McCain Visits Dordt
Holds town hall meeting in campus center

Joel Veldkamp
Staff Writer

Dordt students and area residents alike packed the De Yager Activity Center last Thursday for a town hall meeting with Republican presidential candidate John McCain. Despite being a few minutes late, the 71-year-old senator from Arizona received a warm welcome from the audience. He proceeded to give a short speech and answer audience questions on topics ranging from nuclear waste to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In his speech, McCain warned that global warming presents a real threat to the planet, and laid out several actions he would take as president to fight it, including making the switch to nuclear energy, promoting electric cars, and joining the Kyoto Treaty. He also expressed support for the persecuted democracy movement in Burma, and claimed that federal spending is out of control, promising as president to veto every "poor" bill that came across his desk. Reflecting on his experience as a POW in Vietnam, he also said that the U.S. should "never torture anyone under any circumstances."

Finally, McCain repeated his firm support for continuing the war in Iraq. He claimed that President Bush's "surge" strategy is producing real results, and predicted that if the next eight months in Iraq produce as much progress as the past eight months, U.S. troops will be able to begin coming home, and Iraq will have a "flawed, but functioning democracy." He also warned that an early withdrawal from Iraq could lead to chaos, genocide, and a greater Iranian influence in the region.

McCain spent the remainder of the meeting taking questions from the audience, on topics like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the future of nuclear energy, and whether America could allow Iran to get nuclear weapons, the risks continued on page 2.

Families of Californian students evacuated

Nate Gibson
Staff Writer

Massive wildfires swept across southern California last week affecting Dordt students and families native to that area. The forest fires started burning on Saturday, Oct. 20, and rapidly spread due to drought conditions and strong dry winds. The FBI has also been investigating the possibility of arson in assisting the spread of the blaze and has already arrested one suspect.

By Monday, many residents began to evacuate their homes, including the family of sophomore Mark Bylenga.

"My family left yesterday to stay at our pastor's house," said Bylenga. As he described the evacuation process in Escondido, Calif., Bylenga explained, "The city shuts down the roads to prevent people from getting back in, and city officials go from door to door, or make phone calls to let everyone know about the evacuation. Whether you leave or not is ultimately up to you."

Between Monday and Wednesday, over 500,000 people evacuated their homes. While some evacuees stayed with family and friends, some accepted shelter in motels and some were forced to stay at their homes. By Thursday night, news reports were showing that many residents returned to their homes or began the process of returning.

International reporters cover McCain visit

Jurgen Boerema
Staff Writer

A pair of big-time journalists came to the Dordt campus last week - but don't look for their report in the typical places. Jeremy Young and Rudy Marshall, who work for the Al-Jazeera English news channel, traveled from their offices in Washington, D.C., to Sioux Center for coverage of GOP candidate John McCain's speech.

Young and Marshall are taking a grass-roots look at the U.S. presidential election in small-town settings. The reporters are on a twelve-month assignment examining the U.S. presidential process: Young is in charge of writing the segments, while Marshall takes footage.

Young felt the McCain speech was a positive experience. "It was refreshing to see many people, especially students, engaged in the political process and asking pointed intelligent questions," he said.

Young has also done work for the Pentagon about the effect of the military on domestic affairs, and he enjoys his role as an American working for an Arab news channel negatively.

"It is an opportunity to help Americans understand the world and get a wide range of international perspectives," he said. "People are better served when they get as many points of view as possible."

He has done stories from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the heart of New York City (following 9/11), and he said his emotions and the stress people were facing are vivid memories.

The footage from the McCain town hall meeting will be worked into larger segments and will air sometime later this year.

Marshall and Young have also traveled to El Salvador, Ecuador and Guantanamo Bay on assignment for MSNBC, CNN, and MTV.

Senator John McCain addresses an open audience in the De Yager Activity Center.

