



Volume XLIV
Number IX

Dordt College Diamond

February 22, 2001

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Andrew Moody

The student, played by Adam Smit, leans over the Colonel's ill daughter, played by Laura Groen. "Ghost Sonata" and "The Stronger" opens on Thursday, March 1.

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Students present a Strindberg evening

by **Jacque Scoby**
Staff Writer

The Dordt College Theater Arts Department will return to center stage in March with the production of "A Strindberg Evening." This time, the cast will present two works by August Strindberg in one performance. Adam Smit, Kevin Kingma, and

Laura Groen will star in "Ghost Sonata" followed by Kate Ver Velde and Emily Vander Hart in "The Stronger." Both performances will be held at Te Paske Theater.

Professor Simon du Toit, director of the play and professor of theater arts at Dordt College, said the department wanted to go out on a limb for this play.

"We tried to be a little adventuresome," he said. "It's not a light-hearted play."

Both plays require the audience to put forth some effort in order to understand them. "Ghost Sonata," for example, deals with themes of death, life, despair and forgiveness. In it, Old Man Hummel (Kingma) uses his vast

knowledge as a form of blackmail against others. "The Stronger," is basically a monologue spoken by Mrs. X (Ver Velde) to Mrs. Y (Vander Hart).

"We want the audience to go on a journey," du Toit said. "We want to challenge the audience to confront despair."

"I think it will be a powerful production, but one that

the Dordt community will have to put some effort into," said Chris Postma, who appears in "Ghost Sonata."

"Ghost Sonata" and "The Stronger" will be performed March 1-3, 5 at Te Paske Theater. Tickets can be purchased by calling the Box Office at extension 6430.

Retreat will prepare students for PLIA

by **Allison Schaap**
News Page Assistant
Editor

Putting Love Into Action (PLIA) will be sending 247 students to do service projects in different areas of the country over spring break. To prepare for the trips, PLIA organizers will be holding a retreat this weekend.

Shari Wubben, a member of the PLIAretreat sub-

committee, says that going on the PLIA retreat is a wonderful opportunity to get to know one's team, as well as to understand the focus of the trip is and what the tasks will be, so that students can be better prepared to serve others.

Becky Hathaway and Marcel Busz are also working to make sure that all the activities planned for Friday evening and

Saturday morning fall into place. The PLIA retreat begins on Friday, February 23 at 6:00 pm, and continues on Saturday, February 24 from 8:00 am to noon at New Life Church.

The theme for this year's PLIA service project is "Ambassadors of Christ," coming from II Corinthians 5:20. Tony Van Zanten, from Roseland Christian Ministries, will

be speaking. Van Zanten will address different issues that one may encounter when on a service project.

Wubben says that the teams will be able to connect at the retreat, and get their hearts prepared for the PLIA experience both as a team and individually. They will also become more aware of the cultural issues before leaving on their service project.

Wubben says that after her first PLIA retreat she became excited about where she was going because she got better acquainted with her team and more focused on what she would be doing to serve others. She says, "PLIA groups are unique in that they seem like a random selection, but by the end of the two weeks, it's found to be a God-selected group,"

Dordt housing plans alleviate "crunch"

by Mitch Beaumont
Assistant Editor

There is a history of housing problems at Dordt. About six years ago, the student body was unhappy with the current housing plan, so a meeting was held between college administrators and members of the student body to discuss the issue. Curtis Taylor, now the Director of Planning and Special Assistant to the president, was on campus when it happened.

"We did have a meeting in which I answered questions from students, and we ultimately changed one of several plans that we had to accommodate students for the following year," said Taylor. "There was a demonstration held in the SUB, but it was done in jest, because the problem had already been rectified. The students even

invited me to attend."

This year, four groups of students were forced to live off-campus because of limited room for upperclassmen. Once again, the Residence Life staff is scrambling to be sure there is ample space for Dordt's student body of over 1,400 students for next semester.

Despite the seemingly cramped space in all the dorms and apartments on campus, Sandi Altena, Director of Residence Life, says that there are plenty of beds on campus for all the students. "But the problem is that the beds aren't in apartments [where they are needed most]. We have enough beds for everyone, they just aren't all in places that students desire the most."

If the sizes of the junior and senior classes of next year stay approximately the same, there will be well over 500 students vying for

space in either Southview or East Campus. With the amount of room available in Southview, East Campus, the duplex and a new building to be used next year, there will be space for approximately 510 students. Altena says that although those apartments probably won't house every upperclassman, it's hard to guess which students will get married over the summer, who will decide to live at home in Sioux Center and who will withdraw altogether.

The new building is called the eight-plex and is located further down 4th Avenue. It would house five apartments of eight people each. Dordt bought the building a couple of years ago and is planning to remodel it this summer to make it ready for student residence next fall.

"I'm not concerned at all about [the housing situation]," says

Altena. "There's really not a housing crunch; it's just a matter of finding the right place for the right people."

The distribution of the student body in all the dorms and apartments has been the problem in the past, but Dordt is trying to alleviate that problem as much as possible. In addition to remodeling the eight-plex this summer, North Hall will be remodeled.

According to Altena, Dordt is considering housing the underclassmen together in all the dorms (North, East, West and Covenant).

"Research has shown that the advantages of housing first year students with second year students together is phenomenal," says Altena. "It makes the first year experience so much better because they are exposed to academic modeling by the sophomores who understand how to do college.

