Senior engineers design campus clock tower

Cheryl Korthuis  
Staff Writer

Spring is just around the corner and Wyenberg, Ashley Prins and Craig Bielema, their project is called, “Dordt College Clock Tower: It’s About Time.”

Craig Bielema is working on a solar calendar, Ashley Prins is working on the gearing of the clock, and Chris Wyenberg is working on a solar calendar and sun dial that will be incorporated into the tower.

“The idea for a clock tower started as a joke in the Senior Design class. The class was brainstorming for project ideas, and Bielema raised his hand to share the clock tower idea. Most of the class laughed, but when it came time to decide, Bielema asked Prins and Wyenberg, who had been joking about the idea, to make it a reality.

They began by meeting with President Zylstra— who “gave positive feedback”— and with the landscaping design team. Dordt is getting a facelift, and the landscaping team thought “a clock tower would be a good focal point,” said Wyenberg.

The team contemplated the architecture of the clock, but their engineering project will focus on the mechanics of the clock. The clock will have four faces, and the controller will have a master clock, using a signal to communicate with the faces. The master clock will run on atomic time, using a radio signal from Fort Collins, Co., said Wyenberg.

“The clock will compensate for the relativistic changes that elevation causes,” said a smirking Wyenberg.

The gearbox will only have one motor to run the clock. A semicircular sundial with perforated numbers will come out of the clock. Bielema is designing the sundial so that the time of day will be centered on a line from the clock. The clock will also host a solar calendar, where the clock will cast figures onto labeled parts of the ground, indicating the month.

The team would like to incorporate the work of all different majors into the clock tower. They imagine a glass column of the clock, where plants from the Biology department could grow inside. Also, the team is trying to incorporate the Reformed perspective into the clock. The group thought about including a cross and inscribing verses about time-stewardship. “Modern culture sees time as a reminder for efficiency, but we want the clock to represent the stewardship of time,” said Wyenberg.

Prins, Bielema and Wyenberg are not the only ones getting excited about a clock tower. The design team has a Facebook group with 351 members called, “Say Yes to a Dordt College Clock Tower.”

“Will it be controlled by the U.S. Atomic Clock? All the cool clocks are doing it...,” asks Dan De Jong, an active engineering team also made a blog site at dordtclocktowernl.blogspot.com.

Several people have wondered about the aesthetic appeal of the potential clock. The design team hopes that the clock will blend with the new sign and landscaping improvements. “A clock tower would bring a professional ambiance to the campus,” said Wyenberg.

The group will present their clock tower project in April, when the senior design projects are due.

Calvin Dean speaks on climate change

Jacob Krooze  
Staff Writer

Dr. Janet Curry, Dean of Research and Scholarship at Calvin College gave two lectures in SB 101. The first explored a case study in New Zealand where nature, social structures and morality combined with market-based policy to arrive at a solution. She provided another solution that involves relationship-based policy.

Relationship based ideas continued in Curry’s second lecture as she tackled climate change and different Christian responses. Trying to answer the problem of a variety of ideas, solutions and responses to climate change from one religion, Christianity, Curry attempted to encourage communication among the different denominations.

Despite the idea that “when ministers and politicians start talking about consensus,” you should “grab your wallet,” Dr. Janet Curry attempted to provide a positive angle to attack the problem of climate change and a diverse church. We should work with different cultures of beliefs, not against them. Each denomination or section of the church can provide resources to develop responsible creation care.

According to Curry, to effectively engage different cultures of beliefs, we need to understand their beliefs and views, the difference between religion and culture, and above all we need to listen. Curry explained different beliefs as they address the future (eschatology), their integration of humanity, nature and God (integration), and their understanding of responsibility to creation.

For example, a farmer in Northwest Iowa noticed that there were fewer birds around in the 1980s during the farm crisis. When asked why this might be, he explained that people were more depressed instead of pointing to land usage as the problem. His beliefs led to an integration of people and nature, which led to his idea that depressed people make birds leave the area.

In the United States, Curry explained that a dispensationalist view combines with individualism and the free-market into a religious culture. Rather than Christians creating culture, the American theocracy creates seemingly odd ideas about an earth created only for humanity’s interests and an earth that will not be hurt but will continue to rejuvenate itself. As James Watt, former Secretary of the Interior, is quoted, “We don’t need to protect the environment, the second coming is at hand.”

