



## How to make sure your W2 finds you

The payroll office will be mailing out 2010 W2s before the end of the month.

Is your address correct in our system? Need to make a change? Here's how:

1. Log in to [KnightVision](#)
2. Click on the "Resources" tab at the top of the screen
3. Scroll down to the bottom of the screen and click on "address change form"
4. Log in again
5. Select the address you wish to update and click "submit"
6. Make your edits to this screen and click "submit" when complete

This update will automatically be sent to human resources and will be updated within 48 hours.

## this issue

- From our director **P.1**
- Gift planning at Calvin **P.2**
- Off-campus interims **P.3**
- Upcoming events **P.4**

## Happy new year: from the desk of our director

Happy New Year! Whether you've been back on campus since the beginning of the month or are just getting here, I want to welcome everyone back to Calvin. This is a new year, a blank page, a fresh start. Whichever metaphor you use, I hope that the upcoming year will both excite and invigorate you.

In this issue, we've chosen to highlight the gift planning branch of the development office. This is an important aspect of what we do at Calvin and we are grateful for the continued hard work from everyone in our advancement/development division. Do you wonder what the [William Spoelhof Society](#) really is? Did you attend the [Barnabas Foundation](#) seminar on estate planning and want to know more? That information and more can be found on page two. Check out the in-depth look at what gift planning really is and meet Sally Vander Ploeg, the director of gift planning. Sally also provides some great general information about writing your will and how to plan for your future.

As we wrap up the month of January, hundreds of students and their instructors will be returning to campus from an off-campus interim. These amazing opportunities part of what makes Calvin so unique and why students return year after year raving about their experiences. Check out page three for a Q&A with Dave Ellens from off-campus programs. Find out a little more about what all of those

students are *doing* for the three weeks they're not on campus and why off-campus interims are so vital to the liberal arts education Calvin offers. Pray for safe travels for all of the students, staff and faculty who will be returning within the next few days.

I hope you all have had opportunities to participate in the January Series this month! This year has been another great example of Calvin's commitment to lifelong learning and ability to bring fascinating and compelling speakers to campus. Interested in what goes on behind the scenes of the January Series? Last year *The Resource* dedicated our entire January newsletter to the January Series and its director, Kristi Potter. The January 2010 issue is still available in our [archives](#). This year's Series runs through January 25—make sure to check out the remaining sessions. A full schedule is available on the January Series [website](#).

As we blaze forward into 2011 and the spring semester, I hope you find time to appreciate the good things that this new year will bring. As always, if you have questions, an idea for an article or are interested in writing a book review, please contact us. I'm looking forward to a great year!

Todd Hubers  
director of human resources

## It's My Job: A chat with Sally Vander Ploeg

This month we talked to the person behind gift planning at the college. Meet Sally Vander Ploeg, director of gift planning and major gifts.



R: How long have you been at Calvin?

S: It will be 12 years in July!

R: What do you do?

S: I focus on gift planning and deferred gifts to the college. This can include gifts such as charitable trusts, life insurance payouts, non-cash gifts such as property or art and mutual funds. Often the major gift officers from development will talk to potential donors first and contact me if the donor is interested in giving. At that point, I work with them to find the best way to make that happen, both from a personal and a tax perspective.

R: What is your favorite part about your job?

S: I love meeting with these donors who have a heart for Christian education.

R: What makes you successful in your job?

S: My legal and tax background is very helpful (I went to law school and am a CPA). I also love talking to people, and this job involves a lot of it.

R: What is one thing we might not know about you?

S: I have a flower named after me! A donor to the college breeds day lilies and she created one that is maroon and gold and named it “[Long Tall Sally](#).”

A department name like “gift planning” might sound self-explanatory. But according to Sally Vander Ploeg, director of gift planning and major gifts in the development office, the concept of gift planning is often misunderstood.

“I don’t think people understand the phraseology behind gift planning or deferred giving very well at all,” said Vander Ploeg. “Gift planning is what it sounds like—a gift you plan to give in the future—but the nuances behind that term are what keep me busy.”

In short, Vander Ploeg describes gift planning as “a gift you set up *today* and the recipient receives it later (after your death).”

Though Vander Ploeg spends her days counseling potential donors who wish to give a gift to Calvin, she thinks everyone needs to write a will and plan for their future.

“I think it can be hard for people to think about their mortality,” she said, “but this is a way to name an executor and determine how all of your assets will be divided up after you die. If you don’t have a will, the state of Michigan will go down a defined pecking order to decide who should control

your estate, and this may not be the best person for the job.”

