle after hearing God repeatedly urge him to do so on a ride home from a church event with his youth students. Soon after, Low confessed to Alyssa what he had been going through.

“I didn’t feel anything but total love and ‘I can’t believe he’s telling me this,’” Alyssa remembers. “It must’ve been such a burden to bear.”

One of the consequences pornography carried into their relationship, she says, was the heightening of her existing uncertainties about her body.

“I became very insecure,” she says. “How did he view me? I don’t look like these women at all. I won’t ever, ever look like those women.”

Alyssa distinctly remembers Ryan telling her that the women in pornography were faceless to him, unable to be hugged or held. They never offered any sort of real relationship.

“When I’m with you, confessing to you, listening to you right now when you’re crying, I’m not going to those women for an emotional connection,” he told her during one of their many open conversations. “That’s not what it was ever about. That was just an escape.”

A relationship
Not only does pornography train a person to objectify others, but Low says devouring one image after another can also promote infidelity in marriage because it cripples the ability to have deep emotional relationships with someone of the opposite sex.

It has been more than 10 years since Low has looked at porn. He says he was able to realize that God was capable of saving him in an area he thought of himself as being so unlovable.

“I’ve conquered it [due] to the fact that I haven’t looked at it, it hasn’t controlled me in that way,” he says. “I can diffuse porn’s power over me. You can get yourself into a life where you don’t look at it. You can be able to move toward healing.”

After his ordeal with pornography, Low can now relate to and counsel people, especially Biola students, struggling with the issue.

“He’s been a model of God to me,” Alyssa says. “Ryan’s chosen to live in surrender of this addiction.”

Healing from the struggle

From Bliss’ perspective, “We need [pornography] in society simply for the fact that it relieves stress; it brings happiness.” Like Bliss, Low, Palos and Tracy all at one time accepted pornography as a means to an end. In the images of over-sexed women, Low found an escape from his failure and Palos found soothing from his childhood pain and emptiness. Tracy immersed herself in sexual experiences that gave her emotional and physical satisfaction.

Bible professor Erik Thoennes believes the core issue behind pornography is an unhealthy view of people and of God.

“Human beings are made in God’s image, and therefore all humans are worthy of great dignity, honor, respect and protection,” he says. “Having a sense of God’s presence and a healthy, holy fear of Him is key to overcoming this issue. Pornography objectifies humans, reducing them to mere things rather than persons to be loved.”

Low remembers how pornography skewed his view of humans in a similar way.

“When I was at the height of my porn usage it took a lot for me to look at women as more than merely breasts and vaginas,” Low says. “I think you get to a place where women become a slab of meat to you.”

To consume pornography, then, is essentially to abuse humans as sexual objects for the purpose of filling a personal need. Thoennes warns against putting band-aids on a deep wound like pornography instead of understanding the root of the problem and depending on God’s grace and power to heal. If the emptiness that originally provoked porn use is not taken care of, the problem will resurface again and again. Low found this to be true, even after a long pe-
period without pornography in high school and in his undergraduate studies.

Now, when helping Biola students who struggle with porn, Low often asks what is going on in their lives when they are most tempted to go on the Internet and search for sex. Strauss has identified four common emotional deficits — hunger, anger, loneliness, and tiredness, or "HALT" — that can lead people to self-medicate with pornography.

Accountability, as stories like Palos’ demonstrate, is key to getting out of a pornography addiction. According to Muehlhoff, accountability needs to consist of a tough love that will test how serious someone is about getting rid of pornography. There is a fight that must occur, he says, and people need to be serious about fighting for each other.

Every time people view pornography, they deaden their ability to hear the Holy Spirit, which progresses toward spiritual deafness, Muehlhoff explains.

“You lose the ability to hear the Holy Spirit in other areas of your life,” Muehlhoff says. “So, you kill yourself for the sake of pornography and you become dead spiritually. And Jesus says, ‘What do you want more, Me or pornography?’ And He’ll wait you out to see which one you want more.” Biola students up to their shoulders in struggle and serious about turning things around can take advantage of several resources at Biola. Dean of Students Danny Paschall describes what the process may look like.

