Daughters of Africa brings new perspective to Dordt College

Bridget Smith
Staff Writer

Thomotina Petrus originally wanted to be an English teacher, and although she is living a different dream today, she is still honored to be a teacher. As the star of the dynamic one-person show, Daughters of Africa, which played at Dordt College last week, Petrus teaches through acting. The play is one of more than six “culturally-specific” plays produced by the Mixed Blood Theatre company, whose mission is to spread the vision of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to middle schools, high schools, colleges, community centers and other theaters across the country.

Petrus exhibited the theater’s mission in her performance of Daughters of Africa. This one-woman show carried the audience through American history through the eyes and experiences of African American women. The stories of the women were narrated by a flight attendant and treated the audience like passengers flying through history. Petrus dynamically switched in and out of the characters to reenact the stories of influential

“I owe it to my ancestors to do something great – to give to my children.”

— Thomasina Petrus, actress

New provost offers ‘best of both views’

Ashlee Stallina
Staff Writer

By this fall, Dordt will no longer have a vice-president of academic affairs. The current VPAA, Dr. Rockne McCarthy, is retiring at the end of the school year, to be replaced by Dordt’s first provost, Dr. Erik Hoekstra.

“It’s a very important switch,” said McCarthy. “It will bring about a greater understanding of integral learning.”

Whatever the name, the purpose of the positions, is to “ensure the quality of the academic enterprise” at Dordt, according to President Carl Zylstra. However, the new title will give Hoekstra “broader responsibilities,” Zylstra said.

Along with the duties of McCarthy’s office, which include leading the faculty, reporting to and making recommendations to the president, and serving as chief administrative officer in the president’s absence, Hoekstra will also assume the title of administrative leader of student services. “It’s about the way we conceive of education,” Zylstra said. “It’s a full-person experience. It’s about what happens in the dorms as well as the classroom, on PLIA or AMOR as well as on an internship or student teaching.”

Hoekstra worked at Dordt from 1997-2000 as the chair of the business department, professor of business management, and director of the business internship program.

Hoekstra attended Trinity Christian College, where he earned his bachelor’s degree in history and philosophy. He went on to receive his master’s degree in international business from the Rotterdam School of Management – Erasmus University, and he earned his Ph.D. in organizational leadership and human-resource development at Iowa State University.

He has also served on the board of Trinity Christian College and, more recently, on the board of Northwestern College, a position from which he resigned when he accepted the provost’s job at Dordt.

With this wide-ranging experience, Hoekstra feels that he can incorporate the continued on page 2
Southview feline: friend or foe?

Bree Wierenga
Staff Writer

Footprints and paw prints dent the snow outside Southview and East Campus apartments. An orange cat has become friends with students in those buildings.

Work-study students "adopted" the light-orange cat this past summer. A few months ago, junior Catherine Bakker saw the freezing feline outside Southview and brought it inside to friends who make wonderful, loving, adoptive kitten parents.

Since then, the cat has been living in students' rooms and around the apartments, particularly Southview.

"Often it would be hanging around the west door and then it was really cold there for a while so we would let it in because we have a heart," said a resident of the apartments, who requested anonymity. "It reminded me of the Good Samaritan story."

The cat's name has indeed changed several times. Bakker said she named the cat Fernando. The summer work-study students who came back early in January dubbed the cat Mischief. Another student calls him Jasper.

"Students generally really like having cats or pets in the apartments," said Bakker. "It makes things cozier and homier."

"Both maintenance and students for the most part liked the cat," said another student who also requested anonymity. "It's a good way of educating part of God's creation and it allows students to de-stress a bit after a long day of classes and studying."

Despite the affection for the same kitty, Dordt's rules do not allow students to own pets other than fish. Maintenance no longer allows the cat to live inside the apartments. Bakker has put up signs asking students not to let the cat inside.

Carol Prinsen, the maintenance worker for Southview and East Campus, put the cat outside after she had to clean up its feces underneath a stairwell. "It's in online blog chat, but we just cannot start having 'pets' inside the dorms and apartments," she said. "They do leave an odor to the buildings."

In addition, Prinsen and several other workers and students are allergic to cats.

Though encounters with the cat have not all been bad memories.

"After picking up the cat and putting it out the door several times, I didn't actually hate it," she said. "Once a time a student was coming down the sidewalk as I set the cat out and said, 'Now get out of here and don't come back.' I got a funny look... and then we laughed when I said I was talking to the cat."

