Dordt volleyball takes national stage

Christian Zylstra  
Staff Writer

Success is determined not by those around you, but by the goals you set for yourself and achieve. For the Dordt Defenders volleyball team, this season was more than a success: it was a triumph.

“Coming into the season, it was always our goal to make it to nationals, and we exceeded that goal by making it past pool play,” said senior Lindsey Floen, Dordt’s middle blocker.

In fact, for the first time since the 2003-04 season, the Defenders made it out of pool play and into the elimination rounds.

Only the best in the nation make it to nationals, which means the journey is tough and long, but well worth the effort in the end.

“The top 24 teams make it to nationals and to say that you are one of those top teams is something special,” said senior Kayla Broekhuis, the Defender defensive specialist. “National leaders are also feeling anxious, many students and faculty members will go to one of five destinations to participate in an AMOR tripicht (AMOR) service project.

The five sites include One Body One Hope in Liberia, Ethiopia Reads in Ethiopia, World Renew in Tanzania, Children of the Promise in Haiti, and Caribbean Life-time Missions in Jamaica.

In past years there have only been two or three AMOR trips taken over Christmas break. This year there are more because these organizations were connected with the AGILE project that students participated in this fall.

The AGILE project worked closely with five organizations, and four of the five organizations are AMOR sites. Organizations chosen for AMOR sites were determined through a combination of student and faculty input last spring through a survey, said Nathan Tintle, executive assistant for vice president of student services.

“I am a little bit anxious and bless somebody whose life is so different from all of ours, but at the same time I know that God is going to make our time over there very profitable in some way, whether it be for the team traveling to Liberia, or for those we will be spending time with. I can’t wait to see what happens!” said junior Regan Lundburg.

Students participating in these service trips are also looking forward to the work that will be done there.

“It is my hope and prayer that we each will be radically changed as a result of this trip, that our perspective will never be the same and that we will see everything in a new light, said senior Naie TenBroeke, who is going to Haiti. “Furthermore, it is my desire that serving in this small capacity may open our hearts to doing further mission work and we will understand our relationship to each other, the rest of the world, and to God in a dramatically different manner.”

Although excitement seems to be the main emotion, many students and leaders are also feeling anxious about long flights and the work that will be done.

“I am a little bit anxious about being able to encourage and bless somebody whose life is so different from all of ours, but at the same time I know that God is going to make our time over there very profitable in some way, whether it be for the team traveling to Liberia, or for those we will be spending time with. I can’t wait to see what happens!” said junior Regan Lundburg.

After spending a semester fundraising, meeting with teammates, getting immu- nizations and praying for God’s guidance, students participating in AMOR are ready to experience another culture and make a positive impact.
Give This Christmas Away

Lauren Bird
Staff Writer

Starting the week of December 3, students at Dordt College were encouraged to donate in a drive called “Give This Christmas Away.”

The drive had themed collection days for things that students could donate. These were Money Monday, Toy Tuesday, Wardrobe Wednesday, Toiletty Thursday and Food Friday.

Notifications for this drive were passed around Dordt’s campus before Thanksgiving break so that students could bring back items they might have had at home to donate, such as clothes or toys.

Students could bring their donations to their RAs or CDAs or to Student Services. Most donations went out to people in need in Sioux County; however the money we have that we don’t actually use and then hopefully do something about it.”

But our hearts need to be in the right place when donating, said Pasker. “Giving out of guilt does still give to those in need, but we aren’t acting out of love as we should,” said Pasker.

“There should probably be more prayer involved in donating our things than we imagine.”

Riley agreed that our hearts need to be in the right place when we donate to drives like Give This Christmas Away, and said that we can impact many lives if we choose to participate.

“Give This Christmas Away” does provide a convenient way to bless the community around Dordt and give back to those who do a lot for us,” said Riley.

Wilderness Club holds photo contest

Eric Rowe
Staff Writer

This year’s Wilderness Club encouraged students to appreciate nature through an outdoor photo contest held Nov. 6-18. Prizes were awarded Nov. 21.