A large part of Vander Ploeg’s job is finding the best way for people to give to Calvin from a tax perspective. She is available to talk to any current faculty and staff members about estate-planning—even if they do not wish to give a gift to Calvin.

There are also free estate-planning resources available for Calvin employees, including the [Barnabas Foundation](#) and the Western Michigan Christian Foundation. Calvin pays a fee to have access to Barnabas’ resources and any employee can meet with an attorney there.

More free resources are available on the gift planning [website](#). “We created this website to be informative and easy to navigate,” said Vander Ploeg. “I’m excited about how much information is there. It’s not just related to gift-planning for Calvin; this information is relevant to anyone thinking about their future.”

Vander Ploeg’s favorite feature is the breakdown of different [age groups](#). “You can select your age group and actually be directed to resources specific to where you are in your life,” she said. “For example, if you select ‘I’m age 40 -54,’ you will find resources

## Gift and estate planning teach good stewardship

Ever wonder what the gift planning branch of the development office does for Calvin? Read on.

about planning for growing children, aging parents and setting up future gifts to your favorite causes.”

The website has basic information about estate planning, ways to give charitable gifts (to Calvin or to other organizations), a gift calculator, testimonies from current donors, tax ID and bequest terminology and resources for outside financial advisors.

“I just encourage people to go online to see what’s available,” said Vander Ploeg. “There’s a wealth of information that could be very helpful before you meet with an attorney or financial planner. Also,” she continued, “this gives you the chance to do some research before actually committing to a will or making a gift to Calvin.”

Like so many people at Calvin, Vander Ploeg loves her job.

“I believe so strongly in the mission of this place,” said Vander Ploeg. “It never feels like a sales pitch. It’s a joy to work with our donors who have such a spirit of stewardship and a heart for Calvin. Their gifts and this college are all working towards the Kingdom of God. That’s a special thing.”



## Off-campus exploration during interim

This month, hundreds of students, faculty and staff are participating in off-campus interims. To get a better idea what goes on during this unique month off campus, we had a conversation with David Ellens from off-campus programs.

R: How many off-campus interims did Calvin offer this year?

D: 35

R: How many students are off-campus for interim? How many faculty and staff members?

D: We have around 610 students participating in January interims with 48 staff or faculty instructors.

R: Are there any exciting new interims being offered this year?

D: "The Adventure Travel Race," led by Curt Blankespoor and Amber Warners; "Israel: The

Land of the Bible," led by Ken Pomykala; and "Development in Liberia," led by Joe Kuilema.

These are all noteworthy to me due to the fact that they are in new locations for off-campus interims. We're expanding our reach of the globe, which is always exciting!

R: How has the off-campus program changed over the past few years?

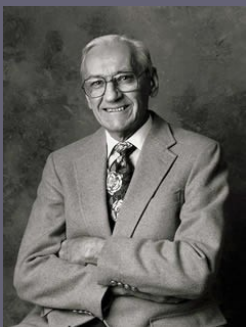
D: There certainly are more off-campus interims offered. The interim committee has deliberately sought a breadth of courses in diverse areas of the world. On the flip side though, it has become more competitive for interim courses to be approved since the interim committee is cognizant of not approving courses that could be considered redundant.

R: In a few words, what is the

purpose of off-campus interim opportunities?

D: We encourage all students to expand their understanding of the world and their place in it by studying off campus in whatever capacity they are able. For many students, an interim is the perfect fit, particularly if they are in a tight major that doesn't allow them to squeeze in a full semester program off-campus or if they're involved in a sport with a rigorous schedule. For other students, spending a month off campus is more manageable psychologically than a full semester. An interim allows students to whet their appetite for further exploration and self-discovery and allows faculty and staff to delve into a subject matter that they have a particular passion for and connect with students.

## What is the William Spoelhof Society?



Just in case you were wondering: the William Spoelhof Society is an organization to recognize those who have committed to carrying forth Calvin's vision through their planned gifts to the college.

The Society is open to anyone who has included Calvin College in his

or her estate plan. In order to become a member, donors need only notify the office of gift planning online or by calling 616.526.8719.

Being a member of the William Spoelhof Society entitles donors to a semi-annual newsletter with practical information about estate planning, invitations to the Society's annual spring luncheon and to other Calvin events and more! Go online for more details.

