



A Rocha Conference held at Wheaton College

Jacob Kroeze
Staff Writer

Last Week, Professor Stutz, Professor Allen, Shannon Wright, Clyde Prosper, Teresa Maas, Jeremy Westra, Lynda Van Wyk, Hara Sun and Hanni Yang joined approximately 30 students from various universities, in Wheaton, Illinois, for a conference held by the Wheaton College chapter of A Rocha. A Rocha, which means "the rock" in Portuguese, started with a center in Portugal and has spread to Brazil, Finland, Lebanon, the United States and many other countries. A Rocha undertakes projects, often cross-cultural, dealing with research, conservation, and education to care for creation, advocate community and promote biodiversity.

The keynote speaker for the conference was Sir John Houghton, a British scientist who chaired the International Panel on Climate Change in 1988. A notable scientist, conservationist and Christian, Houghton's presence and guidance were enjoyed by the conference attendees at his presentations and an informal tea time, which included fair-trade coffee, fair-trade tea and scones.

Dr. Sleeth, another speaker, also inspired students with his passionate call to fulfill the talk and encouragement about climate change and creation care with action that will curb damage to the creation. Sleeth spoke for a second time with a panel of experts, once again passionately calling for action as well as displaying his care for the students at the conference.

What did the students learn about action? A main point of the conference was to publicize the Evangelical Youth Climate Initiative, which will be brought to leaders who deal with climate change policy, and commits its signers to care of creation. What action is creation care? Jeremy Westra, who attended the conference, suggested buying green energy (from wind, solar or hydroelectric), using less hot water while showering, turning off lights, shutting computers off at night, driving less, changing light bulbs to compact fluorescents, turning down the heat and sharing ideas about climate change and creation care with family and friends.



Jeremy Westra

Dordt College students and faculty pose for a group photo at the A Rocha Wheaton Summit. **Back row:** Clyde Prosper, Jeremy Westra, Prof. Allen, and Prof. Stutz; **front row:** Shannon Wright, Teresa Maas, Linda Van Wyk, Hara Sun, and Hanni Yang.

Changes coming to Student Services

Andrea Dykshoorn
Editor

On Monday, January 22, Ken Boersma—Dordt College's Vice President for Student Services (VPSS) publicly announced his decision to conclude his service at Dordt College, effective the end of this summer.

Boersma arrived at Dordt in July of 2000 after working for five years at Sterling College, a small Presbyterian institution in central Kansas. As someone who grew up in the Christian Reformed Church and is a Calvin College graduate, Dordt seemed like an ideal fit as a place where he could exercise his "strong love and interest for the Reformed worldview and perspective."

At Dordt, Boersma stepped into the position of Vice President for Student Services. This was a position that had previously been filled by Curtis Taylor, who currently serves as the Special Assistant to the President. For the past six and a half years, Boersma has been in charge of supervising all of the departments in Student Services, which include Campus Ministries, Residence Life, Counselling Services, Career Services, Health Services and Campus Security. He also serves on the Administrative Cabinet, advises Student Forum, serves on a number of college committees, and deals with violations of the student code of conduct.

In a recent interview, Boersma indicated that the decision to conclude his service as VPSS was finalized over

the Christmas break, after extended conversations with President Zylstra. When asked about the reasons behind his decision, Boersma was open and honest.

"I have struggled off and on for a number of years with mild depression and anxiety issues, and I needed to come to a place where I can take care of myself," he said. "I needed to seek help; I've finally decided that I can't just handle [my struggles with depression] on my own."

Boersma admits that the VPSS position comes with a high level of stress. The decision to step down was made with the knowledge that it was the best thing for both his own health and for his family.

According to Boersma, the toughest part about leaving his position at Dordt is that, "I feel I have things I can offer, but because of my personal issues I haven't been able to."

Although he does not yet have specific plans about what he will do after he completes his work at Dordt this summer, Boersma indicated that he will continue to address these personal issues, as well as strive to understand God's plan for his life.

"I'd appreciate the prayers of the college community as I address these issues," said Boersma.

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Troop surge in Iraq

Joel Veldkamp
Staff Writer

"Send your entire army to be annihilated at the hands of the mujahedeen [holy warriors] to free the world from your evil, because Iraq, land of the Caliphate and Jihad, is able to bury 10 armies like yours, with Allah's help and power."

So boasted Ayman al Zawahiri, Osama bin Laden's right-hand man, in a videotaped response to President Bush's plan to send an additional 21,500 troops to Iraq.

The planned troop surge is part of the president's "New Way Forward in Iraq," a new bid to secure a country torn apart by sectarian violence more than four years after the initial U.S. invasion. Under the plan, the U.S. will send five additional brigades of troops to help Iraqi security forces secure Baghdad and end the Sunni-Shiite violence tearing the city apart. An additional 4,000 troops will also be sent to Iraq's violent Anbar province, to assist in the fight against al Qaeda forces there. The surge will bring the number of U.S. troops in Iraq to approximately 160,000.

The president's plan was met with heavy opposition from many corners: Congress, the American people and even some of his own generals. Both Democrats and Republicans in Congress have denounced the plan. A CNN poll taken soon after Bush announced the new plan found that over two-thirds of Americans oppose sending more troops to Iraq. Reportedly, the plan was also resisted by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as well as John Abizaid, the former head of the U.S. Central Command, and George Casey, the former top commander in Iraq. Both Abizaid and Casey were recently replaced with generals more favorable towards the surge plan.

