Shamar: Justice matters

Jamin Hubner
Staff Writer

Last Thursday, twelve Dordt Students visited Rochester Minn. to attend the annual 2006 L'Abri Fellowship Conference under the direction of Professor Roger Henderson. The conference, entitled "Living in a Brave New World," was held at the Kahler Hotel from February 17-18.

L'Abri Fellowship began in Switzerland in 1955 when Francis and Edith Schaeffer decided to open their home for a place where people might find answers to their questions and practical demonstration of Christian care. Thus, "L'Abri" means "shelter." The meetings eventually grew to large conferences and today there are several major study centers around the world sharing the same vision and purpose. While it is generally believed that events like L'Abri are intended for intellectual types only, the conference proves that there are many and they stand on all of the controversial issues of the day.

Any Dordt students who were interested have been geared towards expanding the kinds of issues that students think about. The club recently sponsored a panel discussion about the future of the Iraq war in which three professors debated various options. Last semester, the club organized a "Kash for Katrina" walk to raise money for victims of Hurricane Katrina. About twenty students and faculty got sponsors and walked from Sioux Center to Orange City in the pouring rain and raised $3,247 towards Dordt's fundraising goal. We also tried to organize a free-will offering at NDIC to raise money for the victims of the earthquake disaster in Pakistan, and after glitches with the power point machine that were beyond our control, we raised over $300.

The above are just a sampling of what Dordt's Shamar: Justice Matters club is interested and involved in. If you're interested in joining, or even just being on our e-mail list, e-mail earth@dordt.edu. Keep your eyes open for posters advertising upcoming events!

Dordt represents at Calvin College

Andrea Dykschoorn
Editor

On February 8, 2006, a group of Dordt students made the twelve-hour trek to Grand Rapids, Mich., for a three-day conference on Faith and International Development at Calvin College. Among those representing Dordt College were Morgan Atrema, Katy Dekens, Andrea Dykschoorn, Corey Dyksstra, Brian Kielstra, Andrew Kroene, Dena Nicolai, Lawren Sinnema, Carolyn Sybersma and Justine Vandergriff.

The mission of this conference—the first of its kind at Calvin—was to introduce students to the opportunities, rewards, and challenges of international development. During the opening session led by David Beckmann, the president of Bread for the World, conference attendees were challenged to consider the implications of sending food assistance, medical aid, agriculture, etc. to those people who have to settle for disposable dishes. At the beginning of the year, club members gathered to watch a video about environmental issues. Some new initiatives that the club has undertaken...
The cartoon controversy

Sarah Meyers
Staff Writer

The current often-violent outcry from Muslims in Europe, the Middle East, Southeast Asia and even the United States have their roots in an attempt to find illustrators for a children’s book. Jyllands-Posten, a Danish newspaper, invited cartoonists to submit drawings of the Prophet Mohammed to their newspaper after hearing of a children’s author unable to find illustrators for his book explaining Islam to children. The author’s difficulties stem from what the Danish newspaper calls “a culture of self-censorship” for fear of violent Muslim reprisals, which the newspaper decided to protest by running the 12 cartoons it received last September. The fury of the Muslim community over the cartoons, the cartoons themselves being mild by American and European standards, went largely unnoticed until the European Union embassy in Gaza city was overtaken by five Palestinian gunmen. Jyllands-Posten has apologized for hurting the feelings of the Muslim community, but has so far refused to apologize for publishing the cartoons. Danish companies, as well as some American companies in general, have not joined the boycott by Muslim-dominated countries. Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen has refused to capitulate to the demands that he punish the newspaper, saying they were expressions of free speech. Although the Islamic prohibition images of the Prophet to be drawn, there is a long history of images made, often for the elite, by Muslims of the Prophet. However, violence continues to spread around the world and newspapers are being pressured to publish the cartoons as part of solidarity with the Jyllands-Posten or simply to inform their readers.

