Brian Degrandmont ’17

Side-stepping the competition

BIG APPLE
Danny Langsdorf ’96
moves up to NY Giants

MARATHON WOMAN
Marci Klimek Gage ’10
reaching her racing prime

COVERING MAXWELL
Football field receives fresh
layer of artificial grass

Fall 2014
WHERE ARE THEY NOW?
Danny Langsdorf ’96

Refining the skills of Super Bowl-winning QB Eli Manning (10) is Danny Langsdorf’s foremost challenge in New York.

Kelly Bird
BIRD’S EYE VIEW

I remember a chance meeting with Danny Langsdorf at the Portland Airport about 15 years ago as we shared a flight to Vancouver, B.C. He was on his way to Edmonton, where he was working with the Canadian Football League’s aptly named Eskimos, and I was headed to Calgary for a hometown visit. It wasn’t long after that encounter that I had the chance to see Danny coach in a professional game between the two rival CFL cities.

As we all realize, coaching is a demanding profession, especially at the major-college and professional levels, where winning supersedes just about everything else. Coaches and their families can’t grow too comfortable in any one spot, unless their team is winning championships each season, or at the very minimum, keeping their fan bases happy.

I’ve marveled at Danny’s ambition and accomplishments, starting as a player/coach in Deggendorf, Germany, during the spring of 1996. In addition to Europe and Canada, Danny’s career has taken him and wife Michele to all four corners of the U.S.

As a Linfield Wildcat, Danny was a classy quarterback who combined a great passing arm with complete command of the offense. Like a lot of quarterbacks, Danny experienced his share of highs and lows. Perhaps the greatest day of his Linfield career came in 1994 when he led the ‘Cats to a 27-10 upset of a talented Central Washington club led by future NFL quarterback Jon Kitna. Another memorable highlight came later that season when Danny piled up a then-school-record 439 passing yards in a 55-42 thriller over Southern Oregon at Maxwell Field. The quarterback that day for SOU? Why, it was current University of Oregon Ducks coach Mark Helfrich.

The darkest day of Danny’s career came in Week 5 of the 1995 season. A vicious hit by a blitzing Willamette safety knocked him out of the game and effectively ended his playing career.

Yet through all the ups and downs, he has remained the same friendly guy who left McMinnville nearly two decades ago. It should come as no surprise that I’m now a New York Giants fan.

You made several transitions between the NCAA, NFL and the Canadian Football League. How did you adjust your coaching strategy to each level?
I really try to be the same person/coach wherever I’ve been. (Oregon State coach Mike) Riley has a good philosophy that players want to be taught and treated with respect. I’ve tried to focus on giving players, regardless of level, some tangible things that can help them improve their game and get to know them as a person outside of football.

During your time in Corvallis, you helped mold several outstanding quarterbacks. Now that you’ve landed with the Giants, what are you hoping to achieve with Eli Manning?
Eli has been a true professional. He has played at a high level for a long time in the NFL. I’m trying to help him grow and learn in a new system and fine tune some things technique-wise that hopefully will make him an even better player.
What do you remember most about Linfield?
Growing up around Linfield football was extremely influential for me as a football coach. I’ve been very fortunate to learn from some excellent teachers as well as people. I spent a lot of my childhood at practice and game day meetings listening to Coach (Ad) Rutschman, Coach (Jay) Locey, Coach (Joseph) Smith and my dad.

What was it like playing football for your dad at Linfield?
You should talk to my mom about that. Playing for my dad was a unique experience. I think my dad was determined to do what was best for the team, while I was trying hard, probably at times too hard, to fit in to a close-knit team. In the end, it was a special experience that I found to be pretty rare. I don’t think he would have been able to see many college games of mine if I hadn’t played for him.

What did you enjoy most about your time at Linfield?
Blasting a home run off my wife’s pitching at the softball field.

How did the relationships you formed at Linfield affect your future? Do you stay in contact with former teammates?
I’m from a pretty special football fraternity that has played and coached consistently good football for 58 straight seasons. I’m proud to have been part of it and hope the traditions that we carried on will also carry over to future teams.