“The object was to get students to look at nature on campus and appreciate what we have here,” said Wilderness Club president, Maria Korver.

There were 27 entries from 10 contestants. The contest was split into two categories. The first was open to all Dordt students and the second was a special category in which judges could compete.

The Wilderness club asked the Photography II class to judge and pick the winners so that they could get the opinions of experienced photographers.

The first place photo, “Droplets,” was taken by Maria Korver. Sarah Faber received second place with her photo, “Butterfly Bush.” “Through the Peril” by Rebecca Konyenbenb received third place. Lance Wunderink won first prize in the judges’ category with “Humming Bird Moth.” Prizes included gift cards to the Fruited Plain and Wal-Mart.

Contestants were able to enter any photo taken since last November, as long as they weren’t edited.

“We had a good variety of summer, fall and winter photos,” Korver said.

The recently reestablished Wilderness Club organizes monthly events that let students enjoy the outdoors while serving the community through various projects.

The club has gone through many changes and has previously been known as the Creation Care Club and Shamar, which means to tend and keep. Traditionally, the club was organized by environmental science majors, but this year the new leadership hopes to revitalize the club and get a variety of people involved. This is the first semester in two years that the club has hosted an event.

The first Wilderness Club event of the year was a combination of a nature outing and community service project. Club members canoed down the Big Sioux River on Oct. 12, picking up trash from the banks on the way. They ended up with four bags of trash, a half-full oil can and two tires.

The idea for a river clean up event came from members of the past club. The Sioux County Conservation board provided canoes from Oak Grove Park.

The leaders of the Wilderness Club hope to be able to host an event every month. Possible future plans include an ice fishing trip and an “owl prowl” night hike.

“A person does not need to be an environmental science or biology major to join,” Korver said. “It’s open to all majors.”

Winning photos may be seen on page 8.

Dordt students donated canned and packaged foods for Food Friday during “Give This Christmas Away”

Photo by Aubrey Pasker

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Current Dordt art exhibit: Bound for Glory

Haley Mulder
Staff Writer

Lyrics from the African-American culture are beautifully scripted with bright, vivid golds and written in hand-crafted script in the current Dordt College Art Exhibit, entitled Bound for Glory, created by Timothy Botts.

“I find it amazing that the African-American people, many who were enslaved by Christians, saw beyond their owner’s hypocrisy,” artist Timothy Botts wrote in his artist statement. “They met the real Jesus.”

As a graphic designer, art director and calligrapher, Botts’s work is known throughout the world.

“I knew I wanted an exhibit that reflected the advent season,” art professor and exhibit organizer David Versluis said. “That’s when I called Timothy Botts.”

Botts, recently retired from Tyndale publishing after 40 years, graduated from Carnegie Mellon University with a degree in graphic design. His specialty is calligraphy.

In the exhibit, open until Jan. 8, Botts depicts the African-American spiritual culture through script, colors and Christian messages.

“They express justice,” Versluis said. “Along with many aspects that are appropriate for the advent season.”

Botts has a strong personal approach to the African-American culture.

“I sang nearly half of the spirituals included in this exhibit when I was growing up in my church,” Botts said. “I pray that the visual interpretation of this spirit-filled music will be instruments of healing and reconciliation among us.”

Botts collected some Victorian moldings from his son, a carpenter in Saint Louis. These moldings have become the frames for the artwork in the exhibit.

“It gives it a rustic feel,” Versluis said. “They become amplifiers for the work, a projection.”

Of his hand-crafted pieces in the gallery, most are created with a water-color medium using pens or brushes. Botts created the backgrounds of the pieces using acrylic paint.

“He’s using a traditional medium that goes all the way back to the scribes and medieval writers,” Versluis said. “He’s a part of that continuum.”

The pieces in the exhibit are collaborated in a book, Bound For Glory. The book includes commentary also written by Botts.

Bott’s says that he is “celebrating the gift of music” through this historical collection.

Although he says that it has been the most difficult collection of art work that he has ever created, Botts hopes it conveys the wonderful music of the culture and a feeling of joy.