Photo by Elbert Bakker

The city shuts down the roads to prevent people from getting back in, and city officials go from door to door, or make phone calls to let everyone know about the evacuation. Whether you leave or not is ultimately up to you.
All creatures here below
DeWitt speaks at Dordt/Northwestern environmental conference

Dr. Calvin De Witt has long been caring for God's earth. It all started, he said, "when I first began caring for my turtle in my backyard when I was three.

De Witt, a professor of Environmental Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, spoke at a series of conferences and sessions about care for God's world from home. Now that their guys have never been away from home. The US. primary process of vandalism and theft that plague the residence hall.

Bob Taylor had one message for Covenant Hall: things need to change.

"[They're] not even sayable," he said. "Thy bountiful care, what tongue can recite?" sang De Witt.

"We cannot even cite the gifts He's given," and what are we to do in response to these gifts? We are to care for and serve God's creation, De Witt said, pointing out that the biblical base for stewardship is to serve God through serving His creation.

"Never take without giving back as much or more than we've been given," he said.

Specifically, De Witt emphasized a dynamic keeping of God's creation - not just preservation, but a hands-on approach to "safeguarding" creation.

De Witt closed the Friday evening session by singing the doxology. He stressed that all creation is intended to praise God - not only humans, but "all creatures here below," and that in light of this, we should protect and guard all that God has created.

McCain Visits Dordt
continued from page 1
of nuclear power (he thinks they can be managed), the Israeli-Palestinian peace process (he said he would support it, but offered few details), immigration (he wants to secure the borders "first"); healthcare (he emphasized cutting costs), education (he emphasized "choice and competition"); corruption (he "knows how to fight it") and farm subsidies (he opposes them).

In closing, McCain advised the young people in the audience that "nothing is more noble than serving a cause beyond yourself," and encouraged them to get involved with a cause they care about, such as the military, the Peace Corps, Americorps, or a political campaign.

The U.S. primary season, during which the Democratic and Republican parties each pick which candidate will represent them in the election, will begin this January with the Iowa caucuses. The presidential election itself will take place in November 2008.

Families of California students evacuated
continued from page 1
and friends who lived outside of the fires' reach, a variety of evacuation shelters set up around the region, such as athletic stadiums, high schools and fairgrounds.

President Bush is scheduled to southern California on Thursday, Oct. 25 to meet with California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, and he declared a federal state of emergency in seven counties.

Over the course of the week, firefighters worked around the clock in an attempt to contain the fires, which spanned from just north of the Mexican border to Los Angeles. Progress was severely impeded by the dry Santa Ana winds.

Friday brought cool weather from off the Pacific Ocean, allowing firefighters to make headway and allowing many evacuees to return home. Many returned to find their homes safe and intact, while nearly 2,000 families found only the smoldering remains.

With staggering losses well in excess of $1 billion, the recovery process is sure to be long and challenging.

Seven selected for Honors Band

Luke Schut
Staff Writer

Seven Dordt College Concert Band members have been selected to participate in the Iowa Collegiate Honors Band in Ames on Saturday, Nov. 17.

"The Iowa Collegiate Honors Band was co-founded by Bill Carson, John Wojeciek, and Dr. Henry Duitman. It's been going for about 15 years now," said Duitman.

The band is unique in the fact that students do not audition to be part of the band.

"It's kind of an interesting process," said Duitman. Instead of auditions, directors nominate their band members and a committee chooses approximately 60 nominees to participate in the honor band. The percussion, woodwind, and brass players come from 14 universities and colleges throughout the state.

"Opportunities like this don't come every day," Susan Le Mahieu said. "I always like to make the most of every opportunity!"

This year's director is Dr. Andrew Boysen, Jr., associate professor at the University of New Hampshire and an active composer.

The covenant is broken

Gerrit Van Leeuwen
Guest Writer

Bob Taylor had one message for Covenant Hall: things need to change.

The Covenant R.D. emphasized the recurring problems of vandalism and theft that plague the residence hall.