Out and about
Jill Hiemstra
Staff Writer

Law enforcement officials, however, have taken steps to avoid the spread of the cartoons. Danish companies, as well as some American companies in general, have not joined the boycott by Muslim-dominated countries. Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen has refused to capitulate to the demands that he punish the newspaper, saying they were expressions of free speech. Although the Islamic prohibition images of the Prophet to be drawn, there is a long history of images made, often for the elite, by Muslims of the Prophet. However, violence continues to spread around the world and newspapers are being pressured to publish the cartoons as part of solidarity with the Jyllands-Posten or simply to inform their readers.

Diamonds and death
Ann Andree
Editor

Tis the season for Senior Scrambling. Alongside the Senior Scramble comes a need for diamond rings. This need is easily fulfilled by a 10 minute walk to Pat’s Jewelers, where they have a sale happening right now.

The issue
But from where are those diamonds coming? From mining to manufacturing, the diamond industry promotes everything from poverty wages to full-out wars. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, more innocent people have lost their lives than any conflict since World War II, because of conflict regarding diamonds. Because of the costly amount we spend on diamonds, it is worth investing the time into researching a diamond (or any jewellery, for that matter) before buying it, to make sure that the rock is not at the expense of a life.

The solution

The answer, at first glance, seems quite simple: don’t buy diamonds from Africa (since it is here that the most injustice resulting from diamonds occurs). However, in some economically-struggling African countries, the people are dependent on the diamond industry for survival. For example, in Botswana, 33 percent of the GDP is dependent on diamonds. Thus, boycotting the diamond industry in these countries completely may not be the best approach, since a worsened economy may result in worsened conditions for the people.

Rather than boycotting African countries completely, one can also ask the jeweller if the diamond has been certified as being mined and manufactured according to a set program. The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme is an internationally recognized program (since 2003), which has 45 countries (including governments, NGOs and companies) voluntarily involved including the United States. The program requires the participants to ensure that shipments of rough diamonds are free from conflict diamonds (conflict diamonds are “blood” diamonds, rough diamonds used by rebel movements or their allies to finance armed conflict aimed at undermining legitimate governments).

That being said, even the Kimberley Process admits that as of yet, it is impossible to determine completely whether the diamond is or is not a conflict diamond, because every part of the chain from mining to retail must be involved, and ethics can be undermined at any point during this chain. Also, because the Kimberley Process is voluntary, it often does not have the governments enforcing as adequately as possible, due to ineffective monitoring and political will. For example, Liberian diamonds are being smuggled into neighbouring countries and sanctioned by the Kimberley Process.

If one would like to ensure absolutely that his or her diamond has stronger ethical codes, Polar Bear Diamonds, Canadian stones, are available. These stones are mined and manufactured in the Northwest Territories. By buying Polar Bear Diamonds, the buyer is assured that the implications of your choices. The answers are not necessarily stated in this article, but the questions are raised and tools for discernment have been given. Ignorance about the issues cannot be an excuse.

Check these websites out:
www.globaljustice.org/buyconflictfree
www.kimberleyprocess.com
www.conflictdiamonds.com

Meet Dea Lieu

Matthew Kunnari
Staff Writer

The recent award winning film Hotel Rwanda has shed dramatic light on one of numerous political conflicts occurring in Africa, which went largely unnoticed by the West. For the average Dordt student the political turmoil in Africa is a distant crisis, however for sophomore Dea Lieu this crisis is reality. Dea Lieu is an international non-traditional student from the West African nation Côte d'Ivoire.

In 1960, Côte d'Ivoire gained independence from France and maintained a peaceful one party existence for over thirty years. After a bloodless coup in 1999, General Guei took control promising reform, stability and elections. A new constitution was adopted and relative stability was maintained until fraudulent elections left the country without a majority ruling party causing the Muslim party to rebel ensuing in civil war in 2002.

Before the war, Dea, his wife and five children had been enjoying relative peace in the western part of the country. Dea worked full-time for a church sponsored organization that used agricultural training as a means for evangelism in underdeveloped regions.

When war broke out in 2002, Dea thought his family would be safe living eight hours away from the epicenter of chaos; however, fighting in association with clan connects brought the fighting directly to his home town. Dea fled with his family with only the clothes on their back and hide in the jungle for five months. Realizing that survival in the jungle was not advantageous, Dea’s family walked continuously for two days until the found safety in a refugee camp.