Yet the president's plan is drawing strong support from conservatives. Pro-war Senator John McCain, a likely presidential contender for the Republicans in 2008, has called the plan "the best chance of success" in Iraq. Foreign policy commentators such as Bill Kristol and Frederick Kagan, who, like McCain, have been calling for troop increases for years, have hailed the plan as a new chance for victory.

And while al Qaeda may boast about burying armies, the mere prospect of the surge is already having an effect in Iraq. According to some sources, Abu Ayyub al Masri, the head of al Qaeda in Iraq, has ordered a retreat from Baghdad in light of the coming military reinforcements. In addition, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al Maliki, a Shiite, has abandoned his support of the radical Shiite Mahdi Army, which has been blamed for a vicious campaign against Sunni Iraqis. Muqtada al Sadr, the head of the Mahdi Army, has ordered his men to stop displaying their weapons, and has told loyal parliament members to end their two-month boycott of the Iraqi parliament.

These are encouraging signs, but some experts worry that it only means that the Sunni insurgents and Shiite militias are deciding to bide their time. Marine Col. Gary Anderson, an insurgency expert, speculates that violence may drop initially, but as soon as American forces begin to withdraw from Iraq, the enemy will begin a renewed attack on the Iraqi government.

According to Lt. Gen. David Petraeus, the new top commander in Iraq, the surge in troop levels should be complete by May of this year. Whether it will eventually lead to peace in Iraq, or only more death, only time will tell.

Student teachers off-campus

Emily Sajdak
Staff Writer

Over half of Dordt's student teachers have chosen to teach off-campus this semester. Many of them wanted a chance to experience the culture outside of a Dutch Calvinist perspective and to focus on teaching without being distracted by the college atmosphere. Sara Kooyenga, who is teaching at Red Rock Elementary in Gallup, NM, said, "I wanted a chance to experience something outside of the Dutch Christian Reformed circle. It's been great getting to meet [people] and learn about the Native culture."

There are many differences between Dordt's campus and the sites most of the student teachers are aiding this semester. Denise Swager, who is teaching high school history courses at Rehoboth Christian School in Rehoboth, N.M., said, "Almost all of my students are Navajo, with a few Hispanic students." Other student teachers are also experiencing this classroom diversity,

as well as a getting prepared for teaching, and the beginning of their job hunts.

Many wanted to see new parts of the country and to learn from teachers who come from different backgrounds and perspectives than they do. Kimberly Taylor is teaching in Smithers, B.C. the first half of this semester and has decided to teach off campus to "see other parts of the country and find potential job areas that she would like to work in." Lynette Andree chose to teach at Elim Christian School in the Chicago area, a school for children with severe disabilities. She is enjoying the "positive Christian environment," the community and how accepting all the students are of each other.

All of these student teachers eagerly recommend their off-campus student teaching experience to other education majors. Andree says, "I know I'll be a better teacher because of this. I'm learning things here that I would never learn in a general classroom setting."

Out & About

Jill Hiemstra
Staff Writer

Georgia police are searching for a burglar who enters homes in a very unique manner, burrowing through the walls of a house. This method avoids setting off alarm systems, which typically are attached to windows or doors.

Someone burglarized a home on January 8 in a subdivision after entering the house through a rear wall. Police believe the burglar peeled back siding and burrowed through the sheetrock with a tool such as a screwdriver.

"We're kind of leaning toward someone who has some knowledge of home or residential construction just because of where the entry points are made," police spokesman Officer Scott Luther said. "He had to have used some type of tool that would be small enough to fit in his pocket or coat that would be able to peel the siding off and chip through the insulation board and sheetrock."

Perky is one tough bird.

The ring-neck duck survived being shot and spending two days in a hunter's refrigerator and now she's had a close brush with death on a veterinarian's operating table.

The one-pound female duck stopped breathing Saturday during surgery to repair gunshot damage to one wing. Veterinarian David Hale revived the bird after several moments by performing CPR.

Perky entered the headlines last week after a hunter's wife opened her refrigerator door and the should've-been-dead duck lifted its head and looked at her. The bird had been in the fridge for two days since being shot and presumed killed January 15. She is recovering with a pin installed in the fractured wing, and probably will not have more surgery because of her sensitivity to anesthesia, Hale said.

A 62-year-old grandmother who prosecutors said ran drugs to support her bingo habit has been sentenced to three years in prison and a \$150,000 fine.

Acting on a tip, state police stopped Leticia Villareal Garcia near Bisbee in southeast Arizona in February 2005 and found 214 pounds of marijuana stuffed into the trunk of her car. Garcia has maintained her innocence, telling the judge at her sentencing Friday that she was unaware of the grass as she headed for a bingo game.

Garcia said she often played bingo, occasionally winning several thousand dollars at a sitting, although her only regular income was a \$275 monthly welfare check she received for caring for a granddaughter.

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Dordt reduces programs and faculty

Bridget Smith
Staff Writer

The academic council of Dordt College recently made their final decisions on faculty and program reductions. A decline in enrollment was cited by Dean Rockne McCarthy as necessitating the reductions.

At a recent student forum meeting, McCarthy explained, "Fewer students means a smaller budget." He also said Dordt College's tuition was researched by the registrar in comparison to that of other colleges and is "very, very competitive." He commented that "careful stewardship and management of funds" has led the academic council to make "hard decisions."