Most colleges house that way. It's very unusual to have a first year building."

Students have the option of volunteering to live off-campus. Applications will be available before or just after spring break for those groups who desire to live in the duplex or eight-plex.

Regardless of Dordt's efforts, there will be people who will not get into the apartments. "There will be seniors who don't get into Southview," says Altena. "It's been that way for four years and probably prior to that, but we will have some place to put them and I hope it's an apartment."

Students may not get to live where they want next year, but according to Altena, there is no such thing as a housing crunch on Dordt's campus. Everyone will have a place to live.

GIFT joins NW praise-and-worship

by Tricia Van Ee
News Page Editor

Students from Dordt will join Northwestern students in Christ Chapel at Northwestern College on Sunday, February 25, for a joint GIFT-Praise and Worship service.

Sunday night services joining Dordt and Northwestern students have been held several times in the past few years, but this will be the first collaborative effort of the two colleges this year. Another joint GIFT-Praise and Worship service has been scheduled for April 22 at Dordt.

Northwestern's Praise and Worship band will play along with one of the teams of singers from Dordt, and Dordt sophomore Kraig Bleeker plans to speak on 1 Corinthians 15 and the Resurrection. When Northwestern

students come to Dordt on April 22, Dordt's band will play, and Northwestern will provide the singers and the speaker.

Junior Rochelle Van Ry, the GIFT coordinator, says that the purpose of this joint service is to promote unity between the two schools. "It's a great opportunity for us to come together as a body of believers, as brothers and sisters in Christ."

Dordt's GIFT service and Northwestern's Sunday night Praise and Worship are essentially the same thing, but there are some differences. While GIFT is held on alternate weeks at Dordt, Northwestern's Praise and Worship service is held weekly. GIFT is usually organized around a theme; the songs are chosen by Van Ry and Emily Deutschman, the GIFT song leader, to enhance the speak-

er's message. Praise and Worship at Northwestern is usually not quite as thematic; the band chooses songs together. Students often serve as speakers at Northwestern, while Dordt brings in more pastors and outside speakers. Also, Northwestern's Praise and Worship coordinators are different each year, while the Dordt coordinator could remain the same person for more than one year.

"It's awesome to be able to worship with so many fellow believers and to know that we are one in Christ, despite denominational differences," said Van Ry. "We are so close to Orange City; we need to take the opportunities we have to fellowship together."

Dordt vans will be leaving from the SUB at 8:30 for the 9:00 service. Students are urged to car pool as there is limited parking.

Adopt-a-Freshman returns to campus

by Rachelle Vander Werff
Staff Writer

The Adopt-a-Freshman program is retuning to campus. Although it was not present last year, it has been done previous years, and it went over well. Juniors and seniors that were interested in participating have already signed up with their RA's, and now freshmen have the opportunity to sign up to be adopted. Each room that signed up (from East Campus and Southview) will be paired with a couple of freshmen.

The Residence Life staff are very excited about this event.

Rebecca Van Ee, an RA in East Hall, says, "It's a good way for freshmen to get to know upperclassmen and upperclassmen, get the chance to share their experiences. Plus, it means good food." Doug Dirksen, the CA in Southview, is also excited about this event. Dirksen says, "This program is really an encouragement for juniors and seniors to interact with underclassmen throughout the entire year. Upper-underclass relations are important for the development and maturing of all students. We don't want this program to be a one time activity. We (upperclassmen) need to challenge ourselves to spend more time

with freshmen and sophomores, both for their development and ours. The Res Life staff hopes this program will open doors to some relationships that might not otherwise have been formed."

The people involved are excited as well as the Res Life staff. Shannon Snieder's room signed up to Adopt-a-Freshman, she says, "We are really excited to get to know some freshmen." Freshman Holly Retzer says, "I want the chance to meet new people, and why not have free food? It's definitely cool!"

The Res Life staff will pair the freshmen with their upperclass adopters tomorrow.

The Bel Canto Children's Choir

The Bel Canto Children's Choir of Omaha will give a free concert at the B.J. Haan Auditorium on Friday, February 23, at 7:30 p.m. The choir, which begins membership at age 11, is comprised of 48 singers and is the most advanced ensemble in the

360-voice Nebraska Children's Chorus.

Dr. Z. Randall Stroope directs the group, which has toured across the United States and overseas. They perform from a repertoire of 35 memorized pieces in up to eight different languages.



The Chamber of Commerce gallery is now displaying works by Dordt senior Andrew Moody. Moody's work will be up for viewing until March 9.