Prinsen continues to try to be of service to the students and to do my work for the glory of God," said Prinsen with a smile. "Just not cleaning up after cats."

Daughters of Africa brings new perspective to Dordt College

Kristina De Graaf
Staff Writer

The Diamond is now online, thanks to the combined efforts of four computer science majors.

Nathan Mulder, Derek Bakker, Andrew Raith and Eric Vermeer took on the project as a part of their Computer Science Client/Server Programming class.

Mulder undertook the overall visual design of the site, while Raith created a brief user manual. Raebel humanized the site by working on the website's database access.

Professor Nick Breems felt the project was an ideal way for the students to implement class learning.

"I enjoyed seeing the students take ownership of the project and turn out a nice-looking end product that put to use many of the skills they had learned during the semester," Breems said.

"The Diamond is now online thanks to the combined efforts of four computer science majors," said Breems.

Using a blogging platform called WordPress, Raith and the other students were able to highly customize the site.

"The site looks similar to an online blog... it's in testing mode at the moment," Breems said.

"It's in testing mode at the moment," Breems said. "It's in testing mode at the moment."

The site has current issues of the Diamond, soon-to-be-added archives, and the opportunity to post comments on most articles, giving a community a chance to participate.

Petra said she is excited to see the site being implemented.

"Any time, I'm part of a ground-breaking project, that's what I like," said Petra. "I want to make sure the end result was up to par and everything was expected to be. It is the beginning of a big step for students on campus."

The new site is currently available only on campus at diamond.cmsc.dordt.edu. The opportunity to post comments on most articles, giving a community a chance to participate.

"I really encourage students to send their meetings and get involved in an issue of injustice in our culture," said Schelhaas.

Death Penalty Awareness Week

Emily Sadjak
Staff Writer

In conjunction with the play "Dead Man Walking," Dordt's Death Penalty Awareness Week will begin Feb. 21.

When the theatre department received permission for production, the theatre department also required that the college sponsor related projects during the week that reflect current prisoner issues.

On Monday night (Feb. 25), three Dordt students from the Advanced Expository Writing class will present a forum on the death penalty. In past years, this forum has covered different global issues, and Professor Dave Schelhaas expects good dialogue to take place on this topic.

Tuesday night (Feb. 26), Doug Tjapkes from Grand Haven, Mich., will be on campus to speak more specifically about prison rights. He founded a project called innocent, which advocates on behalf of prisoners.

"I really encourage students to send their meetings and get involved in an issue of injustice in our culture," said Schelhaas.

February 14, 2008

Dordt Diamond Online!

www.diamond.cmsc.dordt.edu
An economy primer – maybe

Joel Veldkamp
Staff Writer

All is not well on the economic front. The U.S. economy lost 17,000 jobs last month, consumer spending is down and the stock market is jittery. And to the delight of Dordt’s Canadian population, the value of the U.S. dollar sank below the value of the Canadian dollar last fall for the first time in 30 years. The specter of the unthinkable — a recession — is everywhere.

But what is the cause of the country’s woes? And what does it mean for the average Dordt student?

I’ve set out to find the answers. After three solid hours of research, I haven’t gotten anywhere. I sit at my desk, staring at my laptop screen, trying to understand; no amount of mental exercise can unroll this Gordian knot.

As I’m about to give up completely, the phone by my desk rings. I hear you’ve been asking a lot of questions,” says a deep-throated voice on the other end.

“Who is this?” I ask.

“I have the answers you need,” he says. “But this line isn’t safe. Meet me at the underground parking garage in three hours.”

“Dordt has an underground parking garage?”

I ask.

“Coffee.”

-Mark Bonnes
Senior

“I gave up pop for Lent.”
Ashley Laverman
Sophomore

“Facebook!”
-Stephanie Krych
Sophomore

What did you give up for Lent?

“What did you give up for Lent?”

“Coffee.”

—Mark Bonnes
Senior

“Amenonomv primer maybe Joel Veldkamp — you have been forgiven.

To coin a phrase, “If you aren’t moved to tears, then you aren’t paying attention.”

“Use a little common sense, for pity’s sake”

“You said you had answers for me?” I ask.

He doesn’t respond.