The goal is to have a 15 to 1 student-faculty ratio. In 1995, Dordt had 79 faculty members. Enrollment peaked in 1998 and in 2001 the ratio was approaching 16 to 1. With similar enrollment numbers today as in 1995, Dordt now has 86 faculty members.

The initial response was to ask various departments to "freeze" their budgets." Faculty compensation or benefits packets were also restructured and pay increases were limited, according to McCarthy.

This year, the academic council has chosen to take further action via faculty and program reductions. They looked at the programs they believe are most likely to grow and the programs with fewer students in them. McCarthy cited the present and foreseen growth of the digital media program and the nursing program

as two examples of the former.

The council has chosen to make reductions by not filling positions from which professors are retiring. For example, according to the academic council meeting minutes, they have decided to "reduce half of a position in the English Department in 2007, accomplished in part by anticipated changes in the General Education program." Other affected programs include the music department, the theatre arts major, the environmental studies program, and the criminal justice program.

One faculty position will be cut in the music department. The council has decided to compensate for faculty reduction "by addressing the under-enrollment in several courses (for example church music and upper-level courses in the various emphases within the major). Some courses will need to be eliminated, others offered less frequently. This will result in a reduced set of options in the music program."

Faculty from the theatre arts department will be asked to "contribute to digital media and general education (communication competency courses)." Another faculty position in the environmental studies department will be cut, and the environmental studies program will either be changed to a minor or offered as an emphasis within a different program.

One faculty position will also be cut in the criminal justice program and training will be offered to current political studies faculty to enable them to teach the criminal justice courses.

According to McCarthy, the budget reduction

"may result in further changes, but I can't anticipate what those changes might be."

Faculty and program reductions are still to be discussed in future meetings. The minutes of the academic council meeting are available on DENIS. Student forum meetings are held every Tuesday at 9:30 p.m. in the upper level of the Campus Center. All students concerned about faculty and program cuts are encouraged to attend or to contact a member of Student Forum.

Are students at Dordt oblivious?

Bree Wierenga
Editor

The Chicago Bears are going to the Super Bowl. Lots of Dordt students know that; guys were screaming and cheering at the TVs in their rooms in North Hall a few Sundays ago. People even changed their statuses on Facebook, where they now say, "Sara is EXCITED THE BEARS ARE GOING TO THE SUPER BOWL!!!" But do any of these people know that on Jan. 28, 250 insurgents aiming to kill Shia clerics in Najaf, Iraq, were killed by American and Iraqi forces? Do Dordt students really know what's going on around them?

This unawareness is not just in relation to current events and world news. Students do not even seem to know of situations, statuses and opportunities on Dordt's own campus.

For instance, Roy Anker, Professor of English at Calvin College, will be talking about God in the movies at Dordt on Feb. 8, and the next day he will host an all-day workshop for local high school and college students and teachers interested in film. Day of Encouragement will be held at the B.J. Haan on Feb. 10. *As It Is in Heaven*, the Theatre Arts department's newest production, debuts on Feb. 22.

A freshman at Calvin College named Melissa Decator died in a car accident on January 21. Pastor Gorter announced this tragedy at the following Tuesday chapel, which contained less than one-fifth of Dordt's entire community (chapel attendance is another story).

Changes are being made in faculty and administration, and some people are not going to be around

much longer. The grading system and curriculum are being re-considered, and the entire Criminal Justice program is being reduced to a two-year degree.

Many of the decisions made in the "upper levels" of Dordt are hidden from students' eyes, which is acceptable in some cases, but not in all. Do students really know where their money is going and what it's being invested in? Students can ask for information, but they won't get as much as they'd most likely want.

The number of students who know about all these events and situations is most likely very small.


Departments tend to keep to themselves. If they were to share information with each other and to tell more students than just the ones in their department, Dordt students would have a greater sense of how their college is functioning, and how they can interact with each other and improve the college experience. Does anyone outside of the Theatre Arts department realize that it won several awards (including directing and costumes) at the recent American College Theatre Festival (ACTF) for Dordt's past productions?

Granted, some departments and groups put up posters and flyers for upcoming events, like the Music department or SAC (Student Activities Committee). The Today also covers a lot of on-campus activities and news, but again, a limited amount of students read that publication.

A lot more can be done to improve awareness of Dordt's daily workings. Maybe students need to wake up, dig around and show more concern about this college than they have in the past.

As Sam Gutierrez says, "The information is there. Students just need a caring heart."

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AMOR team travels to Nicaragua

Bridget Smith
Staff Writer

On a cloudy Saturday afternoon, 18 Dordt students and one professor gathered in the Omaha airport. The final two weeks of our Christmas break would be spent serving fellow believers in Nicaragua through the Dordt program A Mission OutReach. We crammed into our first airplane – a veritable mini-me plane – at 2:40 p.m. and began the first leg of our journey.

After our second plane trip, we arrived in Managua at 7 p.m.. Outside the airport, we met two of our team leaders, Rachel (a Dordt alumnus) and Alma. With a two hour ride ahead of us, we tossed our luggage into a small green van. A swarm of blue t-shirts, we crowded into an old Mercedes bus. Each passenger took a spot in one of the brightly arrayed orange and red seats. All week we talked about our "little engine that could" as she plugged up mountain sides and bounced down city streets.

As we raced through town – weaving in and out of crowded traffic among packed cars, trucks and vans – I tried to capture all the sights, sounds and smells of the city of Managua. I noticed the incongruity of the placement of the businesses and homes that seem randomly placed along the road. The structure is – well, just that, so much less structured than in the U.S.