How did your family respond to the move to New York?
That was a tough one. The Northwest is about as good as it gets for raising a family, so we had some anxiety about moving. Michele was definitely more nervous about moving to the Big Apple but it has been a great adventure. We’ve been in the city with the kids on the train a few times and been able to see some of the sights. I think we’re slowly getting used to traffic and a much faster pace.

Coaching Destinations
New York Giants (NFL) Current
Oregon State University 2005-13
New Orleans Saints (NFL) 2002-04
Edmonton Eskimos (CFL) 1999-2001
Oregon State University 1997-98
Cal Lutheran Kingsmen 1996
Deggendorf (Germany) Blackhawks 1996
One of these seasons, Linfield is bound to break through the glass ceiling and return to the NCAA Division III championship game. Could 2014 be the year?

It’s been a decade since the Wildcats last slogged all the way through the five-week grind of the NCAA postseason, winning the program’s fourth national title over Mary Hardin-Baylor. That’s not to say Linfield hasn’t been close in recent seasons, because it has. Suffering just a single defeat in four of the last five seasons -- all in the playoffs -- few teams in the country are as consistently capable as Linfield of advancing to at least the quarterfinal or semifinal rounds.

This fall is no exception. Reaching the championship game would be a first for ninth-year coach Joseph Smith, who welcomes back a dozen starters among his 53 lettermen. There are questions to answer at key positions, such as quarterback, linebacker and kicker, but Smith speaks confidently that Linfield will simply plug-and-play with its rising talent.

“We have a great deal of unrealized potential,” said Smith. “If we can maximize the potential we have, I’ll feel very good about the season.”

The coaching staff faces the task of retooling an offense that averaged an eye-opening 48.8 points per game last season. The ‘Cats are unquestionably deep at receiver and on the offensive line, where they return five starters.

Needing to break in a new quarterback is a challenge for any coach, yet Smith has three quality candidates to choose from in senior Matt Yarbrough, junior Tom Knecht, and sophomore Sam Riddle. All three signal callers are capable of fully piloting the offense effectively.

A squadron of quality receivers line the roster, led by all-stars Charlie Poppen and Brian Balsiger. At running back, the Wildcats feature a power back in Spencer Payne and speed and finesse in Tavon Willis.

The offensive line is captained by All-American Steven Schultz and features incumbent starters Jeremy Patrick at center and guards Eric Pitassi and Kekuapono Kalua. 2012 all-star Jacob Hanke is also back.

Defensively, Smith considers his defensive line “one of the very best in the country,” a unit that features all-stars Jeremy Girod, Marq Randall, Brynnan Hyland and Alex Hoff. Randall and Hyland sat out all of 2013 with injuries.

The linebacking corps includes converted tight end Westly Meng, senior Mike Nardoni, and juniors Eli Biondine and Derick Turner. Senior Jordan Giza is set for an all-star season in the secondary.

Ranked No. 4 in the preseason Top 25 poll, Linfield appears to have all the pieces needed to capture an unprecedented sixth consecutive NWC championship and advance deep into the NCAA playoffs.

“If we can get close to playing to our full potential and stay healthy, I like our chances,” said Smith. “We would like nothing more than to experience a deep playoff run and measure ourselves against the best.”

WOMEN’S GOLF

Linfield has much to look forward to this season as third-year head coach Brynn Hurdus expects her team to compete at a higher level. The Wildcats added both depth and experience to their roster and their veterans enter the year looking vastly improved from the spring.

Maggie Harlow is the team’s top returner and comes off a career-best season in which she averaged 88.8 strokes per round and earned a pair of top-five finishes. Laura Waller and Erin Grofcheck progressed leaps and bounds from the start to end of their first seasons and put in a good amount of work over the summer, while Chelan Guischer is making strides in her second season of golf.

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MEN’S GOLF

With as much experience as Greg Copeland has returning, the ‘14-15 season is a year that could see the Wildcats vault back to the top of the NWC.

“I believe we have the potential (to win the conference),” he said. “We won’t be able to have just 1-2 of our players score well. To reach our goals, we have to have all five guys play well.”

