The earthquake that rocked Haiti on Jan. 12 rocked the world of Dordt freshman Claude Gillot as well. Gillot, 22, who is from Minotrie, Haiti - 30 minutes from Port au Prince – watched from a distance the night of the earthquake, while footage on the news stations displayed the rubble of his country and bodies of his people.

Gillot made a trip to Haiti the next day, visiting his family and friends, all of whom survived. Gillot had been talking to a friend from home on the day of the disaster. Twenty minutes after hanging up, he turned on CNN and saw a report that an earthquake had hit Haiti. He tried calling his friend back, but there was no answer.

“Wow, maybe this is serious,” Gillot thought after seeing further reports with Haitians in tears. He tried calling again, but still couldn’t reach anyone. Later that night, he got a call from Josh Burns, a pastor in Tennessee who has spent time with Gillot in Haiti. “Everything in Haiti and Port-au-Prince is gone,” Burns told him.

Gillot left for home the morning following the earthquake, still without news on his family and friends. Burns joined him on the way, and they arrived in Minotrie two days later.

Gillot has one sister who lives in New York, and who left Haiti two days before the earthquake. The rest of his family is in Minotrie – his parents, five more sisters and three brothers. They are all safe. Their house, although damaged, is still standing. But that doesn’t protect them from seeing the destruction of their village and the horror of its people.

“When I got there, I cried,” Gillot said. Before the earthquake, Minotrie was one of Haiti’s poorer villages. Many people worked in the flour mill, but the factory couldn’t support everyone. Some sold watermelon to survive; some had to turn to prostitution or drug dealing.

The earthquake destroyed houses, leveled schools, and collapsed the flour mill, leaving many workers with severe burns and leaving poor families even poorer.

How can I help?

T-shirts:
T-shirts with the design below, created by Claude Gillot, are available for purchase through Student Services.

Choose the size and pay up front. Cost is $15; any size is available from youth S to adult 3X. Shirts will be ordered as needed, and Student Services will send e-mail notification when the shirts arrive. All profits go directly to the aid of the people of Minotrie, Haiti, Gillot’s hometown.

Donate:
Donation boxes are located in the library, the Copy Center, and Student Services.

Making the trip:

How he got to Haiti

Tuesday - Earthquake hits Haiti.

Wednesday, 8:45 p.m. – Claude Gillot leaves for Omaha.

Thursday, 6:30 a.m. – Flight from Omaha to Chicago.

Mid morning – Gillot lands in Chicago and departs again for Nashville.

11:45 a.m. – Plane lands in Nashville, Gillot meets Pastor Josh Burns.

1:30 p.m. – Flight from Nashville to Miami.

8:30 p.m. – Flight from Miami to the Dominican Republic.

Midnight – Gillot and Burns land in Dominican Republic.

Friday, 8:00 a.m. – Bus from Dominican Republic to Haiti.

Around 1:00 p.m. – Bus crashes; only injury sustained is the driver’s broken arm.

2:30 p.m. – Another bus picks up Gillot and Burns, continuing to the border.

5:00 p.m. – Second bus stopped by immigration at the border; lacks official documentation.

Government car takes Gillot and Burns into Haiti.

7:30 p.m. – Arrival at Port-au-Prince airport.

8:15 p.m. – Rental car into Minotrie.

8:45 p.m. – Gillot reunites with his family.

“All I wanted to do when I got there was go to bed.” – Claude Gillot

Above: What is left of the house of one of Gillot’s friends, whose aunt sits amidst the ruins preparing food.

Right: Jeaneen and Claude with some of his family, as he prepared to come to Dordt in July.

Photos provided by Claude Gillot.
Students create name for new building, an ‘interesting part of Dordt’s history’

Ashlee Stallings
Editor

Residence halls face the possibility of new identities, to the delight of the creative and the distress of the directionally challenged. Students have the opportunity to choose the name for the new apartment building which will open next year, in the form of a campus-wide contest.

But the contest does not end with the nameless building, currently referred to among the administration as “Beejview” or as “192” for the number of beds it holds. Instead, the administration decided to give students the opportunity to re-name all of the residence halls on campus.

“The buildings lack identity,” said Associate Provost Bethany Schuttinga. Of course, some students do appreciate the simple theme of directional names, and changing those names is an optional aspect to the competition.