His intended audience was the male wing of the first floor, where most of the problems have originated.

"We have a lot of freshmen on the first floor," said Taylor, "and most of these guys have never been away from home. Now that their parents aren't here, they feel invincible, and free to do anything they want.

"We have a variety of issues," stressed Taylor, "vandalism being number one on the list."

The list is not pretty.

The elevator is currently shut down because someone filled it with urine and spit.

The glass frames of paintings have shattered because of frequent airsoft gun wars in the hall. The pool cues in the basement have been snapped in half, and holes have been poke through the roof with the cues.

"The amount of money that has been spent on repairs is incredible," said Taylor. "Just the other day, we spent $40 replacing the plastic cover of a fire extinguisher because it was covered in airsoft pocks.

The behavior, according to Taylor, is not what it should be either. Many of the residents do not take their R.A. seriously.

"[R.A.] Daniel [Davis] is frequently brushed off and ignored," stated Taylor. "Several times he asks the residents to quiet down, or asks to confine air soft guns, and every time he is ignored and treated with disrespect.

"It's definitely not easy," Davis said. "Especially when it's 3 a.m. and guys are blowing duck calls in the hallway, or sticking vacuums in other people's rooms.

"Some guys just don't have that maturity level," he continued. "Guys will play Halo through all hours of the night and swear as loud as they can when they die or don't get a kill."

The irony is not lost on Taylor.

"We are living in Covenant Hall," he said. "The literal meaning of Covenant is a contract that two parties agree on."

"We need to help each other out, and live for each other," he said.

"College is about community, and our community is being torn down," Davis agreed.

"The covenant that we have between each other is being broken," he said. "The guys need to grow up fast; this is college, and no one is going to hold their hand."

Photo by Ebert Baker
A call to action

Do you approve of cutting a world-class musician and instructor?

Nate Nykamp
Staff Writer

What would Dordt look like without music? Specifically, what would Dordt look like without a music program?

Or think of it this way: How many of your roommates/friends/lab partners/teammates/boyfriends/girlfriends are somehow a part of the music department? A count in my own circle brings in over half of the people I know on campus, and I’m not even a music major.

Perhaps that’s part of the problem, because although the Humanities department estimates (see meeting minutes from August 22, 2007) that the music department serves about 23 percent of the student body, there are only about 32 majors and 14 minors in the music department.

Therein lies the problem, since that means that the faculty-to-student ratio (in terms of major) is about 1 to 11. By Dordt’s standards, this ratio is unacceptable, and a professor must be cut. If this were true to the situation, no one could complain.

But I am very, very upset about the current state of affairs. As you recall, the Humanities division claims that the music department “serves” 23 percent of the student body. Where would that number come from?

The total membership of the Concert Choir, the Concert Band, the Chorus, the Orchestra, the Women’s Chorus, the Flute Choir, Kantorei, and the Canons of Dordt is far more than 46.

“I trust this is of some concern to you. But will you do anything about it?”

Many of the students involved in those groups have, or have had, an interest in any of the music professors, thus making it difficult to take an actual class with any of the music professors. Yet they are spending class time learning from those professors all the same.

When you include all nonprofit groups, the faculty-to-student ratio becomes something around 1 to 75. This is the current ratio. Remove one teacher, and the ratio suddenly becomes 1 to 100. A program with professors stretched over 100 students will not be effective in the least. That the program hasn’t imploded as it stands is a miracle. Yet the music department at Dordt College is being asked to do just that.

Not acceptable.

But will you do anything about it? If you’ve made it this far, I trust this is of some concern to you. But will you do anything about it?

One of the most visible and noteworthy developments in this college is being ordered to do the impossible. It is as impossible as asking a Thanksgiving table to stand with only three legs.

I want to give you the chance to be heard on this issue. We’ll be petitioning the Board of Trustees to renew Prof. Horton’s contract so that the music department doesn’t fall apart. Please consider carefully before signing.