After a bumpy ride, our bus driver pulled into the entrance of Rancho Ebenezer. The large, heavy gate was shut and locked behind us. Later that night, stragglers stood outside our little gated community and yelled up at el dormitorio, whistling and saying "You are my love. I wait for you my love." And the acclamations continued in broken English to the ladies of the party. We could hear them as we lay in bed and they wandered back and forth outside our windows still proclaiming their undying love.

On Sunday morning, we awoke at 5 a.m. to the sound of cackling roosters and barking dogs. In the



Bridget Smith

The Nicaragua AMOR team poses for a group shot at Rancho Ebenezer in Managua.

next week, we woke every morning to those sounds. At 7am the breakfast bell rang and we ate a breakfast of gallo pinto, eggs, and – on two occasions – pancakes.

At the ranch we picked coffee beans, helped build a guard house for an adjacent farm, painted a water reservoir, filled bags of dirt for coffee bean seeds, dug a seven meter latrine and bent rebar. Each work day started at 8 a.m. Nicaraguan time – every-

thing runs late – and went until 12 p.m.. From 12pm – 2pm we ate lunch and had a siesta. Three more hours of work and we were done for the day

At night we had devotions, wrote journals and played numerous group games. One night, Don Chico (owner of Rancho Ebenezer) hosted a special dinner and program for the 10th year anniversary of AMOR's presence at the ranch. The appreciation for Dordt's work was always evident in Don Chico's thankful words and smiling face.

Every day when we walked down the road to work on the adjacent farm, the children stood at the edge of the dirt road and yelled "hola, hola, hola." The children asked "Una foto? Una foto?" We took pictures and showed them on our digital cameras.

On the weekend, we journeyed to the inactive volcano, Mombacho. We also went on a short boat tour of the islands on Lake Nicaragua. Afterwards, we went shopping at the open market in Masaya. On Sunday, we were extremely blessed to spend time at a quiet beach on the ocean. These trips helped us to experience and understand more of the Nicaraguan culture.



Bridget Smith

Lauralee Stel, Nicole Top and Bridget Smith paint with local construction workers.



Bridget Smith

Bridget Smith with some Nicaraguan children.

Dordt purchases new astronomy equipment

Cheryl Korthuis
Staff Writer

Last November, Dordt purchased new astronomy equipment, including two telescopes and an observatory building.

Dick Hodgson, former Dordt astronomy professor, knew of an amateur astronomer in Sioux City who wanted to sell his observatory and equipment. Hodgson contacted Dordt's current astronomy professor, Douglas Allen, and Allen pursued the deal.

Allen bought two telescopes and the observatory for half the price of new equipment. The seller was moving and needed to sell the equipment in order for his house to sell. The fifteen-inch telescope is already in use and will be set up in front of the Campus Center for a "coming-out party" during Alumni Weekend (Feb. 16-17), says Allen. The new Obsession telescope will focus on Saturn.

The observatory will be set up on the roof of the science building in the spring, after approval by the administration. "An observatory is a visible sign to visitors showing that we are serious about the sciences," says Allen.

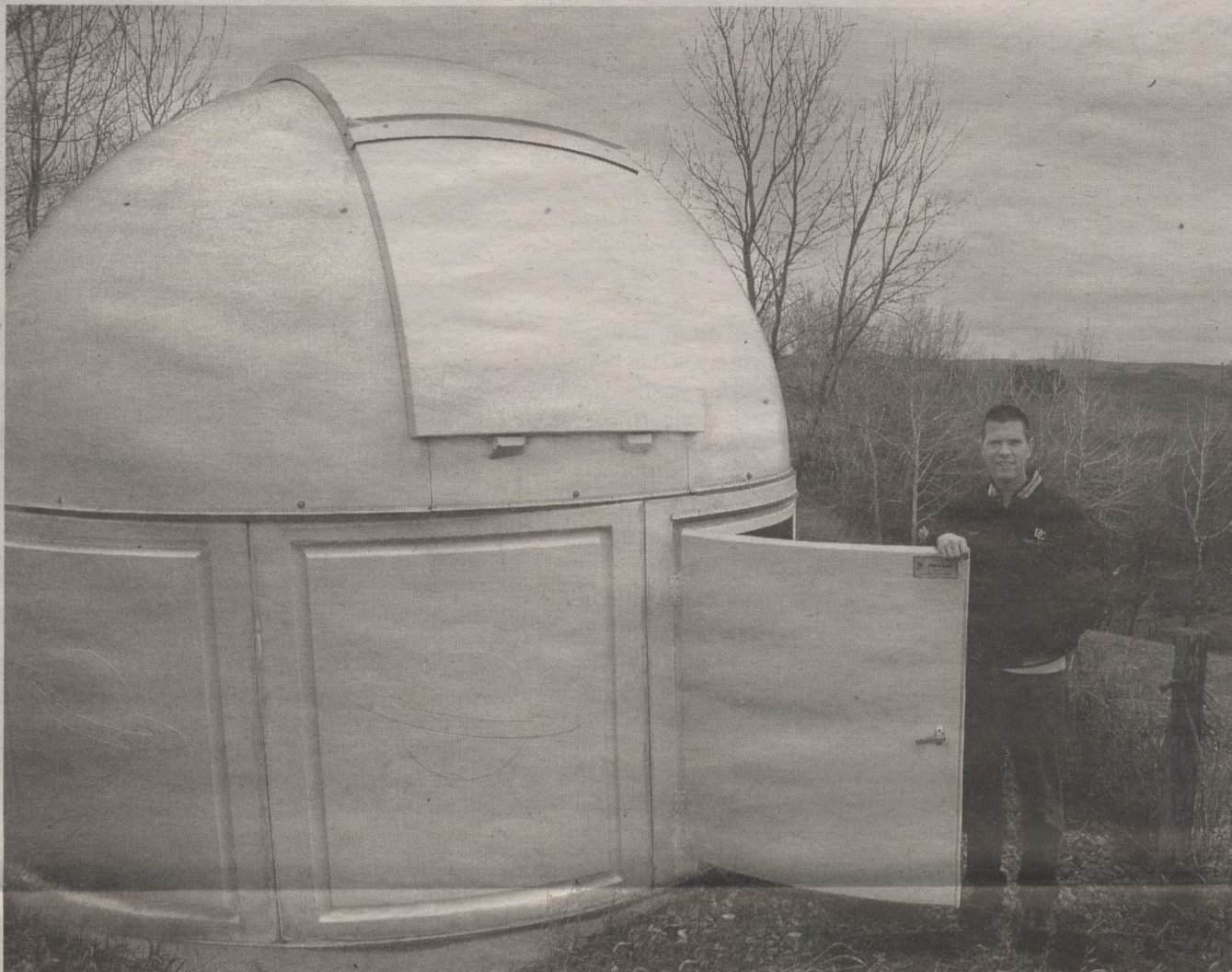
The used equipment is in good condition. The fiberglass observatory was built by an Australian yacht-building company. The diameter of the top dome is twelve feet. A hand-crank opens a shutter for the telescope to peek through. The dome shape blocks out stray light, says Allen.