The exhibit is dedicated to his African-American grand-children: The ones who he says are “helping me become color blind.”

What’s the deal with Dead Week?

Lauren Bird
Staff Writer

Traditionally, the week before the week of finals is called dead week. The name comes from the notion that the week is supposed to be free of homework so that students have time to study for their finals.

However, some students associate dead week with the fact that it leaves them “dead” at the end of the week, especially when professors assign papers or try to get caught up before the end of the semester.

To be fair, the Friday before finals week is scheduled to be a review day for students to ask any questions in their classes and go over the material that will be on the finals.

How busy a student’s dead week might be depends on their classes, professors, study schedules and extra-curricular activities.

Mark McCarthy, a Dordt history professor, tries to live up to the “dead” part of dead week.

“I try very hard not to have any major assignments or exams due the week before exams,” said McCarthy. “I have done it before though, and that was when the class asked me if they could move a particular assignment back a few days and that pushed it into dead week. In terms of my students this semester, I do not have any major assignments or exams due.”

Students are thankful for professors who think along the same lines as McCarthy.

The absence of extra assignments means more time for studying. Nathaniel Dyett, a sophomore engineering major, plans to use dead week to its full potential.

“This semester I will not have as many materials due compared to previous semesters,” said Dyett. “However, with the schedule I made for myself in order to prep for exams, the coming week looks daunting if I truly stick to my schedule.”

Other students are not so lucky to be free of extra assignments. Freshman Emily Postma has found that she will have other things to do during dead week besides studying.

“I would love to be free of assignments during dead week,” said Postma. “It would help me since I have four exams I need to study for and about which I am already feeling stressed. I think the extra time I would have would not be wasted.”

Whichever situation you happen to be faced with, a lot of homework or a lot of study time, dead week tends to be stressful and busy for most students. The most one can do is hope their professors have the same mindset about dead week as McCarthy.

“For the most part I remember dead week as a student and I appreciated it quite a bit,” said McCarthy. “Therefore I try and honor it as best I can.”

Survive dead week and good luck during finals week!

Elizabeth Riley, Heidi De Waal, and Aubrey Pasker feel the effects of Dead Week

Photo by Aubrey Pasker

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Features

Engineering design project competitions

Eric Rowe
Staff Writer

Design a concrete canoe that will float on water. Build an unmanned air vehicle to evaluate its usefulness in forest fire reconnaissance. These challenges are peculiar and are designed to push students to exercise their creativity.

Dordt’s intercollegiate student design competitions enable students to learn the practical process of creating technology.

“It’s a way to see a project from start to finish. It’s not finishing a problem in a book and saying you’re done,” said Emily Riihl, co-caption of this year’s concrete canoe.

This year at Dordt, engineering students have two opportunities to create a design and compete with colleges across the country: the concrete canoe and the student design competition.

Concrete Canoe

In the concrete canoe competition, students design, construct and race a canoe made out of concrete. This will be the fourth year that Dordt students have participated in the competition sponsored by the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Riihl and fellow co-captain, Amanda Donnell, started recruiting team members the first week of school, but have been planning ever since observing the 2013 competition.

The three last canoes had the same form and basic design. Last year, the mold was destroyed when they removed the canoe.

“This gave us a great opportunity to rethink the form,” Donnell said.

They are planning on an asymmetrical shape with the back wider than the front, unlike a conventional canoe, which is widest in the middle. They hope this wedge shape will cut through the water better. The new design has a rounded bottom and straight sides to make it easier to paddle. The canoe will be 30 inches at its widest and 16 inches deep.

The regional contest will be in the spring, so there is still work to be done.

The construction crew built the new mold and needs to finish and seal it. The mix design team has been testing and will decide which concrete mixture will be used by Christmas.

The 2014 concrete canoe is named “Prairie Fire” and the concept designers are designing it around that theme.

Lighter than aircraft

The Dordt chapter of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) is starting their second year entering the ASME student design competition.