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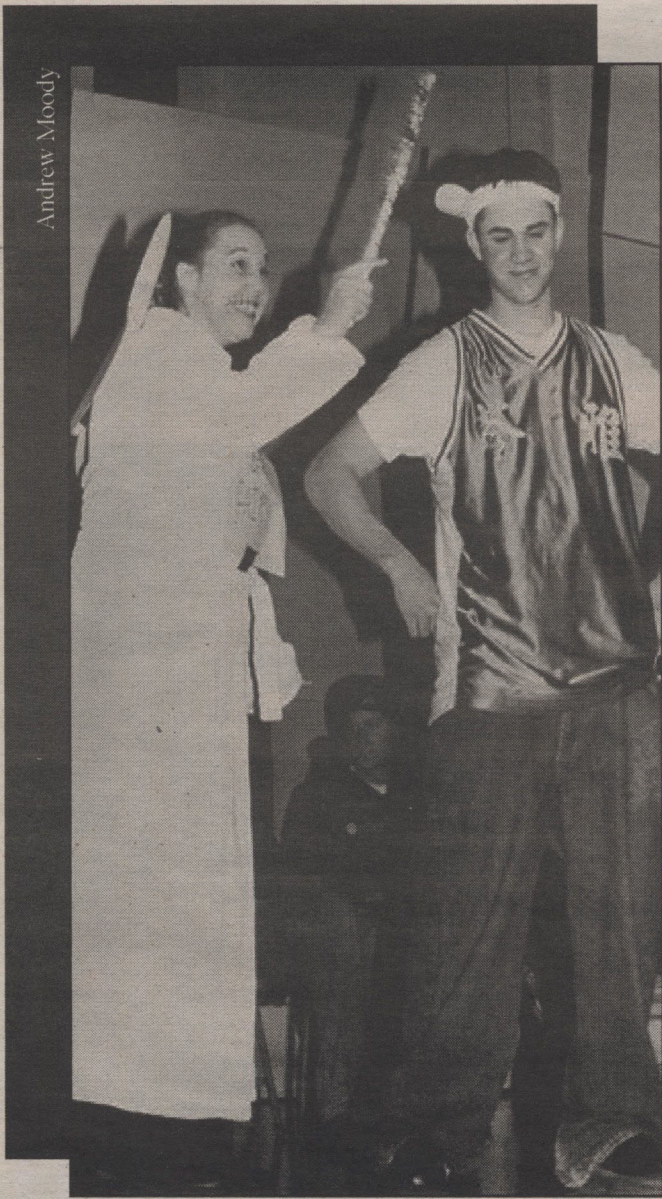
Andrew Moody



Mark Brink, Luke Shannon, Reuben Vander Kwaak and Phil Van De Griend in the locker room after practice, fantasizing about attending a college where, according to Luke, "my parents went, my aunts and uncles went, my grandparents went and all the profs went." "Isn't that kinda like intellectual incest?" Reuben responded.

TX 2001

Andrew Moody



John Hansen



Above: Luke Shannon, Rueben Vander Kwaak and Andrew Hoeksema introduce the audience to Thorton-Xaiver High School.

Left: The fairy of manhood, Amy Vroom, visits Phil Van De Griend. With a tap of her wand, Phil enters puberty.

TX 2001

Andrew Moody



Right: Freshmen Brenda Janssen, Danielle Bosma and Liz McPherson sing "Leaving on a Jet Plane."

Below: "Save the Other Last Dance:" Kevin Kingma and Kristin Anderson join Heather Johnson in a live performance of the last dance from "Romy and Michelle's High School Reunion."

John Hansen

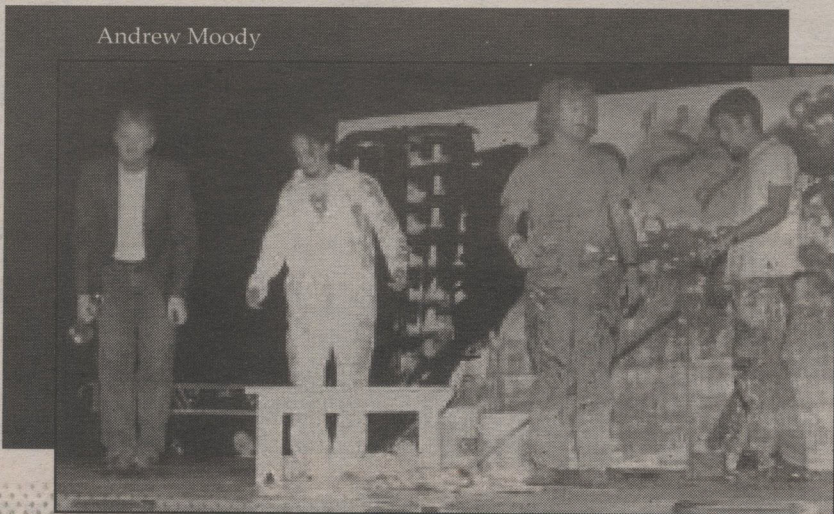


Andrew Moody



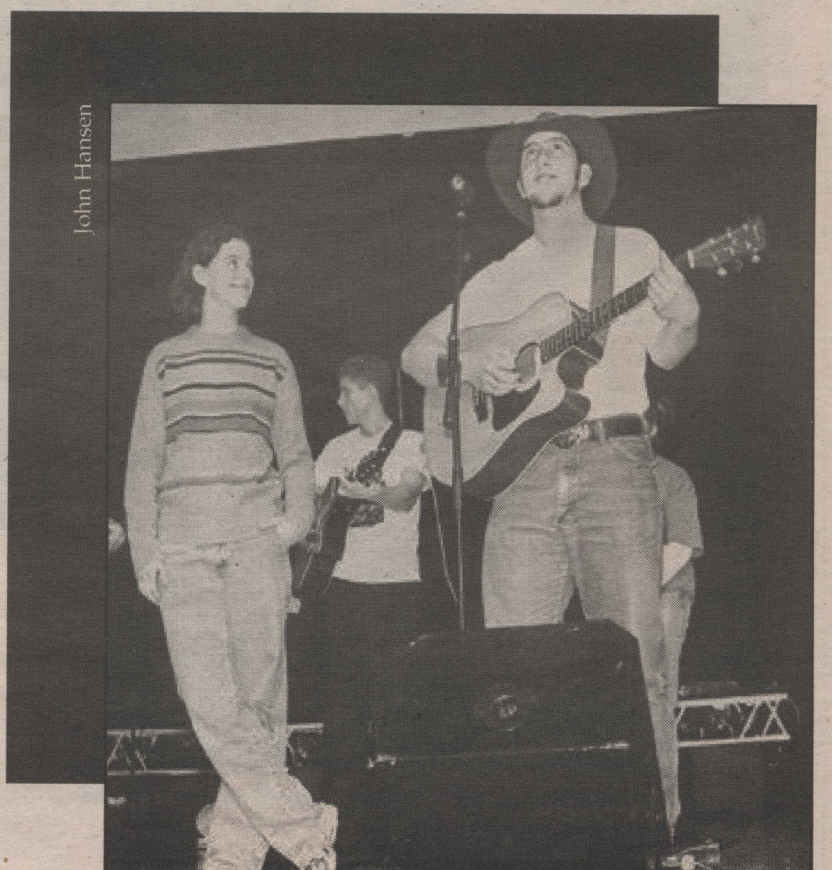
Left: James Klaver, Becca Schelhaas and Laremy De Vries led the audience in a round in their act entitled "Van Morrison meets Psalty the big blue Hymnal."