“I press on. The economy has been doing great for years,” I say. “Now, all of a sudden, the dollar starts to drop like a rock, consumer spending is down, and businesses are starting to cut jobs. What happened?”

“Arrogance,” the shadowed stranger replies. “We became too arrogant. People spent money they didn’t have,” he continues. “Take housing, for instance. For the past few years, subprime mortgages have been all the rage. Get a loan for a house; pay next to nothing — your credit score doesn’t matter. But of course, eventually, you do have to start paying.”

Graceful passion in a painful world

Micah Schuurman
Staff Writer

“If you aren’t angry, then you aren’t paying attention!” It is a common protestor’s phrase.

Whether helpless, impassioned or bitter, anger is a tempting option for people who take the time for the world around them.

Does this righteous anger have a purpose for Christians? One thing is clear: love must be the basis and our response must be genuine.

Out of gratitude for the extravagant grace which was given to us, we begin to produce fruit. If this transformation (or should I say transfiguration?) of grace truly takes place within us, we become a new creation, mirroring Christ.

The Bible often speaks of the emotions of Jesus. When Christ saw the sadness in the world, He was moved, and our response must be the same.

People have broken hearts and broken minds. There are broken families and broken hips. Orphans are wracked by AIDS. Wombs are barren. Children have heart defects. Cancer eats our loved ones. War eats our countries. Death eats all.

In the realm of real life, it is sad realities of life to move you to sorrow, you have no life in you. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and if I hand over my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

If we cannot show love to our brother or sister who suffers, we cannot claim to have Christ’s love within us.

Our response to the pains of the world should be based upon this love, this grace.

We often think of grace as something given to us, not something that we must give. Yet the very purpose of receiving grace is to become the sort of person who can give grace to others. Now it’s time to pay the piper.

“Wait!” I shout. “Who are you?”

“Someone who knows,” he says, and continues into the darkness.

“Use a little common sense, for pity’s sake,” he says. “Know what you can afford. Look down the road. Spend your money wisely. If in the long run, you – and the country – will be a lot better off.”

With that, the man turns and starts walking away.

“Wait!” I shout. “Who are you?”

“Someone who knows,” he says, and continues into the darkness.

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Valentine’s Day: how it all began

Jessica Assink
Staff Writer

It’s February 14, a day of pink and red foil-wrapped chocolate hearts, red roses by the dozen, candy hearts imprinted with meaningful messages like “TXT ME,” pictures of fluffy half-naked cherubs pointing arrows at unsuspecting victims, boxes full of school valentines displaying Harry Potter concocting a love potion and Orlando Bloom rescuing damsels from pirates.

How did we get to this point? Unless the founders of Hallmark traveled back in time to start a consumer-driven holiday in the otherwise slow card-giving season, it’s all quite mysterious. But your intrepid “Diamond” reporters are here to shed a little light on the subject.

We’re not exactly sure who St. Valentine was. One legend says that he may have been a young man who fell in love with a girl who visited him while he was in prison. He wrote her a letter and signed it, “From your Valentine”—and it stuck. What if his name had been Wilbur: would we be celebrating Wilbur’s Day and passing out wilnuts? Or else there’s the story about the priest named Valentine who performed marriages for young couples after Emperor Claudius II said that young men couldn’t marry (they would make better soldiers if they were single). Of course, Valentine was killed when Claudius found out about his romanticism—particularly because he united them nowhere to be found.

After we found out a little about Valentine, students started wondering why this holiday is in February, and not a happy (mostly) sunny month, like April.

“I hooked up with her on February 13...” – Ryan the Temp, “The Office”

Well, the pagan fertility festival Lupercalia traditionally happened in the middle of February. It was a little different from our conventional holiday activities: boys would slap women with strips of goathide dipped in blood so that the women would be more fertile in the coming year. (Is that where the red of Valentine’s Day comes from?)

And later, after the women put their names in a giant urn, each of the town’s bachelors would draw a name and find his true love—or at least the woman that he would be paired with for the next year. Kind of like match.com, with the choice factor taken out.

After all of this, it became official—around 498 A.D., Pope Gelasius decided that February 14 was St. Valentine’s Day.

So it could be worse. Instead of being blinded by pink for a day, we could be chased around with bloody strips of dead animals and be stuck with a random guy for a year. Pass the candy hearts.