Led by seniors Taylor Klopff, Kevin Kawasaki, Logan Munson and Taylor Pinke, the ‘Cats have four bankable performers.

“The seniors are playing with great confidence. Their leadership and experience is rubbing off on the younger players and is going to help carry the day.”

VOLLEYBALL

Three productive seniors head a solid overall cast of returnees for the Wildcats, who are expected to elevate the program back toward the upper half of the NWC in 2014.

Left-handed senior Kailana Ritte-Camara is on pace to become the first player in Linfield history to end her career with 1,000 kills and 1,000 digs. Middle blocker Victoria Thompson is another go-to player along with transfer Caiti Barrie. Right-side hitter Molly McTaggart also factors into the offensive puzzle. Sophomore Casie Giza and talented newcomer Jamie Talbo are the setters.

Defensively, senior libero Courtney Wamanaker captains the back row.
WOMEN'S SOCCER

Armed with an upperclassmen-heavy roster that includes 17 juniors and seniors and returning its five leading point scorers from a season ago, Linfield enjoys an easy transition for its first-year head coach Cole McCool. All signs point to the Wildcats again being a championship contender in the NWC.

McCool takes over the program after serving four seasons in an assistant role, and due to his familiarity with the program believes the team picks up right where it left off.

One aspect is different, however.

“They are hungry, hungry to do more than they’ve done,” McCool said of this year’s squad. “They’re pretty unsatisfied. We’re using that motivation to be really fit, to be ready for the season and to not be satisfied or have average days of training.”

The ‘Cats return all-time leading scorer and all-American Emily Fellows, all-West Region pick Ellie Schmidt and all-conference performers Marisa Specht and Emma Vukic in the front field.

Tegan Grunwald and Dani Nurmi should also factor into the offense while 2013 all-conference honorable mention defender Lauren Pyrch moves into a greater attacking role.

After a year away from the program, Madisen Stewart returns with hopes of balancing nursing school with soccer. Her experience should prove invaluable in the midfield.

About the only area of concern is in goal, as the Wildcats lost all three rostered keepers from last year’s squad to graduation and Linfield’s nursing campus. Linfield’s only experienced goalie is McKena King, who returns to the program after taking a year off, but McCool is working on developing one or more backups to both challenge for minutes and support Linfield’s sole netminder.

Senior Lindzee Baker, juniors Jalyn Halstead and Regan Cox, and sophomores Kendra McShenidan and Erin Moller comprise a veteran defensive unit.

“Our team spirit, morale and chemistry are really good this year,” McCool said. “We’ve got a bunch of upperclassmen that have been through a lot together and they all seem to be willing to do whatever they need to do to get past what we’ve done before.”

MEN'S SOCCER

Returning three of its top five goal scorers from a season ago while increasing depth at every position, Linfield aims to continue its upward progression through the NWC.

The Wildcats remain a young club, featuring a roster 2/3 comprised of underclassmen, many of which are expected to assume key starting roles. But some talented veterans are on hand to provide leadership, and one of Linfield’s greatest overall strengths lies in its versatility.

Sophomore Brian DeGrandmont remains a dangerous scoring threat along with upperclassmen Jake Baker and Ivan Colin. Freshman Moi Diaz and junior-college transfer Alexander Gosselin are two of the most promising new offensive weapons.

An influx of talented and confident Wildcats should aid Chris Musser and Wyatt Lay in making the defense more formidable. Aaron Barber-Axthelm provides strength on the back line. Eli Peckham, Isaac Archer and transfer Brandon Brooks should also log important minutes.

Jorge Rodriguez and Grant Loriaux return in goal.

CROSS COUNTRY

Linfield faces an uphill battle on the women’s side in particular after losing six of its top seven runners from last year’s regional meet.

The Wildcat men, meanwhile, enjoy a bit more experience, led by Michael O’Neil and Alex Mangan, the Wildcats’ top finishers at both the NWC and West Region Championships a year ago.

O’Neil, a sophomore, remains a talented and confident runner capable of handling the frontrunner role. Similarly, Mangan is a proven competitor who consistently improves over the course of the year.

“They took it to another level and you can already tell that they’re a different group,” coach Travis Olson said. “They’re ready to take on the challenge of making a statement in the conference.”