The new telescopes are of a higher quality than the older ones, and dimmer objects, such as the Orion Nebula, become clearer with the new scopes.

One of the new telescopes is a twelve-inch Meade LX200. This means the mirror inside has a twelve-inch diameter and is able to gather more light than Dordt's old ten-inch telescope. A great feature of the Meade is that it has a computerized "go-to" system.

Allen says the telescope is programmed to find 65,000 different objects on command. "It gives me confidence too—that I can show a variety of objects... and that's exciting," says Allen. "It's a great teaching tool," he added.

He was able to observe thirty objects in an hour and a half, which would have been impossible



Dr. Doug Allen with Dordt's new observatory.

Photo courtesy of Jane Ver Steeg

without the computerized "go-to" system. While navigating to find certain stars is a useful exercise, the computer makes it possible to discover a lot more, says Allen.

The Meade telescope also has "tracking." The telescope automatically shifts as the earth turns, so the view is constant. The "tracking" feature is great for public viewing; no one has to waste time readjusting the telescope as the earth moves.

Allen says, "We will be in awe of seeing God's creation, and get a glimpse of what He's done, and appreciate how large God is."

The observatory will be open to students who ask Professor Allen for permission. There will also be monthly viewing opportunities with the Astronomy Club. For more details, contact Professor Allen or Jeremy Westra, president of the Astronomy Club.

Faith and Film club begins

Alli Hagey
Staff Writer

For movie-buffs on campus, this new group may spark your interest. The Faith and Film group, started by Professor Lief, is hoping to provide some thought-provoking discussion regarding interesting films that will be screened on campus this semester.

Professor Lief hopes to be able to look at the films from different perspectives, and not just limit the view to a "moralistic, Christian approach" that is often taken by Christians towards things produced out of pop culture, including movies. Lief states, "Such an approach does not allow us to get deeper into the themes of the film, including how it was

made." The discussions surrounding the films will focus on the specific themes that the film provided and hopefully lead to a creative, though-provoking discussion.

The group will screen one movie every month, and students can get involved by coming to the screenings ready to provide their thoughts on the film that is shown. The next screening will be on Feb. 15, with "What The Bleep Do We Know" providing the entertainment and fueling the follow-up discussion. The movies chosen for the rest of the semester are "Dear Frankie" (Mar. 8) and "Saint Ralph" (Apr. 12). Students who have film ideas for next semester can contact Professor Lief.



Acclaimed percussionist joins NISO for winter concert

Jamin Hubner
Staff Writer

The Northwest Iowa Symphony Orchestra, directed by Henry Duitman, is soon featuring one of the hottest composers and percussionists alive today. David Gluck will be playing a musical piece he recently composed, along with NISO, the Dordt College Jazz Band, and the Northwestern College Jazz Band. This grand combined performance will be held in the B.J. Haan Auditorium, Feb. 3rd at 7:30p.m.

Gluck is originally from Utica, New York, but currently serves as the Assistant Professor of Studio Composition at Purchase College, State University of New York. As the founding member of Rhythm and Brass, he toured the world as a fabulous percussionist and an acclaimed virtuoso mallet performer. His unique compositions have been featured in Rhythm and Brass and countless symphonies across the United States. In addition to numerous commissions from professional and collegiate

ensembles, he was recently premiered at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall. Gluck received his B.A. in Music from Ithaca College and M.A. in Fine Arts Studio Composition from Purchase College, where he received the prestigious Alvin Brehm Award in composition. Some of his work has also been featured in numerous musical publications including Jazz Player magazine.