If you want to help, please talk to me. This will never work on an individual basis; we need our community to good use.

Talking about Dordt Talk

Jamin Hubner
Staff Writer

Student Forum recently recommended that Dordt’s online forum, DordtTalk, be shut down. Though DordtTalk has recently increased in activity, the search for better ways of expressing ideas has become a concern of many students and administrators.

A host of Dordt’s online technologies, such as DENIS, Courses@Dordt, and DordtTalk, have been carefully created to make student and faculty life more efficient and productive.

Email, online scheduling services, and even a miniature version of eBay (DENIS Marketplace) have all contributed to more specific ways of making connections. But with all the benefits of the digital age, some technologies can often be counterproductive.

President of Student Services Bethany Schuttling believes this could be the case with DordtTalk, and that the negative aspects outweigh the positive.

DordtTalk is useful in many ways. It indicates what students are concerned about, encourages communication, and allows students and faculty to find a place to voice their opinions.

But because of its structure, it targets a relatively small part of the student body. For the past couple of years, a small group of 10 to 30 students has usually dominated the forums, leading to a limited discussion.

DordtTalk is, again, counterproductive. It should have influence and insight. It should be used 

But the real problem with DordtTalk is that there is a lack of expert opinion.

Without controlled, expert moderation, some students are prone to going off on irrelevant tangents and senseless flaming. This is, again, counterproductive and not beneficial to the student body.

What, then, is the answer? To many in this debate, an ideal situation would be a place of meaningful discussion where Student Forum could garner recommendation and insight. It should be a place that is engaged with the decisions being made on campus and the student body as a whole.

Right now, no such place exists, and we may be seeing the last days of DordtTalk.

Global Warming: humanity’s biggest “test”?

Approaching global warming with a Christian worldview

Jes Veldkamp
Staff Writer

The Diamond recently featured a multi-part series on global warming and the earth’s fight against an enemy of its own creation. But as we all learn at Dordt, worldview is everything, and it is critical that we approach this issue, along with all others, from the correct worldview. It is obvious that the author of the above quote is approaching global warming from the wrong worldview.

Think about that statement: “The greatest threat to humanity’s existence is not a test of our species. It is not something from which we need to save ourselves. The only threat to our species is sin and hell.”

A TIME magazine article on global warming last year said, “in a solar system crowded with sister worlds that either emerged stillborn like Mercury and Venus or died in infancy like Mars, we’re finally coming to appreciate the narrow black band of life within which our ship can thrive.”

In his movie “An Inconvenient Truth,” Al Gore warns darkly, “The earth is the only world known so far to harbor life. There is nowhere else, at least in the near future, to which our species could migrate.”

The world is not a place that God created for His people to dwell in peace and fellowship; it is a rock hounding through the vast chasm of space that is just barely able to produce and support life. Earth is not a created home; it’s a cliff onto which we are hanging for dear life.

Christian environmentalists, a great many of whom are rightly working to spread awareness about global warming, must nevertheless reject these ideas. While it is our responsibility to care for this world, we know that there is a God who created this world, made laws to order it, and sustains it through His will and constant oversight. And God promises that this world will continue until Jesus’ return—see Genesis 8:22, Psalm 93:1-2 and Job 38:9-11.

Global warming is not a threat to our existence. It is not a test of our species. It is not something from which we need to save ourselves.

The only threat to our species is sin and hell.

The only test of our species will be at the Last Judgment, when God tests the works of every man. And only Jesus can save us.

We should care for the world because God calls us to, not because we are afraid of global catastrophe.

We must never lose sight of the truth that we must resist the urge to use fear as a motivational tool when trying to persuade others to care for our planet.
Ross Van Der Bill: Army soldier returned home

Kyla Jameson
Guest Writer

A break from school usually means a relaxing time away from homework, but for Dordt senior Ross Van Der Bill, time away meant a deployment to Iraq.