Unable to support his family while at the refugee camp, Dea was able to contact the organization in the United States where he had received his agricultural evengelism training and was afforded relocation for part-time work.

Dea came to the United States in May of 2003 and soon decided to further his training in agriculture and theology. At a missions conference he became connected with another college who did not have an agricultural focus, but promised to help him search while he attended there. While at Hiwassee College in Tenn., a professor connected Dea to a colleague of his, Dr. Ron Vos, who teaches agriculture here at Dordt.

Dea was granted a scholarship for the 2005-2006 school year at Dordt and now is thoroughly enjoying his time here. Faculty and staff have been very supportive and greatly encouraged him. Dea agreed that his agriculture and theology studies are very applicable and greatly desires to be able to go home and implement what he has learned. It has now been almost three years since Dea has seen his family. He frequently talks on the phone with his family, who now reside in Guinea due to the still unstable condition in Côte d’Ivoire. During one such recent conversation his youngest child pleaded: “I know your voice, but I want to see your face.”

Dea’s life is an incredible testimony of God’s sovereignty. Dea said: “We will go through difficult times. Life won’t be perfect. Trust God; submit to Him. God knows we are human and have needs, but He will sustain us… so let’s be joyful and live fruitful lives.” Dea would like to challenge students here at Dordt to study hard and most importantly trust God.

The Rwandan paradox

Morgan Attema
Guest Writer

Rwanda. The word instantly creates a paradox in my mind. Fragmented stories of appalling violence, miraculous survival and unconditional love.

I can still hear Rwandans of all shapes and sizes painfully recalling accounts of genocide in low voices. It would be easier to forget their emotionless faces and their eyes which spill the truth without tears.

When I watched “Hotel Rwanda” a few weeks upon returning to the U.S., the image of every Rwandan I had brushed past in the street, waved at from my window seat, or spoke with face to face took me as I sobbed throughout the entire movie. I remember tramping through the crowded streets of Kigali four times in one day, passing the same posse of young men selling shoes. I remember cases upon cases of skulls and walls upon walls of photos in the National Genocide Museum. I remember Ariane, a small girl who was commemorated in the children’s part of the museum: she was six and pictured with a huge smile on her face; she liked to eat rice and beans, enjoyed playing with her doll, had two younger brothers, and was chopped to death by machete. I remember the bowed head of a teenage boy revealing scars left by a machete twelve years ago. I remember hearing the public confession and apology of genocide crimes to the village and surviving members of the victims’ families. I remember the tears on the face of a war criminal as he knelt in front of a forgiving church. I remember the inexpressible, heavenly harmony of the church choirs, the women passing at the side of the road to vigorously wave and hesitantly smile at the passing bus, the joy and humor in the eyes of the children who taught me to dance, and the love woven into the gift given to me that says Thank you Jesus in Kinyarwanda.

I will never forget the hugs, the waves, the faces and the tears of the Rwandan paradox.
Getting to know Pastor Rod

Cheryl Korthuis
Staff Writer

Recently, Pastor Rod Gorter, the new Dean of Chapel for the 2006-2007 school year, answered a few questions concerning himself and his future ministry. The following words are his, written with the intent to acquaint himself with Dordt while he finishes his work across half a continent and an ocean.

Background

I grew up in Edgerton, Minn. My father died in a tractor accident when I was four years old. My mother remarried a couple of years later, but my step-father died from carbon monoxide poisoning while working on a tractor in a machine shed when I was eight years old. From that point on, my mother raised seven children by herself (by God's grace and with much help and support from the church community). The Lord used this in many ways to help me grow and develop. It was necessary for me to take greater responsibility for things in my life at a younger age. Growing up without a father helped me appreciate the fatherhood of God in a greater way, as well as the rich blessing of the fellowship of the saints. The Christian community really stood with our family throughout those years.