“The civils had their concrete canoe,” said Steven Talsma, leader of last year’s ASME design project. “I wanted something for the mechanicals to do.”

Talsma researched and decided that the ASME student design competition was a good fit due to its low budget and short distance from Dordt.

He gathered names of interested students and put together a team. The team met once a week to bring ideas to the table and delegate research.

The ASME design problem statement changes annually. This year, the challenge will be to build an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) able to pick up a load and carry it through multiple gates. Last year, the design was a remote inspection device that could move through obstacles and retrieve a sensor from a closed off area.

The Dordt students based their remote rover off an old Roomba vacuum since it already had motors and wheels.

Alec Woods, a junior engineering major, works with remote controls as a hobby and gave valuable insight on which motors and servos are the nicest,” said Joe Van Weelden, 2014 chair of the design competition.

Talsma sent out an email to tell the group when he would be working in the shop, and people dropped in to help for an hour or two.

Successful mechanical designs aren’t just the mechanics of each part but also how consistently and effectively they work together.

Last year, there was a chronic problem with the robot. The remote that controlled its movement had the same frequency as the camera that showed it where it needed to go. This resulted in a fuzzy picture.

The team members made adjustments the night before the competition until they were confident it would perform. A lot of other teams had the same problem with camera frequency.

“They didn’t necessarily anticipate it as well as we did,” Van Weelden said.

The Dordt design placed fourth out of 13 teams in its region at the ASME student design competition.

Van Weelden thinks that skill in syncing mechanics to controls will carry over to this year’s UAV design.

This year, Van Weelden visited underclassman engineers to promote the competition and start gathering momentum. The design competition group started meeting and brainstorming designs on Nov. 6. The group plans to meet and put together a time line before the end of fall semester.

Due to the large group of about 20 students showing interest, Dordt may be able to send two teams and two UAVs to the competition in April.

Practical learning

A large part of any design competition is organization and delegation of work.

“Pulling an all-nighter doesn’t work in competitions,” Riihl said.

Students get their budget from the engineering department and often show professors their progress, but they are on their own to research, develop and set deadlines.

The mechanical engineering group last year divided their project into three sections. Different people worked on the robotic arm, the remote control and the driving aspects of the remote inspection device.

Both mechanical and civil engineering students said these competitions allow them to meet students from other classes. They already have relationships with classmates from doing homework and class projects together. Creating a design for competition builds those same bonds with students outside their classroom.

Dordt College’s intercollegiate design competitions give engineering students an opportunity that cannot be found in a classroom.

“This is getting away from the numbers and getting into the creative design,” said Talsma.

This year’s concrete canoe team came up with a new design with an asymmetrical shape to cut through the water more effectively.

Photo by Andrew Deelstra

Statistics classes take on new format

Rachel Mulder
Staff Writer

The 131 and 132 Statistics classes will both be offered in the spring semester using a “flipped classroom” model. This model is new to Dordt.

“This ‘flipped classroom’ model means that students come to class with questions, and can receive group or personalized instruction, making more efficient use of both student and instructor time,” said Nathan Tintle, who will co-teach the course.

The current plan is to implement these changes only in the spring semester and continue teaching the course in its regular format again in fall 2014.

“Both courses will be offered in a hybrid format this spring semester, which means that students will be expected to complete readings, guided discovery activities (labs), view instruction videos and take quizzes online prior to coming to interactive, tutorial sessions,” said Tintle.

This spring Tintle will co-teach the course with Jason Westra who is currently teaching a version of the course (AP Statistics) at Trinity Christian High School in Hull. Tintle’s role will be mainly behind the scenes.

According to Tintle, these two introductory statistics courses are taken by approximately half of Dordt students by the time they graduate in order to fulfill the quantitative reasoning core requirement.

“Given the increasingly pervasive use of data in decision making and research across most disciplines in the natural and social sciences, as well as the humanities, this makes the course increasingly relevant for most Dordt students,” said Tintle.

The course is also currently being taught as a dual-enrollment course at Unity Christian High School in Orange City next semester as well.