Valentine’s Day Facts

- 190 million Valentine’s Day cards are exchanged annually.
- 25 percent of all seasonal cards sent each year are valentines.
- More than 2.3 million couples become engaged each year, and 10 percent of the engagements happen on Valentine’s Day.
- Valentine’s Day is the number one holiday for fresh flower purchases.
- Women purchase approximately 85 percent of all valentines.

Student Services establishes new “Retention Matters” program

Nathan Smith
Editor

Student Services has initiated a new program this semester that will work to increase student retention. The “Retention Matters” Project is a cooperative effort between Residence Life, the Academic Skills Center (ASK Center) and the faculty who serve as academic advisers.

Student retention, particularly freshmen retention, is always a concern for a college. Every school year, some of the freshmen students who attend Dordt during the fall semester do not return for the spring semester.

This semester is no different. Roughly 9.9 percent of freshmen who attended Dordt during the fall semester did not return for the spring semester. This rate is not unusual.

“We’re about exactly where I would have expected to have been with retention,” said Jim Bos, Registrar. “Over all, it’s average,” he added. Freshmen retention rates typically hover around the 90 percent mark.

While retention was average overall, it is marked by characteristics unique to this year. The unusual high rate of male freshmen enrollment this year was accompanied by the lowest retention rate for freshmen males in the past five years (83.2 percent), while the freshmen female retention rate grew to the highest it has been for the last five years (97.8 percent).

Last year, students with activity grants for athletics, theater, music, or journalism had unusually low retention rates, and they continued to drop this year. Bos explained that it is difficult to examine the low retention in this group of students.

He says some people link low retention with specific groups such as athletics, but because the Registrar’s office does not break down the statistics by specific activity, the Registrar’s office cannot determine which type of activity grants have the lowest retention.

Bos also said that it is important to realize that the number of activity grants has risen greatly, a fact that makes explaining the changes difficult.

Bos said that it is too early to make any particular claims about these developments. “I don’t dare point my finger anywhere,” said Bos. “But there is something here.”

Academic success is one of the largest determining factors in freshmen retention, and peers and living environment have an enormous influence on academic success and retention.

“Where are students and the social environment they’re in a definite factor in retention,” Bos explained. This is evident when looking at the academic status of students. Last semester, these 102 students had roommates on one of these lists. This sort of correlation is particularly alarming for males, of which there were 54 who had GPAs below 2.0 during the first semester.

Retention is not a new concern, and though this year has average retention overall, Dordt’s staff is intent on trying to increase retention.

According to staff members, one of the best ways to do this is to enable students to succeed academically.

We’ve developed a “Retention Matters” project,” said Bethany Schuttinga, Vice President for Student Services. She explained how the project will work: students on any type of academic alert will have to meet with their RD to fill out an academic survey on classroom environment, learning issues (time management, study skills and habits), and their social environment.

The appropriate portions of the surveys will be given to Res Life, the ASK Center and academic advisers. These individuals will work together with the students to help them determine in what ways they would like to make changes in order to improve their academic pursuits.

“Hopefully the whole process is more transparent, and the students will be confronted a bit about what’s going on, and they can make some decisions on their own behalf about whether or not they want to stay in that stream of habits that are stimulating poor academic standing,” Schuttinga explained.

But Schuttinga believes that the project is likely not a quick fix. “Just because we’re being strategic about intervention, doesn’t mean it will always show up right away. It takes a while for the system to really make a difference.”

Schuttinga also sees this new project working well with the restructured Student Services.

“The Learning Community Assistants and Area Coordinators will really hit that [academic alert] list hard, and be looking at the [living environment],” Schuttinga said.

She also stressed that the new project and restructuring will not be implemented by telling students what they can or can’t do, but by encouraging compliance and accountability for good habits.

“It’s not just your individual responsibility, but we’re all supporting each other academically,” she explained.

She also mentioned examples of how wings or halls, or other institutions have implemented group goals for average GPAs for their wing or building and achieved excellent results. “[Residents] have to take some ownership of promoting an environment that’s contributing to academic success,” she said.
Dordt men compete in all-campus "Februhairy" beard-growing contest

Luke Schut
Staff Writer

Beards! Chuck Norris, the Amish, female body builders, they all have beards! Manly beards! Beards are for men! This February is Februhairy at Dordt! Men, grow your manly beards! Beards come from being manly, so do this manly stuff to grow a manly beard!

MANLY THING 1: PLAY MANLY SPORTS!