But the new building will be named for sure. “We’re trying to figure out how to create excitement around the question, ‘What does a name mean?’” Schuttinga said.

Some students may find motivation for excitement in the cash prize awarded to the originator of the winning entry. The amount of the prize will be announced at the campus-wide meeting on at 9:45 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 1, in S101.

After the meeting, the competition begins, and it will last until the end of the month. Proposals will include the name of the new building, and rationale if the student chooses. From there, the rules are vague. “There could be themes, if the student wants to re-name all the residence halls,” Schuttinga said. “We could even consider naming neighborhoods, like the area between East, North, and West Halls.”

The one residence hall that is not named for a cardinal direction, Covenant, is up for re-naming as well. Schuttinga does not know exactly how and why that building was named, or why it is not called “Far East,” but she does believe that new names for the buildings will be part of a legacy.

“There’s just something cool about being part of the naming process,” she said. “It’s an interesting part of Dordt’s history.”

Shim providing a taste of Korea

Hani Yang
Staff Writer

Professor Jay Shim and Korean students at Dordt are hosting a Korean Fair on Saturday, Jan. 30, with the help of Students Without Borders and the Humble Bean.

“One day last semester I was having lunch with a bunch of professors at the Commons,” Professor Jay Shim said. “One of them asked about Korean food. I found very small number of them had experienced it; I proposed an idea of Korean food fair and they all liked it.”

His wife Joyce will be the main cook and will prepare four dishes for the event:

- Bulgogi (Korean BBQ)
- Kimchi (traditional side dish)
- Jajj-bi (transparent noodles with vegetables and meat)
- Pal-bugogi (Korean pancakes with veggies and seafood)

Both Korean and non-Korean tea will be available for purchase in the event.

“I think sharing meal is a great way of learning a culture,” Shim said.

Tickets to the fair are $3 for students and $5 for adults. They are available through Jan. 29 in the Grille area during lunch and dinner. No ticket will be required for children under five.

“Food is not something to talk about - you should come and taste it yourself,” Shim said. “See you there.”
Dordt students return from Kenya more insightful

28 January 2010

“Dozens of people are living in the streets,” Gillot said. “They’ve lost everything.” While visiting, Gillot bought beans and rice for his neighbors.

Gillot purchased food from a store in Minotrie and some of their neighbors.

During his visit, Gillot bought beans and rice for his neighbors. While the food was cooking in the street, people crowded around asking to eat. Gillot has a video of the chaos. “Give me food, give me food!” That’s what they’re saying,” he narrated.

Gillot stayed in Haiti Friday night and Saturday, and then he went back to Dordt for classes. “I’m still overwhelmed,” Gillot said. “Every time I sleep, I dream about what I saw.”

Gillot keeps CNN on in his dorm room whenever he’s there, watching the constant updates from his country. “I want to be there,” he said. Gillot has tentative plans to go back to Haiti over Spring Break; otherwise, he will have to wait until the school year ends. Other students express a desire to go to Haiti as well, and Dordt is considering making that a reality—though it will not be right away.

There’s been talk of creating a service team—something like PLIA or perhaps another AMOR group—to go to Haiti,” Pastor Rod Gorter said. “It’s a long-range plan; perhaps next year. The needs will be there for months and years to come.”

But that doesn’t diminish the importance of the needs that afflicted Haiti now. “I want people to understand that Port-au-Prince is not all Haiti,” Gillot said. “That’s like saying Des Moines is Iowa. Port-au-Prince is not the only area affected; the little cities are suffering too, everywhere—the whole country.”

On Monday, students organized a service in the BJ Haan dedicated to prayer for Haiti, and took an offering to help alleviate the immediate needs specifically in Minotrie.

Gillot attended the service, and so did his host mother, Jeanneem De Jager of Rock Valley.

“It was just awesome,” De Jager said. “The connection Dordt has with Haiti just brings it all together.”

De Jager and her husband Verlan have had connections with Haiti for a while. They met Gillot in February on a mission trip to Minotrie, during Dordt’s spring break.

They then decided to sponsor him, providing him a home and education in the United States.

Those at the Dordt service donated $1006.25, which will be sent in a check from Dordt College to Burns.