“We don’t discipline students for pornography,” he says. “That doesn’t help. We connect them with someone to talk to every week. If it’s deeper, we get them to go to counseling. This is a monster that you’ve been feeding. The more you feed it, the bigger it gets. What are you going to do to stop it?”

Paschall says that there is no formula, but that the goal is to help students individually to stop harmful behavior and change their habits. Support groups, one-on-one accountability and counseling are just a few options. Ultimately, the Christ-follower believes that it is God who convicts, empowers and restores. Bliss and millions of others in our society are not willing to say “no” to pornography. Unfortunately, some believe pornography is an ultimately satisfying answer to life’s problems and that it can heal life’s hurts and sorrows.

Low doesn’t deny the destructive nature of pornography in his life, but he sees God’s ingenious work in his life during the struggle and the distance God has taken him since then.

“This is what redemption looks like,” Low says. “And I believe God can do the same for other men and women.”

"Jesus gets all the glory. He loves to be the healer; He loves to be taken into those messy places.”
How do you define pornography?

Lisa Swain, Professor of Cinema: Any narcissistic enjoyment of pleasure that has utter disregard for the other person in the relationship.

Jonathan Anderson, Professor of Art: The objectification of a person’s sexuality for personal, private consumption.

Gary Strauss, Professor of Psychology: Consumption that is specifically for the purpose of self-gratification.

How do you draw the line between porn and art?

Strauss: An image that’s very much focusing on the body itself, the intimate portions of a person’s sexuality, sexual activity or even just the portrayal of the nude body, where there seems to be no purpose other than erotic stimulation. That is where you have clear divisions.

Anderson: I would define pornography as having a consumptive drive to it whereas art is reflective. The whole point of art is to reflect on something, to raise certain questions. The problem is that you can take the same object and have two different people do two different things with it. As viewers, we’re writers in a way.

Swain: The one thing that’s very clear is when an image is designed to evoke pornographic response. But when you’re backing away from that, what you always trying to promote in artists is truth in what they’re telling.

How can a Christian responsibly portray sexuality?

Swain: The nude body itself communicates a lot besides just sex. And sexual expression communicates more than just lust. Sex can communicate surrender or power. There are a million things that are said with nudity and with sexual expression that have nothing to do with just pure lust and just pure consumption. If in a story those elements are handled with care and handled with truth, then I think the artist has a responsibility to use those elements. It’s not license; it’s an obligation to demonstrate those things in a healthy manner.

Anderson: The artist does need to take responsibility. They are putting something into the world. They’re contributing to culture. But certainly we need to recognize and dignify the viewers with they’re measure of responsibility. I can’t be responsible for talking to everyone and shepherding every response that’s going to be made to my image.

What boundaries have you created for the classroom?

Anderson: It’s always an issue when teaching figure drawing. I usually will spend a portion of the first class addressing the issue of nudity and looking at another person’s nudity. We approach as someone who wants to understand, who regards the body as something that is good and even holy to be revered and that ultimately, the person we’re drawing is of utmost importance. Continually resisting the urge to turn the person into an object.

Swain: Watching it and shooting it are different things from a college-age perspective. I tend to be rather conservative on what I think college students should be shooting because it’s a very different experience when you’re actually in the intimate situation around the camera.

Strauss: I have purposefully chosen the textbook to rely primarily on line drawings rather than explicit photographs. Many teachers of human sexuality in secular settings will flood their students with pornographic images for the first two or three class sessions to desensitize them to nudity.

How does faith affect your view of art and sexuality?

Swain: When we fell in the garden, God could’ve handled [nudity] in any number of ways. He could’ve had us grow fur. But He didn’t. He made clothes, and to me, that does not say that He wants us to be ashamed of our nudity. He wants us to still have times of being naked, but it’s contextualized. That, I think, is so important for us as Christians for us to remember, that God didn’t say our nudity is bad. In fact, he protected it. He protected it so that it could still be available to us, and it was now at our discretion.

