Dordt Diamond

McCarthy to retire in 2008; replaced by a Provost

Micah Schuurman
Staff Writer

During the fall semester, the Academic Administration Review Team came out with a list of recommendations. The core proposal involves a major change within the structure of the administration. Effective in the 2008-2009 academic year, there will no longer be a Vice-President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). Rather, the college will replace the position of VPAA with a Provost. This change coincides with the upcoming retirement of the current VPAA, Dr. Rockne McCarthy.

In the current system, Dr. McCarthy acts as the chief academic officer of the institution. As one of the Vice Presidents of the college, he reports directly to the President. He also works closely with the three division deans: the Dean of the Humanities, Dr. Harah Sun, the Dean of the Natural Sciences, Dr. Adams, the Dean of the Social Sciences, Dr. Lanlinga and the Dean of the Humanities, Dr. Kok. The VPAA works with Dr. Zylstra to make many decisions regarding academics. For example, Dr. McCarthy plays an integral role in hiring new faculty persons when there are vacancies. He was also heavily involved in the recent decision to make cuts in faculty and programs. The role filled by the VPAA is an extremely important one. Dr. McCarthy’s role as a bridge between the faculty and the administration is essential to the well-being of the college. As one can imagine, there is a great deal of apprehension regarding the future of this position.

To the untrained eye, it may look as though the administration is simply rearranging and renaming some positions. The truth is that the shift that will take place is quite substantial. A Provost differs from a VPAA in several ways. Firstly, the Provost will be a “first among equals” on the administrative cabinet. In addition to overseeing the Division Deans, the Provost will directly supervise the Vice-President for Student Services, the Registrar and the Director of Admissions. Also, “the Provost (will serve) as the chief administrative officer as directed by the President in his or her absence.” In other words, the Provost will act as the President whenever the President is away on business.

The process of choosing a Provost will begin with a committee. This committee consists of a member of the board of trustees, two administrators, two of the Department Deans, two professors and one student, Harah Sun. They will sort through the applications and pick one or two to recommend to the President. Then Dr. Zylstra will choose one and submit his decision to the board. In the final step in the process, the board will approve the candidate, provided they agree that he or she is suitable for the position.

There has been quite a bit of discussion already as to what sort of person the Provost should be. Some strongly favor someone from within Dordt. These people feel that only an insider would truly understand Dordt’s distinctively Reformed perspective. If Dordt hires someone without any prior experience here, there is a risk that the Provost will not share the same mission as the rest of the college. However, other people have voiced different opinions. Some professors feel that the Provost should be an outsider. They claim that hiring someone with a history at Dordt will cause division in the school. They feel that a person without a history at Dordt is the only person who can bring the faculty and the administration together under one roof.

All that remains is to congratulate Dr. McCarthy on his retirement and to await expectantly the person that is to take up the position of chief academic officer at Dordt College. Pray that God will guide those who are involved in making this monumental decision.

Sewell working on second book

Jamin Hubner
Staff Writer

A popular history professor at Dordt is taking a semester off to write a scholarly, comprehensive book on what it means to be an evangelical Christian. Professor Keith Sewell wants to try and “get evangelicals to think in a more biblical way of what it means to be a disciple of Christ.”

Sewell’s composition takes on the very interesting subject as what it means to be “evangelical” or “reformational.” In fact, while there isn’t an official title for the book yet, Sewell says a tentative, fitting title might be, “Evangelical or Reformational? A Question for Bible-Believing Christians.” One of the obvious tasks Sewell is compelled to accomplish is to properly and sufficiently define what exactly the words “evangelical” and “reformational” mean.

This core task is central to his writing scheme, especially since it is Sewell’s contention that “evangelicalism is much less biblical than evangelicals actually think it is.” Gleaning from minds like David Bebbington, Calvin Seerveld, McGrath and others, Sewell formulates a working definition for each of these terms in his book.

While Sewell does think the reformational worldview - which sees life in terms of creation, fall, redemption and consummation - to be more accurate, he says it isn’t perfect. But Sewell argues that “certain problems of evangelicalism arise from the fact that it does not see any great importance to having structural insight in the creation order, and that it does not really pay any serious attention to the religious character of human culture.” He ties this phenomenon with the development of megachurches, where the gospel has become something to be marketed.