Burns and his church have now officially decided to focus on Minotrie in their mission work, setting up an infrastructure there to stabilize the economy and make disciples of the people by showing them the love of God.

“We want to invest in young people’s lives,” Burns said. “Donations make a long-term difference.”

Money from Dordt, as well as other donations, will be taken with Burns on his next trip to Minotrie, from March 1–6.

He will be buying a bus, which he will convert into a tap-tap, which is like a taxi. It will generate jobs and revenue, making it a sustainable operation. Some of the money will be spent on agriculture, a year-round activity and another sustainable venture. He also hopes to buy wells for clean water, start a pharmacy, and boost business at Claude’s mother’s store.

Everything is purchased locally, another way to stimulate the economy. Some of the money will be spent on agriculture, a year-round activity and another sustainable venture. He also hopes to buy wells for clean water, start a pharmacy, and boost business at Claude’s mother’s store.

The Haitians are the ones who are going to change Haiti,” he said. “Not the people from America.”

But until their village is stabilized, the people of Minotrie need help. Burns is using money in the hands of Michael, one of Burns’ disciples and a friend of Gillot. Burns will wire more money as needed.

“I want to thank you so much for seeing a need and filling it,” he says to Dordt students. “Right now we’re just trying to raise funds.”

The Dordt relief efforts did not end on Monday. Donation boxes are in the library, the Copy Center, and Student Services. All funds go directly to help Gillot’s hometown.

Gillot also designed t-shirts that will be on sale for $15 through Student Services.

So far, student efforts have encouraged Gillot.

“It means a lot to me…that my fellow students are thinking of my country and my people,” he said. “I just want to say thank you.”

Right now, much of America is thinking about Haiti. News reports cover the earthquake constantly; Facebook statuses and links remind others to pray and donate money; and “Haiti” has been the number one trending topic on Twitter since the earthquake happened.

The challenge comes after a few weeks, when everyone’s busy,” said Gorter. “When the visibility in the news decreases, but the suffering, struggling and needs are still strong, the challenge is to keep the awareness there, and to keep praying for them.”

Gillot certainly cannot forget.

“One thing Claude said to me when he first got here was that he did not come just for an education,” De Jager said. “He said, ‘I am here to help my people.’ That has become all the more urgent for him now.”

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Schapa went down to Georgia

Lance Kooiman

Staff Writer

He can’t be in two places at once, but he can teach two classes at once.

From January 15-21, Schapa was teaching a creative writing class at Covenant College, which is on top of Lookout Mountain, Georgia.

Covenant College offers a two-credit creative writing course which asks well known writers to come and teach for two weeks out of the year.

“It was an honor for me to be asked to come and teach the course”, Schapa said. “I was somewhat familiar with the college and knew some of the professors there that once taught at Dordt.”

Schapa is teaching the same class to his students at Dordt.

He commented on similarities between his students in both places.

“I had fun understanding the culture,” he said. “They were a lot like Dordt students and responded to me the same way after I warmed up to them for a while. Covenant is a lot like Dordt with a southern spin and by the end of the week, they had accepted me.”

Covenant students were given assignments by Schapa while he was teaching, and they have access to Courses@Dordt in order to turn in assignments.

“There is a lot more reading for me to do after taking this job,” Schapa said. “But other than that, I enjoy it.”

Schapa will return to Covenant College to finish his final week of teaching in March, during Dordt’s spring break.

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Cafe, Italian restarant unofficially open, grand opening in February

Dave De Wit

Columnist

The Fruited Plain Cafe--Sioux Center’s new food, shop, bar, and part-time Italian restaurant--will have its grand opening on Feb 4, 5, and 6.

The cafe will serve various goodies and beverages, including coffee and a selection of wines and beers.

On the weekends, the shop doubles as an Italian restaurant for reservations only. In a private room called "The Backroom Bistro," chef Giovanni Romano makes your entree from a select menu of Italian foods.

"Giovanni [happens] to be our neighbor...and we said, 'Hey, let's work together,'" said Professor Rebecca De Vries, who owns the cafe with her husband Laurence.

According to De Vries, the cafe has the necessary sound equipment for any musicians who want to play live music.