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Busy concert season in BJ Haan Auditorium

Haley Mulder  
Staff Writer

The sunrise at the Colorado Rockies, a Mexican fiesta and the deep valleys of Virginia. With a variety of musical pieces, from all over the world, the concert band and campus community band will be performing in the BJ Haan Auditorium for the last time this semester on Friday, Dec. 13 at 7:30 p.m. The campus and community are invited to enjoy a night of musical variety.

“It’s not specifically just a Christmas concert,” band and orchestra director Yuri Henriques said. “It’s a combination of a lot of different styles and pieces.”

“There are some true Christmas pieces that are quality band works,” Henriques said. “But the really quality Christmas works are either chorus or choral with band or orchestra accompaniment. I focused on picking quality repertoire from the band literature that fit the strengths of the bands we have this semester rather than the season.”

Henriques says that this will make the performance “electric and exciting.”

The piece Shenandoah, by Ticheli, will be performed by the campus community band.

“It’s so beautiful,” Henriques said. “It depicts a breathtaking valley in Virginia, and it comes together as a beautiful piece of music.”

The concert band will perform Fanfare for the Hour of Sunrise, a piece that was inspired by the sunrise over the Rocky Mountains in Colorado.

“It has a very mosaic sound,” Henriques said. “It contains the musings of nature and creation all in one.”

A new style of music will also be played by the concert band in La Fiesta Mexicana by Herbert Owen Reed.

“It’s like church meets carnival,” Henriques said. “There will be a special mariachi band section within the piece.”

Henriques described it as festive: “Bring your sombrero!”

This December there were also many choral concerts held at Dordt. Bella Voce, Kantorei and Concert Choir all performed on Dec. 8 under the direction of Benjamin Kornelis.

Chamber Orchestra performed Mother Ginger, a piece from The Nutcracker, as well as The Christmas Concerto.

Jazz band featured senior Tia Nieuwswa on saxophone and vocals for Only You, composed by Diane Schuur.

All of the concerts are free and open to the public, so venture out to the BJ Haan Friday at 7:30 to enjoy the final concert of the season.
Kyle Lindbergh enters final season

Four years ago, high school senior Kyle Lindbergh sat with Dordt head basketball coach Ross Douma at a Las Vegas breakfast spot during an AAU tournament. Douma was recruiting, looking to replace graduating coach Ross Douma at a Las Vegas breakfast spot during an AAU tournament. Douma believed the then 17-year-old senior Kyle Lindbergh sat in faraway Margate, Fla. to fill the shoes of Kingma – a 1,000 point scorer in his first 13 games, the De

Staff Writer

Sam Ekstrom

Sam Ekstrom

Fast forward to the present. Lindbergh has started nearly 100 games as a Defender and is the newest member of Dordt’s exclusive 1,000 Point Club.

Looks like he met coach’s challenge.

But it hasn’t all been a breeze. It took a while for Lindbergh, who grew up in faraway Margate, Fl. to get acclimated to his new environment as a freshman.

“I was kind of taking it all in,” said Lindbergh. “Just meeting as many new people as I could and making as many connections and just trying not to be overwhelmed with schoolwork.”

Lindbergh took refuge in the gym and weight room, building his strength and putting in long hours. When the conference season began, freshman Lindbergh earned his first collegiate start against Dakota Wesleyan and finished as the team’s leading scorer with 17 points.

In the conference home opener, Lindbergh made an early statement against rival Northwestern.

The 6-foot-7 Lindbergh rebounded the game’s first missed shot, then drove it coast to coast for a layup. Northwestern missed again on their next possession, so Lindbergh snatched up another rebound and took it the length of the floor for an “and-1” layup.

Two boards and two buckets in the opening minute. “I just felt like I could hang with these guys,” said Lindbergh.

As a sophomore and junior, Lindbergh was a critical part of Dordt’s back-to-back Elite Eight appearances. Now, as a senior, he has even bigger shoes to fill than those of Logan Kingma. Dordt lost five seniors to graduation who accounted for 57 points per game. Through this season’s first 13 games, Lindbergh is doing his best to fill that void by notchng 17.9 points and 9.8 rebounds per contest, averaging just shy of a double-double and leading the GPAC in rebounding. Meanwhile, the Defenders hold an undefeated conference record entering play on Dec. 11.