Gluck's most recent composition, which is being featured at this year's NISO Winter Pops Concert, is entitled "Nagaina's Nemesis." The title came from a story found in "The Jungle Book" (1894), called Rikki-Tikki-Tavi. In the story, Rikki is a young courageous mongoose that is befriended by a British family living in the heart of India during the turn of the century. Rikki protects his new family by battling Nag and Nagaina, two evil cobra snakes who want to kill humans in order to hatch their eggs. "The kinetic energy and frenzied interaction between Rikki and Nagaina (pronounced Nag-ee-na) during a joust-like,



David Gluck will join the Northwest Iowa Symphony Orchestra for a concert on Feb. 3.

one-on-one battle paralleled the essence of my newly composed work," Gluck said. "Also, being that the story takes place in India is coincidental to the fact that much of the melodic material in the piece is based on Indian raga." Gluck also notes that the piece is "not programmatic in the sense that the im-

agery and story-line came first." He is quick to say, however, that "it is uncanny how the music at times, captures the color, flavor and subtle nuances of the story of Nagaina's Nemesis-Rikki-Tikki-Tavi."

Gluck will be playing all sorts of instruments during the

performance of his composition, including the didjerido, marimba, and others. There is even talk about a live drum battle on stage. Immerse yourself in one of the most marvelous and unique symphonic performances ever at 7:30 p.m. this Feb. 3rd in the B.J. Haan Auditorium.

Concert Choir tours over Christmas break

Jessica Assink
Staff Writer

While most students were enjoying the waning days of Christmas break, the 53 members of Dordt's Concert Choir were touring the frozen tundra of the Great Plains. From Jan. 9 to 15, the choir, led by Dr. Benjamin Kornelis, traveled through the northern United States and Canada.

Although the weather was disagreeable and the tour schedule demanding—at least one performance a day and several hours on the bus—the singers enjoyed the experience and appreciated the opportunity to share their music with a wider audience. Sophomore Claire McWilliams, in her first year with Concert Choir, says, "Concerts are especially meaningful when the audience is grateful for us making the time to come to them."

Bonds were formed not only between the singers and the audiences, but among the members of the choir. Junior Sara Achterhof describes the camaraderie that developed on the bus rides: "You are pretty much forced to get to know each other on a deeper level when you are in a bus with them for many hours each day. You're never really alone, but that's one of the things that makes it fun."

The repertoire for the tour varied from Mozart's "Kyrie Eleison" (in a slightly belated celebration of the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth) to a French Canadian folksong ("J'Entends le Moulin"), a Kenyan melody ("Vamuvamba") and a spiritual ("Daniel, Daniel, Servant of the Lord"). At the end of each concert, Dr. Kornelis invited Dordt alumni and current students to join the choir on stage for the singing of the alma mater.

One powerful song was "Child of God," by Layton De Vries, a graduate of Dordt. He was killed in

a car accident at the age of 24 and this song was one of the last that he wrote. According to Achterhof, the song "talks about how God is with us in every season of our lives, even in the face of death."

The choir had a few days to recover before giving one final concert here at Dordt on Jan. 19. During the intermission, some singers shared a bit of their experiences on tour with the audience: they demonstrated the hazards of crossing the U.S.-Canada border, told a few host family stories, showed off some of their hidden talents and even led the audience in their typical pre-concert stretch routine.

But the tour was not just about the experiences and fun had by the choir members. One of the final songs on the program, "Praise to the Lord," reminded both the choir and the audience of the motivation for the tour. As McWilliams says, "it ended our concert with a song that defined the reason for our singing, to rejoice and honor God for His wonderful blessings."

Junior art show featured in Campus Center gallery

Grace Venhuizen
Staff Writer

The Junior Art Show began last Friday night in the Dordt College Campus Center Art Gallery. The work of 12 Dordt students has been on display in the gallery since Jan. 18 and will continue to be displayed until Feb. 4.

All junior art majors are required to submit work to the exhibit. "It's a chance for junior art students to show their work thus far and explain why this art is important to you," says Lindsey Shearer, a

graphic arts major participating in the show.

Other students participating in the show include Elbert Bakker, Matthew Berkenpas, Diane Feucht, Aaron Huisman, Mallory McConnell, Amanda Niewenhuis, Dave Schierbeek, Randi Unverzagt, Mary Jo Van Essen, Joe Van Walbeek and Mason Welsh. Shearer says that the show is a chance for these art majors to display their "strongest work – the best of the best of what they have learned."

The exhibit includes pieces of all mediums of art. The artists' work consists of digital motion pictures, drawings, graphic and website design, paintings,

photography and sculptures. Shearer has contributed a mixture of pieces to the exhibit that, she says, "I have invested a lot of time and myself in."

The show was planned to include a time for the public to mill around and observe the artists' work. Art majors and Dordt art professors then took time to comment on the pieces throughout the room, giving the observers the opportunity to fully appreciate the art.

Shearer says that this is a "good chance to talk to the artist about their pieces," and that it is also "a good opportunity for people who don't know a lot about art to learn."

Freedom Writers a winning film

Jurgen Boerema
Staff Writer

Hollywood is an industry beholden to formulas. One of the most tried and true formulas is the "true story." The characters and stories change a little bit, but the plot essentially stays the same. In this case, Hilary Swank (*Million Dollar Baby*) puts on pearls and a nice dress and goes to school as Erin Gruwell, the "inspirational teacher."