Sports are manly! Playing manly sports will make your beard grow abnormally fast! Play any sportyou want! Football, Ping pong! Bear-wrestling! Beard is just bear with a mouth.

MANLY THING 2: CRUSH THINGS WITH YOUR FACE!

Crushing stuff with your face is manly! Men do it all the time! Most men crush aluminum cans, but you can crush whatever you want! Crushing stuff with your face is manly, so it makes beards grow! You don't need a reason to crush stuff, just crush it with your face!

MANLY THING 3: LIFT HEAVY STUFF AND SET IT BACK DOWN!

Lifting heavy stuff is manly! Men lift heavy stuff! But what really makes your beard grow is setting that stuff back down! This is why female body builders have beards! They lift heavy stuff and set it down! But setting down heavy stuff is for men! So get out there and put that heavy stuff down!

MANLY THING 6: FIX STUFF!

Fixing stuff is for men! It's not broken! Who cares?! It will be once you're done "fixing" it! With duct tape use duct tape to fix stuff and you'll grow a huge manly beard!

Junior Josh Cheney shaved his trademark beard in preparation for the competition. Photo by Becky Love

Long Lines Rec Center offers rock climbing options

Sarah Groneck
Staff Writer

Since towering mountains aren't exactly commonplace in northwest Iowa, novice and expert rock climbers alike should consider an excellent and inexpensive climbing alternative in Sioux City. Long Lines, Family Rec Center, located at the Tyson Events Center in Sioux City, is home to, according to recreation superintendent Geoff Hubbard, "the best rock climbing wall in the Midwest." The entry price, a mere five dollars for two hours of climbing, is a great deal for any penney-pinching college student.

With over 5800 square feet of climbing space and towering walls for climbing and bouldering, the facility is well-equipped for all levels of climbers. Newcomers to the sport need not be intimidated by the height of the walls. Certified climbers will walk first-time visitors through the basics of rock climbing and show which walls are the easiest to scale. Self-belaying on the easier walls is also an option. Climmers with previous experience will find that the climbing walls pose a challenge to their skills as well. With a 42 foot competitive wall and a 52.5 foot tall tower, climbers can test their limits by following the mapped routes on the walls or navigating on their own.

"Rock climbing pushes self-boundaries," Hubbard says. "People look at the walls and say, 'there's no way I could do this.' But once they're 20 feet up, they start gaining a definite sense of fulfillment.

Reservations for the rock climbing wall are required. The five-dollar cost includes the price of a harness and helmet. Rock climbing shoes may be rented for three dollars as well. Each rock climbing session lasts two hours. For reservations and more information, please call (712) 724-5127.

Club NOIR educates Dordt community

Jurgan Boerema
Staff Writer

Black History Month marks a nationwide effort to acknowledge progress and change within the African-American culture. Throughout the month of February, Club NOIR will also seek to honor those ideals.

Club NOIR is a group created by Merlyndi Proper in an effort to expose students to a multicultural education. The aim of NOIR is to expose the Dordt community to a variety of cultures that are distinctly black," said Proper.

"Hopefully this club will provide a greater awareness of distinct cultures on Dordt's campus." - Merlyndi Proper

On Feb. 15, a mini-panel discussion entitled "African Experience" will be held in CA 158 from 8 to 9 p.m. The panelists are Gideon Wamala, a Kenyan pastor in Rock Valley, and Jacob Kohis, a Sudanese refugee attending Northwestern College. Wamala and Kohis will relate some of their life experiences and speak on the current situation in both countries.

Senior Trevor "Sundialta" Ferguson will present a lecture entitled "Rastafarianism - A Way of Life" in SB 108 from 7 to 8 p.m. Ferguson was born in the Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, and has had a positive life experience with Rastafarianism.

On March 1, Ferguson will give another lecture entitled, "Africa before Slavery and Colonization" in SB 108 from 7 to 8 p.m. Ferguson was born in the Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, and has had a positive life experience with Rastafarianism. Ferguson runs the House of Jah, a successful Afro-Centric Retailstore and holds associate degrees in engineering design and drafting and design. He is pursuing a master's degree in architecture and certification as an African holistic healer.
“Dead Man Walking” raises questions

Grace Venhuizen
Staff Writer

Justice and mercy come together to form a poignant image on Dordt’s campus next week in the theatre department’s production of “Dead Man Walking.”

