

UWF police chief writes more than tickets

Jessica Leigh Jones
Features Editor

University Police Chief Ronald Seacrist is not your ordinary cop. Beyond law enforcement duties, he writes and performs his own songs.

Raised around musicians, it was natural for him to take up music.

"I've been a musician since I was 12 or 13," Seacrist said, "My dad and everyone in my family was musically inclined."

Seacrist has found music to be a cleansing process to help him work through his day. From being just a form of stress relief, music has gradually become a passion.

He's performed solo sets at the Purple Parrot, Character Lounge and Silver Moon.

"My aim is not to be a performer, but a songwriter," Seacrist said. "People tend to confuse songwriting with performing, but there's usually a big difference. While a few songwriters are also excellent performers, such as Alan Jackson, most do one or the other."

As a songwriter, Seacrist's objective is to get his songs picked up by a recording artist. He's found that a great way to get his name out there as a songwriter is to be involved in local festivals. He'll be performing and competing later this month in the Frank Brown Songwriter's Festival at the Flora-Bama Lounge.

"I've competed in many songwriter's festivals and met lots of other songwriters," he said. "This area is a songwriter's Mecca."

"I'm glad to work under a chief that has interests outside the job," University Police Sergeant David Faircloth said.

Seacrist said he draws song ideas from all over. He keeps a tape recorder with him for any time an idea strikes him.

He also gets some of his ideas from his wife. "She

often helps me write my songs," he said. "She can come up with words that blend perfectly with my music. She's a poet."

Seacrist has written a song for his wife, "Ordinary Love." Every time he performs the song, he introduces it this way, "This is a love song I wrote for my wife. Every woman wants a love song. It can help you get out of trouble or keep you from getting into trouble."

Many of his songs are about love. Some of his songs are serious in nature. He's written one about a man who follows the same routine of riding the subway to work every day in his urban city, but meanwhile, he dreams of being a cowboy on the wide-open range. Hence, the song is called "Subway Cowboy." Another song he's written is called "Saigon Guitar," about the time he spent in Vietnam.

But not all of Seacrist's songs are so serious. He's written one about the hassle of security checks in airports and one called "Geraldine and Burt," about a transvestite. This was the song he performed for the September Open Mic Night that he hosted in the University of West Florida Commons.

"The people enjoyed having him there and liked listening to his stories while he was on stage," said Andra Phelps, representative of UWF's Center Stage.

Seacrist was asked to write two songs for a screenplay that will be turned into a movie. He said he's unsure what the name of the movie will be, but the screenplay is titled "Sunset and 5th." One of the songs he has written for the movie has this title.

So will all this hidden talent be uncovered and take UWF's police chief on to pursue his dreams?

Not likely, Seacrist said.

"I've only been writing for about 10 years, and I was in law enforcement long before that," he said. "I'm planning to retire in six or seven years. Then I will spend time in Nashville to continue my songwriting."



Photo provided by UWF Student Activities

The next performance by RonSeacrist is at the Frank Brown International Songwriters Festival at 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 21 at the Flora-Bama Lounge.

One of Seacrist's songs, "When Elvis Left the Building" was chosen in the top 25 on WKRG's "Uncharted Zone." Here are the lyrics:

"When Elvis Left the Building"

I took my little baby
To a rock & roll show

She said she had to see him
I could stay or I could go
Now she's gone
Now she's gone
When Elvis left the building
He left me all alone

When he danced across the stage
All the ladies were a rage

The screamed at him and cried
They threw their panties on the stage
Now she's gone
Now she's gone
When Elvis left the building
He left me all alone

BRIDGE
She stood there beside me

Looked at him and looked at me
She said I'm sorry baby
He's the one that I need
I stood there and watched her
Walking through that stage door
And wondered what the hell
I bought that ticket for

So let me tell you fellas

You're so lucky that he's gone
Cause if your baby saw him
You'd be moving on alone
She'd be gone
She'd be gone
When Elvis left the building
He took their hearts along

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Buying books can cause a meltdown: Here's the breakdown

Megan Martinez
Staff Writer

Why are textbooks so expensive? This is a question that is in many student's minds because every semester they spend sizeable amounts of money on books that they are often unable to sell back at the end of the semester.