Another view, often called Calvinist or reformed, emphasizes the complete integration between humanity, God and nature, as in a web. The relationships are complex, and so the problem is equally complex.

Curry summarized the proper Christian response with the saying, “Every complex problem has a simple solution, and it is wrong.”
Bombings threaten India-Pakistan peace process

Joel Veldkamp
Staff Writer

The Samjhauta Express was once a symbol of reconciliation between bitter enemies. Traveling from New Delhi in northern India to the Pakistani border, the train, whose very name means "friendship," carried citizens of the two rival nations peacefully across the border.

That image was shattered two Sundays ago, when unknown attackers set off bombs on the Express. The explosions, which apparently were caused by crude bombs and bottles full of gasoline, set off the two train's coaches on fire. The driver of the train did not immediately realize what was going on, and the train did not stop until an assistant station manager saw fire shooting from the train cars. As is standard in India for security reasons, the windows of the coaches were barred, and the heat of the fire fused one of the train doors shut, trapping dozens of people inside the burning train. Rainder Prasad, an Indian laborer, raced to the scene of the fire with his neighbors to try to throw water on the flames. "We couldn't save anyone," he said. "They were screaming inside, but no one could get out." At least 68 people were killed in the fire.

The attackers have not yet been identified, but the Indian government has rounded up a group of suspects and re-released sketches of two men who apparently jumped off the train soon before the explosions.

The attacks came at a crucial point in peace talks between India and Pakistan that have been ongoing since 2004. The two countries have been hostile toward each other since their bloody separation in 1947. After Great Britain granted India independence that year, largely Muslim Pakistan broke away from the rest of majority-Hindu India. Since that time, India and Pakistan have quarreled over control of the predominately Muslim province of Kashmir. India and Pakistan fought two wars over Kashmir, which resulted in the province being split between the two nations, with two-thirds in Indian hands. In recent times, Kashmir has been the site of fighting between the Indian military and Muslim militants. The conflict has claimed the lives of 50,000 people.

Muslim militants fighting for control of Kashmir were behind an attack on the Indian parliament in December 2001, closely following the 9/11 attacks. India claimed that Pakistan was behind the attack, a claim which Pakistan has always rejected. In July 2005, a wave of train bombings in Mumbai (or Bombay), India, killed 207 people. India also blamed those attacks on Pakistan, claiming that elements of Pakistani intelligence had dealt with the attackers.

While it is not known if the attackers behind the bombing of the Samjhauta Express were Muslim insurgents or Hindu extremists, it seems clear that their goal was to derail the peace process, since the attack occurred two days before the Pakistani foreign minister was due to arrive in the Indian capital. Trying to avoid a breakdown in the talks, both India and Pakistan have deliberately avoided blaming the other nation and have pledged to cooperate in bringing the attackers to justice. The majority of the victims in the bombing were Pakistani Muslims traveling home from a visit to India.) However, last Friday President Abdul Kalam of India pointedly declared that if the talks are to succeed, Pakistan must not "permit any territory under its control to be used to support terrorism in any manner." Whether the attack on the Samjhauta Express ends up bringing these adversaries together or driving them apart remains to be seen.

IPC pushes for biblical, gay marriage

Jessica Braunischweig
UPI Correspondent

The Institute for Progressive Christianity (IPC) is saying "I do" to biblical, gay marriage. But voices on the conservative right are saying they don't — and the Bible does not — agree.

"We believe that God is reflected by gay people in their marriage," said Zeus Yiamouyiannis, co-founder of IPC, a new think tank that is seeking to honor God through revolutionary, theological acceptance of gay marriage.

The IPC went public with this belief in their Feb 23-24 Winter Symposium: "Countering Fundamentalism: Christian Gospel as a Basis for Progressive Social Action." The two-day conference was held at the First Church in Cambridge in Massachusetts. It represented the IPC's progressive, biblically-based beliefs that are reflections of Jesus' message and ministry in the Gospels.

Yiamouyiannis said that Jesus came to test and transform the old Law. The IPC is following Jesus' motto of compassionate radicalism and inclusion by Biblically defending gay marriage today. He said the IPC is "seeking to change both the political and theological dialogue in America to reflect values that are seen in the message of Jesus: healing the sick, uplifting the poor and peacemaking."