Another key concept that is foundational to Sewell’s new work is that Christianly faces a daunting choice: is Christianity going shape the world, or be shaped by the world? He asserts that evangelical Christianity is far more shaped by the world than a true reformational view. The completion date of Sewell’s project is tentative, but he plans on finishing this marvelous work as soon as possible.
Soulforce rides eastward after visit to Dordt

Grace Venhuizen  Staff Writer

The Soulforce Equality Ride East Bus left Dordt College on March 9 with what they deemed a “successful” stop on their journey advocating equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. After their Dordt visit, Soulforce stopped at six more private universities in the following four weeks.

On March 12, the Equality Ride visited Central Bible College in Springfield, Mo. Police stood on the campus ready to confront the riders if they trespassed on campus. Officials refused to initiate any kind of dialogue with Soulforce. A walk-on peaceful demonstration by the riders resulted in two rider arrests.

March 14 and 15 resulted in more arrests of the riders in Shawnee, Okla., at Oklahoma Baptist University. The first day of the stop, five Soulforce riders were arrested for attempting to worship at a chapel service with the students. On the second day, four more riders were arrested along with two of the college’s students.

On March 19 in Waco, Texas, at Baylor University, five were arrested – three riders and two Baylor students for writing Bible verses on campus walls. After being told to stop, on March 20, the riders revisited Baylor, and although campus officials did not encourage any discussion about changing their policies against homosexuality, the police did not make any arrests.

On March 22, five riders were arrested for attempting to confront students after the college refused to allow discussion between Soulforce and the students. March 28 resulted in the arrests of one rider and two students from the University of Cumberlands in Williamsburg, Kent. Upon arriving at the college, police surrounded the Soulforce bus and informed the riders that they were not allowed on the campus.

The riders stood on the public sidewalk outside the campus attempting to engage students in discussion; after students began to listen the college called in a police force to make the arrests.

On March 26 the Equality Ride scheduled a visit at Union University in Jackson, Tenn. This visit was canceled; however, the school is open to discussion and invited Soulforce to stop next year.

Soulforce had scheduled a visit on March 30 with Samford University in Ala., but no news has been posted about the visit as of press deadline. Riders were looking forward to the stop and the discussion events planned by the school.

The Soulforce East Bus is to make 10 more stops before the end of April to finish their journey for equality. The riders will finish their tour with stops at Cornerstone University, Calvin College and Bethany Lutheran College.

Encouraging awareness through ‘Justice Week’

Emily Sajdak  Staff Writer

The coming week of April 9 to 14, Justice Matters Club will again be holding Justice Week. The goal of this group, according to planning committee member Linda Van Wyk, is to make people on campus aware of justice issues around the world that are not always clearly represented. The Justice Matters Club also hopes to inform students that they can make a difference and influence decisions that are made by our governments about these issues.

The club’s first event will take place on Friday, April 6, where they will be showing a film about women who have become trapped in the sex trade that happens around the world in C-160. During the upcoming week there will also be a 24-hour prayer tent and a tent set up to write letters to the government concerning the sex trade.

On Monday, April 9, the group will host a showing of the new movie Blood Diamond, and Paul Kortenhoven, a missionary to Sierra Leone, will lead a discussion afterwards.

Tuesday night’s featured speaker will be Wrede Vogel of the Luke Society, who will be giving a presentation on justice issues in the book of Amos at 7:00 in C-160. On Wednesday night, the campus community will have the opportunity to hear Jason Fileta of the Micah Challenge speak about global poverty at 7:00 in 5-101. Prof. Dave Schelhaas’s Advanced Expository Writing class will hold a forum on Iraq on Thursday evening, where students will present three different opinions about what the United States should do in regards to the present situation in Iraq.

In addition to the speakers that will be on campus in the coming week, Justice Matters will also hold several other events. These include a 24-hour fast and corresponding prayer marathon, which will begin on Tuesday. The prayer tent will be open throughout the week, as will a letter-writing tent where students will be able to write to government officials and call for action in regards to issues such as the sex trade.

