

9-1-2015

Stunting His Growth

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Recommended Citation

Wagner, Ron '93 (2015) "Stunting His Growth," *Furman Magazine*: Vol. 58 : Iss. 2 , Article 13.
Available at: <https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine/vol58/iss2/13>

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BRASH MENTALITY

A philosophy and history double major, Lane Erwin isn't comfortable unless he's uncomfortable—as in, painfully so.

A lifetime of extreme fitness is literally about to pay off for Lane Erwin '15.

When a family friend helped him land a gig doing stunts for a television show pilot earlier this year, he discovered he had a marketable skill: no fear of physical injury. In the stunt world they call it “on-the-job training,” and his went so well he was hired to be assistant to the stunt coordinator for the NBC drama *Game of Silence*, which began filming this August in Atlanta.

“You name it, I’ve probably done it,” Erwin says. Jumped

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Four years of pushing his body and mind at Furman has led a recent grad to embark on an unusual career.

BY RON WAGNER '93

out of airplanes? Check. Ridden horses? Yes. Dabbled in parkour? (Look it up, but yeah.) “That’s how I’m programmed,” Erwin adds.

Erwin’s father was an Army Ranger and member of Delta Force who had his son navigating obstacle courses in the backyard before he had learned his multiplication tables. One summer, they covered 43 miles in three days in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area in Montana. “I ended up going back out to Montana and that was where I finally formed my idea of fitness and how one becomes fit,” he says. “I would

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wake up in the mornings and work on a ranch, then I would do some kind of circuit workout, then go on a long hike or mountain bike ride that was at least five to six miles. After lunch and a solid cup of coffee, I would go for long runs that were anywhere from nine to 14 miles, or rock climb or mountain surf."

At Furman, Erwin gained a reputation for tearing around the PAC doing timed muscle-ups and power cleans while most everyone else has the good sense to stick to well-rested bench reps. "Over the past 15 years, I do not believe that I have ever met a student who was as committed to fitness as Lane," says Kelly Frazier, Erwin's instructor for Health Science 101 Wellness Concepts. "He derives immense satisfaction from overcoming fitness challenges."

Taking a backward baseball cap off and running his hand through thick, sandy-blond hair, Erwin gives explanations for his path that sound straightforward but don't come without some thoughtful meandering. "I'm a philosophy and history double major, and my dad always harasses me about thinking too much. 'You need to just do stuff sometimes,'

and he's right," Erwin says. "For a long time, I wanted to be my dad."

Reminded that his father spent the better part of the past year recovering from a broken neck suffered doing a back flip in a hotel room, Erwin laughs. "To me, man, shoot, at least you went out doing what you want to do."

Erwin came to Furman from North Carolina to play rugby but left the program because the beating his body and grades took prevented him from doing other things. He doesn't much care for competition anyway, and none of the other usual exercise motivators apply either: He doesn't work out for appearance, generally practices alone, and has no obsession with mastering a particular skill. All that seems to matter is the activity be difficult and, preferably, fast.

"I grew up doing a lot of plays. I was in musical theatre, and all I ever really wanted to do was act, especially film. I loved film," Erwin says. "[But] I figured out I didn't want to do the whole acting thing. I wanted to do stunts more. I like doing dangerous things. When you jump off of something, it's like, that's it. It's that moment." **E**



NOW

Reflection on the Importance of Furman as It Is Now

At particular moments in life, certain questions seem to be at the center of nearly every conversation you have with those around you. You may have noticed this. When the college acceptance letters begin rolling in, everybody asks, "Where are you going to school next year?" When you start wearing that goofy grin everywhere you go, people grin back and say, "Who's the lucky someone?"

For young college alumni, one inescapable question has many forms. "What's next? Where will you go from here? What will you do now that you've earned your degree?" My favorite iteration—because it captures the question's true gravity and brings to the fore the difficult reality the question ultimately signifies—goes something like this: "What does your life after Furman look like?"

Life after Furman. Because that's what we mean when we talk about "next," when we talk about grad school and careers and starting families. We mean people and places and vocations pursued after Furman.

I detest the "life after Furman" question, and lately I've been trying to discern why. I've decided it's because the question implies something that just isn't true.

There is no life after Furman. Once you first enter its gates as a student, Furman becomes a formative force in your life and

it never stops shaping you. The great thinkers we encountered in Furman's classrooms? Their ideas serve as foundations for our own. The ultimate questions about morality, spirituality, and humanity with which we wrestled? We will face these questions time and time again, at work and at home, in the world at large and in our respective corners of it. And the relationships we forged? These certainly do not end when classes do. They continue to blossom and operate as networks of personal and social support as we settle into new communities and endeavor to do good work for the benefit of those around us.

A Furman diploma does not represent an ending. It signals a beginning, but not the beginning of life after Furman. A Furman degree signifies the start of lives filled with meaningful work and relationships informed by our time at Furman—of life with Furman. The questions we asked here, the answers we sought, and the friends we made—these stay with us wherever we go.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Luke D. Christie graduated from Furman in 2015 with a major in communication studies and a minor in humanities. He is a freelance writer and creative consultant in Greenville with long-term plans to earn a PhD in communication studies and pursue a career in academia.