News of the symposium led to less-than-peaceful remarks from voices on the conservative right. Peter Sprigg, vice president for policy at the Family Research Council said the IPC is ignoring clear-cut, biblical condemnation for homosexuality. While the IPC can make whatever theological arguments they wish, they cannot say that "their position is rooted in the biblical witness," he said.

The IPC stands strong in their belief that homosexuality reflects the diversity of God. The symposium's key feature was Saturday's hard-hitting panel discussion on homosexual marriage, which went "beyond the present discourse toward an affirmative and authoritative opposing of gay seekers of faith," said Yiamouyiannis.

Discussions also traced the U.S. history of the progressive Christian tradition of abolitionism, civil rights, and other economic and social justice issues, connecting it to the legislative right for gay marriage today. Otis Gattis III, IPC co-founder, emphasized the words of Jesus: the persecuted shall inherit the earth — that includes the poor, black, immigrants and homosexuals. Gattis' paper, The Kingdom of God and the Witness of Gay Marriage" was featured at the conference. The paper represents innovative theology because it's one of the first to say, "if homosexuality is fine, then what does it mean?"

The IPC believes the Winter Symposium is a step in the right direction for the issue of gay marriage. Gattis said, "The Christian Gospel is all about Jesus going into places where he's not supposed to be and this is a place where the Church and society has said that God is not."
PLIA and AMOR:
Developing a healthy attitude

Micah Schuurman
Staff Writer

Spring break is just around the corner. It is a time when Dordt students look forward to spring break as a time to step out of the classroom in order to get away from the drudgery of learning. While many students will let the time slide by, a large number will climb into a fleet of vans destined for PLIA work sites.

However, there are problems with some of the discussions that surround PLIA. Some people talk about PLIA and AMOR in terms of “going out and making a difference.” If the only goal of PLIA is to make a material difference, then PLIA is hardly the best way of doing so. It sometimes costs several hundred dollars per person to send students to these sites. AMOR costs even more. If the sole goal is to help others with their physical needs, it would be much more stewardly to write a check and hire local people to do the same work.

If students want to make a difference in the physical situation of the people they serve, they shouldn’t treat PLIA as an end in itself. Rather, they should treat PLIA as a taste of what a life devoted to development work is really like. They should think of AMOR as a training facility where students can prepare to spend their education. Rather, they step out of a small classroom, into a much larger classroom.

Finally, it cannot be said that the sole purpose of PLIA is to benefit students. After all, the first stated goal of PLIA is to “share Christ’s love with people in whose communities we work.”

Let’s get creative

Phil Van Maanen
Guest Writer

Dordt has a lot of talent and creativity for such a small college. However, the creativity is quite lacking in one area where it should shine, specifically in dorm names. The names of Dordt’s dorm buildings (excluding Covenant) are quite dull. Naming a building based on its location is not creative or original. Even in the dorms called Welch and Robinson, that say “East Hall, Third Floor, North Wing,” the creativity is quite lacking in one area where it should shine, specifically in dorm names. Buildings can be named after influential people or objects expressing the pride they have for their college that is very simple but can tell an entire story. “Birch Stevenson Riot Free Since 2004.” I lived in Birch Stevenson and now I carry that name with me wherever I go because it’s a story that means so much to me.

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Finally, it cannot be said that the sole purpose of PLIA is to benefit students. After all, the first stated goal of PLIA is to “share Christ’s love with people in whose communities we work.” Fortunately, there is much more to PLIA and AMOR than “making a difference.” PLIA and AMOR teach students about living in a global community. The vision statement of PLIA reads, “To challenge one another to grow as servants through cross-cultural communities in which we are encouraged to put love into action.”

Ask Alvin...
What should I do?

Are you serious? U h h ... g e e j
Well, this is only one guy spewing his random thoughts and commands. As long as you keep this in mind, I think we’ll be okay.

1) Drink more tea – A few weeks ago, I woke up with bees stinging my throat every time I swallowed. I only get sick once or twice a year, but when I get sick, I go crazy sick and eventually start thinking about who of my loved ones would get which of my awesome stuff. I wasn’t about to punk out and get sick so early in the year, so I drank three cups of tea that day (green, red, and black). Even though I got four hours of sleep that night, I woke up and felt so good that I jumped out of bed and punched my roommate in the hamstring (he’s taller than me). Note: If you’re really not a tea drinker (for some reason), there’s a juice brand called Naked and there’s a POUND OF FRUIT in each bottle. Do it.