“Kyle’s most valuable asset is his versatility,” said Douma. “As the game of basketball warrants players who have a complete game, Kyle is ahead of the curve as he is able to do many things both offensively and defensively.”

Austin Katje, Dordt’s only other senior, is also impressed with Lindbergh’s hot start to the season.

“He’s best quality is that he makes everyone else on the floor better,” said Katje. “He just makes the game easier for the rest of us.”

Lindbergh credits his success to having more opportunities to play in the post this season. He also surprises teams with his ability to use both hands.

“Most teams think I’m a lefty, but I’m actually a righty. I shoot left, but I’m actually right-handed,” said Lindbergh, who considers his signature move to be a right-handed hook shot.

With so much talk about the team’s loss of talent from last season, Lindbergh is ultra-motivated to silence the doubters and take this young team to new heights.

“There was so much question once [last year’s seniors] were gone,” said Lindbergh. “Are you going to be good or no?” We just really wanted to prove everyone wrong. It was exciting to get a fresh start.”

“The past two years, we always knew how good we were,” Lindbergh continued. “We knew we were good. We knew we could compete at the national level. This team has so much potential that we can just go way outside that comfort zone.”

Coach Douma is proud to see the progress of the young man he recruited that morning in Vegas.

“Kyle is a coachable young man with a very compassionate heart,” said the fifth-year coach. “He enjoys basketball, but does not let it consume him. Kyle has grown spiritualy and socially during his time here, and that has been very gratifying to see.”

Men's basketball shows promising results

Justin Pastoor

Staff Writer

“The game always has, and will always be, about buckets.”

A quote made famous by NBA point guard Kyrie Irving seems to be evident in Coach Ross Douma’s fifth year at the helm of Dordt College’s men’s basketball team. Through the team’s first 13 games, the Defenders have increased this year’s scoring average from an already impressive 84 points per game to 94 points per game in the first portion of the season.

Coach Douma attributes this increase to a number of factors.

“A lot of this is largely due to a change in rules and foul calling,” said Douma. “Hand checks and other defensive fouls are allowing for more attempts from the free throw line and opportunities to put the ball in.”

“The other side of it is our increased tempo,” said Douma. “We have numerous players who can take the ball up the court leading to more breaks and faster breaks in transition.”

This surge in offensive production is due largely to the leadership of Dordt’s two latest 1,000 Point Club senior members Kyle Lindbergh and Austin Katje.

Lindbergh, former GPAC Defensive Player of the Year, has led the team in scoring with just shy of 18 points per game.

“Kyle is a versatile player. After losing Jordan [Vogel] and Chris [Sievers] last year, we needed someone to score around the basket, and he seemed to be a natural fit,” said Douma. “He works well with both hands, draws fouls and mismatches and gets putbacks on offensive rebounds.”

The other side of the tandem, Katje, a 3-point specialist his entire career, has added 13.2 points per game. Over half of his shots this year have come from beyond the arc, hitting at a sky high 46.8 percent after shooting 37.6 percent from deep the previous three years.

“The leadership from these two has been tremendous. Not only have they increased the abilities of themselves, but they have made the players around them better and, along with the other upperclassmen, have allowed our freshman to work into their roles on this team,” Douma said.

Along with the team’s two seniors, freshman Dalton Franken has contributed 15.2 points per game and junior Tyler Wolterstorff has added 12.1. Lindbergh has led the team in rebounds thus far with 9.8 per game. Sophomore Nathan Rindels is second in rebounds with five per game while leading the team in assists with 3.8 per game.

Although eight players on Douda’s varsity roster are freshman, the team continues to collect wins. The team is off to a 12-1 start with key victories over Midland – pre-season pick to win the GPAC – and Briar Cliff, previously undefeated in conference play.