Anderson: Christian theology provides the most potent reasoning for not objectifying another person. It provides the resources for seeing another person as not ever an instrument to be used but as loved by God in ways that I can’t comprehend and can’t recreate. Totally stripping a personality out for the sake of seeing their body, looking at their body, is just a way of doing violence to the image of God.
They’re Cougars. We’re Eagles. The intense Biola/APU rivalry is inherited the moment a new student steps onto either campus. But when you line up the facts, Biola and APU really aren’t that different. We’re both Christian universities in Southern California. We swap professors. We even share a fondness for the color red. The Eagle recently took a trip to APU to offer Biola’s love. Let’s keep it going.
"Just the other day, I was wearing a shirt that said ‘I went to Biola.’ Mike saw it and said, ‘Really? I’m sorry you went there.’"
To those who don’t know them well, seniors Joelle and Marie Tanaka look just like any twins. Standing side by side with their straight, black hair and matching tennis rackets, the girls are almost impossible to distinguish one from the other.

Impossible, that is, until you take a look at their shirts: Marie proudly sports her APU apparel, while Joelle wears her fire-engine red Biola shirt.

“They thought it was ironic,” Joelle says, remembering their mutual friends’ reactions upon hearing they were going to rival schools. “But they thought it was kind of cute.”

“We’ve always been really close,” Marie chimes in. “If anything, going to rival schools has made our relationship even better because we can really relate — tennis, school, everything.”

Though the “Red Sea” and “Blackout” during basketball games highlight the Biola/APU rivalry, cases like the Tanaka twins reveal a hidden affection between the schools.

Take engaged couple Michael Popp and Kellee Thompson, for example. The two met through Thompson’s brother during a trip to Disneyland in October 2006. A fast friendship sprung up between them, and they were officially dating by the following April, according to Thompson.

Though Thompson went to Biola and Popp went to APU, they playfully embrace the rivalry and often poke fun at each other. “Just the other day, I was wearing a shirt that said ‘I went to Biola,’” Thompson says, grinning broadly. “Mike saw it and said, ‘Really! I’m sorry you went there.’”

While they still have school spirit — evident through each’s lighthearted jests at the other’s college — Popp and Thompson earnestly recognize how their relationship has affected those close to them. Once they were dating, their friendship circles became more mutual.

“All of my Biola friends started hanging out at Azusa with them [Mike and his friends],” Thompson remembers. “We all just became really good friends.”

In addition to students and alumni, both schools also share faculty and staff. Robin Faris, an assistant professor of nursing at Biola, attended APU for her master’s degree in nursing. While Faris was attending class...
But in the end, Biola and APU students are united by their love for God.

es there, her son was completing his undergrad career at Biola. For a funny Christmas gift, Faris decided to give her son an APU T-shirt.

“He wouldn’t even touch it,” Faris says, laughing as she recalled the memory of her son opening the gift and seeing his expression. “He looked at me and said, ‘Take that back.’

Stephen Childs, an art professor at both universities, is an example of a faculty member who visibly maintains his ties to Biola and APU. As a Biola grad, Childs smiles and admits that he has a bias toward his alma mater. He has taught at both schools since 2006 and describes the mixed responses when his students discover his “compromise.”

“Biola came up once in one of my classes at Azusa, and the one thing I kept hearing [brought up] was the contract,” Childs says. “The students [at APU] thought it was crazy how Biola students would sign something like that.”

All joking aside, however, Childs acknowledges more significant similarities among Biola and APU students.

“Compared to a junior college, there’s a quality and maturity and willingness to learn in the students both at Biola and APU,” he says earnestly. “They want to be there to learn. Both are campuses of faith, and that’s noticeable.”
It all began with the Red Sox. “There’s nothing in all of sport that is more longstanding and more vicious than the rivalry between the Boston Red Sox and the New York Yankees,” DBC states.

DBC affectionately and proudly recounts the 2004 American League Championship between the Red Sox and the Yankees when the Red Sox rallied to win the championship, deeming it “one of the greatest moments in the history of sport.”

Aside from Major League baseball, he recalls the annual football Thanksgiving rivalry, when every year on Thanksgiving Day “every town in Massachusetts played their archrival.”