Andrew Moody



Above: Mike Contant and Eric Van Wyk paint "To tell a story." Joel Schreurs and Dan Perkins assist them.

John Hansen



Right: Kalie Gaskill suggests a song topic for Jon Shupe. He performed impromptu while the audience waited for the judges' decisions.

Andrew Moody

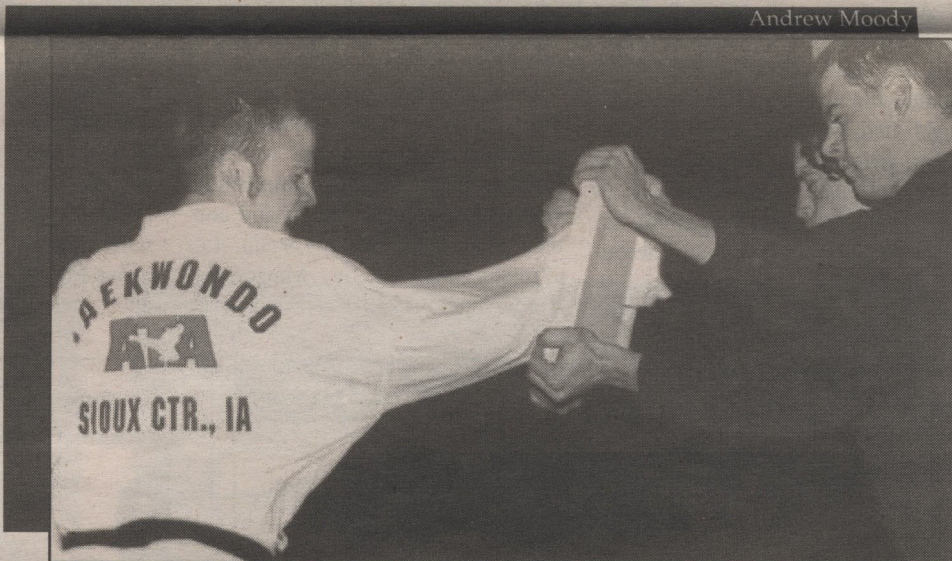
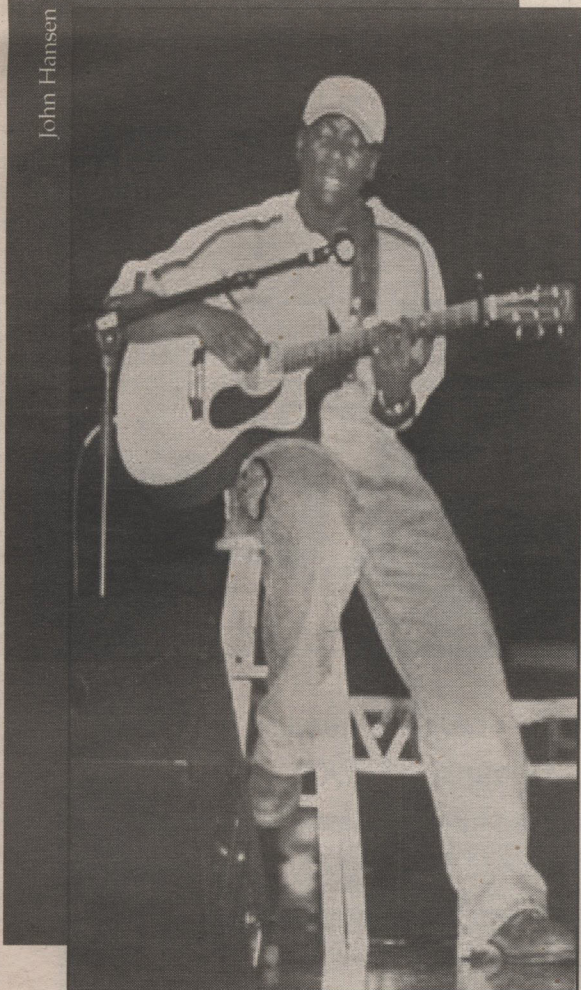
Right: Dordt's own rappers, David Akerele and Thomas Thomas, took first place with RecognizeO. They were awarded \$100.



And the winners are...