Brooke Niemann is the most decorated women’s returner as an all-conference and all-region performer two seasons ago. Audrey Lichten is coming off a great track season as a finalist in two mid-distance events. But the two seniors must solve some injury problems if Linfield is to challenge for one of the top spots in the NWC. Fellow senior Cali Dowdy is expected to push for the frontrunning position.
This summer, the social media world witnessed another example of the reach and power of viral campaigning via the “ALS Ice Bucket Challenge.” In this, friends posted videos on Facebook challenging each other to donate to the ALS Association, which aims to create a world without Lou Gehrig’s disease, and/or dump a bucket of ice-cold water on their heads.

The ALS Ice Bucket Challenge demonstrates a relatively new but increasingly popular fundraising practice known as “crowdfunding,” the process of raising money from a large number of people over the internet. Some other examples you may have heard of include Kickstarter, which focuses on creative projects such as film and theater, DonorsChoose, utilized primarily by teachers, and GoFundMe, most often used to raise money for families in need.

These fundraising campaigns appear easy to carry out, require little to no administrative cost and in some cases prove to be quite fruitful. The ALS Association reported raising $4 million over a two-week stretch this summer, nearly four times the amount the organization raised during the same time period in 2013.

At Linfield, we are always thinking about new opportunities to raise money, and perhaps these “crowdfunding” campaigns could work well for future capital projects. But our most important source of fundraising remains annual gifts directed toward the TopCat Club. As our programs continue to achieve success at the conference, regional and national levels, our ability to support them has become increasingly challenging. Expenses are not going down, and in some areas, such as travel, costs have skyrocketed in recent years.

We are so thankful to our supporters for stepping up this summer to raise funds to replace the turf at Maxwell Field. But we can’t forget to support our student-athletes throughout the entire year, in needs ranging from medical supplies to playoff trips.

There are many important causes out there, but everyone who receives this quarterly newsletter and other forms of communication from our department has a connection with Linfield Athletics. For current TopCat members, why not challenge your fellow alumni and/or friends to increase their contributions? If you haven’t yet joined the TopCat Club, do so and challenge your friends to do the same!

Who among us will help us continue the tradition of excellence? It could be you.
Why do we contribute every year to the TopCat Club?

“We feel a great deal of pride in helping keep Linfield’s great tradition moving forward. Not only do we take great pride in The Streak in football, but we admire the ideals Linfield stands for and the kind of quality people the college is attracting.

When we were students in the 1960s, pride in athletics permeated the whole school and was a positive benefit for students, for faculty and staff, and for the outside image of the college.

Every year when we receive our annual TopCat Club reminder in the mail, we don’t think twice about making a gift. We feel good remembering the fun things we were involved in at Linfield. We want to see that spirit perpetuated for years to come.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

No matter where you choose to spend your money, you want to know that the entity you’re investing in sits on solid footing, has a good track record and that it’s going to continue on an upward trajectory. Linfield is just that and always has been.

Even though we are not able to attend as many games as some of our friends, we still care deeply about the success of the athletic programs. Giving annually to the TopCat Club is one way we feel we can make a positive difference.

STAYING ACTIVELY INVOLVED

Linfield continues to be a focal point of our lives. Being contributing members of the TopCat Club is our way of remaining actively involved. Please join us in supporting the TopCat Club and continue the tradition of excellence.”

Count me in! I want to support the Linfield Wildcats, too!

| Name |
| Address |
| City, State, Zip |
| Phone |
| Email |
| Credit Card |
| Visa | MC | Expiration | Security Code |

National Champion: $5,000 and up
Conference Champion: $1,000 to $4,999
Varsity Club: $500 to $999
Basic Booster: $100 - $499
Lettermen’s Club (monthly gift via credit card)
$10/mo. = $120/year or $25/mo. = $300/year

I wish to give the following amount: $

Please direct my gift to the following program:

My total gift is: $

Support the ’Cats with an online gift at linfield.edu/gift
In August, the Athletics department held its annual retreat. This all-day event allows us to rejuvenate, get focused and prepare for the new school year. It’s essential that all coaches and staff function independently yet collaboratively, and that we constantly reexamine and reframe the goals and objectives of the athletics program.