2) Stop crying for attention – It’s stupid and it doesn’t really work. Not in the long run, anyway. There are two kinds of people who will help you out when you tell your MSN id as “humph!” People who don’t think enough to realize that you’re a whiny little kid and just give in to pleasing people and/or your friends. And your friends are good enough to sacrifice their personal integrity by giving in to the huge problems that you have. Okay, yes, you may very well have huge problems, and I’m not saying that you’re not allowed to cry, but please don’t cry all the time and, if so called for, to give you, say, advice or anything ([hal]). But the execution, people!

3) Listen to “The Crane Wife” by The Decemberists. One word to describe this gem of an album is groove. Their second track (“The Island: Come & See/The Landlord’s Daughter/You’ll Not Feel The Drowning”) is 12 minutes and 28 seconds of a gorgeous story and is a journey in itself. It is a beautiful and I have a lot of opinions and condescending opinions. I’m trying to tone down the condescending for Lent. Or did I give up swearing for Lent? I could go all year long; I have a lot of opinions and condescension bottled up in me, but I should probably put some focus in my writing every once in a while.
On March 8, the SoulForce bus will bring Equality riders to Dordt to dialogue with students and faculty about the issue of homosexuality.

An interview with Adam Britt:
The Dordt stop coordinator of the Equality Ride speaks candidly about SoulForce

Emily Sajdak, a writer for the Diamond, recently interviewed Adam Britt, the Dordt stop coordinator for the Equality Ride. SoulForce will be coming to Dordt’s campus on March 8. The views expressed here are solely those of the interviewee.

Q: How did you get involved in the Equality ride?
A: I go to school across the street from a private Baptist University. A fellow rider and myself talked to the president of the college to ask him about the possibility of holding Coming Out Day on their campus. He said no and sent us an article about a group of students traveling across the nation doing queer activism. I knew it was something I wanted to do ever since.

Q: What is your schedule while at Dordt?
A: I received that article. I can only answer with how responses from students on other campuses are soley those of the interviewee.

Q: What kind of responses do you get from students on other campuses?
A: I go to school across the street from students who are supportive of the Equality Ride. Some of them currently understand our stance and some do not, but are willing to listen to us. Some students think that the ride is not needed (these are very few). Almost all of the contact that I have had with Dordt students has been very positive and greatly outweighs the few negative things the other riders and I have heard. The response on campuses is very different depending on the environment we are entering. From what I understand, most people, while they do not necessarily agree with what we are saying, are willing to listen, which is a wonderful thing. It’s all about calm dialogue, not a heated debate. Debates go nowhere and we will not be having them.

Q: Do you believe that you can be practicing homosexual and a Christian? Why or why not?
A: Yes, as does Soulforce and many churches across the nation. I am not going to get to deep into this, as this topic is what the ride is for. However, I feel that someone’s sexual orientation has nothing to do with their religion and how they worship. Sexual orientation should not bar anyone from something as beautiful as education or the religious experience.

Q: Are homosexuals mistreated by Christians?
A: Yes, this is why we stress the theme of love so much. Often people get caught up in how they interpret the Bible that they forget the final issue of loving their neighbor. I can not speak for everyone, but that I know that I personally am constantly on the receiving end of derogatory language, and often it is from people who identify themselves as Christians. This is another reason why I came on the Equality Ride; I do not understand how someone who follows the teachings of love from Jesus Christ can openly discriminate against an entire group of people and feel justified in their actions.

Q: Do homosexuals (in your opinion) choose to be homosexual?
A: No.

Q: What is your schedule while at Dordt?
A: I just want people to understand that this is an issue of love. You cannot “love the sinner and hate the sin.” That is not love. Hate is right there, bright as day. I want everyone to remember that, as Jesus said, at the end of the day, the most important commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself. We can interpret the Bible we want all day when it comes to the six “clobber passages” against homosexuality. However, this just hides the bottom line issue of love.

Q: What do you think of the stereotype of homosexuals choosing that type of lifestyle because of traumatic experiences?
A: I think it is a misinformed stereotype. I never had a traumatic experience in my life that I can link to my seemingly different sexual orientation. I think that everyone goes through various forms of traumatic experiences in their lives and we always take something from them, which is what they are for. However, I do not think that human sexuality is something so simple that one experience in your life could alter that.