She goes to a newly integrated school in Los Angeles two years after the Rodney King race riots of 1992. Tensions are high, and everyone at school has retreated into their separate gangs. She charges in with enthusiasm, not heeding the warnings of faculty members who tell her that the kids are unreachable.

Her first days are chaotic, and the students laugh at her goofy smile and expensive pearls. Erin drops plans to read *The Odyssey* and puts on a tougher approach.

When an Asian student passes around a crude drawing of another student, an opportunity to dispense some genuine movie wisdom appears. Gruwell scolds the kids, telling them that this is how "the Holocaust started," "by the biggest gang in history who blamed other people for their problems."

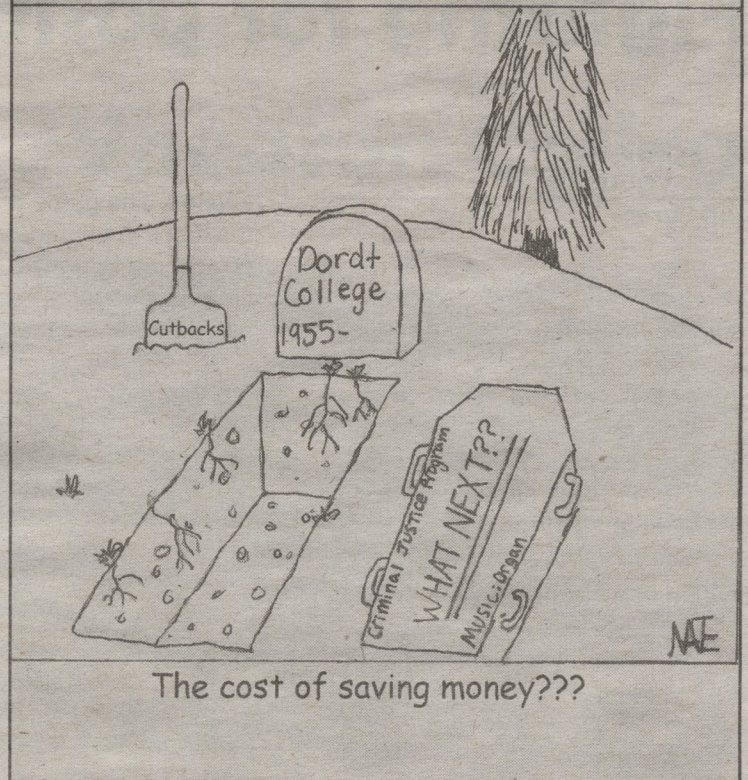
Suddenly, a nerve is struck. Erin assigns *The Diary of Anne Frank* and gives journals to the students so they can write about whatever they want. Stories of broken families, dead siblings and near-death experiences start to come out. Everyone begins to find their inner voice, befriend their classmates

and leave their old life of hate behind. The rest plays itself out in typical fashion.

So why did I find myself liking this movie? Was it the slow-motion voice-over with earnest faces looking at the chalkboard? Or maybe because of the words at the beginning saying it was a true story?

No, I think it was the fact that someone risked something, and Hollywood decided to acknowledge that risk. Unfortunately, not all of these people get the movies with the big name actors, dramatic soundtrack and words scrolling at the end describing where everyone ended up. So when a movie like this pops up, I don't feel so bad about parting with four dollars to watch it. Or maybe I was just too scared to watch *The Hitcher* instead.

Political Cartoon by Nate Gibson



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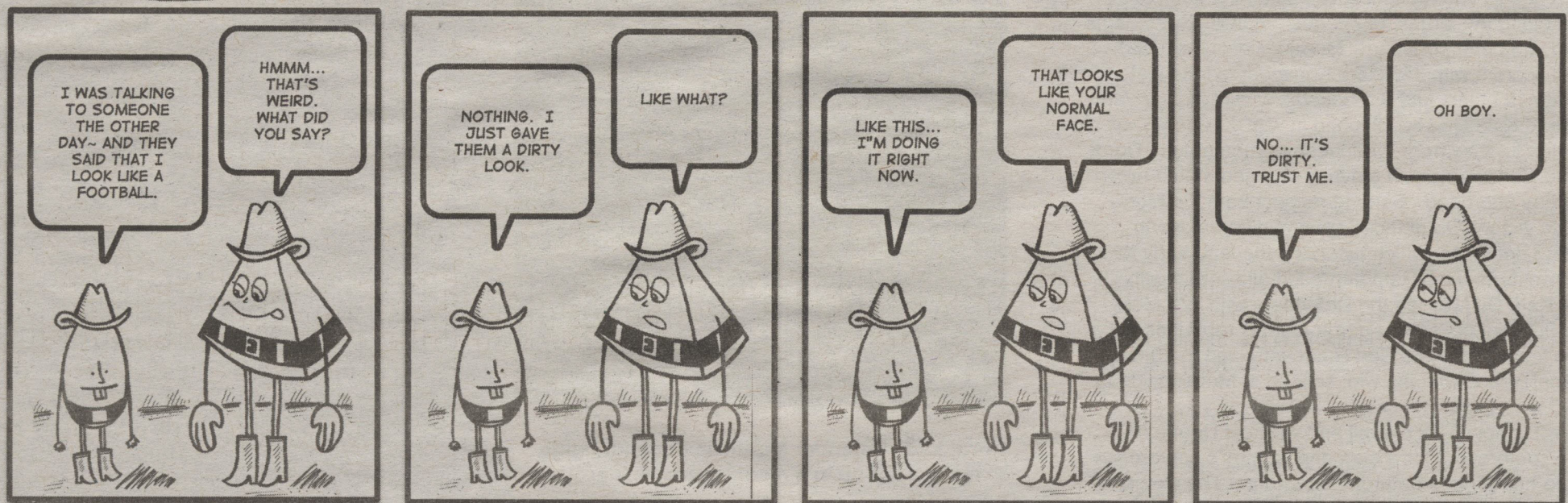
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SAMGUTIERREZ

Dordt Defenders basketball: Fighting for position in the GPAC

Jesse Veenstra
Staff Writer

After a torrid start, the Dordt men's basketball team has cooled off slightly and now is in a dog-fight for one of the top four spots in the GPAC conference. The Defenders started the season 11-2 but have slumped to a 15-9 record.