On Saturday, Justice Matters will hold a campus clean-up for Global Climate Awareness Day as a concluding event to their week.
WRITERS Micah Schuurman and Joel Veldkamp have different views about what the United States foreign policy should be in regard to Iran. United States has a set of criteria that must be met in order to begin negotiations. Why would Syria or Iran make concessions just for the honor of sitting down with us? What poker player shows his cards before he must? In the worst-case scenario, Iran and Syria will make unreasonable demands. If this happens, then we have lost nothing and they gain nothing. On the other hand, the benefits of negotiations include the real possibility of a lasting peace in the Middle East. Insurgents and Palestinian terrorists are responsible for much of the chaos in Iraq. They armed Hezbollah in Lebanon in preparation for last summer’s war.

The political thinkers that I met last semester in Egypt all said the same thing: “Peace in the region is not possible without the help of Iran and Syria.” This is only possible by means of direct negotiations. If we continue our high-handed power diplomacy, we will only succeed in further alienating these states, making them more likely to act rashly. The problem is that the United States has a set of criteria that must be met in order to begin negotiations. Why would Syria or Iran make concessions just for the honor of sitting down with us? What poker player shows his cards before he must? In the worst-case scenario, Iran and Syria will make unreasonable demands. If this happens, then we have lost nothing and they gain nothing. On the other hand, the benefits of negotiations include the real possibility of a lasting peace in the Middle East. Insurgents and Palestinian terrorists are responsible for much of the chaos in Iraq. They armed Hezbollah in Lebanon in preparation for last summer’s war.

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Students put love into action over break

Kristina De Graaf
Staff Writer

Over one hundred Dordt students dedicated this year's spring break to helping those in need. Dordt's student-led missions organization, Pulling Love Into Action (PLIA), sent students to 13 different sites across the U.S. and Canada in order to "put love into action" through service.

From painting and plumbing to Vacation Bible Schools and tutoring, there was as much variety in the work as in the sites and people themselves.

Sophomore Emily Schoenfelder says of those she met in Vicksburg, Miss., "There's no handshake - it's more of a bear hug. They were so welcoming."

And it wasn't just the Vicksburg team that experienced a warm welcome. Michaela Groot, a freshman at Dordt, says that the Grand Junction church with whom they worked went out of its way to help the students. "We weren't the only ones putting love into action," she said. "It was cool to see that the community of Christ was everywhere."

The Shiprock, N.M. team member Kara Peters cited a similar realization. With a culture very different from the Christian culture with which we are accustomed, she noted that seeing so many Christians standing apart from their culture was a really good experience.

But PLIA participants gained more than just a break from coursework. In addition to the opportunity of helping others and establishing new friendships, students had the chance to see the world in a slightly different light. "It's not just getting the work done," says Schoenfelder, "it's about spending time making relationships."

Students reflect at St. John's Abbey

Alli Hagey
Staff Writer

For college students, spring break is a time to get away from campus to relax and stretch your mind in other ways. Whether serving on PLIA, sharing talents on the band and orchestra tour, or road-tripping with friends, almost all students are able to get away from the grind of college life over the much-anticipated break.

However, five members of the Dordt community made a trip to a location nearly the stark opposite of a typical spring break hotspot - a monastery. Jessica Klopstra, Kris Walhof, Nate Nykamp, Sam Gutierrez and Jeff Gutierrez spent five days at St. John's Abbey in St. Cloud, Minn. where they spent hours in personal reflection and prayer.

The trip was recommended to the students by Sam Gutierrez, who has traveled to the monastery in previous years. St. John's Abbey is a community of Benedictine monks who support themselves through fine wood craftsmanship and pottery, among other things. One of the more impressive things the monks have been producing is the first commissioned hand-written Bible. Visitors to the abbey may view the Bible on display with its decorative gold leafing.

The students who went to the monastery were free to spend their days as they wished. Most spent their time in deep personal reflection or taking walks to visit the chapel or bookstore. Jessica Klopstra, a first-time visitor to the abbey, said about the trip: "Self-reflection is good, and when you have that much time to yourself it's hard not to. It was tough, but it was a great experience."

Not all the time spent at the abbey was in solitude. The students were able to join the monks for morning prayer, noon mass and evening prayer. The monks also provided meals for the students - Klopstra adds, "they were excellent cooks!" - but besides these set times during the day, there was not a lot of interaction between the monks and the visitors. The monks allowed their visitors the time they needed to reflect and meditate without being over-bearing.