Our president generally kept away from the messy center of youth athletic rivalries. Though not especially involved as an athlete — he played the trumpet where other boys played hockey, baseball or football — DBC maintained a sense of rivalry in his heart. “I wasn’t mischievous, but I was very loyal,” he says.

DBC’s loyalty to the Red Sox persists long after leaving his hometown. But recently, he’s encountered another reason to revel in rivalry. “In the quarter of a century since I left college, my sense of rivalry has pretty much been contained to Boston and New York. Until I came to Biola,” he says. “Now there’s a new rival in my life. Those — those Cougars.”

It didn’t take long for DBC to understand the fullness of the Biola/ APU rivalry. But three months after arriving at Biola, he met an obstacle in the path of the Red Sea: APU President John Wallace. “It made me so mad,” DBC says, “because he was so nice. And so kind to me.”

DBC nostalgically recalls how his friendship with Wallace developed. “We’ve had dinners together, gone to Dodgers games together — sitting there eating Dodger Dogs and watching baseball — and we’ve had breakfasts together and those presidential retreat things together. I love the guy,” he says.

DBC relates this rivalry conflict back to the one he experiences as a Red Sox fan. “It’s as if my widowed aunt married George Steinbrenner, and suddenly the owner of the Yankees is like part of our family, and you don’t like the Yankees, but you kind of like the guy who runs the Yankees. That’s how it’s been with APU,” he says.
A starving little boy stares out from the photo, transfixing the 6-year-old girl.

“That isn’t real, Daddy, is it?” she asks. “That’s just pretend, right?”

How does a father explain to his daughter that somewhere in the world children just like her die every few seconds because they can’t get enough to eat?

“She was incredulous,” remembers her dad, Jonathan Acuff, a copywriter by day and popular blogger by night. Her questions set him to thinking: What could they do to change the pain of that reality?

So one day last November, Acuff took up the challenge. He announced on his blog, “Stuff Christians Like,” that he would be raising $30,000 to build a kindergarten in Vietnam.

“I thought it would take us six weeks,” he says. “It took us 18 hours.”

Blown away by the results, Acuff decided to do it again. In just 25 days, he raised $60,000 to finance two kindergartens, using only his
“I’m just a guy in my kitchen; I don’t possess anything different from anyone else.”

blog and social media tools such as Twitter and Facebook.

“I’m just a guy in my kitchen; I don’t possess anything different from anyone else,” Acuff says. “I use a free template that everyone in the world has access to. It’s not anything special.”

What is special is that the children in the Phong Tho district of Vietnam will soon have two new kindergartens thanks to an ordinary guy with a computer, an Internet connection and a vision. These are the times we live in — ones of unprecedented opportunity to enact change.

Sixty-one percent of Millennials (voters born after 1980) say this generation has a unique identity, and 24 percent say it is their use of technology that makes them unique, according to a Pew Research Center survey from January 2010. The survey describes Millennials as “confident, connected and open to change.” This generation has proven itself more willing than any other to fuse technology into their social lives, forging a new identity as they do so.

Heavy use of technology also shapes our interaction with social issues, something particularly important to the current generation. Millennials rank helping others in need as one of their top priorities, second only to a successful marriage and happy family, according to the Pew survey.

Social justice ministries have been quick to recognize the value of the Internet’s global platform. The screen of every computer or cell phone is now a window to the larger world and its problems. The organization Invisible Children promotes awareness about child soldiers in Uganda; To Write Love on Her Arms provides support to people struggling with depression; the ONE Campaign fights poverty and preventable disease
in Africa; TOMS provides a pair of shoes to a needy child for every pair purchased by a customer. And the list goes on.

Social justice holds a wide appeal for a generation that is already seeking to help needy people. But in some ways, people might identify with a cause in the same way they embrace fashion trends — by wearing the T-shirt, bracelet or pair of shoes; putting stickers on their computer; and joining multiple Facebook groups.

"It seems that social justice is vogue right now," says Biola communications professor Sarah Auda. "It kind of becomes a fad."

Her husband, Jason Jaggard, a professor at Pepperdine University, believes this "fad" has potential to produce a harmful focus.

"One of the dangers of the social justice movement is converting people to social justice, not to Jesus," Jaggard warns. "While those two things are connected, they are not the same thing."