The story is based on true events of a death row prisoner and a nun that befriends him.

The show is controversial and has been presented by other organizations with a message of anti-capital punishment.

Junior Becky Lancaster plays Sister Helen Prejean, a nun that befriends the inmate. Lancaster said that Dordt is not trying to present the play as a statement against the death penalty.

“Every person is worth more than their worst act,” Lancaster said.

She says that Dordt’s production is trying to show “that no one is past God’s love.”

Director Jeri Schelhaas said that the play “grapples with something important for us to think about by way of story so we can put flesh and blood on the issue.”

It is the “challenge of finding where justice and mercy embrace,” Schelhaas said. “The actors have done a tremendous job — really committing themselves to fully engage in an unpleasant story,” she added.

While developing her character, Lancaster said she drew on personal experiences.

Lancaster worked for a summer in the inner city of Los Angeles. She also went with a group of Dordt students to participate in a worship service at South Dakota State Penitentiary.

When Lancaster took on the character of Sister Helen, she said, “It helped me to look at specific needs in people’s lives.” Lancaster sees Sister Helen’s life as a real inspiration for others, having counseled more than one death row inmate.

“Dead Man Walking” has brought to light in a new way the old issues of justice, mercy, forgiveness and retribution for the students participating in the show. Schelhaas said she hopes that audience members also will grapple with the question of making justice and forgiveness fit together.

The show will run Feb. 21-23 and Feb. 28-March 1. During the weekdays between the shows, discussions will be held on Dordt’s campus dealing with capital punishment and prisoners on death row.

Call the box office for more information (643-430).

Alvin the foodie: fluffy and vibrant rice

Alvin Shim
Staff Writer

My mother taught me to make rice, showing me how to wash and re-wash the grains several times over until the water was clear and no longer murky, until all the residue had been rinsed off so it takes less time to cook and the rice is fluffy and vibrant.

She taught me to measure the right amount of water so we don’t end up with dry, “plastic” rice or a soupy porridge that is impossible to eat with chopsticks.

I still can’t get it right all the time. She can tell, with her eyes closed, that there’s enough water.

And then the electric steamer, the new one my parents brought back from their summer in Korea (it beeps, giggles, lights up and sings classic Beatles songs in Korean) heats the water more and more, cooking the rice that absorbs moisture, until it reaches boiling point and then the heat is lowered.

A very poorly translated “Hey Jude” tells us that it is time to eat.

I’ve never been able to eat plain rice by itself. Fortunately, because my father takes care of his family and my mother is the best cook I know, I’ve never had to. Yes, we eat rice at home. We use chopsticks. They speak to me in Korean and, unless I’m in class with Professor Shim, they hardly ever call me Alvin.

Generally, a Korean meal consists of rice and, if you’re rich, an enormous variety of banchan. This can be anything that you eat with rice. Spicy, pickled cabbage or radish (kimchi), dried, roasted seaweed (gim) or beef marinated in soy sauce, garlic and onions (bulgogi) are a few elemental dishes.

The point is that there was always something colorful and very garlicky to load onto my rice.

That is why I was boggled and, actually quite impressed this summer when a friend of mine came over and, instead of fixing himself a taco with the rest of us, he took a scoop of plain white rice and munched away.

I shrugged and ate my own rice, dressed with lime and cilantro sitting on a corn tortilla with tomatoes, seasoned steak and roasted bell peppers.

Every translucent meal my mother creates is served with a bowl of rice. I have no doubt that her last meal, if she were to choose, would be a bowl of rice and a few slices of kimchi.

A few years ago, my brother and I went to pick her up from the airport after a long trip across Europe. She instructed us to bring a bowl of rice and when she inhaled it the moment we had settled in the car.

There are a million times I can remember my father coming home late at night from a trip, four or five in the morning even, and she will have prepared a full meal for his return, staying awake and waiting to sit at the table and watch him eat.

The same thing happens with my brothers now, when they come to visit. We sit around the table well after the town has fallen asleep and eat the food we grew up eating.

These are my favorite foods — my comfort foods, my last meal foods. The dishes that my brothers drool over, that drive home faster.

Pork loin cooked in the juices of whatever kind of kimchi we have with bean sprouts, tofu and, again, the bowl of rice on the side. This is kimchi chigae (jee-geh) and it is comparable to the newfound, guiltless obsession that the student body has with poutine, but that’s for a different issue.