I went to Christian elementary school and Christian high school in Edgerton, and then went on to Dordt. I started out in the business program with a major in business administration. In my sophomore year, I sensed the Lord leading me to go into full-time ministry. So I changed to the pre-seminary program and changed my major to psychology. Because of this, I decided to go a fifth year to Dordt to finish the necessary courses. By God's wonderful providence, in that extra year a magnificent young lady from Clinton, Ontario transferred to Dordt as a junior—Lydia Schuurman. We started dating in that year and began a wonderful marriage after my first year of seminary. The Lord has blessed us with four wonderful sons.

One of my favorite activities is playing ping pong. I also enjoy various other sports (though I can't play them as well since I had an accident and major hip surgery in 2000). Board games and cards are great to play with family or friends. I likewise love to read a variety of books. I love traveling and seeing new places.

Life in Ukraine

It will be very hard to leave the ministry in Ukraine. God has richly blessed our ministry here. Though certainly frustrating at times—since church leaders bring much baggage into ministry from their pre-conversion life—teaching and discipling these young leaders is very rewarding. Life is an ongoing adventure here, with no threat of being burdened with boredom. We will miss the people we have gotten to know here—teammates as well as Ukrainians whom we have come to love. And ironically, I think will miss being able to use the Russian language we've learned, in spite of the fact that it is a very challenging language.

Looking Forward to Dordt

Something I eagerly look forward to at Dordt is the community atmosphere there. Building relationships with the students in the college will be great. They are so full of energy and enthusiasm, which can be contagious. This can be inspiring in many contexts—uplifting worship, dynamic discussions, heartfelt conversation, mutual prayer and just having fun together.

At the same time, these years can be a time of anxiety and struggle. I believe it will be rewarding to stand with and encourage students through such times, as some did with me when I was a student at Dordt. In addition to all that, I look forward to working with a great group of colleagues in the staff and faculty. I'm sure we will grow, along with the students, as we work together in the great calling our Lord has given us.

The new position of "Dean of Chapel"

We were already thinking throughout most of this past term in Ukraine that we would likely stay in North America after this term was finished. But we had no idea where the Lord might lead us to serve Him following our service in Ukraine. I think it was in May of 2005 that my brother-in-law, Rick Fey, from Edgerton, saw an ad for the Dean of Chapel position. He sent it to us, saying it sounded like a great fit for me. A few weeks later, my father-in-law from Clinton, On., told me about the ad for this position, saying that he thought it was perfectly suited for my gifts and experience. The combination of teaching and pastoral responsibilities immediately appealed to me, since I thoroughly enjoy both of those areas of ministry. The requirements and responsibilities seemed almost tailor-made for me. We thus requested more information, and submitted an application a couple of months later.

During the process in which I was being considering for this position by Dordt's search committee, we had no idea whether the Lord would open this door to us. I was in dialogue with a few churches, which had contacted us as well. But as the process with Dordt continued, my initial conviction deepened that this may be where the Lord is leading us. The various dimensions of this ministry gripped my heart.

What can I bring to Dordt, serving in this position.

I will work very intentionally to get to know students, as well as staff and faculty, at Dordt. I hope to interact with students on campus—walking along, after chapel, in various contexts where they like to spend time (e.g. the Humble Bean, events on campus, etc.). Coming alongside the students, engaging them in conversation, and doing some fun things with them (e.g. ping pong??) will all be means to build relationships with students. Likewise, with faculty and staff, I am hoping we will have opportunities to really get to know each other and encourage each other in our service for Christ.

I have already mentioned a couple of the things I am excited about in coming to Dordt. Among the things I most eagerly look forward to at Dordt:

1) being a part of the friendly, community atmosphere on campus
2) getting to know the students, and work with them in various ministries
3) working with a great staff and faculty
4) being able to do a variety of ministries I love—teaching theology, discipling, counseling, and proclaiming God's truth in relevant, practical ways.

Opinion Poll:

Why do you or don't you go to chapel?

Julie Andree—it is nice to stop in the middle of the week and praise God.
Kyla Jameson—I do homework during that time.
Matt Olsen—I like it. It is uplifting.
Leesa Schmidt—it's a nice spiritual pick-up.
Ryan Prins—It is an inconvenient time; I like to eat at that time.