"There are people there who hate me and wish to do me harm," said Van Der Bill.

Van Der Bill is from Richfield, Minn., and was away from home for a total of 22 months. During the summer of 2004, he began his basic training in Fort Sill, Okla. In October 2005, he completed six months of Iraq-specific training in Camp Shelby, Miss., and in April 2006, he traveled to Iraq and stayed until July 2007.

Joining the Army was not necessarily on Van Der Bill's to-do list. He was watching TV in his dorm room in March of 2003 when a report on the invasion of Iraq on CNN prompted him to join the army a month later on April 24, 2003.

"I didn't really have some sort of patriotic urge or revelation because of the war," he said. "But it certainly made me feel like something was missing from my life and that I could be doing more with myself then just being a student... It wasn't like I just wanted to go to war. Overall I think I was in need of a challenge in my life and [wanted] to test myself out." 

"We were supposed to come home after a year in Iraq, but we were extended for an extra four months as part of President Bush's troop surge," he said. "So we ended up being there for sixteen months. We are the longest deployed brigade to Iraq since the war began."

Being away from loved ones was a struggle for the Army soldier. "I missed out on graduating with my class from Dordt, my father was diagnosed with cancer while I was gone, and I had a bunch of friends get married," he said. "I missed my family, girlfriend, and friends."

Van Der Bill's Christian perspective gave him much of the strength that he was forced to find through the hardships he went through. "We all faced a lot of rough stuff over there, and I was able to come out of it only through faith and trust in God, and knowing that He would watch over me and protect me if I needed it."

He learned about handing his life over to God, and trusting that being in the Army was what God wanted him to do.

"I feared death and injury as most everyone does, but I also knew that no amount of worrying or precaution could stop it," he explained. "It was my time, it was because it was His time for me."

The Muslim culture of Iraq was not an easy adjustment for a Dordt College student originally from the Midwest.

"I found some of their culture very interesting and fun to learn about firsthand from the Iraqi people," he recalls. "Other parts—usually distorted, extreme interpretations of Islam—were rather disturbing and left me scratching my head... it is a complete 180 from what we are used to here."

While getting used to the Muslim culture of Iraq, Van Der Bill was also faced with the need to adjust to the culture of the Army. "There are a lot of hardships," he said. "Discipline, following orders even if you don't agree with them, a total lack of privacy, a completely unique Army language of acronyms and slang, rank structure and other things that just aren't a part of most civilian's lives," he said.

After his initial adjustment to the Army, Van Der Bill realized the parts that he enjoyed the most. "My favorite part of being in the Army is the down-and-dirty stuff, the field time," he said. "Going out and running through the woods, sleeping in a foxhole, shooting guns, making things blow up, the craft and strategy, that kind of stuff."

Iraq also brought Van Der Bill good memories, apart from the Army.

"My favorite part of Iraq was interacting with friendly villagers," he said. "We had an interpreter, so we could speak to them, joke with them, play games, share food, and learn more about them as a people and teach them about us too."

Returning home has overall been good for Van Der Bill, but it also meant going back to college and joining a class that he does not know.

"It's kind of like freshman year all over again without the easy classes," he said. "I am at least two years older than most of the seniors and have done and seen things that no one else has or can relate to."

After his experience in Iraq, Van Der Bill believes that all people, no matter what their religion or background, are "basically the same" and hold the same desires for their lives.

"The people of Iraq want to be happy, safe, free of fear and oppression, and to live their lives, raise their families, and work their jobs just like Americans, Europeans, and other nations who live under stable governments," he said. "Iraqis want these things, but they just haven't figured out how to do it."
An instrument in God’s hands: Justin Carruthers

Justin Carruthers first got involved with team worship when his youth pastor encouraged him to play with a church worship team. “But I can’t play well,” Justin said. “That doesn’t matter,” his youth pastor replied. Feeling encouraged and glad that he didn’t have to be good, Carruthers went ahead and played with the worship team. Then at the end of the service the youth pastor said, “Well, you might as well continue now that you have started.”