Nearly a week at a monastery most likely wouldn't be most students' first choice for a spring break trip, but the students who went to the monastery this year would tell you that it is an experience that they don't regret. Spending so many hours in solitude is a tough experience - especially for college students that are always on the go - but the students would also tell you that it is spiritually strengthening and an especially important thing for Christians to spend time doing.

Q: What is your favorite family Easter tradition or memory?

Liz Brand: "We would pick a stick out of our back yard and hang Easter eggs on it to make Easter Egg trees."

Cacey Byker: "My parents hid eggs the night before Easter. In the morning, we'd wake up early and search for them."
Faculty, program reductions revisited

Bridget Smith
Staff Writer

The controversy surrounding faculty/program reductions remains an important issue for Dordt. Three concerns are prominent – the future of each department, provisions for students’ academic needs, and the added concern of a spirit of dissension.

The fear is that an atmosphere of dissension interrupts Christian fellowship. Dean Charles Adams, a member of the Academic Council, explains, “We’re a community. I can only speak for myself, but I think we all recognize that tension and an adversarial relationship between ourselves is wrong – sinful. We don’t want to have that. We’re all working towards realizing the role we have as fellow servants.”

Dr. James Mahaffy, professor of biology at Dordt, responds to alarmed reactions of various members of the Dordt community. "Have we to be careful that we do not interpret this as a crisis [in regard to enrollment]. We think we are leveling off, in fact we might rise a bit.”

Mahaffy points to similar situations this year at King’s College and in previous years at Calvin College. He does, however, recognize the strain: "It’s not easy and it’s particularly hard on individuals being asked to leave.”

He understands the cost of supporting small classes is high. But, he says, the school must be careful about requiring specific numbers. He says, “It’s a danger if you only look at the numbers.” For example, he teaches general education courses with 60-70 students, while upsetting when faculty are cut, no matter

what the circumstances. In a year when we are starting a significant and expensive sports program, the cuts to Dordt’s academic program are particularly hard to accept.”

Though her sadness over the reductions remains and her frustration may be even deeper, she says, “I now also understand that Dordt has faced a declining enrollment, which makes maintaining the programs and faculty numbers more difficult.”

Gerritsma’s words embody the problem, “I am concerned that as we cut faculty because of low enrollment, we will only push more prospective students away by not offering the programs or course selection they want.”

She is concerned this could begin a spiral of lower enrollment and more reductions. The faculty might then, she says, worry about “whether or not they are next to be cut” Such an environment “discourages and disempowers faculty and students.”

Adams assures that no further reductions of faculty will be made at this time. He explains that particular positions recently reduced were previously created because of the Lilly Grant for the GEN 100 program. New faculty was hired to enable other professors to teach the GEN 100 courses.

For example, the Environmental Studies department received a capable helping hand from Professor Stutz. Unfortunately, that position can no longer be maintained with the current enrollment. Thus, Rob De Haan will again assume the primary responsibilities for the department.

Mahaffy says though he thinks the college could have handled some areas differently, he realizes “it’s easy to sit back and say it.” He also says other avenues might have been just as burdened with problems.

“I think” says Mahaffy, “It’s important for faculty and students to see that we have a strong institution in many ways; let’s put this behind us and move forward.” Mahaffy also pointed to a wealth of resources for enrollment that the college needs to open its eyes too. URC and PCA schools, and to some extent home-schoolers, are just a few examples of a relatively untouched market.

Though Gerritsma believes some programs lack adequate support, she hopes the college will indeed grow and be able to reinstate positions. “Dordt remains in my thoughts and prayers as the administration, faculty, staff, and students struggle to seek an obedient response to God’s call for the institution. I pray that decisions will be made with openness and honesty, after having listened carefully and considered all thoughts on the issues.”

Opinion poll conducted by Becky Love and Naomi De Boer

Piper Kucera: “One time, me and my cousins went to my grandma’s house, and they had laid raisins through the house leading to the Easter baskets. My mother told us the raisins were pieces of rabbit poop.”