Photographs and interviews by Jessi Reiken
Aaron Baart, Dordt alumnus and pastor of Bridge of Hope, has been leading thought-provoking and dynamic Thursday chapel services—a source of encouragement for many Dordt students and professors. The Diamond recently interviewed Aaron to get a behind-the-scenes look at his life—his background, interests, challenges, goals and passions.

Aaron looked all too comfortable at the beginning of our interview—curled up on the couch in the Humble Bean—sipping on apple cider and snacking on his favorite, dark chocolate. Yet the lazy atmosphere was deceiving, for fiery passion blazed from his blue eyes that gazed thoughtfully out the window and penetrated the heart of some topics that are central to our campus and our culture.

Aaron (proud of his Canadian heritage) loves to spend his free time playing hockey and being with his wife, Niki, and young son.

To regain his focus in life, he gardens or goes for long drives. His favorite music is folk and alternative, and the best book he’s read in the last 12 months is Velvet Elvis: Repainting the Christian Faith by Rob Bell. Growing up with encouraging parents who demonstrated the meaning of grace, Aaron knew he wanted to be a pastor from the age of twelve.

He loves the freeing feeling of his job and he has a passion for Christians to learn that the Gospel is always new and exciting, taking part in the transformation of people. “The measure of Christianity is transformation and change,” Aaron emphasized, “Jesus expected change from his followers, not perfection.” In Aaron’s ministry, he seeks to find out the hurts of everyone and what each person longs to hear—which Christ can ultimately fill. Aaron testifies to the truth of one of his past professor’s words: “half of [a pastor’s] job is exegeting people, half is exegeting text.”

Aaron recognizes that “people aren’t craving a church that looks like their culture—they know how crummy that is.” He challenges the all-too-often stagnant churches in America to study/listen to the people where the Gospel is exploding. Aaron would love to see church being a place where people want to be, which ultimately begins with us as Christians—we need to “transform our Christianity from something we feel obligated to do to something we thrive on.”

Relating best to the Bible character Jonah, Aaron knew what God wanted him to do, but took forever to actually accept the task. Though Aaron endured years of wandering from his faith, this experience has made him all the more adamant that “submitting to God is a much better way to do it.” And “watch out,” he advised, with a knowing smile—“if you put a challenge before God, He will always remind you who’s in charge.”

Aaron urges Dordt Seniors to view the unknown by experiencing it with a sense of freedom, not confinement. He also encourages people to get away and look at life from a distance, adding that it’s “usually the things you don’t want to do that become the greatest learning experience.” When asked what Dordt’s campus is hungry for, Aaron believes it’s “education that is experientially driven, rather than just cognitively driven.”

It’s not too late to hear Aaron speak at chapel—his next message is Thursday, March 30. For those of you who are not chapel-goers, Aaron will also be speaking at GIFT on March 5, 8:30 p.m. Do yourself a favor and don’t miss it!

Interview with student author

Jessica Braunschweig
Editor

Aaron Baart, Dordt alumnus and pastor of Bridge of Hope, has been leading thought-provoking and dynamic Thursday chapel services—a source of encouragement for many Dordt students and professors. The Diamond recently interviewed Aaron to get a behind-the-scenes look at his life—his background, interests, challenges, goals and passions. Aaron looked all too comfortable at the beginning of our interview—curled up on the couch in the Humble Bean—sipping on apple cider and snacking on his favorite, dark chocolate. Yet the lazy atmosphere was deceiving, for fiery passion blazed from his blue eyes that gazed thoughtfully out the window and penetrated the heart of some topics that are central to our campus and our culture.

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If you think working seven hours a week at work study cuts into your social life, try adding an extra five.