"Here's the stage," she said, pointing to the wooden platform with a piano on it. "If there are any bands--quartets, brass quintets, opera singers...poetry readings, story-hour for children, whatever...we want to bring performers here." The business--located on Main Street across from the Co-op Gas Station--has been unofficially open since Jan. 22 and will continue to serve customers leading up to their grand opening.

The cafe is open Monday through Wednesday from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., and Thursday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to
Knitting club extends a warm welcome

From left to right: Freshmen Tawny VanBerkum, Christine Gould, Aubrey Kloosterhouse and Mary Du Mez try their hands at knitting. They came to knitting club for the first time last week to give it a try. The “Knifty Knitters” meet every Thursday night from 7 to 8 p.m. by the fire in Eckardt Lounge. Anyone is welcome to join.

“We’re not very good, necessarily, but we love to come and have fun,” Bonnema said. “It’s nice to have something fun and relaxing to do.”

New members don’t need to know anything about knitting to join, and they don’t even need their own supplies right away.

“We have needles and yarn for people to borrow if they need it,” Bonnema said.

Whether you want to knit for fun, knit to take a break from homework, or knit chain mail, members of the club want you to shake your fear of needles and give knitting a try.

The club also welcomes those who prefer a crochet hook to knitting needles.

So, with no more excuses standing in the way, interested students should stop by. And for all you males out there looking for a spark in the romance department, sources have stated that “hook-ups” happen every week at the knitting club.

Stacy Bervig
Staff Writer

In the dead of winter, the knitting club has come back to life.

The club, officially titled the “Knifty Knitters,” is heading into its second year with a steady group of knitters already involved...

Members of the club are excited to see what this year will bring... or rather, who this year will bring.

The club meets every Thursday night from 7 to 8 by the Eckardt fireplace, and is open to all classes, both genders, and all skill levels.

“AMOR group threatened, unharmed”

Josh Welch
Staff Writer

AMOR groups set aside their Christmas break for an exciting trip and a chance for service. When the group in Guatemala did get a break, they still found excitement—more than they would have asked for.

While most Dordt students used the semester break to relax from the stress of classes, eleven Dordt students, along with psychology professor Mark Christians, went on a ten-day mission trip to the city of San Cristobal, located in the western highlands of Guatemala.

When they had a free afternoon, most of the group went on a hike up a mountain nearby with a local guide. On their way down the winding path, they suddenly met two men who held them at gunpoint.

“They had us sit down,” said Emily Huston. “One stayed in front of us on the trail, the other asked each person for their money. They took a few cameras too, out of the backpacks.”

The group was shaken when they got to the bottom of the mountain.

“But it was amazing how calm we were at first,” Huston said. “We were really protect—ed.”

Though an unnerving occurrence, it’s not the only thing the group experienced while on their trip.

They painted a dormitory at Camp Shalom, which houses groups of middle school and high school students that participate in church-led retreats.

On Wednesday 10 February at 7 PM in S101, Mixed Blood Theatre (of “Theory of Mind” fame) returns to Dordt College with their 45-minute theatrical production of “African America.”

Storyline: The unexpected appearance of a near-magical African man leads a very modern interracial couple to a better understanding and appreciation of the modern African diaspora and the immigrant experience, and helps them consider how to connect with and celebrate one’s heritage.

Background: Even in smaller communities in the Midwest one does not have to look far to see Asian faces, Hispanic faces, the faces of Pacific Islanders, and many, many African faces. In looking at these African faces (from Ethiopia, Liberia, Kenya, Somalia) the new stereotype is that they are all victims of some indeterminate civil war or genocide from some indeterminate African country. Yet many young African professionals, students, and, yes, even three of the Minnesota Vikings have spent almost their entire lives in the United States. The stereotype is only a partial truth.

There will be opportunity for a post-performance discussion with the (multi-racial) cast. Plan on coming!
Dating Daze:
Who’s happy now?  Part I

Allyssa Hoogendorn
Columnist

Even in today’s society, we haven’t lost the concept of true love. An article featured on MSN Relationships concluded with these words: “You can’t have it all unless you have someone to share it with.”

But sharing can mean making sacrifices. If there is no risk, there can be no reward. So we make choices at the risk of losing love.

Fortunately, there’s a way around that. It’s called not sharing and choosing the single life in all its glory.