One significant anxiety I have about graduation and living (hopefully) in the city is that I won’t have the foods that shaped my life this far.

When we left Grand Rapids, we left a community of Korean families behind. When I leave Sioux Center, I don’t imagine I’ll find one such community to live within and I have one problem with that.

I love cooking for myself and for others.

But, while my parents worry every day of my life makes me less and less of a Korean son, I worry that I won’t be able to cook what my mother taught me here, to keep my family home to and dreams about when they’re away, a dish that will be Korean.

And then I wonder how far we are on this whole “growing up” thing anyway.

My father still tells stories about when they’re away, a city that I won’t be able to make a dish that my family rushes home to and dreams about what they’re away, a dish that will be Korean.

And then I wonder how far we are on this whole “growing up” thing anyway. My father still tells stories with some sort of moral or biblical theme. My mother yells with just as much gusto as she had before, but it is for different reasons now.

The last time my family was together around the dinner table, it was mostly “When are you going to give me grandchildren?” which proved that I haven’t grown up enough to keep from falling off my chair laughing.
Ellerie and Lehman leave legacy of well-planned pranks

Nate Gibson
Staff Writer

Every generation of students has its pranksters. While each class comes and goes within the span of four years, pranks live on in the campus mythology. Even today, students discuss and pass along certain legends. For example, it has been passed down that one year, several students rappelled from the rafters of the B.J. Haan to open TX. Or, how about the snowy morning that a student called KDCR and, imitating the president, was able to cancel classes for the day?

Although such stories tend to change and be exaggerated with time and retelling, they encourage new pranksters to rise up. For this current generation of students, seniors David Ellerie and Ben Lehman have served as eminent pranksters.

Perhaps their most well-known prank occurred early in the morning on March 26, 2006. Inspired by a prank at MIT, in which a large mural of Trogdor (of Homestar Runner fame) was assembled using only Post-it notes, Ellerie and Lehman set out to give Calvin and Hobbes a similar treatment at Dordt.

Armed with 3200 Post-it notes (540 worth) of three different colors, they spent four hours constructing the mural on the wall of the stairwell in the Campus Center. The mural stayed up for six days before it was taken down.

"Even President Zylstra thought it was pretty cool," Lehman explained, "but Dordt was hosting a banquet so they had to tear it down."

Fortunately, they took a number of pictures, even compiling a slideshow, which has generated over 50,000 hits on YouTube.

On another occasion, Ellerie and Lehman, along with friends Andy Schroedermeier, Karin Zuidhof and A m a n d a A r k e m a , built a pyramid using 168 chairs from the Grille.

"We just started putting a few chairs down, and decided to keep building," Ellerie recalled.

In less than an hour, they had finished a pyramid approximately 12 feet high. The feat was short-lived, however.

A member of campus security "came and yelled at us, so we took it down right away," Lehman said.

Ellerie and Lehman attributed the pyramid prank to the amount of time they spent at the Grille as underclassmen.

"The meal plan was why that prank happened," said Lehman. Ellerie added, "I guess the meal plan was a good thing after all.

Other pranks have included the publication of an eight-page underground newspaper, "The Offender" (modeled after the satirical "Onion") with several friends, and pouring 500 bouncy balls, purchased by friend Jesse Van Essen, down various stairwells on campus.

In planning and executing pranks, Ellerie and Lehman adhere to several important guidelines. Here again, they follow the example of MIT.

"Pranks are big at MIT, and there is a code that the pranksters follow. Most importantly, the pranks have to be safe, and they can't damage anything," Ellerie said.

Lehman agreed, "People appreciate the pranks at MIT and we want it to be like that here."

As Ellerie and Lehman prepare to graduate this spring, they offer advice and encouragement to future pranksters at Dordt.

"Go big," Lehman stated.

"But keep in mind the nondestructive code of ethics," added Ellerie.

As for the possibility of a final prank before graduation, Lehman said with a chuckle, "We've been thinking about stuff for a while now."

Alumni come to celebrate 50 years of basketball this weekend

Kyla Jameson
Staff Writer

Heated walkways to and from class, a brand new apartment building requiring only three people to a room instead of cramming six. Doesn't that sound great right now with the cold weather and housing frustrations?

Maybe by Alumni Weekend 2019, those dreams will become reality, and we'll wish we were students again.