Between his induction into team worship and his official addition to Dordt, Carruthers continued to perfect and deepen his musical skills and understanding by also playing on his high school worship team. Now, four years after he first played on a worship team, the acoustic guitar player and singer makes the cut for one of the three Wednesday night praise-and-worship teams for the second time. He’s on a team with six other people, one a good friend from last year’s team.

But not only is he on a team, Carruthers is also the band leader of his team. Apparently, like his youth pastor, the coordinators recognized his potential and encouraged him to take on the additional responsibility of team leadership.

Now one of Carruthers’s self-assigned roles is to work closely with his group to help prepare potential leaders to succeed him. One’s “devotion” to God, he said, is something that shows up in a good potential leader. But such person should also have “sufficient musical background” and a “passion for worship.”

And Carruthers’s passion for worship, not music, was strikingly profound. His “passion,” he said, “comes from his longing to know God.”

He added, “A lot of people relate worship to singing, but worship is greater than that. Worship is a reflection of what we do every day. It’s an everyday affair.”

But band leadership in itself wasn’t simply a prize. While he values the opportunity to lead and the responsibility that goes with it, he would have otherwise been happy just to serve God by playing his instrument—something that many others who audition for spots don’t get the chance to do.

Nonetheless, a few more opportunities were created this year because for the first time, each band took on an additional guitarist.

Despite his love for worshiping through music, Carruthers is uncertain about his future level of involvement in Wednesday night praise-and-worship.

The sophomore theology major, who hopes to get into the pastoral ministry, has been exploring other ways of ministering to people. As well, this semester began, Carruthers has been leading an effort through which Dordt students can minister to homeless people in Sioux Falls.

Through a homeless shelter, students can do chapel worship and speaking, lead Bible study sessions, donate clothing and food, and serve meals.

Word is spreading around campus and, so far, “about 30 people have indicated interest in being a part of it,” Carruthers said. If everything goes well, the ministry could take off late this semester or early next semester.

From one note to another, God has been strumming the strings of this young servant’s heart, and good music comes forth.

Perspectives on global warming

Part 2: Faculty

Nathan Smith

Editor

In the last issue, the Diamond found that many students claimed ignorance about global warming, but there were also many who had something to say about the phenomenon and how we should or shouldn’t respond. Dordt faculty are not silent on the subject either.

Most professors of the Diamond interviewed affirmed that human activity is a significant contributor to global warming. “The data is overwhelmingly in favor of the human component,” said Dr. Robert De Haan, professor of Environmental Studies. He said it’s important that scientists question findings and conclusions, but, De Haan added, “You end up not being able to explain [global warming] without human interaction.”

Moreover, he said, “We can’t put our heads in the sand,” said Dr. Ron Vos, professor of Agriculture. He added that many people don’t want to acknowledge human activity is contributing to global warming because “it means you don’t have to do anything.”

One professor said that we need to stop thinking and talking of global warming as a debate. “As long as the phenomenon is held as an issue, it will forever be expected to remain in the realm of opinion or, worse, political spinning,” said Dr. Del Vander Zee, professor of Biology. Vander Zee added that we need to get beyond “political posturing,” so that scientists and the general public can evaluate how we deal with uncertainty and scientific modeling.

Other professors also recognize the complexity of the subject. “Where people stand on this issue is often tied to their political leanings or personal biases,” said Dr. Doug Allen, professor of Physics. “As with many complex issues we often align ourselves with the opinions of people we trust, since we don’t have the time or capability to be able to explore the issue fully ourselves.”

Allen has spent the past several years researching and analyzing the science behind global climate change. Allen says he does what he can to “try to inform people [about the science of global warming],” and that he thinks it’s important to “focus on the basic science” for understanding global warming.