Andrew Moody

John Hansen



Left: Doug Dirksen won most creative act for his Tae Kwon Do routine, entitled "The Way of Songham." Doug was awarded \$25. Matt Haan, John Hoogeveen and Dan Perkins assisted him.

Andrew Moody

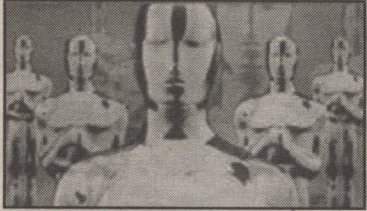


Above: Abasa Asake won second-runner up for "Abasa, Unplugged." He was given a check for \$50.

Right: Tony Rietema and Jason Kuiper led the "Jackson 18." They won first-runner up and \$75.

Oscars: best picture of the year?

by Mark Brink
Staff Writer



It's award season in the entertainment world, and last week the nominations for the Oscar awards were announced. For those in the movie-making business the Oscars are the most important award to win. Through its 73-year history it has become the most respected and sought-after prize available.

The most important category is that of Best Picture because it garners respect and (more importantly for the studios) money. Looking back, how many of us would have gone to see such small films as "Shine," "Life is Beautiful," or

"Shakespeare in Love?" Without the attention of a Best Picture nomination these three movies would have never even come close to gracing a movie screen within 300 miles.

This year, the five films nominated for Best Picture are "Erin Brockovich," "Gladiator," "Traffic," "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," and "Chocolat." I figured I should take the time to review these films for you so that you can be fully in-the-know when Oscar time rolls around. Granted, I haven't seen all five of these films. In fact, I've only seen three. "Erin Brockovich" never really interested me, even now when its been nominated as best picture, and "Chocolat" is still nowhere to be found in these parts. So, what follows is a quick review of the rest:

"Gladiator": I'm sure most of you have seen this film by now. It

was released at the beginning of the summer last year, and has since been released on video and DVD. The story is a familiar one--the reluctant hero loses his loved ones and must avenge their deaths while fighting for the freedom of his people. I thought the movie was good. It was visually solid, had great effects, and displayed strong acting. But good as it was, I question it's Oscar quality. Haven't we seen this same story before? "Braveheart" won best picture for the exact same story just a few years ago. My final judgment is that the film is good, but undeserving.

"Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon": Where did this movie come from? A month ago you would have been hard pressed to find someone who had heard about this film, let alone seen it. It is a subtitled foreign film from Taiwan

about two detectives/ninjas who are trying to recover a lost sword. Sure, it sounds basic, but it has much to offer. At its core is a love story (actually two love stories), but it's also an action flick, a murder mystery, a coming-of-age story, a cop movie, a kung-fu movie, and a drama all in one. The cinematography is extraordinary, and the film is amazingly beautiful. The fight scenes are less fighting than dancing; the gracefully moving forms are enough to hold you captive. The story and all its elements are executed very well; I would not be disappointed in the slightest if this film wins the award.

"Traffic": Rarely does a film come around that addresses a real issue so honestly that it doesn't even claim to have the answers. This film is actually three stories (like last year's multi-storied "Magnolia"). Each story centers

around a different aspect of the drug problem facing the U.S. today. One story takes place on the U.S.-Mexico border. A drug lord is arrested and must face trial while his wife deals with the consequences. A second story takes place on the other side of the border as a Mexican cop fights to maintain his integrity while everyone else willingly sells out. The final story is about the man newly appointed U.S. Drug Czar and how he deals with the fact that his own daughter is an addict. Truly an amazing film, it will make you think about the drug problem in a new way. I feel that this film, with its sincerity and dead-on convictions, should be the obvious winner.

Unfortunately, we will have to wait until March 25 to see who the winners are, but at least now you have a better idea of the competition.

Jean Berger to visit campus

by Andrea Voogt
Staff Writer

Internationally-known choral conductor and composer Jean Berger will be on Dordt's campus Monday, February 26, and Tuesday, February 27. According to adjunct professor of voice Deb Vogel, "Anyone who has sung in a choir knows of Jean Berger because his works are widely used." Vogel had ordered some arrangements from Jean Berger, and he wrote her a letter volunteering to come visit Dordt for a very small fee. Vogel was surprised that an internationally-known composer like

Berger would volunteer to visit our campus and thought it would be a wonderful learning experience for music students as well as the Dordt community.

Berger was born in Hamm, Germany, in 1909. He studied music theory at the University of Heidelberg and the University of Vienna and received his Ph.D. in 1931. Shortly after acquiring his doctorate, Berger moved to Paris, France, where he took composition lessons from Louis Aubert and conducted a mixed choral group, Les Compagnons de la Marjolaine. Berger spent 1939-1941 in Rio de

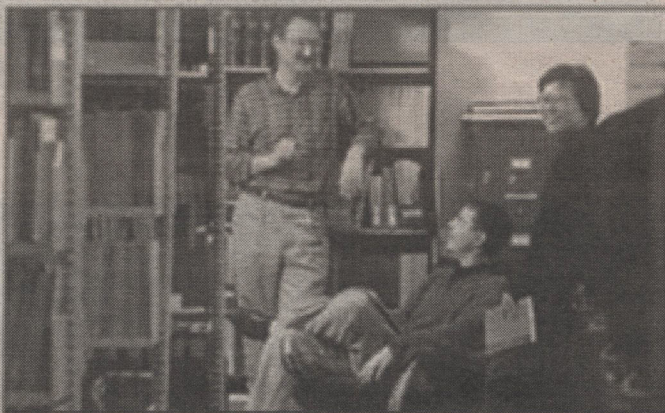
Janeiro, Brazil, where he worked as a French opera coach at the Municipal Theater. Since 1941, Berger has lived and worked in the United States. He has taught at several universities, including Middlebury College in Vermont, the University of Illinois in Urbana, and the University of Colorado in Boulder.