Twelve hours a week is the average practice time of those participating in the production of "Jane Eyre." Jane Eyre, a play by Polly Teale that was adapted from the novel by Charlotte Bronte, will be presented by the Theatre Arts Department in the TePaske Theatre from February 23 to March 4. The play tells the story of a woman named Jane Eyre who searches to find her identity in a very oppressive, Victorian society. Cast members include Justine Moelker, Laurel Koerner, Marcus Roskamp, Andrea Dejong, Becky Lancaster, Amy Blok, Jonathan Shaffstall, Andrea LeMahieu and Paul Krygsman.

For fans of the book Jane Eyre, director Teresa Ter Haar points out that the play will be different. "Polly Teale has changed the characters in order to highlight Jane's struggle in society," she says. For example, the character Bertha is presented as Jane’s "alter ego," or just in Jane's imagination, as opposed to being a completely disconnected madwoman in the book. Ter Haar says, "Fans of the book may be a bit frustrated but challenged to think about how a book becomes a play."

Frustration for the fans is nothing compared to that of the actors. The play requires the actors to learn not only British accents, but also to play multiple roles. Ter Haar says that these have been the two greatest difficulties the actors have encountered.

To help develop the differences between their characters, actors endured dialect and movement workshops, private coaching, and rehearsals in costume. Two of the actors have to speak with different accents, and all but three cast members have multiple roles. "How to tell the story without the audience getting confused is a challenge," Ter Haar says.

Classics don't always appeal to everyone, but at Dordt students should be excited to see Jane Eyre. Ter Haar listed several reasons, including the fact that the play is an "unusual adaptation that's creative and challenging that will make people think." She also says that both the play and novel still speak to us today by addressing the issues such as our journey in life, how we sometimes question God and how we search to be our true selves.

Jane Eyre debuts tonight at 7:30 p.m. Additional performances will be on February 24 and 25, and March 3 and 4 at 7:30 p.m. and one matinee performance will be held on the 4th at 2 p.m. Don't miss it! In the words of Ter Haar, "the chance to see a beloved classic novel interpreted in a new way is an unique opportunity."
I've been on a roll this semester, writing directly about the most obvious kinds of wheels—cars. Some of us students on-campus are lucky enough to have work-study jobs. The even more elite have cushy jobs that only require us to sit in a comfy swivel chair behind a desk. Or maybe you’re lucky enough to have class in the campus center in the rooms with the swivel chairs. If not, you can always go to the library; the computer labs are full of them. The swivel chairs provide easy access to almost anything, within reason (when I say “within reason,” I mean don’t try to ride them down the stairs). You take for granted the mobility of the chairs—I know that I do.

Although I cannot give you the history of the swivel chair, I can maybe persuade you that at least once “Wheels of the Week” is applicable to you. This week, you don’t have to read about some punk on a skateboard and wish that it were you. YOU are the star of “Wheels of the Week.”

Hey man, it’s time for spring... Why not bump the temperature up to 60° or so? That would boost student morale for sure.

Yeah, but just for a day or two... then give ‘em more sub-zero temps, snow, ice and WINDBash their hopes. Make ‘em suffer!

I’ve been on a roll this semester, writing directly about the most obvious kinds of wheels—cars. But I felt that it was time for a change, a remodeling, if you will. There are many students on campus who do not own cars, so maybe this will be more applicable to them—or it could actually be less applicable. Who knows?

Some of us students on-campus are lucky enough to have work-study jobs. The even more elite have cushy jobs that only require us to sit in a comfy swivel chair behind a desk. Or maybe you’re lucky enough to have class in the campus center in the rooms with the swivel chairs. If not, you can always go to the library; the computer labs are full of them. The swivel chairs provide easy access to almost anything, within reason (when I say “within reason,” I mean don’t try to ride them down the stairs).

How many times have you found yourself quickly rolling short distances across the library to ask a fellow student about that paper that you’re supposed to be writing? Or swiveled to your book bag to get that pen that you forgot on the first trip? You could not have done that without the wheels on the bottom of the chair—it would have been a worthless pursuit, not to mention slightly awkward. You take for granted the mobility of the chairs—I know that I do. Although I cannot give you the history of the swivel chair, I can maybe persuade you that at least once “Wheels of the Week” is applicable to you. This week, you don’t have to read about some punk on a skateboard and wish that it were you. YOU are the star of “Wheels of the Week.”