“The faculty stressed the importance of sources of scientific information,” said Dr. Gary Vander Plaats of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as being reliable sources.

Not all of Dordt’s faculty are convinced that global warming is cause for significant concern. “It may be warming, but that does not necessarily mean we are responsible, or that we would be able to do anything about it,” said Prof. Gary Vander Plaats of the business department.

“There would appear as though people want a problem that they need to be saved from, but they have identified the wrong problem, and the wrong Savior,” said Vander Plaats.

Many of the faculty agreed that Dordt as a community needs to work together to address the concern. “As an academic community we need to be an example,” said Vos. Then he added that he felt Dordt could take a lead in teaching about global warming.

Allen pointed out that we need to move beyond just talking about it, and that “there needs to be a concerted effort [to address the concern].” He then added, “momentum can be maintained by working with other colleges.”

Faculty also advocated for responses ranging from personal choices of consuming less, driving less, “to policy changes on both Dordt’s campus and a national level.”

Many faculty also proposed policy changes on the national and international levels. “The overall cost is a lot larger than a lot of people realize,” said Vos.

Some faculty are concerned with the effects that global warming is already having on developing countries. “We’re seeing drought and flooding cycles in Africa that are affecting crops,” said Vos. “We’re seeing effects already in subsistence economies,” he added. “Environmental disaster causes massive suffering and hunger,” said Prof. Dave Schelhaas of English. Schelhaas added that this only increases our need to respond.

While there was not complete consensus among faculty interviewed, most strongly urged that our community move beyond merely talking about global warming by making a concerted effort to respond to the phenomenon.

Editor’s note: Opinions and responses were solicited from many more faculty than recorded in this article. At the time of this publication, they chose not to respond.
Dynamic Dance Team swings into lacrosse halftime

Ashlee Stallinga
Staff Writer

Parents saw more than lacrosse during the match on Saturday, Oct. 20 - the halftime show featured a swing-dancing routine by the Dynamic Dance Club.

The club, led by senior Allison Fox, is made up of 14 women from Dordt. For the swing-dancing routine, the women need partners. Each member is responsible for finding someone to dance with, but there are some guys who have participated in previous years and volunteered to dance.

Sophomore David Christensen was one of those volunteers. "The chicks dig it," he said.

Because of time conflicts, Fox was unable to choreograph and lead the Parents' Weekend swing-dancing routine, so the task fell to juniors Ashley Hoekema and Leah Applebee.

"We hope to keep the tradition going," Hoekema said, "so if any guys thought it looked fun, keep it in mind for next year."

"True, it risked falling on our heads...but nothing beats pulling off a tricky stunt like 'side-side-middle.'" - Allie Vande Zande

Experience is not required.
"I had never swing-danced before," said freshman Drew Hoekema. "My arsenal of dance moves greatly increased with this activity." Without experience, learning the routine requires a lot of time and energy. "We put a lot of work into the stunts," Hoekema said.

Many of the guys enjoyed trying something new - with one minor complaint. "I think it's more fun for the girls; they're just swinging around, while the guys do all the lifting," said sophomore Tim Boonstra, smiling. "But if the girl messes up, she falls on the floor. And if the guy messes up - she falls on the floor. I dropped [my partner] three times."

"The swing routine was a great way to start our dance season," said Vande Zande. "True, it risked falling on our heads...but nothing beats pulling off a tricky stunt like 'side-side-middle.'" Overall, the guys enjoyed it too. "I decided I'm not a cowboy," said freshman Ricky Mellor. "But it was a lot of fun."
Pumpkin Madness
From pumpkin guts to winning cuts

Dawn Van Kuiken and Sarah Visser scoop out the guts.
Mandi Pruismann can take her pumpkin on a Dordt Walk.
Amanda Henke's and Nicole Ongna's pumpkin has the flu. Jon De Young and Dawn Wieringa take a stab at their messy creation.
Lacrosse dominates University of South Dakota

Ashlee Stallinga
Staff Writer

The Sowers lacrosse team did a little showing off to the dozens of parents in attendance when they beat the University of South Dakota 10-1. The Sowers played their annual Parents’ Weekend home game—the only home game they have this fall—at the field behind Southview on Saturday, Oct. 20.