As I listened to each head coach and staff member talk about their respective programs, I grew encouraged by Linfield’s potential to have a great overall year. Some programs should make significant improvements, while others that have typically been strong believe they are in position to remain near the top of the conference and possibly qualify for the NCAA playoffs.

I am proud of our coaches and staff. They are knowledgeable, competitive and have great work ethics. The enthusiasm, drive and determination our teams display are a direct reflection of the leaders of each program.

I am also proud of our administrative team. Though Linfield employs the smallest athletics staff in the NWC, we continue to run and administer quality programs.

As an alumnus or supporter of the Wildcats, you can celebrate not only our athletic accomplishments, but also what Linfield Athletics stands for. We take great pride in the academic reputation of the institution, our alumni support, and the character demonstrated by our student-athletes on and off the competition venue.

In return, we recognize and acknowledge that what this institution achieves in all areas would not be possible without the great interest and support of our alumni, friends and the McMinnville community. It is, and always has been, a collaborative effort to keep this a very special place. For that, I am so humbly grateful.

I hope you have the opportunity to come back to campus and enjoy the tremendous feeling of pride we have in Linfield. This place has grown to be a part of all of us, including you. Come visit and enjoy it again!

P.S.: Each time I sit down to write a Carney’s Corner, I ask Cathy, my beautiful wife of 43 years, to read it. This time, she contributed three words to describe our athletic programs: “Passion, Intensity and Commitment.” Even though we don’t always agree, I believe her analysis is quite accurate.

Makeover complete, fund drive continues

Getting tackled on the Maxwell Field turf now will be considerably softer for Linfield student-athletes, who returned to campus in late August to the sight of a freshly replaced playing surface.

The old surface had reached its maximum 10-year lifespan. After a decade of cushioning shock for not only football players but for the many other users of the facility, it was time for a replacement.

First came removal of the old sand-and-rubber infill along with 5-yard wide strips of artificial grass. Each roll weighed over a ton and had to be hoisted off the field with a forklift.

The next step involved re-leveling the bedrock of the field. It was discovered by surveyors during the replacement process that one end of the field was actually several inches higher in elevation than the other. Additional gravel had to be brought in, spread and compacted. New rolls of turf were then laid out one by one and stitched together. Once the surface was fully covered, yard lines, hash marks and lettering were embedded.

Countless layers of sand and recycled rubber pellets were then spread and blended into the surface, giving the simulated grass a realistic feel.

Numerous donors contributed to the project, though fundraising efforts fell short of the intended goal. To contribute online, go to linfield.edu/gift. Be certain to designate your gift to “Maxwell Field Turf.”
Wildcat Open deemed a success

Linfield’s second annual visit to The Reserve Vineyards and Golf Club in Aloha in July made for a fun and successful 2014 Wildcat Open. An unseasonably hot week cooled off just enough on Friday to make for a beautiful day of golf on two of the finest courses in the Portland area, along with plenty of opportunities to socialize with fellow alumni and friends pre- and post-round during registration, lunch and dinner.

The postevent raffle and auction were both a big success. In addition to several golf packages and a hotly contested baseball experience package involving the Seattle Mariners and New York Yankees, new and exciting live auction prizes included a weeklong stay in a Seaside condo, and a guided fishing trip and a vacation package to Disneyland.

Linfield Athletics extends a big “Thank You” to our generous donors who helped make the raffle and live auction a successful fundraiser.

We also owe a tremendous amount of gratitude to our tournament sponsors, including those who partnered at the Silver level: AT&T, Farnham Electric and Pacific Office Automation. Thanks are also due to our staff members and volunteers, whose hard work and dedication ensure a smooth and organized event every year.

We are happy to announce we have secured a date in August for the 2015 Wildcat Open. Mark your calendars and plan to join us Thursday, August 6 at The Reserve for another day of golf, friendship and opportunities to support Linfield Athletics!

“Last summer’s Wildcat Open was a great opportunity to reconnect with old friends and coaches. I loved the chance to get caught up on Wildcat Athletics and hear about the bright future ahead. Go Cats!”