Q: Do you believe that you can be a practicing homosexual and a Christian? Why or why not?
A: This can be summed up by giving you the goal of Soulforce, the group that sponsors the Equality Ride. We hope to achieve freedom for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people from religious and political oppression through the practice of relentless nonviolent resistance. For many students at private religious institutions, life is miserable. Often so miserable that they feel the only way out is suicide. This is an extreme, but a very real one. I hope that Dordt students do not let our status of Equality Riders cloud their vision of what we truly are. We are young adults just like Dordt students, many of us are still students ourselves and we are human beings, just like everyone at Dordt. I would encourage everyone to have conversations about homosexuality with Equality Riders, but I also hope that you will be able to find a Rider that you have common interests with and talk about those interests also.

Q: What do you hope to change in Christian perspectives?
A: I just want people to understand that this is an issue of love. You cannot “love the sinner and hate the sin.” That is not love. Hate is right there, bright as day. I want everyone to remember that, as Jesus said, at the end of the day, the most important commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself. We can interpret the Bible we want all day when it comes to the six “clobber passages” against homosexuality. However, this just hides the bottom line issue of love.

For more information on the Equality Ride, visit www.equalityride.com or email Adam at adam@equalityride.com.
Disaster extravaganza

Grace Venhuizen
Staff Writer

"CINDERELLA" was the last word Jon Bushnell yelled before he became, as he says, "a cripple.

I went to Jon's apartment a week after the accident to get the full story. Sitting in his recliner, crutches on the floor and both in the air, Jon began telling me the fateful tale.

At the Thursday rehearsal in the BJ Haan Auditorium before Talent Extravaganza, or TX, everything seemed to be running smoothly. The skits were done by group of travelers who had just reached their destination — California. Jon's character, being a bit eccentric, hadn't just straight down from the stage; both stage exits were clogged. In the excitement of the scene, Jon says that he believed the only thing Jon adds, "Who would take Jon's character, being a bit eccentric, couldn't be contained."

"This needs to be the grand entrance to California," Jon says. "The excitement to see my favorite Disney character, Cinderella, couldn't be contained." In a very serious tone Jon adds, "Who would take the steps when you could jump and run for all you're worth?"

As Jon lay on the ground repeating to himself, "Oh, this is not good, this is not good," [his roommate John] Vanden Berg found words to comfort him: "Oh, Jon, stop acting--the scene is done."

Jon's hospital stay was not all together regrettable. At first he says, "They left me in a room with a wheelchair for a long time," with the only entertainment of a screensaver of fish swimming. The only thing for Jon to do was "pop wheelies" to pass the time. Eventually, he ventured out of the room and down the hallway. A nurse caught him leaving, but Jon explained to her in his "whisper voice", "I'm escaping."

Jon had fun with the nursing staff at the hospital. The discovery of the call button on his bed was not lost or wasted. He says that he would ding it for the nurses to shut the door or just "ding it cause I was bored." Every nurse wanted to know the story behind the break as well, and Jon says he "had to explain the jumping, but left out the screaming Cinderella."

Back at Dordt, Jon has been finding ways to cope with his new handicap. He went to Hy-Vee and took the electric scooter for a test drive. "You can get up to pretty good speeds on a straight-away," he says.

Jon's also found a new usefulness for his injury. On the night of the interview, Jon explained that his foot had been aching, and from a suggestion of a friend Jon discovered, "I think I can predict the weather!") At this idea, Jon's roommate Brad Redeker adds, "My grandma's knees can do that!" Jon is proud to say that because of his broken foot, he can now enter the ranks of the "elite group of elderly meteorologists."

Along with his newfound successes, Jon has discovered some hidden dangers with his injury as well. The distance to class, Jon says, "is so much further when you are crippled."

And it doesn't help that all the sidewalks at Dordt are sloped. Using crutches makes Jon aware of the incline as one shoulder always seems to rise above the other.

"Ice is my biggest enemy," Jon says. With crutches, Jon now has four legs and his struggles against the "Bambi effect" have increased. He describes this effect as that moment when a person steps out onto the ice and all four legs just fly out from under them.

Traffic jams seem to be another obstacle for Jon. He wants to let other students know that if they see him hobbling along on the sidewalk to "just pass me." Jon says, "You're not helping me at all by standing behind." Still in good spirits, Jon adds that he's thinking of getting a "slow moving vehicle sign for [his] backpack," just to let other students know that it's legal to pass.