But at what age do we give up the glamorous single life and become the crazy old spinster lady, living in a house of cats? Do single men of a certain age live in a house of dogs?

Let’s face it—being alone isn’t easy. It never has been.

In the Feminine Mystique, Betty Friedan laid out the 1950’s and early 1960’s societal setting like a boxing match—“In that corner, the fiery, manicating feminist, the career woman—loveless, alone. In this corner, the gentle wife and mother—loved and protected by her husband, surrounded by her adoring children.”

Nearly sixty years later, the happy housewife has been de-throned and a new woman has taken her place, providing an image just as unattainable as the smiling, dress- and make-up-wearing, 1950’s housewife.

Meet the single girl in all her conflicted glory. She may be viewed as having this fabulous, independent single life, doing what she wants, when she wants and answering to no one. But if she’s so fabulous, why is she still single?

She’ll be led to believe there’s something wrong with her and the happy hookup will gain an attraction. After all, what’s better than having the freedom of singleness and the illusion of having someone? Maybe actually having someone. But those are just details, easily ignored.

Reality Check:
In Haiti, the Past is Prologue

For two weeks now, the world has been fixated on the devastation in Haiti. But even before the earthquake, Haiti was the poorest country in the western hemisphere. 80% of the population was impoverished, and life expectancy was fifty-nine years.

If you ask Pat Robertson, Haiti is cursed because its inhabitants “wore a pact to the devil” in the late 18th century. Robertson has been progressively silent in the media for that statement and rightly so. But if Haiti isn’t suffering under a Faustian curse, then what’s the deal?

Part of the problem is internal. Haiti has suffered a long line of corrupt leaders who have squandered the country’s resources. By all accounts, the current democratically-elected president, Rene Preval, had been making moderate progress until the quake.

But a large share of the blame lies outside Haiti. The native peoples of Haiti were completely wiped out by the war, slavery and disease. The first Spanish settlers brought with them. Eventually, Haiti became a French slave colony. A slave revolt brought independence in 1804, but the French forced Haiti to pay $21 billion in damages for property loss – property including the newly-free slaves! That debt lingers to this day. Haiti makes $58 million in debt payments annually.

The United States occupied Haiti for mostly economic reasons from 1915 to 1934. U.S. Marines killed nearly 3,000 Haitians during a revolt in 1919. Later, in the name of fighting communism, the U.S.-supported Haiti’s two most infamous dictators, the Duvaliers. This father-son duo embezzled billions in aid and killed tens of thousands of Haitians. They are responsible for almost half of Haiti’s current debt. The people of Haiti are still paying for their cronyism.

So what happens now? Or, more importantly, what happens when Haiti fades from the news and the donations dry up?

If you ask FOX News host Bill O’Reilly, “The USA will once again pour millions into that country. One year from today, Haiti will be just as bad as it is right now.”

As Christian citizens, we cannot accept that attitude. No nation is hopeless. We should give from our plenty to organizations working to rebuild Haiti. We should demand that our leaders enact programs for debt relief and continued development for Haiti. The United States owes Haiti its support, and the church owes Haiti its love. As the Apostle Paul wrote, “Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another.”

Alvin observes:
A thought, brought to you by GEN 300

I met three friends last night for a big, dramatic “two Faith-this and fast-ses-ses- ter drink, in convocation to all the different ways we hope to grasp our remaining times. (This is how seniors speak.)

We have our ambitions, and significantly less time to claim that we haven’t yet decided our post-grad procedures and – this is where it got weird – our smiles altered, our eyes lowered and “Oh gosh, we’re going to be so lonely, aren’t we? It’s in- evitable.” Except, of course, for that one engaged friend – he’ll be just fine. (They’re a dependable quarter of our student body, no?) A lot of projecting was bad on “Where will we find ourselves?” that should have, instead, been, “Where will we take ourselves?”

The worry of how we’ll occupy our time is, funny, more in deciding what we want than in how we’ll get there. And what we want is dependent on so many vari-

ables: What are we good at? What are we intrigued by? What needs us most?

It is my belief that what we carefully decide for ourselves, one of several possi-
bilities, is not subject to the one way that we’re supposed to be doing.

Or, put a different way, there’s no one specific call- ing that we’re built for, that we follow it to rigid detail or we wobble and falter in anything else we do.