Many students feel that the bookstore is to blame for the high textbook prices and erratic book buy-back system.

The Voyager recently sat down with bookstore manager, Michael Leonard, to talk about the problems and questions that students have with their current bookstore experience.

Q. Why are textbooks so expensive, and who is responsible for the way they are priced?

A. The textbook prices are determined by the publisher, and we simply operate within the parameters that they give us.

Q. Who operates the bookstore?

A. We are operated by an off-

campus vendor. The vendor, Follett, is one of the largest textbooks wholesalers in the country, and we operate within the same parameters that the University did.

Q. Who benefits from high textbook prices?

A. The publisher and the authors are the ones who benefit from that process the most. They make 76.4 percent off every textbook dollar.

Q. How much money does the bookstore make, and what is that money being used for?

A. The norm in the textbook business is a 25 percent margin. Out of that 25 percent margin, I am paying the labor here at the school, the book shipping expenses (because those aren't added into the price of the book), and the bookstore also is paying the University money. Also, because we are an off-campus vendor, we pay for our utilities here. I am paying for our electricity and our water usage.

Q. Why is it important that faculty turn in their textbook requests on time?

A. One thing that could be done to make textbooks more affordable for students would be getting that adoption information in on time. This would give money back to the students and allow us to go out and get more used books instead of new books.

Q. How are the buyback prices determined?

A. A lot of places will return you 50 percent of the used book price. What we do here is give you 50 percent of the new book price. So if the book is \$100, you will get \$50 back for a buyback that has been readopted. Where the real savings will be noticed is if you bought the book used for \$75 and get \$50 back.

Q. Do you buy back books that aren't going to be used specifically at UWF and send them out to be distributed?

A. If it is adopted, then you are

going to get money back for it. Once the adoption information comes in, even if it is prior to the two weeks at the end of the semester, you are going to get 50 percent of the new book price. If that book isn't going to be used at this University, it would be a situation where they wouldn't get the \$50 for that book versus a book that has been readopted. They would get \$25 or \$30 for it. Sometimes it is a situation where the book is just so old, I can only give \$5 for it.

Q. Are textbooks cheaper at Lemox or other local book stores?

A. I sent folks that worked for me to Lemox and got book prices on the basic titles that they carry, which are our lower division classes. There were only two books lower in price, one by 25 cents and the other by a dollar. There really wasn't an appreciable difference. What I am doing this year, and what we did last year, is price match. If the student will bring us a print out

from a local vendor that shows their price is lower, we will match that price. By and large, what Lemox sells is equal to the used books we are selling. We also went online and compared the prices for our top 15 titles and there weren't but two titles that were cheaper than what we carry them for. The rest were either equal or more in price than ours. If you order a book online and you realize that is the wrong book, you are paying for shipping it to your home and back to the company again.

Q. Do you find that there are more students who are going online to purchase textbooks?

A. I can't say that people aren't going online and buying books, but I don't think that there has been an impact on us.

Q. Would you encourage students to buy used textbooks over new?

A. I would rather have the student buy the used textbook. It is kind of crazy, but it benefits us. Say we have a book adoption that is turned in and I need 150 math books for the

spring semester. I can't say that I am going to buy back all 150 textbooks from the students because not all of them are going to sell it back or they are going to sell it to a friend. If I did, I wouldn't be able to go out there and find used textbooks. I would rather buy the book from the students for two reasons:

1. If I can get it from the students then I am not paying for the shipping. 2. It is going to benefit the students on both sides because they are going to get a fair amount of money back, plus there will be used books available for students taking the math course in the fall.

Q. Have you found that there is any truth to the article in the New York Times that reported that textbook titles are cheaper overseas because the European economy can't bear the high prices that we have in the United States?