Craigs Van Drunen, another roommate, was able to take over for Jon as master of ceremonies of TX. Jon still enjoyed the show from his own honorary spot in the audience, and says it was "kinda fun" to see Craig act out the part he had written. It was still entertaining, even without the leaping and screaming "Cinderella!"

Jon believes he has covered all his bases. He has already warned Pastor Rod that if he should ever get the urge to jump off the stage during chapel he should "resist." And for any other chapel speakers, or performers, or anyone standing on the stage of the BJ Haan for whatever reason, Jon added this experienced wisdom: "It doesn't seem that far down... but it is."

DORDT COLLEGE STUDENT POLL:

"Do you think a homosexual can be a Christian?"

A. Yes, if they are not practicing.
B. No, the Bible condemns all forms of homosexuality.
C. Yes, even if they are practicing homosexuals, they are still considered Christians if they are trying to change.
D. It's not for us to decide, only God knows their heart.

Poll taken by Naomi De Boer and Becky Love

Number of students agreeing with statement

DORDT DIAMOND
The actresses from ‘As It Is In Heaven’ perform during last week's dress rehearsal. The theatre production will be showing again this weekend--Feb. 28, Mar. 1 and 2.

‘As It Is In Heaven’

Alvin Shim
Staff Writer

HmmHmm. Nine ladies doing laundry, baking, singing and dancing begin to quarrel and doubt each other. I know. I know! The twist is that the year is 1837, and they're Shakers. The set is simple and bold, neatly presenting the symmetrical way of the Shaker people. The props centered mostly around five benches. Shakers stress the "plain and simple." The choreography is systematic and orderly, without embellishment; paired and circular.

The director's (Jeri Schelhaas) notes give sufficient background information on the Shakers for the play's context and pique enough interest into this group of people who, though once numbering 5,000 members, have fewer than twelve today. Who were these people who believed in a man-God (Christ) and a woman-God (Mother Ann Lee)? Who, when they reach a certain age, sign a life-long Covenant that pledges everything they own to their community? They have some interesting ideas; they believe in celibacy, they "don't need men anymore," and everything is perfect.

The play opens with the girls flanking the stage in a unified, a capella song, followed by a public confession of sins. It's okay; it's very, very funny. From there, daily life in a female Shaker community is observed, as are several demonstrations of worship through song and dance. But what seems out of place is the dramatically lit (by Lee Melbera) and executed interrogation—the first of which is on Danielle Roos' character, Polly.

"What did you see?" Fanny (Emily Stam) and Izzy (Justine Moekier) are also asked this question in their own, later interrogations. Where Polly is reluctant and denies that she saw anything at all, Fanny and Izzy are both excited and eager, although unable, to explain their visions.

Scenes transition very smoothly from one to the next, especially from Izzy's interrogation to finding Fanny and following her past the meadow where the initial visions take place. What happens then is the greatest character exposure in the play. Fanny's bold and wholesome confidence, Izzy's lovable childish glee and Polly's negativity are highlighted in red.

While these three have their visions, the rest of the community—mostly authority figures—guide and counsel them and, in doing so, give the audience more of an understanding of their utopia. Head honcho, Hannah (Anna Venhuizen, the eldress) attempts to keep everything the way it is (except when she gives the line, "Sometimes we need to change the way we do things": what the heck?). Phoebe and Betsy (Jenna Veenaas and Melissa Schans) play a more personal and friendly role in raising the girls. The chemistry and timing between all the actresses is evident and clear; one has to believe it is natural since theater practice and preparation take over the life of a college student. They, or rather their characters, spent a lot of time together.

It's an interesting and meticulous play about Shakers and changing times. If you don't go to observe a glimpse of Shaker life, go for the dancing and singing. If not, go for the Southern accents. If not that either, go for the comedy... or the tenderness. If neither of those work, go for Justine Moekier's performance as a 12-year-old. It's enchanting.

Men's Glee club: reborn and rising

Nathan Nykamp
Staff Writer

They sing with passion, they sing with vigor, they sing with camaraderie. They've already performed the world debut of Cornelius Bensma's "The Canons of Dordt." They're the Canons, the rebirth of the men's Glee club. Dr. Kornelis, the director, explained at the first meeting that to participate in the Canons, you should want the following things: to have fun, sing well, and impress the girls.