During his time at Dordt, Berger will visit several classes, including Music Theory II & IV, Music History, Concert Choir and Kantorei. He will also give lessons to several voice students. At 3:00 p.m. on Monday, February 26, he will conduct a vocal master class. At 7:30

p.m. on Tuesday, February 27, a number of ensembles will participate in a concert entitled "An Evening with Jean Berger" featuring Berger's music. The concert will include songs written in English as well as a few French songs, and will include the Chamber Orchestra for one piece. The Dordt College Concert Choir and Kantorei will perform, and solos will be performed by Tricia Van Ee, Rochelle Van Ry, Holly Meyer and Zach Vreeman. During the concert, Berger will offer descriptions and explanations of his music. "An Evening with Jean Berger" is free.

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Westra works to promote Dordt

by Jason Mulder
Staff Writer

A 1997 graduate of Dordt College, Corey Westra is currently in his eighth year on Dordt's campus. As KDCR Sports Director and Dordt College Sports Information Director, Westra keeps busy during the school year. A sportscaster on KDCR, he broadcasts approximately 100 games each year. He

announces all ball games but focuses primarily on basketball and volleyball. He even does high school games on occasion.

Not only does Westra broadcast games and act as KDCR's on-air personality from 10:00-12:00 every morning, but he is also the NAIA Region IV Sports Information Director. He oversees Sports Information Directors within a 5-state region including South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri, and Kansas. Westra is a member of

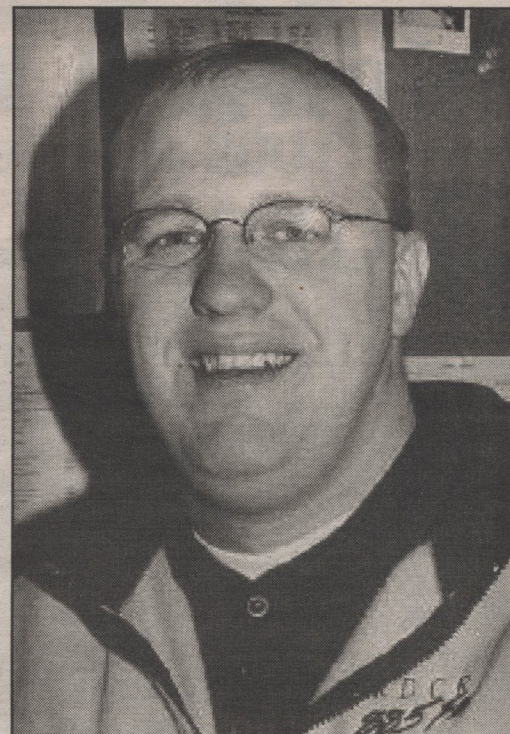
the Division II Women's Basketball National Championship Committee and is the public address announcer for the national tournament.

While serving on this committee, Westra met his fiancé, Anne Borchert, who is a marketing assistant for the Sioux City Convention Center. They plan to be married on May 19 of this year.

Westra enjoys his job because he "gets to work with such great student athletes." He

loves to be able to bring something to people who can't be at the games, to be their "eyes and ears." Westra has been involved in three national volleyball championships, in '95, '98, and '00.

Westra emphasizes that Dordt is such an "easy college to promote" because it is "loved by so many people." His next big challenge is working on the web page and updating it with press releases, media contacts, and statistics.



Andrew Moody
Corey Westra is in his fourth year of employment at Dordt.

De Ruiter hired as men's soccer coach

by Jocelyn Van Beek
Sports Page Editor



After a season of new leadership, Dordt's men's soccer team is once again looking forward to a new coach. Darryl De Ruiter comes from Unity Christian High School in Orange City with seven years of coaching under his belt. In addition, he coached and taught in Visalia, CA, his hometown, for eight years.

De Ruiter teaches Spanish, Physical Education, and Anatomy and Physiology at Unity, in addition he is the soccer coach and the assistant track coach. He is also the assistant administrator for Unity. While coaching soccer at Unity, he led the team to the last three state championships and a third place finish in 1997.

De Ruiter attends Immanuel CRC in

Orange City, where he takes part in the praise team as drummer. He has three children Derek (7), Morgan (5), and Jake (3).

De Ruiter earned his Master's degree in Administration, but he says, "The administrator jobs didn't pan out, so this is where God is leading me to serve." He will be taking over as men's soccer coach here at Dordt, in addition to teaching in the health, physical education, and recreation department.

De Ruiter is a 1986 graduate of Dordt, where he played soccer for all four years. He was a district 15 selection as a junior and senior while at Dordt. "I am excited to coach and teach at Dordt, it's like a homecoming for me," he says. "I have to adjust to a different level of play and to different personalities and maturity levels than I'm used to."

De Ruiter sees a tremendous amount of talent on the men's soccer team. He feels that with clear direction and focus, they can do really well. He has high expectations for the team next year. He says, "I hope to impact the guys and students as my teachers and coaches taught me - to give them good experiences at Dordt like I had."