The sole loss on the year came to No. 10 ranked Davenport on Nov. 8. The Defenders currently sit at No. 11 in the national rankings.

After a trip to Mitchell, S.D. to face Dakota Wesleyan at the Corn Palace, the team returns back to the DeWitt to tip off against Hastings College for a battle for first place in the GPAC.
Jeremy Jabber
Tha-tha-that’s all folks!

The thing that bothers me most about people traveling is when they think they’re the ONLY PERSON traveling, or that they’re somehow more important than everyone else. We’ve all seen them at some point; at airports they push to the front of the line, they complain constantly, they yell at staff and people and are the loudest thing in the room. On the road, these people drive 90 miles an hour all the time, they always want to pass and won’t slow down, even if it’s dangerous, they are totally OK with blasting the horn if they are being ignored.

My one request, all I want for Christmas, the one thing you should take from this column, the one thing you should have learned this year, is this: DON’T BE THAT GUY. Travel like a normal, reasonable person. There will be hundreds of people around you, all trying to get home. What makes you so special that you always have to get your way? Calm down. Adapt to the situation, and always let old people and families with children go first. Or else everyone will hate you.

Whether you are flying through Sioux Falls, Omaha, Chicago, Minneapolis, Denver, Dallas, Los Angeles, Vancouver or any other airport, be the kindest person in the room, not the loudest. Whether you’re driving down an Interstate, a blacktop, a gravel road, or even just stopping for gas, be the safest, kindest and least annoying driver you can.

If we all just do our part and let other people do theirs, we will all get home safe and have a stress-free time getting there.

Above all, Merry Christmas. Travel safe, have a great break and get on back here for next semester! I know it’ll be great!

Adventures in Nicaragua

There isn’t enough space in this column to explain everything I am feeling at the end of this trip. I have tried so many times and each scratched out sentence is a testimony to how difficult it is to describe what it is like to say goodbye to a person and place you were just getting to know and connect with. It’s like saying goodbye to a person you never knew before, but when you realize that will never see them again, the potential of the relationship you could have had, but now realize you are never going to have, almost breaks your heart.

Before the time came to actually say goodbye to my host family, I kept trying to figure out how to word a goodbye that would fill the months and years’ worth of silence about to stretch between us. But there is no such goodbye. Eventually words would stop coming out of your mouth, and you’d stand there looking lost instead of wiping away the tears. They say home is where the heart is, but where is my home when my heart is in two different places? This kind of bittersweet can’t be put into words.

I was only in Nicaragua for three months, but these are the invaluable lessons I learned. It was easy to constantly feel like I was learning and discovering in Nicaragua because everything was new and foreign and exciting. Honestly, life back home seems terribly mundane in comparison. But now the spots have shifted. Nicaragua is my old friend I find it the hardest to say goodbye to, and the states, even thought I have lived there my entire life, is the new friend I have been given a second chance with.

That goodbye was one of the hardest I have ever made. But now I have the chance to take the same attitude I came to Nicaragua with back to the States. Life is an adventure, even if it is has always been with the same people and in the same place. It took leaving the country to realize this for me, but I’m eager to come back now, even though I don’t have my life planned out whatsoever. My eyes are open, and I’m ready for whatever my next adventure may be.

Jeremy Vreeken
Columnist

Well, it’s exam time, and who doesn’t love exam week? It’s a wonderful, magical time of stress, late nights, procrastination and replacing the blood in your veins with coffee. It’s a time for regretting all those nights you could have gone out with friends, or maybe regretting all those episodes of Breaking Bad you watched, instead of actually doing chemistry homework.

Exam week is an opportunity to prove to your profs that you weren’t just sleeping the whole time, and that you actually know what you’re talking about. You’d stand there looking lost while trying not to cry, with all the memories you want to thank them for running through your head as you hug them instead of wiping away the tears. They say home is where the heart is, but where is my home when my heart is in two different places? This kind of bittersweet can’t be put into words.