Other than that, there are no set criteria to join the Canons. The group is open to anyone; you do not need to be in Concert Choir or Chorale, and there are no auditions (it's really very easy). The Canons practice every Thursday night at 9:00 p.m. in the choir room. You can join at any time; come as often as you can, and if you miss a day, Dr. Kornelis promises that "no one is going to come after you." So come and sing with vigor and spread some genuine camaraderie: come join the Canons.

Dr. Kornelis directs 'The Canons'--formerly known as 'The Glee club'--at a recent Thursday evening rehearsal.

Jeremy Westra

NISO Concert!

Alli Hagey
Staff Writer

Friday night's NISO concert will feature the prestigious University of Iowa Symphony Orchestra and Gro Sandvik as their guest performers. This is the 3rd concert in NISO's 2006-2007 season and will prove to be a worthwhile night showcasing outstanding musical prowess.

The University of Iowa has often been referred to as one of the finest university orchestras in the nation—95% of its members are graduate students specializing in music performance. Conducted by William Lander, Dr. Westra will perform pieces that have not been previously heard by a Northwest Iowa audience—The Creation of the World by Danus Milliard, Concerto for Flute & Harp by Mozart, and Symphony No. 2 (London) by Ralph Vaughan Williams. Creation of the World will be an exciting, jazzy piece featuring the saxophone.

Conductor William Lander Jones is hailed as one of the most active and versatile symphonic conductors in the U.S. because of his ability of work effectively with musicians of all levels. He has been invited to guest conduct orchestras all over the world—from Minnesota to Malaysia to Switzerland. He has also conducted orchestras all over the 50 states and Canadian provinces, conducts workshops, and works with other musical groups at the University of Iowa.

Gro Sandvik, the orchestra's featured performer, is a member of the Bergen Woodwind Quintet, a leading chamber music group from Scandinavia. She has performed all over the world and has an active career as a soloist and chamber music performer of many premier pieces written especially for her. She teaches at her summer school, the "Gro Academy," and is featured on many CD recordings including those with the Bergen Woodwind Quartet and other solo performances.

NISO's guest concert will be presented on Friday, March 2 at 7:30 in the BJ Haan Auditorium. Tickets will be available at the door and are offered at a student price of 10 dollars.
Amazing Grace: fighting for a better world

Jurgen Boerema
Staff Writer

When one usually thinks of "history," one thinks of note-taking, long lectures and struggling to stay awake. It is fortunate, however, that "Amazing Grace" contains none of these elements. Instead "history" is presented in a little bit more palatable form. In this case, loan Gruffudd steps out of Reed Richard's shoes from Fantastic Four and becomes someone more compelling: William Wilberforce.

Wilberforce is an 18th-century politician with quiet grace and purpose. He is first seen in the movie recovering from an illness in the care of some close friends. While recovering he has an opportunity to reflect on the previous years of his romantic campaigning to end slavery. Much of the movie revolves here, in bits of flashback and then revert to the present.

At the time of the flashback, William is struggling with how to balance a Christian life and a political life. He meets with John Newton (writer of the song "Amazing Grace") and later a group of abolitionists who tell him that he can be both a Christian and a politician. He teams up with his friend William Pitt to introduce a bill to end slavery. Parliament seems to resemble most political talk shows today except this time there are hundreds of people yelling instead of two or three. A world begins to emerge where men run frantically to deliver secret messages, people whisper earnestly in backrooms, and card games are turned into clandestine political deal-making. Wilberforce assembles a group of sympathetic politicians and supporters to go to work on getting the issue passed.

Taming works against William as allies prove not so dependable and ideas for radical change are dismissed as delusions in a time of war. His health begins to decline and he withdraws from political life. Then the movie takes us to the present where he is still struggling with his perceived failure. His future wife, Barbara, encourages him to take up the cause again. He assembles some of his old supporters and tries for one last push.

This is a drama very steeped in the elements of the time. Women prance about in peacock hairdos and men flaunt their flowery love of language. British humor is also present in even the smallest areas of the film. Political debate and discussion become very moving when there is a strong choir to step in during the key parts. The defining moment of the film comes from the sight of Wilberforce with hordes of Parliament members literally in his face, still yelling at the top of his lungs for something he truly believes in. The end notes tell us that Wilberforce died "fighting for a better world." Would that rest of us would do the same.