Unfortunately, the Internet can play right into a surface level involvement with social justice. A person can stare at a screen and scroll through Web pages, "like" Facebook causes and even donate electronically, but never get off the couch to truly make a difference through tangible action.

The grand paradox is that the Internet allows us to be more connected to global suffering than ever before, but it also allows us to remain more passive. This is the phenomenon author Shane Hipps identifies in his book *Flickering Pixels* as "empathy at a distance." And empathy kept at a distance rarely results in actions that will better the world.

Ryan Daugherty, a staff member at Mosaic Church in Whittier, points out that people can feel they are engaging with a social cause simply because they frequent an organization’s website.

"I can actually feel I’m involved when I’m not," Daugherty says. "I can experience all kinds of emotions, and I can actually feel like I’m doing something because I’m processing a lot with my brain."

Daugherty says that confusing mental engagement with physical action is one "curse of technology." Auda agrees.

"A lot of people want to help so far as it is convenient for them," Auda says. "But when it takes a significant amount of sacrifice whether that’s time, energy, finances or physically going somewhere, all of a sudden it changes."

These are the unfortunate results of the "empathy at a distance" concept. Many people are willing to interact with a cause online but cannot stand to face a person who is truly hurting. They allow technology to become a protective barrier between them and the people who need help.

As Acuff demonstrated, the Internet, when used intentionally, can certainly be a powerful vehicle to advance God’s kingdom. But when used casually, it can give us a false sense of our involvement and prevent us from acting for God.

Although much can be accomplished over the Internet, at some point it must move beyond the screen. But making this transition from awareness to activism is a hard task.

"People manage their lives by what happens to them," says David Bolt, a Biola graduate and founder of the orphan care organization Bring Me Hope. "It’s more a reactive lifestyle than a proactive lifestyle. Whatever is happen-
ing in your life is what you focus on.”

Bolt’s ministry provides short-term service opportunities for people to volunteer at orphan summer camps in China. Over the years, Bolt has witnessed how people are impacted when they are willing to leave their comfortable surroundings and go somewhere where they see needy, hurting people.

“A lot of people’s lives are not challenged,” he says, comparing it to the parable of the Good Samaritan. “I feel like we’re not even out on the road seeing people half-beaten.”

Bolt’s passion is to see people more fully loving God through their actions, and he says that often involves breaking their hearts first.

“It goes beyond just the Internet at that point,” says Dave Bourgeois, a Biola business professor who teaches a class on using Internet tools in ministry. “There has to be more than just reading something on the screen that’s going to get you to get up. You have to be led by the Spirit. You have to be moved.”

With our incredible access to be able to impact the world for good, we have no excuse not to act on our opportunities. Daugherty advises not to get caught up in waiting for a specific calling, but to practice acting on the change you want to see right now. He says that college is the perfect time to start experimenting and not be afraid to get involved.

“Passions are extremely important,” Daugherty says. “But a lot of people can allow the discussion of passions to handcuff them because they say, ‘I don’t know what I’m passionate about so I’m not going to do anything.’ That’s the worst thing you can do.”

As Biola’s director of the Coalition for Social Action, Alicia Miller has a similar vision to see Biola students actively living out their faith.

“I think it comes down to an individual looking at their open hands and seeing what God has placed in their hands to do at this time,” Miller says. “Get involved with what you’re able to right now.”

Technology is certainly one thing that is in all of our hands that we can use for God’s glory. But we must approach it with intentionality, commitment and imagination. And we must make Jesus the focus of it all.

“What God does through people who partner with Him over long periods of time, committed to seeing substantial change in their lifetime in one cause or issue — that is the hope of the world,” Jaggard says. “There’s no Facebook fan page for that kind of commitment.”
What you will need:
½ packet taco seasoning
1 lb. ground beef
1 lb. tri-tip
One 6 oz. can tomato paste
One 14 oz. can beef broth
½ tbsp. garlic powder
4 cloves garlic (minced)
1 serrano pepper
½ chopped onion
1½ tbsp. cumin
½ tbsp. cayenne
One 16 oz. can black beans
1½ tbsp. brown sugar

What you will do:
Brown the ground beef in a pan with the taco seasoning. When browned, place into a crock pot. Then brown the tri-tip in butter, garlic and a diced serrano pepper. Once browned, place in the crock pot.