Jtyler Marquart ’98

2014 WILDCAT OPEN RESULTS
At The Reserve Vineyards and Golf Club, Aloha
LONG DRIVE – South Hole 18: Jeff Menold (Men), Gary Logsdon Sr. (Senior). North Hole 8: Scott Brosius (Men), Robin Potera-Haskins (Women), Gary Owens (Senior).

Visit the Wildcat Open Photo Gallery bit.ly/1z6ehdj

2015 Wildcat Open: August 6 at The Reserve
Kat Enders to lead lacrosse program

Kat Enders will lead the Linfield women’s lacrosse program in 2015. Enders becomes the fifth coach to head the program. The college launched women’s lacrosse as a varsity sport in 1997.

A native Oregonian, Enders spent the last two years as an assistant lacrosse coach at the University of Findlay (Ohio).

Enders was a four-year lacrosse letterwinner and two-year captain at Ohio Wesleyan University, graduating in 2012. Named one of Ohio Wesleyan’s Top-10 scholar-athletes, she earned a bachelor of science degree in psychology. During her time at OWU, she served as president of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and was the North Coast Athletic Conference SAAC representative.

“I’m really passionate about the Division III model of athletics,” Enders said. “I’m looking forward to helping Linfield maintain the proper balance between academics and athletics while also being able to help grow the sport of lacrosse in the Northwest.”

Enders grew up in Lake Oswego, Ore. She graduated from Portland’s St. Mary’s Academy, competing for four years in lacrosse. She was a member of consecutive Oregon Girls Lacrosse Association state title clubs in 2007 and 2008.

“All the things Kat brings to the table we believe are going to enhance the program,” said Linfield director of athletics Scott Carnahan.

“In Compliance

Lisa Macy-Baker

Division III athletic programs are required to assure that student-athletes and athletic departments are treated similarly to the general student body and to the institution’s academic departments. Article 16 of the Division III Manual states specifically what benefits an enrolled student-athlete can and cannot receive.

According to Bylaw 16.02.1, an award is an item given in recognition of athletics participation or performance. Examples include varsity letters, all-conference or All-America, team MVP and Linfield Athlete of the Year. The legislation is so extensive that maximum value limits are set on all awards. Should coaches wish to present a plaque to the team’s most valuable player, the cost cannot exceed $175.

Bylaw 16.02.3 states that an extra benefit is any special arrangement by an institutional employee or a representative of an institution’s athletic interests to provide a student-athlete (or their relatives or friends) any benefit not expressly authorized by NCAA legislation unless that benefit is one offered to the institution’s general student body.

Examples of permissible benefits to student-athletes include: Up to four complimentary tickets to contests in their sport, six tickets to an NCAA Championship event in their sport, or single admission to a home contest in another sport. Student-athletes or the individuals designated to receive complimentary tickets, are prohibited from selling them.

Additional examples of permissible benefits include meals and lodging in conjunction with home and away contests, or reasonable entertainment in conjunction with practice or competition. Student-athletes may retain athletics apparel items (not equipment) at the end of the individual’s collegiate participation. Used equipment may be purchased on the same cost as any other individual. Student-athletes may retain apparel items that are not reusable but may not sell or trade them.

To remain In Compliance, if a Linfield student-athlete is eligible to receive a benefit, so then too should a regular student.

Linfield again among the “Best of NACMA”

The National Association of Collegiate Athletic Marketing Administrators presented Linfield with a Silver Award for creative design work in the realm of digital video board presentations. It marks the fifth time in six years that a Linfield football video compilation has been singled out for excellence by NACMA.

NACMA announced Linfield as the contest runner-up during its annual “Best of NACMA” awards presentation June 10 at the annual gathering of sports marketing professionals in Orlando, Fla. A total of 117 awards were announced across 13 different categories, drawing from a list of over 1,100 entries.

“Winning our fifth ‘Best of NACMA’ award is truly a great thrill,” said Ryan Carlson ’99, producer, director and cameraman of the award-winning piece.