Blades season struggles to a close

by Sara Van Nijenhuis
Guest Writer

The final siren of the year went off this weekend, ending the hockey team's hard fought and challenging season in regulation time. The team's 4-18 record was disappointing for the guys who came out to play every weekend, but junior James Bentum expressed this year to have been his best so far as a Blade. "We had great team leadership from the coaches and captains, who generally played with a lot of heart," he says. "We had a lot of fun on and off the ice together."

Part of this leadership included a transition for the Blades from being a student-led to a coach-led team. Aron Zuidhof, assistant captain and one of five retiring seniors, described the team's transition as necessary for the future, but still a difficult process to be a part of. "The team members do not have as much pride as they did when we used to run it as players," he said, but added, "It is wonderful to have Quatro

come out and coach the team. The time he has put in is much appreciated."

Both Zuidhof and Josh Vande Kraats, also a retiring senior, talked about the team not playing up to its fullest potential. Much of this may be attributed to the transition the team experienced. But it seemed as though the hits just kept on coming. Last year's MVP, Chris Veurink, had his season cut short in early November, and captain Nathan Van Nijenhuis left for the locker room three weeks early, both because of broken bones. In addition to these losses, the team's second leading scorer, Travis Woudstra, and defenseman Justin Vyn enrolled in off-campus programs for the spring semester.

Despite challenges and some disappointments, the fans continued to come out and support these athletes and the time and effort they put into the game of hockey. Bentum said, "We don't take our fans for granted; we know how lucky we are to play for such a great crowd. They make me want to skate, hit, bleed, and break for no apparent reason."

Statistics

Hockey

Feb. 9-10
Carleton College
L (7-9) Goals: Mike Debbink (2)
Nick Boskers (2)
Ryan de Lange (1)
Aaron Terpstra (1)
Assists: Ryan de Lange (3)
L (1-9) Goals: Mike Debbink
Feb. 16-17
Des Moines Collegiate Hockey Club
L (4-12) Goals: Ryan de Lange (2)
Aron Zuidhof (1)
Mike Debbink (1)
L (2-11) Goals: Ryan de Lange (1)
Mike Debbink (1)

Track

National Qualifiers:

Men:
4x400 M Relay - 3:24
Eric Carlson, Mark Buwalda, Jon Dekkers, Ron Kingma
4x800 M Relay - 7:55.64
Marcus Scholten, Jeff Taylor, Jon Dekkers, Ron Kingma
800 M Run - Ron Kingma 1:57.07

Women:
4x400 M Relay - 4:03 (also school record)
Sarah Haan, Lisa Cannegieter, Jackie Eekhoff, Kristi Meendering
4x800 M Relay - 9:49.29
Lisa Cannegieter, Rebecca Demarest, Emily Kauk, Jessica Rowenhorst
Pole Vault - Jill Starkenburg 10'
Triple Jump - Erica Ton
High Jump - Susan Schaap 5'4"
USD Invite:
School records:
Long Jump - Aaron Klein 21' 6 1/4"
Pole Vault - Nathan Kauk 13'

1000 M Run - Becky Demarest 3:10.31
Other exceptional finishes:
Shot Put - Amanda Te Krony 40'01.25"
1000 M Run - Emily Kauk 3:11.98

Feb. 24, the track team will be hosting the GPAC Conference Meet in the REC Center. Field events begin at 9:30 am, while running events begin at 12:30 pm.

Basketball

Women:
(4-22, 1-15 GPAC)
Feb. 7 Hastings L (62-74)
Leading Scorers: Serena Van Beek (18)
Alexis Smith (16)
Rachel Schutte (11)
Feb. 10 Concordia L (72-78)
Leading Scorers: Rachel Schutte (17)
Serena Van Beek (16)
Alexis Smith (10)
Feb. 14 Mount Marty L (57-62)
Leading Scorers: Serena Van Beek (16)

Alexis Smith (11)
Feb. 17 Martin Luther W (80-66)
Leading Scorers: Serena Van Beek (23)
Alexis Smith (12)
Heather Broekhuis (10)

Men:
(13-12, 7-9 GPAC)
Feb. 7 Hastings W (81-60)
Leading Scorers: Evan Beimers (26)
Dylan Haak (11)
Feb. 10 Concordia L (89-93)
Leading Scorers: Evan Beimers (26)
Shawn De Stigter (15)
Michael Ribbens (13)
Feb. 14 Mount Marty L (65-62)
Leading Scorers: Evan Beimers (14)
Brian Wassenaar (13)
Dylan Haak (11)
Feb. 16 Briar Cliff L (85-81)
Leading Scorers: Evan Beimers (16)
Michael Ribbens (16)
Dylan Haak (14)
Ryan Dooyema (12)

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NEWS BRIEFS

compiled by Kristi Mulder
World Page Editor

ISRAEL-- Israeli Prime Minister-elect Ariel Sharon is pushing ahead with efforts to form a government of national unity despite being rebuffed by the outgoing Prime Minister, Ehud Barak. Sharon said there was no alternative to a unity government in Israel and he would not give up trying to form one. Palestinian officials, meanwhile, say the turmoil within Israeli politics is harming the peace process.

D.R. CONGO-- The United Nations Security Council is holding a public meeting with ministers from six African countries involved in the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, amid greater hope that progress can be made towards ending it. There are about 50,000 foreign troops from African countries in the Democratic Republic of Congo, with Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia backing the shaky government.