Dordt has shown signs of brilliance, beating Morningside last Wednesday by a convincing 22 points. Sophomore Mark Rowenhorst had a career high 27 points without missing a shot, going 9-9 and 5-5 from the three point line. Brian Eekhoff added 21, and Eric Van Maanen scored 17 in the win.

In front of one of the largest crowds in De Witt Gymnasium history, Dordt looked to beat rival

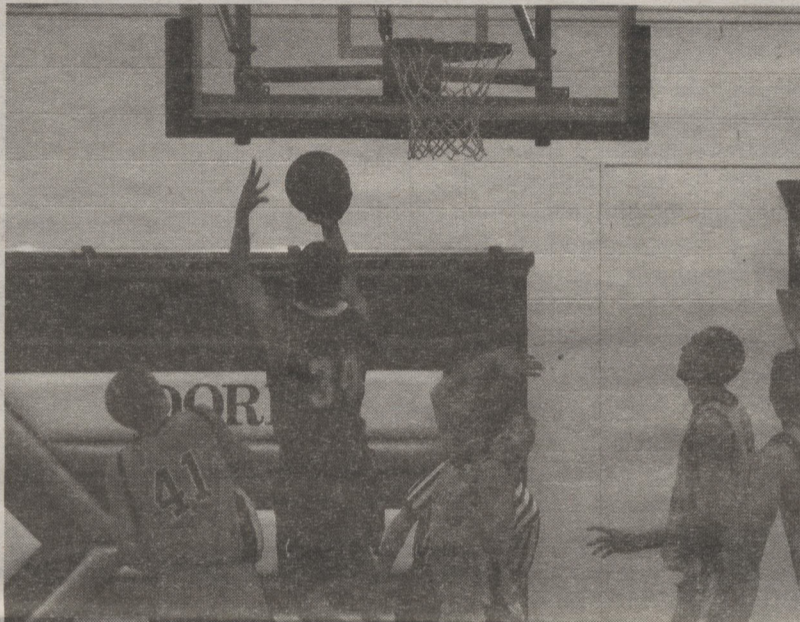
Northwestern for the second time this season. The game remained close until the last five minutes when Northwestern played lockdown defense and the Defenders couldn't seem to score. "We played great defense all game, but down

the stretch couldn't seem to get the job done offensively," said senior Derek Keizer, who is two assists away from breaking the career assist record.

Northwestern outscored Dordt 17-3 over the last eight minutes of the game to win 76-59. Logan Kingma scored 13 points in the loss, and Scott Van Zanten added 9.

Currently with a conference record of 8-5, Dordt is tied for fourth in the conference with Hastings, a half-game ahead of Midland Lutheran. Sioux Falls and Northwestern share the lead at 10-3, with Dakota Wesleyan a half game back at 9-3. "Our goal is to play ourselves into one of the top four spots in the conference and make a run deep into postseason play," said Keizer.

Dordt plays at home against Doane College on Saturday, Feb. 3 at 4:00 p.m., and again Wednesday Feb 7 against Sioux Falls.



Alvin Shim

Dordt Defender men watch for a rebound at a recent home game against Morningside.

Defender women split vs conference rivals

Amanda Henke
Staff Writer

The Dordt women's basketball team is hanging on above the .500 mark, sitting at 7-6 after a win and a loss in GPAC competition this week.

On Wednesday, the Defenders fought their way to an unexpected upset over the 5th-ranked, conference leader Morningside 83-81. Playing at home, Dordt outshot the Mustangs 51 to 47 percent. The game was a head-to-head, tight play with a nine point differential being the largest of the entire game. Both teams pulled in 31 total rebounds; Morningside's Dani Gas led all scorers with 25. Kara Karlsgodt led the Defenders with 19 points and 9 rebounds, while Lindsey Van Wyk and Kate Du Mez chipped in with 17 each.

Trying to draw from Wednesday's momentum, Dordt hosted Northwestern in a rivalry-charged match-up on Saturday afternoon. Earning respect from the Morningside victory, Dordt faced several different Northwestern defenses, which extended the lead early for Northwestern. Deb Remmerde led all scorers with 29, while Kate Du Mez led the Defenders with 17. McKinzie Schmidt pulled in a game-high 11 rebounds out of the team's 39. The Red Raiders moved to 10-3 in the conference with the win, second to Morningside in GPAC standings.

Dordt is now 9-13 overall and will host Doane (9-3 in the conference) for a men and women's conference double-header this Saturday afternoon. The women's game will begin at 2:00 p.m.



Alvin Shim

Dordt Lady Defender McKinzie Schmidt fights to make a lay-up in a recent game vs Morningside

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