That's how many alumni feel when they see new improvements at Dordt. Most alumni think the improvements are great and they wish they were students again, said Wes Fopma, director of alumni, and Deb Hulstein, coordinator of alumni.

Fopma and Hulstein have both worked together to provide a weekend for alumni to come to Dordt and revisit their college years.

"Anywhere from two to five hundred graduates from age 25-65 attend Alumni Weekend every year," Fopma and Hulstein said.

"Primarily the athletic events are what keep them coming back to visit Dordt."

This Alumni Weekend, with the theme "Keeping the Ball Rolling," is full of school events that alumni can take part in, said Fopma and Hulstein.

"February is not conducive to having outdoor events and it's tough for travel - next year with a varsity football schedule, Alumni Weekend will move to September."

Events this weekend include a Mini Graphic Design Symposium, an Alumni Business Connections Breakfast, an Alumni Banquet in the De Yager Student Activity Center, an Alumni vs. JV Basketball game, as well as the Dordt men's and women's basketball games, TX and Comedy League. Students and alumni are both welcome to attend.

Who knows? Maybe in 2019, the ball will keep rolling on the floor of a brand new basketball court.

Cartoon by Nate Gibson
Track pleased with performance at home invitational

Amanda Henke
Staff Writer

Even though Dordt’s indoor track season started a week later than most schools, coaches Greg Van Dyke and Craig Heynen are pleased with their athletes’ performances.

Already, Dordt has qualified one relay team and two individual events for the 2008 national indoor meet to be held in Johnson City, Tenn., at the beginning of March.

Senior Jen Kemper is the individual qualifier in both the high jump and the 1000 meter run. In addition, she will compete as part of Dordt’s 4x800 meter relay team.

The winning 4x800 team (Tami Weiringa, Sierra Zomer, Joy Hortsman, Kempers) and Kempers’ 3:02.54 time qualified at the Dordt College Invite on Feb. 2.

“We’ve seen times drop dramatically over the past three weeks.”

Indoor Track
Coach Van Dyke

Other top overall Dordt finishes at the Dordt College Invite include:

Jesse Veenstra
Staff Writer

Dordt’s men’s tennis team made it to regionals last year, but this year they are struggling to find enough players to field a team.

The Defenders suffered a serious blow as sophomore Ben Boekelo had surgery to repair his shoulder, a year after playing the top spot. Three seniors also graduated, leaving the team short-handed this year.

Since the team needed new players, current players started asking people they knew if they wanted to join the team. Jake Compaan recruited his roommate Joe Van Walbeek, and Tim Walstra convinced Jared Rempel to give a try. “Rempel showed up the first day in a pink shirt and shorts.”

Bykerk’s butt, Shupe’s afro, and of course, my goalie, avoid running as much as possible, and score—all while looking as attractive as possible.

Do you have any pregame rituals? Who needs them when you’re as good as me?

What is your personal strategy when on the field? Stand in front of the goalie, avoid running as much as possible, and score—all while looking as attractive as possible.

Do the Sowers have any significant team traditions? When you score your first ever goal you have to run around the field in your underwear while getting drenched with water.

What has been your best memory in your four years on the Sowers? Last week I scored the game winning goal in over time against Augsburg—that was pretty cool. Also our road trips in general.

In your opinion, who is the ultimate male on the lacrosse team? I would have to say that to get the ultimate male you would have to combine Harmelink’s head, Dave Bykerk’s butt, Shupe’s afro, and of course, my washboard abs.

What are your personal goals for the seasons? Team goals? Individually I would like to make second team all conference and surpass the twenty goal mark in one season.

For our team, a GRLC division championship baby!

-Compiled by Alanna Dake

Men’s Tennis struggles to recruit

Amanda Henke
Staff Writer

Boekelo. “But he is still pretty decent and will help the team.”

The season doesn’t give the Defenders much of a break this season either. One year after reaching regionals for the first time in school history, the Defenders received a challenging schedule. “The schedule looks pretty brutal this season, and it could be real tough for the team,” Boekelo said. However, there is still a lot of potential with this group.”

The season begins for the Defenders on Feb. 15, when the team travels to Storm Lake to face off against Simpson College. Unfortunately for fans, the Defenders will not be hosting a match this season.

Anyone interested in playing tennis this season should talk to Jake Compaan, Tim Walstra or Coach Tom Wolthuis.

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