This is meant to be assur-
ing (to myself as much as to any reader) and I think, on some days, it’s believable.

Those assuring days will begin as soon as we start working toward one of sev-
eral possibilities of what makes us happy – after we decide on what might make us happy. It’s a big, significant decision. We hedge on it. When asked of our plans in passing, we shrug and almost feign apathy. We as-
sure our parents that it will work out, that we have time to decide and that we are putting active time in prayer and reflection to the kind of people we want to be.

How long will we feign apathy? What kind of peo-
ple feign apathy?

The anti-Moderate: Convoked by what voice?

Robert Minto
Columnist

“Convocation” comes from Latin words that mean “to call together.” These words have profound meaning at Dordt, where we believe in “vocation” – that the voice which convokes us is the voice of God. Therefore, a convocation speaker has a big role to fill.

Dr. Pavlischek tried to fill that role this year. He was introduced as “one who shares Dordt’s perspective.” Then throughout the speech he kept saying that students could ask their professors to explain his own points further, implying that all Dordt professors agreed with him.

Pavlischek’s theme was war and Christianity. He began by suggesting he was bringing a problem to Dordt, but he ended by asserting a particular perspective. The perspective he recommended – with a lot of rhetorical cunning – boiled down to neoconservative militarism. I’m all for discussing this perspective, but the venue (convocation) and the constant implication that he somehow represented Dordt’s institutional views, make me skeptical of Dr. Pavlischek.

Did I miss the part where a Reformed worldview necessarily entails militaristic neoconservatism? Perhaps the many professors that I heard objecting to Pavlischek’s ideas don’t contribute to our institutional perspective.

I, for one, benefit more from challenges to my comfortable opinions than from apologies for them. In this sense, perhaps the theme of war and Christianity could have been a good convocation theme. But not by preaching to a choir of Northwest Iowans the same message that lets them sleep at night.

Did God’s voice convoke us this semester? It sounded more like the voice of American foreign policy to me. When did Dordt start to obtain that voice? It must have been while I was sleeping, because I haven’t seen it in the founding documents, heard it from my professors, or encountered it in chapel. Maybe we were all asleep. Maybe we need to wake up.
Dordt Athletes Make a Difference

The men’s basketball coach, Ross Douma, is starting his Dordt career strong. Not only has he led his team to an 11-8 start, but he has also led his team in areas of lasting significance.

In November, Douma and his team were hired to throw tires at a local ethanol plant. The team, along with several other groups from Dordt, volunteered their services and donated the money they earned to the AMOR groups. Douma appreciated that this project let his team interact with other campus groups. Most of all, Douma enjoyed seeing his team make an impact for Christ by raising money for the mission trips that took place over Christmas break.

Douma certainly would like to continue serving in the future. He says that, through these volunteer opportunities, he wants to “promote a life of service” for his players.

But the men’s basketball team is not the only Dordt squad making a difference. The women’s basketball team has done some recent volunteer work as well.

During Christmas break, Coach Craig Steimensma and his team served at The Bridge in Orange City for the second year in a row. The Bridge is a transitional living shelter for women and children who need guidance and support.

The team cleaned, organized, and assisted with childcare. They were eager to help, and Steimensma said that the women had great attitudes.

“We’ve been so blessed that we try to give something back,” he said.

Both of this year’s basketball squads have shown talent on the court, but more importantly, they are showing true servanthood in their time off the court.

Ask an Athlete

Diamond sports writer Sam Hart goes the extra mile to ask Dordt athletes the tough questions

Joniah Lutjebroer is a junior from Belleville, Ontario, majoring in K-12 education and HPER. He hopes to one day be a high school PE teacher and coach. Lutjebroer runs both cross-country and track. He claimed the top spot in the 600m at the Dordt Invite on Jan. 16, and was on the first-place finishing 4x800m and 4x400m relay teams as well. Here is a closer look at this quick Canadian.

When did you start to run track? I ran track in Grade 4 just for fun, and I really enjoyed it. Then in Grade 6 I started running track with a club team.

When you were a little boy, did you love running? Yeah, I have a couple of brothers, and we would always race around, like down the street.