A. We had our office look at our top 10 sellers for the past semester and found there were only two titles off the list that were cheaper overseas.

CADIC finds way out for students with drinking problems

Toni Federico
Contributing Writer

Veronica is a small town freshman at a university. She doesn't drink or do drugs of any kind. Life at college is good for her. She enjoys her classes and the atmosphere of her campus, except for one thing: Her roommate Nicole likes to party.

Veronica wouldn't mind, but when Nicole drinks she is loud and argumentative like Veronica's father used to be when he drank, and it's been getting worse in the last few weeks. The other morning, there was vomit all over the bathroom floor, and she had to clean it up because Nicole was too hung over to do it herself. But since Veronica isn't the one with the problem, what can she do?

On Nicole's side of the story, she just can't understand what all the fuss is about. Every college student drinks. It's just a given. Sure, Nicole feels bad that Veronica had to clean up the mess, but it is not like she meant to do it. She drinks to relax, although now it seems that all she does is drink. But hey, what is college for if not for experimenting? And what better way to experiment than with drugs and alcohol? So what if she sleeps with someone when she's drunk? Who will it hurt? Besides, even if she wanted help, where could she go?

Ever feel like either or both of these two roommates? They both feel trapped by drugs and alcohol. It doesn't matter that Veronica doesn't actually drink. Nicole's habits affect

her anyway.

Both Veronica and Nicole may feel like they have no way out, but they are wrong. There is help in the form of the Campus Alcohol Drug Information Center. CADIC works with the organizations Boosting Alcohol Consciousness Concerning the Health of College Students and Greeks Advocating Mature Management of Alcohol to provide education to teach college students the facts about drugs and alcohol through seminars, rallies, information packets and other fun and informational ways, while providing low-risk activities as an alternative to drinking and drugs.

Most recently, CADIC and BACHUS and GAMMA presented a week filled with activities to further educate students. The week started on Oct. 19, with speaker Mike Destefano. It continued with special events all week, including a Wastin' Away Relay Day, which involved students with the use of beer goggles, games and an obstacle course. Finishing the week was the Monster Bash Halloween Party Oct. 24. Each day, there were games and contest.

Informational pamphlets are also available. These pamphlets deal with every thing the two roommates Veronica and Nicole were dealing with. The pamphlets help students if they find themselves drinking too much like Nicole. To further help her out, she can find information on drugs and its affect on people through first-hand accounts. If needed, quizzes are provided to see if Nicole, or students like her, really does have a problem with drug

and/or alcohol addiction. There is also a pamphlet to help her understand the risky combination of drugs, alcohol and sex.

But what about Veronica, how can she find help? Since she doesn't have the drinking problem, no one cares right? Wrong. CADIC has produced pamphlets for her too. In them, she will find she is not alone. The pamphlets give accounts of what students whose roommates

drank too much were up against, and how to find a way out. Veronica can also get help concerning her fears and thoughts about her father's drinking. Unknown to most drinkers is the fact that the behavior of an alcohol abuser affects at least five people in their lives. There is even a pamphlet to help students who do not drink and may or may not be thinking about trying it.

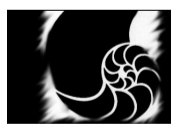
These pamphlets can also help

any student sort out the myths from the facts. Ginny-Beth Joiner, graduate coordinator for CADIC, said that one of the biggest myths is that there is constant drinking among college students. She said it seems to be more social drinking rather than binge drinking at the UWF.

Another commonly perceived myth is that all college students drink. In fact, one out of every five college students don't drink. While

that may seem like staggering odds, remember the fact that 300,000 of today's college students will eventually die of alcohol-related causes and 159,000 first-year students will drop out of school next year for alcohol or drug-related reasons.

For more information, contact CADIC located in Building 21, Room 132, at 850-474-2417, 850-474-2384, or online at www.uwf.edu/cadic.



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