SOUTH AFRICA-- South African Finance Minister Trevor Manuel has announced increased spending on social welfare and crime fighting in the country's budget for the fiscal year 2001-2. Manuel told parliament that the allotted money would largely go to reducing the debt burden inherited from the apartheid era. The money is also to be spent on social services, fighting widespread violent crime and on educating against AIDS since South Africa has the fastest growing infection rate in the world.

FRANCE-- Over 900 Iraqi Kurds left stranded on the French coast after their ship deliberately ran aground there this weekend have been given temporary residency in France. They now have eight days to file claims for political asylum. France has made it clear that it will not automatically grant the Kurds asylum, but has also said it will not force them to return to Iraq. The Kurds are believed to have paid traffickers \$4,200 per adult and \$1,700 per child to get to Europe, and had been held in squalid conditions in the ship's hold.

INDIA-- India has decided to renew its ceasefire in Kashmir. The extension was unanimously approved after leaders of main political parties gave their support to the proposal, but Muslim militant groups fighting Indian rule in the region rejected the extension as a propaganda stunt. The ceasefire - which was due to expire on 26 February - bars Indian forces from offensive operations against Muslim separatists in the disputed province of Kashmir. It has already been extended twice since it began in November.

Opinions? Responses to the political opinions? Contact the Diamond at X6431 or email diamond@dordt.edu

CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL OPINION

by Peter Anderson
Staff Writer

Pessimists in the media are having a hayday with the recent coverage of Israel and the election of Ariel Sharon as Prime Minister and it's hard not to blame them as the violence continues in the Middle East. However, the fact that a new order is on the way should create some sort of hope, especially since the last Prime Minister failed to make significant headway in Israel's problems with the Palestinians.

The last administration was that of Ehud Barak, the man Clinton helped win the 1999 Israeli election. Barak was the man who was supposed to bring peace to the nation of Israel and he tried to compromise by granting large tracts of land and a portion of Jerusalem to Palestinians; but their leader, Yasser Arafat, rejected the deal saying it was not enough. Obviously, none of Barak's tried concessions worked since Israel has been in a state of near war with the Palestinians for almost

five months. Predictably, Israel has grown weary of the fighting and has shown it by electing former General Ariel Sharon as Prime Minister with a resounding 19 point margin over Barak.

So why the pessimism in the media? Some say the answer is self-evident. Sharon is the leader of the right-wing Likud Party, and his record as a general is less than "pro-Muslim." Sharon also helped set off the five months of violence by visiting a holy site that was sacred to both Muslims and Jews. The media is particularly dismayed that Sharon has revoked all of the concessions made by the former Israeli administration at Camp David last summer. He has also dared to say that he will only negotiate with the Palestinians on his own terms and that they can forget about ever gaining part of Jerusalem, which he says will remain Israel's forever.

Apparently, taking a hard line against Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian terrorists who both want Israel's destruction is what has given the media reason

to doubt Sharon's ability to broker peace. However, a few things should be understood. Almost all of Israel's neighbors are bent on its destruction because of religious matters. Israel is also by far the smallest country in the Middle East, so it is almost ludicrous for Israel to give up more land due to its already minimal size. Israel also faces trouble from within in the form of Yasser Arafat and the Palestinians who obviously want much more than the generous offers Barak made--they want Israel's destruction.

The media is blatantly pessimistic about Sharon bringing peace, and rightly so, knowing the history of the Middle East. However, since Barak's concessions to the Palestinians did not bring about peace, it was time for a change and a new strategy. The Israeli voters recognized this, and the American media should also recognize this. There is a new government in Israel and hope can spring eternal, maybe even in this land of conflict.

Political forgiveness: can we grant it?

Nathan Vander Plaats
Guest Writer

In the last two issues of the Diamond, I have read the political opinion section, and I have been very disappointed. This disappointment is due in part to Mr. Anderson's failure to forgive his former President for his actions. Many of us know that what Mr. Clinton did with Monica Lewinsky was wrong. We also believe that his lying to us and Congress about it was wrong. However, we are forgetting one thing: Bill Clinton also knows that he was wrong.

I believe that Mr. Clinton has asked us and, more importantly, God for forgiveness. However, it often seems to me as though God is the only one who has forgiven him. What makes some of us think that we are too good to forgive this man for sins he committed two years ago, when God forgave him the second he asked for forgiveness? Also, why are some of us focusing on Mr.

Clinton's sins instead of our own? I'm sure our personal lives have no shortage of greed, lust and other unmentionables, yet we continue to focus on another man's sins. How can we remove the speck in our brother's eye while we ignore the plank in our own eye?

I was very upset when I listened to former President Clinton apologize to the American public for his actions. I felt hurt, betrayed, frustrated and angry. In short, I felt no different than most people. However, this does not give us the right to continue to dwell on Mr. Clinton's dishonesty in the Monica Lewinsky "scandal," especially after he has apologized and asked us for forgiveness. Mr. Anderson, please take this into account when writing future articles. For the rest of us, please realize that we need to forgive Mr. Clinton for his actions. If God has forgiven him, we need to as well.

Mackeral Sky in Sioux City

Art Professor Jake Van Wyk's piece entitled "Mackeral Sky" is in display in the Sioux City Art Center. It has been accepted in the 57th annual Midwest Juried Competition. This is a wonderful show with a wide range of work and numerous styles. Make a trip down--the show's free and up for another month.

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