Zach McCoy: “We go on an Easter egg hunt. I’m the oldest grandson, so I get to find the most eggs.”

Justin Car ruthers (Birth day-Man): “We hunt caribou in our underwear with big sticks” (special thanks to Troy Ellens as the caribou)
Band and orchestra hit the road!
Karen Klynsma
Staff Writer

This spring break, the members of Dordt's Concert Band and Chamber Orchestra piled into two buses for a tour across the Pacific Northwest. This trip included concerts in Alberta, Washington, British Columbia, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and South Dakota. The ensembles also brought their music to Sioux Center with a home concert last Friday night.

Though many members of the band and orchestra experienced illness upon returning from the tour, there were also many great memories from the trip, such as building houses out of French fries and two girls getting locked in the bus because they couldn't figure out how to get the doors open. The drivers of the van, however, had some less enjoyable experiences: the trailer had two flat tires in the first 24-hour drive, the van needed to have its fuel pump replaced and several items—including a laptop and a Dordt College display—were stolen from the van.

To pass the long hours spent traveling, many tour members spent time watching the second season of "The Office" or movies like "The Prestige" and playing Rook, while others used the time to catch up on a few precious hours of sleep, as the tour often resulted in late nights and early mornings. The tour members stayed with different host families at every stop along the way and became very experienced in making small talk with strangers.

The tour kept the members very busy, and they were rarely able to relax. Fortunately, they had a free day in Vancouver and an afternoon off in Salem. These were very welcome breaks from the hustle and bustle of the tour. A few members of the band needed to be educated in how to use the public-transportation system, but other than that, the band members spent their time off shopping, exploring, going to movies or just hanging out.

Sophomore Eric Vermeer says, "Even though the tour kept us busy, it was a good way to spend spring break. It was a great chance to get to know people better." The trip resulted in lasting friendships and even brought on budding relationships for some.

Come join the Treblemakers
Jessica Assink
Staff Writer

It's not just Dordt's men that are singing in their spare time. The newest women's vocal group, the Treblemakers, specializes in barbershop style — a cappella singing in four-part harmony. Freshman music education major Susan LeMahieu started the group earlier this semester, wanting to share her passion for barbershop harmony with the rest of the campus. The group's repertoire so far has included "The Lion Sleeps Tonight," "For Good" from the popular musical "Wicked" and a parody on "Breaking Up Is Hard to Do" by the Carpenters. The group currently has about 15 regular members and is open to many more. The Treblemakers rehearse every Wednesday at 9 p.m. in the choir room, so take a break from homework and join in singing fun songs with other women.

Dordt theatre major directs spring play
Sarah Groneck
Staff Writer

While many students are coping with heavy bouts of spring fever, one Dordt theatre major is kicking it into high gear as she prepares for her directorial debut of the spring production, "The Real Inspector Hound" by Tom Stoppard.

After starring in last year's "As You Like It" and more recently appearing as young Izzy in "Can't Buy Me Love," Justine Moeller decided to take on directing for the enjoyment and experience. "I've been in a few shows," she states, "but I thought it would be a good challenge."

Even though the transition from actress to director was difficult, Justine has found that her acting experiences have taught her to be a more compassionate director. "I think that because I've spent so much time on stage, I can understand where the actors are coming from," she comments. "I can relate to how actors work. Being on stage also gives me enough background knowledge and experience needed to direct the actors."

The Real Inspector Hound, written by Stoppard in 1968, is a comedy set in 1920s Great Britain. In the play, two madcap theatre critics view a murder mystery and eventually discover that the production isn't as innocent as it seems. British accents and humor abound and, as Justine affirms, "the ending will take anyone by surprise."

The actors are already thrilled with the play and Justine's work. Freshman Mark Bylenga, who plays misguided Simon Gascoigne, states, "I love this play. It is one of the funnest plays that I have done and I can't wait until production."
CD Review: ‘Neon Bible’ by Arcade Fire

Jurgen Boerema
Staff Writer

Second acts are a hard thing to duplicate. Michael Jordan should have un-retired only once. Rocky should have quit after the second movie. And George Bush’s re-election is still a controversial topic in many circles. So for any band to replicate the success of their debut album is that much harder.