Add all other ingredients to the crock pot, mix well to ensure that the tomato paste and other flavors have mixed evenly. Place on high heat for four hours, or for more tender meat, cook on low heat for an additional four hours.

People’s Choice Winner
Popes of Chili Town
Ryan McAneny and John Ray

“Great diversity and a first-time sensation! Loved it.” -DBC
**MPS!**

**DBC’s Choice Winner**

*Diversity Chili*

Sandi Nicolaides and VJ Vonk

“A Pinch of This and a POINT of That” Chili Cook-Off brought together students and faculty in a battle for Dr. Barry Corey’s taste buds. The competition was fierce and flavorful, but in the end, DBC announced his Chili Champs — and so did you! Here are the award-winning recipes that will spice up your dining.

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**What you will need:**

- 1 lb. ground turkey
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1/2 lb. pinto beans
- 1/2 lb. kidney beans
- 1/2 lb. white beans
- 32 oz. canned tomatoes
- 1 cup diced onions (red and yellow)
- Diced green bell peppers
- Diced red bell peppers
- To taste: chili powder, oregano, cumin, garlic, salt, cayenne pepper

**What you will do:**

Cook dry beans in separate pots before adding to crock pot. Brown ground beef and half of the onion; drain and add to crock pot. Brown ground turkey and remaining onion; drain and add to pot. Add remaining ingredients. Allow to simmer four to eight hours. Serve with warm tortillas and butter or hot cornbread and honey butter.

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A LIFE (holding on)

March 3, 2009. Fullerton, California. We pray and find the right house number. A warm, friendly face steps into the frame of the front door. A hand gesturing to come into the house: handshakes and names, “please sit down.” Small talk. Breaking ice. The phone rings, and a conversation takes place in the kitchen. Outside, feet are shuffling upon the pavement. “Left foot first, left foot first” can be heard from the living room. A pink support belt and a walker prop the man scooting outside. The questions begin, and Jim and Miriam Mohler tell me their story of how cancer has changed their lives.
Jim and Miriam talk about how they met at Biola University back when they were students. The two played in symphonic winds. Miriam recalls Jim as gregarious and outgoing. He had a quick wit, lots of puns and a love for performing magic tricks.

Not much has changed since then. The conversation casually swerves to their similar calling. Miriam comments that they have “a similar sense of purpose in ministry” and both have always wanted to pursue God full time in ministry. They dated for a year and a half. After an engagement at Newport Beach on Christmas, two lives became one and the pair felt called to junior high ministry.

“Naturally, we can do this as a team,” Miriam recalls thinking, looking back at their nine years of ministry in Scottsdale, Arizona.

They felt led to Trinity College in Illinois where Jim served on various boards and taught a youth ministry course in the Christian Education and Bible department. They were called to come back to their alma mater in 2006, and Jim became chair of the department of Biblical and Theological Studies, where he served until February 2010.
A lagging foot and a drooping face — early symptoms indicated something wasn’t right. An MRI on Feb. 26, 2009 revealed three cancerous tumors in Jim’s brain. His functions quickly deteriorated, causing him to need a walker, support belt and cane. His speech slowed and the magic tricks weren’t on cue. He became co-chair of the Biblical and Theological Studies department with professor Dave Talley, and left a void in the Biblical Interpretation and Spiritual Formation classroom.

Chemotherapy. Walking therapy. The questions started flooding in through Facebook, and Miriam decided to use their blog, CaringBridge, to update friends and family about their status. Phones rang continually, and concerned friends provided meals.

Jim reflects upon their hope during this time of need and says, “The things that have gotten us through this, I think, is that God has blessed us with an enormous amount of friends, people that have expressed care.”

Jim also says that reconnecting with old friends has been an important aspect of the CaringBridge blog.

“That’s been, for me, one of the biggest blessings, reconnecting with people from my youth group, family and friends I haven’t seen since high school. Miriam’s CaringBridge thing, I don’t know how many hits that thing has.” Jim pauses and laughs. “It’s mind boggling to me.”