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Columnist

Be sure to look for Nathan Sparks’ upcoming production of Doubt

Hannah DeVries
Columnist

The semester was dope.
Darin: ... Kyle: Anyway, my time in LA was awesome. I came to California really nervous about how the semester was going to go. I didn’t know what to expect. But even though the semester was a lot of work and quite challenging, I came away from it with hardly any complaints. I hope to be lifelong friends with the people I’ve met, even if I don’t get to see them as often as I would like. My internship was also a good experience. I was able to read scripts and interface with professionals in the industry, which was beneficial to understanding what goes on in a production office on a day to day basis. Exploring the city was another rewarding part of living in LA because I was able to get a sense of the city’s culture. The Los Angeles County Museum of Art was a great place to visit, and it was within walking distance from our apartments. Living and working in LA was one of the best semesters of my college career.

Darin: That was lovely.
Kyle: Thank you. You’re a scholar and a jet engine.
Darlin: What?
Kyle: Anyway. These articles were fun.
Darin: I guess. Except for the part where they made us do them.
Kyle: Wait... I thought that this was your idea? As like a bonding experience?
Darin: Oh. Yeah.
Kyle: Okay. cool.
Darlin: Let’s say some nice things to the people who took the time to read these.
Kyle: They are nice.
Darin: Yes.
My Christmas list: The bests and worsts

Megan Kaiser
Staff Writer

Low on holiday cheer? Feeling like a Scrooge? Well it’s probably because you have five tests next week, but that is not near a good enough of an excuse to be low on that holiday-hoobie-what-ty (The Grinch Who Stole Christmas? Anyone?). I am here to tell you about the highs and lows of the season.

Remember, this is MY list. Not your list. Not your cousin’s dad’s list. MY list.

Best Holiday Movie: Jack Frost
(1998)

Now do not get this 1998 Jack Frost film mixed up with the 1996 film about the serial killer that dies and then comes back as a snowman. The Jack Frost I’m talking about is the one where a kid’s Dad dies and then comes back to life a year later, only he comes back to life as a snowman. Same premise as the other one, just, you know, minus the serial killer part. I absolutely love this movie. It’s hilarious. I don’t care if you saw this movie when you were a kid and thought it was the dumbest thing ever. It is sad how he comes to be a snowman, but THE DUDE TURNS INTO A SNOWMAN. THAT’S RAD.

Runner Up: Elf
(2003)

Cliché? Who cares!

Worst Holiday Movie: Frozen
(2010)

It’s not technically about Christmas, but it is just ridiculous. Three people get stuck in a chairlift while on a ski trip. I mean, come on. The whole movie is about two dudes and a chick chillin’ (definite pun intended) out on this lift, hoping someone will find them. Maybe you saw this film and loved it—I don’t know you. It’s just depressing. Happy ending? You aren’t going to get one. Santa doesn’t show up in his sleigh, pick up these goons and then fly off into the night sky. Somehow, I think that would have probably made the film even worse. All I can say is, don’t trust the ski lift guy.

Runner Up: Jack Frost
(1996)

Don’t make me repeat myself.

Best Holiday Song: Run Rudolph Run
by Chuck Berry (1958)

I have heard plenty of covers of this song, and I love the guitar riffing ones. I mean it’s uber catchy. Go find your favorite version. Now. Or don’t.

Runner Up: All I Want For Christmas Is You
by Mariah Carey (1994)

I’m going to kick myself later for fessing this up, but I cannot help but love this song. I know. I hate myself too.

Worst Holiday Song: Funky, Funky Xmas
by New Kids On The Block
(1989)

“He said hay - said what - he said you - I said what. He said you left the fire burning and I burnt my butt.” Who legally said that this song was ok? New Kids On The Block? Leave.

Runner Up: I Want A Hippopotamus For Christmas
by Gayla Peevey
(1953)

No. No you really don’t. So stop.

So there’s my brief list. If you would like more information, please check out the website that I don’t have. In the meantime, thoroughly enjoy your Christmas break and save your wrapping paper. Just kidding. Don’t be that person.

Megan Kaiser
Staff Writer

My Christmas list: The bests and worsts