National Athletic Trainers’ Association presents Greg Hill with Service Award

Linfield certified athletic trainer Greg Hill was honored in June with an Athletic Trainer Service Award by the National Athletic Trainers’ Association. A 1997 graduate, Hill is in his 10th year as an assistant professor at Linfield and is the clinical education coordinator of the college’s Athletic Training Education Program.

“This national recognition is a very prestigious award for Greg,” said Linfield athletic training program director Dr. Laura Kenow. “He’s put a lot of time, energy and effort into improving the status of athletic training in the state of Oregon and that in turn elevates the status of athletic training across the country. He should be commended for his efforts. It’s great to see Greg receive some of the rewards he deserves.”

NATA’s Athletic Trainer Service Award honors members for their contributions to the athletic training profession at the local and state levels. Recipients are involved in professional associations, community organizations, grassroots public relations efforts and service as a volunteer athletic trainer. Candidates must have held the certified athletic trainer credential and have been a NATA member for at least 15 years.

The service award was presented to Hill at the NATA’s 65th Clinical Symposia & AT Expo in Indianapolis on June 26.
There is no finish line for runner Marci Klimek Gage ’10

Marci Klimek Gage earned nationwide recognition in June by finishing a 26.2-mile run in a fast 2 hours, 35.38 minutes.

In August, she crossed the finish line fifth among 2,715 women at Grandma’s Marathon in Duluth, Minn. The 2010 Linfield graduate turned in a negative split — running the second half faster than the first — and a pace averaging less than six minutes per mile. Eclipsing the qualifying A-standard time of 2 hours, 37 minutes, her impressive performance is a foot in the door for the Olympic Marathon Trials in February 2016.

It’s a goal she’s been working toward since running the Portland Marathon in 2011, when she missed the qualifying mark by 30 seconds.

But Klimek Gage feels she’s developed enough in the meantime to be both realistic and confident.

“The quality and length of workouts in each cycle leading up to the next competition is higher quality and longer,” she says of her training. “I’m logging between 90 and 100 miles a week now, compared to about 75 back then.

“Not only that, but it takes a lot of mental training, too, to be able to handle being uncomfortable for such a long time.”

“Marci is obstinate and that’s why she’s good,” says Dr. Garry Killgore, retired Linfield track and cross country coach. “In classic runner mentality, Marci would run through a brick wall if she thought it would make her better.”

The two have been working together for eight years now, ever since then-Klimek joined Killgore’s Linfield cross country squad in 2006, following a long distance record-setting career at Phoenix High School in southern Oregon.

“My coach, Pete Voskes, was a Linfield alum and ran for Garry. He had a great experience and was always talking it up,” she laughs. “I knew I wanted to run for him, too.”

She’s glad she did. Marci and her husband, Scott Gage, met at Linfield and ran together on the cross country and track teams for two years. In 2010, Killgore stepped away from coaching to concentrate on his faculty role as the chairperson of Linfield’s Health & Human Performance department. When Klimek approached him about continuing to train beyond college, he encouraged her to pursue the marathon — at the national level.

“She has a good, efficient gait,” Killgore says. “And she’s really tough.”

He has been a valuable resource to her for more than eight years now.

“Garry understands running as an athlete, as a coach, and as a scientist. Getting all of that experience has kept him very busy, and I really appreciate the time and effort that he committedly gives me, just because he loves it.”

With so many post-collegiate competitive runners immersed in intensely running-only environments that turn their whole lives into focused training regimens, Klimek Gage feels fortunate to live the way she does. Not many runners chasing the Olympic qualification have an outside job, a good long-term relationship with their coach, or even a spouse — who, in this case, contributes his own observation and encouragement alongside Killgore’s near-constant evaluation.

The three Wildcats are working now to prepare Klimek Gage for the New York City Marathon on November 2. She encourages her fellow runners to keep pounding out the miles even if they’re not pursuing a competitive career after college the way she is.

“Get out and do it!” she says emphatically about continuing to set training goals beyond college. “It’s been sad to find more and more past teammates or even competitors who aren’t running any longer, but it’s such a great way to connect and reconnect with people. Find a way that the sport can still be part of your life, however it might work for you.”