What goes through your mind in mid-race? Honestly, I forget a lot about it when I cross the line. Sometimes it is strategy, but a lot of times it’s a song that someone was humming or something that gets stuck in your head.

Favorite race to run: Relays, both the 4 x 400 and the 4 x 800. It is really exciting because it has a team sort of feel to it. You are busy cheering your teammates on and then you get the baton and you are all excited, ready to go.

Do you have any pre-race traditions? Our relay team usually prays before a race.

What is the best thing about Dordt track? The social part is awesome; everybody is great, really fun to talk to. Warm-ups in practice is fun because everyone is just talking to each other, it’s relaxed.

Do you have any advice for the young, up-and-coming runners? Keep trying and go for it. You can’t expect to do amazing right away coming in from high school. It takes awhile to adjust, so don’t get discouraged and hang in there.

Track and field makes Nationals the goal

Michelle Steiger, who ran at the cross country National meet this past fall, has also started off well by qualifying for nationals in the 3000m.

“We also have a really good freshman class,” said Coach Heynen.

Some names that he threw out were Nicole Pfeifle, who took two second-place finishes at the Invite, and a couple of throwers, Orrin Berger and Jordan Huismann, who made the “Top 10” list at Dordt College. Pole vaulter Josh Brinkhoff is another freshman who has a chance at qualifying for Nationals.

Coach Heynen is also expecting some of his upperclassmen to hit their stride this season. Eric Tudor, hampered by injuries in the past, claimed second in the men’s 3000m, and Jenna Brouwer took first in the 55m dash and third in the 200m.

For goals this season, Coach Heynen has Nationals on his mind.

“We would like to get both our 4x800 and 4x400 relay teams to Nationals, men and women, as well as a number of individuals,” he said. “We also have some athletes that could finish in the top five of the conference. And we just want to score more points overall than we did last year.”
One group working on its film. Details about the production are kept secret until it is shown on Feb. 19.

Photo by Hani Yang

One of several competitions this year was the Film Challenge, which took place on Saturday, Jan. 16. Students had 24 hours to write, shoot, and edit a video in a given genre, including a specified prop, character, and line of dialogue—all in 48 hours.

But Huisman didn’t even have that long.

“The majority of us had to work, so instead of being able to utilize the entire 48 hours, we had to pump it out in roughly 24 hours,” Huisman said.

For three of the 21 teams participating in the Film Challenge, even 48 hours wasn’t enough. Those teams were penalized points for missing the 9:00 deadline on Saturday, Jan. 16.

Details about the films are top-secret for now, but all approved films will be shown on campus at a free public screening on Friday, Feb. 19.

“Best of Show,” chosen by the judges, will be awarded $500, the coveted Dordtly Award, and an AVID software digital editing package.

Fourth Prairie Grass Film Challenge

The fourth annual Prairie Grass Challenge was not only a chance for Dordt Digital Media majors to practice their skills, but a chance for engineers to let loose and for alumni to prove themselves.

“I wanted to do it because it is such a great opportunity get out of the strict world of equations and mathematical rules, and just let my mind run wild,” said Stephen Pederson, an Engineering major who competed for the second time.

He may have been a little inexperienced, but that didn’t stop him from having a good time.

“I was intimidated by the legitimate teams working on four different computers with professional equipment while I am just using the basic editing program,” he said. “But my experiences in the challenge have been some of the best of my college life, and I would recommend it to everyone.”

Several Dordt alumni also participated in different locations.

“We got disqualified the past two times we entered the competition when we were in school, so Jon De Weerd wanted to prove to ourselves that, if nothing else, we could finish a project and not be disqualified,” said Aaron Huisman, a Dordt alumni who competed from Los Angeles.

Alumni are faced with another dynamic to the challenge: “The actual filming was harder to do here, as it’s a lot harder to get permission to film in any location,” Huisman said. “So we stuck to locations that were easily attainable: our apartments and places we work.”

The film challenge forces teams to write, shoot, and edit a video in a given genre, including a specified prop, character, and line of dialogue—all in 48 hours.

So what is ACTF? Anti-Communist Turnip Farmers? American Christian Trapeze Foundation? Atheist Cat Trout Fishing? Not exactly. ACTF, or more accurately KCACTF, is the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, an annual weekend theatre competition that Dordt has the opportunity to participate in this past week.