### Movie Reviews

**Madagascar - 9:00 Friday 24th by the grille**

Although the title may be deceiving, this movie is not a happy-go-lucky fairy tale. Set in the middle of the Great Depression, this film tells the story of one man’s desire for fame and his family to survive. Jim Braddock (Russell Crowe) used to be a prizefighter but has long since given up that career path. When he can no longer pay his bills or provide for his family, he realizes that he has hit rock-bottom. With unbelievable willpower and courage, he steps back into the ring and makes his way to the top, surprising everyone, and he eventually takes on the challenge of fighting the heavyweight champion of the world.

**Cinderella Man - 11:00 Friday 24th by the Grille**

Although the title may be deceiving, this movie is not a happy-go-lucky fairy tale. Set in the middle of the Great Depression, this film tells the story of one man’s desire for fame and his family to survive. Jim Braddock (Russell Crowe) used to be a prizefighter but has long since given up that career path. When he can no longer pay his bills or provide for his family, he realizes that he has hit rock-bottom. With unbelievable willpower and courage, he steps back into the ring and makes his way to the top, surprising everyone, and he eventually takes on the challenge of fighting the heavyweight champion of the world.
Alumni sharpen skates

Amanda Henke
Staff Writer

Current Blades players had the chance to compete against hockey alumni as well as possible future team members at the Alumni tournament, one of the many activities that took place during Dordt's Alumni weekend.

Games for the tournament took place Friday and Saturday. Both days, the Blades were victorious, outscoring the alumni team 9-3 and 12-3. Friday night's scoring was led by freshman Kurtis Heerema and sophomore Joel Sikkema, each recording two goals. Defensive players Corey Dykstra had a hat trick during the Blades' victory Saturday.

Although not victorious, the alumni made their time on the ice worthwhile, enjoying each of their goals. "The alumni team always had funny celebrations after scoring," said Heerema.

The alumni competing in the tournament were Greg van Leeuwen ('98), Lake Bandringa ('74), Albert Visscher ('89), Wayne Dykstra ('90), Ken Griffioen ('84), Rob Vandermeer ('98), Nate van Niejenhuis ('91), Jeff Koops ('92), Dave Vander Plaat ('90), Ernie Termorshuizen, Adam Jeninga, Ron Veebreek, Bryan Woudstra ('04), and John Prins. Joining these players were Blades hopefuls David Prins and Nate Woudstra.

Wrapping up the regular season, the Alumni tournament offered a unique competitive and fun atmosphere for past, current, and even possible future Blades players.

The Blades will travel to USD for play-offs this Friday and Saturday, Feb. 24-25, hoping to advance to the National Tournament, which will be held in Florida March 1-4.

Baseball Preview

Jesse Veenstra
Staff Writer

Even though there is still snow on the ground and the wind chill is below zero, the Defender baseball team is ready to hit the field and begin another season after a long off-season filled with running, lifting and working out in preparation for a successful season.

A relatively young team will take the field this spring with the solid senior leadership of Dan Goodyk, Brent Van Maanen, Jeff Zomer and Brandon Haan to guide them through a challenging GPAC conference. The team also carries four juniors, nine sophomores and eight freshmen.

The Defenders hope the combination of new players, increased experience and intense off-season training will allow them to build on their 2005 record of 7-29. Sophomore pitcher and first baseman Derek Peters said, "We will be a lot better this year. No doubt we will win more than seven games."

The GPAC preseason coaches' poll has the Defenders picked 13th in the conference, with perennial powerhouse Dakota Wesleyan ranked first in the conference. The Defender baseball team will open the season against Midland Lutheran on Feb. 23 in a non-conference doubleheader in Fremont, Neb.

The Defenders will also be traveling to the Phoenix, Ariz., area over spring break to participate in the Phoenix Invitational from March 11-16. The team will play eight games over six days while in Arizona.

The Defenders' home season will begin on March 28 with a doubleheader against Northwestern. The Defenders are scheduled to play 43 games this season, including 18 games at home.