Notable alumni pass away

Former baseball pitcher David Safford ’89 passed away Aug. 12 after a 4½-year battle with cancer. He was 47. A two-year baseball letterwinner, Safford graduated from Linfield in 1989 with a degree in economics and business administration.

At Linfield, he was NAIA District 2 Player of the Year, a NAIA Academic All-American, and received the Don Kirsch Memorial Award from the Oregon Sports Hall of Fame, honoring the college baseball player from Oregon who best exemplified the standard of excellence set by Kirsch, the former University of Oregon baseball coach. Professionally, Safford spent the last nine years as director of product management at Pay Plus Solutions/Insight e-Tools.

Gil Hargreaves ’71 passed away July 10 in Salem at age 64.

In recognition of his devotion to Linfield alumni, Hargreaves was honored by the college with the 2012 Alumni Service Award.

After earning a bachelor’s degree in economics and business administration, Hargreaves went to work for the Multnomah County Health Department and the State of Oregon’s Department of Environmental Quality.

He is survived by his wife, Vickie, and sons Edward and Raymond.

Hall of Fame Banquet tickets on sale

Tickets for the 17th annual AT&T Linfield Athletics Hall of Fame banquet are on sale. The Class of 2014, which includes seven athletes and an alumni volunteer, is Saturday, Nov. 15, inside Ted Wilson Gym. Order tickets online at linfieldsports.universitytickets.com.

The Hall of Fame class of 2014 is comprised of:

• Steve Beguin ’63, football;
• Bruce Lundquist ’78, track and field;
• Tyler Matthews ’04, football;
• Chris McDonald ’01, men’s soccer;
• Jeff Owens ’79, football;
• Dennis Schweitzer ’67, football and baseball;
• Doug Walker ’78, football, and,
• Tom McFadden ’80, meritorious service.

The event begins with an informal social hour at 5 p.m. Dinner starts at 6 o’clock and the program gets underway at 7.
Hall of Fame coach and athletic director Paul Durham ’36 will be immortalized during Homecoming weekend when a monument in his likeness is unveiled in the courtyard between the Health and Human Performance building and the Aquatics Center.

The eight-foot-tall monument will be dedicated at 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 18 prior to that afternoon’s football game.

Noted northwest sculptor Heather Soderberg-Greene (featured in the September edition of AAA’s Via magazine) has been commissioned to create a lifelike depiction of Durham dressed in football coaching attire, complete with rolled-up pant cuffs and clipboard in hand.

Nearly 150 gifts were gathered in support of the project, which was spearheaded by Pete Dengenis ’61.

The monument will rest on a round pedestal surrounded by a circular stamped concrete walkway, permanent benches and recessed lighting for nighttime viewing.

On Friday, Oct. 17, a special social gathering dubbed “Standing Tall With Paul” is set for 5 p.m. at the McMinnville Elks Lodge at 4th and Evans streets.

Durham monument unveiling Oct. 18

Linfield alumni and football fans of all ages are invited to an upcoming pre-game barbecue.

Enjoy delicious food and beverages with fellow Wildcat alumni, parents and fans in Puyallup, Wash., before Linfield’s annual clash with Pacific Lutheran at Sparks Stadium.

The game-day menu includes burgers, hotdogs and all the fixings, as well as beverages. The Linfield Bookstore will be on-site with the latest Wildcat and Linfield gear for purchase.

The event begins at 11 a.m. across the street from Sparks Stadium. Cost for lunch is $7. Kickoff is at 1 p.m.

Radio, videocasts ready for 2014-15

Linfield’s popular videocasts of home football games continue this fall. Fans can watch all four home games for a cost of $12 per game or a discounted rate of $40 for the entire season. An audio-only stream is available at no charge. Bill Johnson and Dave Hansen return to call the play-by-play action of all games, home and away.

Fans in the Portland area can again listen to football games live on the radio on KPDQ-AM 800. Games are also carried live in Yamhill County on KLYC-AM 1260.

Videocasts are also planned for home volleyball, soccer, basketball, baseball and softball events. Those events feature student announcers.

More information: linfield.edu/sports/sports-broadcasting.html

Football BBQ slated Oct. 4