The city of Clifton is not going to the dogs. At least not if the City Council has anything to do about it. Later this month, the council is expected to introduce an ordinance setting a limit on how long dogs can bark.

Noisy canines will be defined as those that bark for more than 30 minutes on two consecutive days.

The city already has nuisance and "noise laws that can be used to address annoying and disturbing noises such as constant barking." But officials said those laws are sometimes difficult to enforce. Police have to investigate complaints, and the city Health Department sent 11 letters last year warning that a summons could be issued if the barking continued, health officer John Biegel said. Clifton has issued 3,756 dog licenses this year.

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Blades season ends, leaves high hopes for coming year

Jesse Veenstra
Staff Writer

Just as another massive snow storm moved through the Siouxland, the Dordt Blades finished up a surprising solid season on the ice. After a disappointing season last year, the Blades used a combination of experience and freshman talent to exceed expectations this season.

Last weekend marked the end of the Blades’ 2006-2007 as they played in the conference tournament. Friday night marked another heated battle against long-time rival South Dakota State University, with the Blades dominance too much, Dordt spanked SDSU 9 to 3, propelling them into the championship game on Saturday.

The championship saw a hard-fought battle between Dordt and Iowa State. The Blades outplayed and outshot ISU, but the Cyclone goalie proved to be too much for the Blades as he held them scoreless on 43 shot attempts. The final score saw the Blades drop 4-0 with ISU scoring an empty netter as the 3rd period wound down. “Although we (Blades) did not come out ahead, we are still extremely pleased with our dramatic turn around from last season,” said sophomore Matt Chesla.

The season had many great moments, including beating Blada rivals four out of five times, including three in overtime. Dordt also gave University of Northern Colorado one of their best games only losing 8-7 to this perennial powerhouse that finished first in the Pacific Region.

The Blades ended up finishing the season 6th out of over 30 teams in the Pacific Region, narrowly missing the top 4 placement that would have sent the team to Nationals.

Says captain Jared Rempel, “We regained a winning attitude that we lost last year. Next year, we are setting our goals higher, looking to represent Dordt at the National level.”

Only losing two players next year (Corey Dykstra and Jeremy Bakker), the Blades look to build on their success and make a run deep into the postseason next year. “We are looking forward to next year. We only lose two guys, and have a few good commitments for next year. We should be very tough,” said Chesla.

The Blades finished the season with a 21-11 record.

Indoor track athletes represent Dordt

Amanda Henke
Staff Writer

The Dordt men’s and women’s track team traveled to Lincoln, Neb. last Saturday to compete in the Great Plains Athletic Conference championships and to make one last attempt at qualification for the national meet. The women took fourth overall, while the men’s team finished sixth in the eleven-team league.

Leading the way for the Defender women was the strong 4x800 and 4x400 relays. The winning 4x800 team of Tami Wieringa, Sierra Zomer, Joy Horstman and Abbie Soodsma finished in a time of 9:36.28, dominating the competition by over five seconds. Qualifying for nationals and taking third in the conference, the 4x400 team of Soodsma, Zomer, Horstman and Sarah Sikkema finished in a time of 4:04.35.

Jen Kempers qualified for nationals in three individual events, scoring conference points for her team in the process. Kempers was the gold medalist in the 1000 meter race in a time of 3:03.00, placed fourth in the mile in 5:15.11 and again in the high jump with a finishing height of 5’3”, matching her a season’s best for the season.

Completing the individual scoring for the women’s team were Wieringa (4th, 1000m), Zomer (3rd, 800m), Horstman (4th, 800m), Sikkema (4th, 400m), Jeanetta Groenendyk (7th, 60m hurdles), Soosdma (7th, 600m) and Christa Beimers (7th, 60m). For the men, the scoring was led by two second-place finishes for Dan De Jong in the triple jump (47’5.25”) and the high jump (6’6”), two events he had already qualified in for the national meet. Josh De Jong also scored points in the triple jump with his 43’4.25” finish. The 4x400 relay of Brett Kroeze, Mark Eekhoff, Josh De Jong and Brent Jong in the triple jump (47’5.25”) and the high jump (6’6”), two events he had already qualified in for the national meet.

Those qualifying for the national meet will represent Dordt College in Johnson City, Tenn. March 8-10.