“It’s always nice to play in front of a crowd,” said junior Grant Dykstra. “It was a good chance to get everyone in the game, and get the freshmen some more experience.”

Freshman Jon Van Nieuwemuhlyen agreed. “We have a lot of new guys,” he said. “We put a lot of work into the fall season, and it paid off.”

“We all put a lot of work into the fall season, and it paid off.”

The Sowers had a solid lead from the beginning: Junior Andrew Shupescored within the first 10 seconds of the game.

Other goals were scored by senior Jake Van Dam (4), freshman Jon Vogel (2), senior TJ Rispens (1), junior Calvin Todd (1), and junior Jevin Vyn (1).

It was not the first career goal for any of these players—much to the relief of some parents.

The team has a tradition for when a player scores his first goal: they strip him down and send him running around the field with his stick between his legs. Maybe the showing off has just begun.

Dordt Sport Report: Kristin De Ronde

Year: Junior
Major: Math Education
Position: Middle Blocker
Hometown: Oskaloosa, IA

Long have you been playing volleyball? I have played volleyball since seventh grade. But it couldn’t be identified as actual volleyball until my freshman year of high school. It was not that big in Oskvy when I was in grade school.

Do you have a pre-game meal? Oh yeah, the Commons...

What have been some of your greatest memories playing for the Defenders these past three years? Freshmen year, beating National American in the Regional Final, going to nationals in San Diego, winning the GPAC tournament last year going in as the 5th seed.

Does the team have any special traditions or superstitions? We always play “Ah-So-Co” before the game. Also, Em, Liz, and I always have to play Three Person Pepper before the JV match.

What are your personal goals for the rest of the season? I hope we can finish strong this season—hopefully we can go all the way to Nationals!

Any funny stories from the season so far? I would say all the freshmen initiations—especially the ones at Perkins, and playing [the] psychiatrist [game] and the head phone game on road trips.

What are your post-Dordt plans? Probably find a teaching and coaching job somewhere.

-Compiled by Alanna Dake

Rempel leads Blades with seven goals

Jesse Veenstra
Staff Writer

The temperature is cooling off outside as things are heating up for the Dordt Blades on the ice. The Dordt Blades hockey season is underway with high goals, and an exciting season is expected.

“We return a very experienced team, and with the new additions we feel like Nationals is within reach,” said junior captain Jared Rempel.

The Blades started the season hosting the ACHA Showcase Tournament. Dordt won against Middle Tennessee State, but dropped the next two in against Saginaw Valley State and University of Southern Florida.

“We played pretty well the entire tournament, but fatigue definitely played a role,” said Rempel. “It’s no excuse, but it’s never easy to play three games in two days.”

Following the showcase tournament, the Blades rebounded strong and swept Iowa State in Ames. During Parents’ Weekend, the team beat Creighton University twice, winning 8-1 and 7-0.

This past weekend, perennial hockey powerhouse University of St. Thomas came to Sioux Center and left Dordt wounded, sweeping the doubleheader 5-2 and 5-3.

“This was a hard-fought weekend in which we learned a lot,” said junior wing Matt Chelsea. “It was our first true test against a difficult team and I believe we played well.”

Through eight games, captain Jared Rempel leads the team with 17 points (seven goals and 10 assists), with Todd Bakker right behind with 16 points. Freshman goalie Ted Gibbons has logged 479 minutes in the net, allowing 31 goals, for a 3.88 goals-against average, with one shutout.

The Blades host South Dakota State University on Friday at 7 p.m.