## Getting to know NEW STAFF

We want to take this opportunity to welcome the staff members (new or transitioned) who have started at Calvin this month. Be sure to make them feel welcome!

**Megan Bergland**, manager of grant proposals for development

## Calvin Perks DID YOU KNOW

**DID YOU KNOW** that Calvin's commitment to lifelong learning extends to you (and your families too)? Full-time staff members may enroll in two free college and/or Calvin Theological Seminary courses per academic year. Part-time staff members can accumulate free courses at the rate of one course for every 1,000 hours worked. Additionally, spouses have the opportunity to audit Calvin classes for free. For more information about enrolling in classes at Calvin, please contact the [admissions office](#).

Employees may also be eligible for tuition assistance for dependents. If you have a student attending Calvin or any of the area's Christian K-12 schools, you may be able to receive tuition reimbursement.

These are only a few of Calvin's great education benefits! Check out the [benefits overview](#) to see a full list. Please consult the [benefits eligibility chart](#) on the human resources website to verify your eligibility from the staff [handbook](#).

## What are you reading?

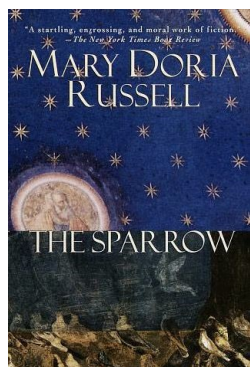
We at Calvin are a culture of education and self-improvement. What better way to encourage our colleagues in their lifelong learning than to ask that revealing question—"what are you reading?"

Want to submit a book review?  
Email [humanresources@calvin.edu](mailto:humanresources@calvin.edu)

Another year, another book review! For our first offering of 2011, we are starting things off with Lori Keen, lab services manager for biology as well as fervent bookworm. So Lori, what are you reading?

### The Sparrow

by Mary Doria Russell



Jesuit priests, astronomer, engineer, physician, Puerto Rico, Naples, the years 2019 and 2060, *Stella Maris*, asteroid spaceships, planet Rakhat, Runa, Jana'ata and hasta'akala.

These are the facts of "The Sparrow" by Mary Doria Russell (1996). The description of "The Sparrow" sounds like

science fiction: a group of humans who for various reasons meet in Puerto Rico are sent by the Jesuits to Planet Rakhat. They depart earth in 2021 to make contact with the beings that are broadcasting hauntingly beautiful choral music into space. Russell's writing makes the story seem absolutely normal and believable. The author's conception of the creatures, societies and culture on Rakhat is fascinating and includes an unexpected twist. Similarly, the story of how the

humans set about exploring and interacting with the planet and its beings is absorbing. Russell develops characters that this reader would love to meet.

"The Sparrow" begins at the end, with the priest Emilio Sandoz back on earth after the mission to Rakhat. Sandoz, badly traumatized physically, emotionally and spiritually is the only survivor of the mission. And so, through the use of flashbacks, the story of the origin of the mission and the experiences of the eight travelers to Rakhat is told.

The story by itself makes this book a great read. However, "The Sparrow" is so much more than a captivating, well-told story. We are also brought into the world of Sandoz's struggles and recovery upon his return to Earth. At its core this is a story about loss, faith and wrestling with God. "Either God's in charge or He's not ... Because if I was led by God to love God, step by step, as it seemed, if I accept that the beauty and the rapture were real and true, then the rest of it was God's will too."

These are the struggles of Emilio Sandoz. These are the age-old struggles of believers from Job to those of us who considers ourselves "square inch" Christians.

This was the second time I have read "The Sparrow" and it remains on my list of all-time favorite books, along with the sequel "Children of God."

the Resource Issue 16 January 2011

## Upcoming Events

### EAP training sessions

Pine Rest, the facilitator of Calvin's employee assistance program, will be offering two more training sessions this spring. Both seminars will take place in the Commons Annex alumni board room from 11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

February 15: Ordinary resiliency: coping in challenging times

April 12: Building positive relationships

\*More information available [online](#); please [RSVP](#) to HR

### Marcus Buckingham video series: "Trombone Player Wanted"

Join Razel Jones, training and orientation coordinator, for these sessions to watch and discuss various training videos created by author, researcher and motivational speaker [Marcus Buckingham](#).

February 16

March 16

April 13

\*[RSVP](#) to HR

### Professional development days

This spring, we will be offering two half day trainings for office assistants. Stay tuned to Calvin News for more information.



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