This year’s festival for the Midwestern region was held at the Johnson County Community College in Kansas City. The festival kicked off Sunday night with orientation and ended Friday night with a closing ceremony, but the real fun happened in between.

Competitions gave college and grad school students an opportunity to compete in various categories such as acting, directing, and scenic design. Danielle Roos was one of twelve regional nominees in the directing competition this year while Ellen De Young participated in the stage managing competition and Becky (Lancaster) Buhlig, a Dordt alum, went for scenic design. Unfortunately, no Dordt student received honors this year.

However, Mark Bylenga was awarded a certificate of merit for “tying a bow tie on stage.”

Buhlig, Roos, and Emily Hageman were also chosen to participate in the Irene Ryan Scholarship Auditions.

Bylenga was a partner for a Northwestern nominee. “Caucasian Chalk Circle” and “Enchanted April” were also nominated but did not go to the competition.

In addition to competitions, the festival also holds workshops on topics ranging from lighting, sound, scenic design, and stage managing to directing and acting.

Serious business aside, students could also see shows performed throughout the day or take part in dance, karaoke parties well into the night.

The festival was a learning experience for the Dordt students. Competitors were offered professional feedback and got perspectives from people outside of Dordt. Grad school recruiters and theatre company agents were also present, providing students with opportunities for summer jobs and future schooling.

Junior Art Show

A new collection of colors, figures and lines created by junior art majors decorate the walls of the art gallery. Fifteen students were selected to take part in the exhibit. The selection was based on the artist’s knowledge and use of two- or three-dimensional art, rendering skills, nuance, and quality, according to Jake Van Wyk, art professor.

The show contains over 100 pieces on display in an around the gallery, including drawings, painting, photographs, ceramics, sculptures, and approximately 50 graphich design pieces.

“They assembled the show themselves,” Van Wyk said. The posters advertising the show were also made by one of the students.

The exhibit is open until Feb. 9.
Comic Mishaps

Stories from abroad

Grace Venhuizen
Guest Columnist

“There’s Washington. And then there’s DC,” my American Studies Program director tried to explain to me the first day of orientation. Jet lagged and hungry, I tried to concentrate on his explanation between giant bites of Armand’s Chicago style pizza.

“Washington is the young executive on his cell phone, the intern running around Capitol Hill, and the distinguished politician making policy decisions,” He said. The District of Columbia is the people that have moved into the inner city, the homeless man on the street, and the unwed teenage mother living below the poverty line.”

That night, on a moonlit walk to the steps of the Capital Building, I saw Washington. In my first day of service learning at Capitol Hill Pregnancy Center (CHPC), I saw DC.

CHPC is a non-profit organization that helps women and men during crisis pregnancies, encouraging alternatives to abortion and offering free services and supplies: pregnancy tests, counseling, classes, diapers, and clothing. In my work at CHPC, I heard about the stories of DC. I heard about the 19-year-old who has had seven abortions. I heard about the spike in pregnancies after another gang initiation. I heard that the center is not allowed to teach abstinence in public schools, and that most girls don’t recognize abstinence as a form of birth control.

Through these stories, I encountered the DC culture – a culture not shared with “Washington” as most people understand it. Now, as I walk past the Capitol building and think of the culture-changing work done inside its walls, I remember too the work being done in DC. Although CHPC is not as recognizable as the Capitol, its work changes a culture as well.

Featured photo

Winter brings the inevitable cold, wind, and snow...but at least it’s pretty, right? Photo by Hani Yang

Top ten reasons why Dordt doesn’t cancel class on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

1. “Worldview” was never said in any of King’s speeches.
2. Every other school’s doing it so we shouldn’t.
3. Students would want to skip class on Tuesday “in honor of him” too.
4. We don’t even get Good Friday off. What did you expect?
5. Streets and highways are named after MLK. That’s enough observation.
6. Dordt only acknowledges holidays that were in existence before the school began.
7. MLK wouldn’t want us to have a day off.
8. Writing a paper about him is a much better way to honor him than taking a day off from school.
9. Dreams happen at night so there’s no need to cancel class during the day.
10. And there is no number 10 because I was too busy doing homework from that Monday to write it.

Grace Venhuizen
Guest Columnist

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by Josh Welch