The blog has more than 57,000 hits, and the numbers continue to climb.

“People send notes, which has been real kind, on CaringBridge or even on Facebook,” Jim says. “They’ll thank me for being a youth pastor. In the process, they’ll give us a specific about what we mean to them. Often as a pastor you don’t get that; you don’t find out until you’re gone, so that’s been really a blessing, to know specifically how we’ve impacted some people. That’s helped us get through.”

Feb. 25, 2010. It has been a full year since the cancer hit. Jim and Miriam begin reflecting on the past year.

What has changed? Where is your family now? What has happened in the last year?

The chemotherapy has officially ended, and the tumors have not grown. Jim walks two to three miles a day free from support. Their story is ongoing, and they talk about the here-and-now as well as the promising future.
Their mindset, Miriam explains, is still day-to-day. So much has changed in one year, and timing has played an important part to their story.

“I’m learning to trust Him in everything,” Jim shares. “The timing isn’t my timing, but God’s in control. I wouldn’t have chosen to get cancer at all, much less how long the healing process takes.”

Miriam talks openly about eternity, explaining that “this” is not why we are here.

“When you live in light of eternity, it changes your perspective,” Miriam says. “It’s not about us; it’s not about now … We’re actually in the land of the dying; we’re going to the land of the living. This is going to be nothing by comparison.”

The Mohlers do not know what the future looks like, in terms of jobs, finances and Jim’s physical status and abilities.

Jim shares willingly about his hopes for the future.

“I look forward to when the doctor says, ‘Well, we don’t see any tumors anymore.’ And I don’t know if that’ll ever happen because of the kind of tumors they are,” Jim says. “But part of that, is that a lot of people just assumed that I was almost on my deathbed. That’s been a
surprise. When people see me, they say, ‘You look good.’ They were expecting not that. I can’t help what they expect.”

Jim and Miriam believe every day is a gift from the Lord and live one step at a time. Miriam shares about the importance of not worrying about the day-to-day.

“I think one of the things about living with a life-threatening illness is that you learn every day is a gift,” Miriam says. “You only have today. You don’t have any guarantee about tomorrow, like it says in James ... You can make plans but you have to live in the now or you worry. You have to live in the now because that’s what you have.”

The Mohlers have embraced many of the gifts God has given them in recent days.

Miriam talks of a recent trip to Scottsdale that consisted of co-preaching and reconnecting with old friends. The two also took a trip to Alaska with good friends during the summer. They made the trip to the Mariners Safeco Field and checked another baseball stadium off their list.

Jim explains that he looks forward to being able to do many things again such as driving on the freeway.

“I’m looking forward to playing my trombone, continuing to work on my magic skills,” he says.

At the end of our time, Jim pulls out his magic trick case and happily shares a few of his perfected performances. He finds the card that I pulled from the deck in his hat as well as the card that was originally pulled from an invisible deck.

Jim has not lost his magic touch.

Miriam shares the example of how a dog knows his master’s voice and is excited to hear it, even if it doesn’t know what’s on the other side of the door.

“We should be excited to hear our Master’s voice whenever He opens the door to heaven,” Miriam says. “It’s a word picture of trust. God is good all the time and forever, and we can trust Him even when we don’t know what’s coming.”

“We’re actually in the land of the dying; we’re going to the land of the living. This is going to be nothing by comparison.”
didn’t get enough?

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100% COMPASSIONATE

Danika Dahlin brings water to the thirsty.

In the small African country of Malawi, where thousands die every year because of a lack of fresh water, this Biola student is working to make a difference.

Each summer, Danika travels to Malawi with Water Wells for Africa, a nonprofit organization started by her family. There, she has been instrumental in both building wells and providing the education and resources needed to maintain them.

Biola has given Danika the strong academic grounding that she needs to help effectively run an organization. And Biola’s commitment to a distinctively biblical worldview has equipped her with the tools and understanding to spread the gospel — and more effectively serve the world for Christ.

That means she’s not just quenching physical thirst. She’s providing living water to people in need.

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