There is a pull between the elite, Garden State-watching, purist group that has followed the band Arcade Fire from when they played at festivals and coffee houses and the group that is used to hearing that same Nickelback or Hinder song over and over again. The trick then is to walk the fine line between the middie of these groups.

This where the Arcade Fire’s Neon Bible lies, aiming for something meaningful while still offering a hint of something the casual listener might be drawn in by. Whereas the seven-strong Canadian group's first album Funeral centered on personal pain and problems from the death of family members, their second opus takes on a wider range of issues. The band recorded their new album in the basement of a church in a small town outside of Montreal and spiritual undertones are rife throughout the album.

Lead singer Win Butler sets the tone for the album with a line from Black Mirror in the opening track “Mirror on the wall / show me where them bombs will fall.” The rest of the album then begins to take a cudgel against a wide swath of evils. “Neon Bible” and “Intervention” rail against society’s disconnect from reality, problems within the church and the senseless nature of war.

“Windowsill” extends this thought even further with: “I don’t wanna fight in the holy war / I don’t want the salesman knocking at my door / I don’t wanna live in America no more.” Fear also seems to bubble out of these angry emotions as well in “Keep the Car Running” where the singer is running from a nameless “they” and in “Black Wave” where images of border guards, the seas and the ghetto are thrown at the listener.

We seem to see the way out of this cauldron of dread and suffering with “No Cars Go.” Butler informs the listener that “we know a place where no planes go / We know a place where no ships go.” That escape lies “between the click of a light / and the start of a dream.” But it doesn’t end there. In the next track he still has not solved the problem of life and the pain it brings. This leaves an uneven sense to what would have been a fitting ending.

Despite the gloomy feel to the album, there are good moments. Booming organs and wide vocal harmonies are spread throughout the scope of the work to help give an epic cathedral approach. After patient listening, the beating heart of the album starts to come out and show itself with beautiful musical pieces.

If only one didn’t have to wade through metaphors and social commentary to get there...

Medium sudoku from www.SudokuPuzz.com

I'm telling you, I couldn't finish my paper because I was too busy this weekend!!

By Sam Gutierrez
After a successful indoor season, the Defender track and field team is looking forward to a promising outdoor season. Here, Jen Kempers and Tami Wieringa (l-r) pose for a picture en route to the indoor nationals meet in Tennessee.

The Diamond Staff

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Baseball and softball off to a slow start

Jesse Veenstra
Staff Writer

The snow has melted, and the Defender baseball and softball teams are in full swing. Dordt’s baseball and softball teams look to turn months of off-season work into success on the field. Already a month into the season, the Defender baseball team finally starts their home schedule this week. Since March 7, Dordt has played 14 games on the road, including four games to start the season in the Metrodome in Min-

For more information, please visit MainStreetTheaters.com.

Meet the Robinsons G NP Fri-Tue (1:45, 4:15) 7:05, 9:25 Wed-Thu 7:05, 9:25
Blades of Glory PG-13 NP Fri-Tue (1:30, 4:00) 7:00, 9:40 Wed-Thu 7:00, 9:40
Wild Hogs PG-13 Fri-Tue (1:50, 4:20) 7:15, 9:35 Wed-Thu 7:15, 9:35
Are We Done Yet PG NP Fri-Tue (1:40, 4:10) 7:10, 9:30 Wed-Thu 7:10, 9:30
Shooter R Fri-Tue (1:35, 4:05) 6:50, 9:45 Wed-Thu 6:50, 9:45
Firehouse Dog PG NP Fri-Tue (1:40, 4:10) 7:10, 9:30 Wed-Thu 7:10, 9:30
The Reaping R NP Fri-Tue (1:40, 4:10) 7:10, 9:30 Wed-Thu 7:10, 9:30
Meet the Robinsons G NP Fri-Tue (1:45, 4:15) 7:15, 9:25 Wed-Thu 7:15, 9:25

L-R: Chris Liebhart and Eric Miedema get ready for another game at the Metrodome in Minneapolis.

After losing seven of their first eight, the softball team has won two of their last three games and look to keep things rolling into the conference portion of the season. They are currently 3-8 overall and have yet to play a conference game. Their next home game is at 6 p.m. on Friday, April 6, against Doane.