



Fall 1988

The Canon, Fall 1988

Dordt College

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CANNON

Inside:

- Sioux Center Had a Movie Theater?
- An Interview With B.J. Haan
- Dordt College—40 Years into the Future
- Students' Poems and Essays

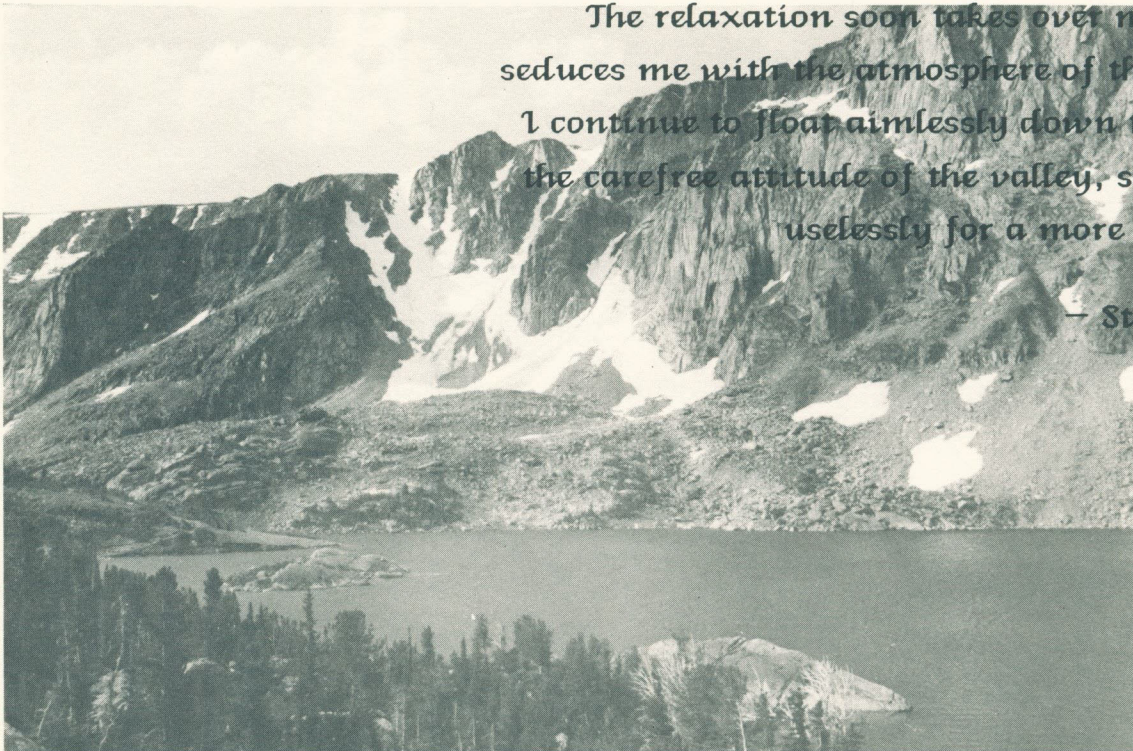


Divine Splendor

Total relaxation is found when I am sprawled across an intertube bobbing up and down the beautiful Merced River in the center of the majestic Yosemite Valley. Floating through the valley soaking up the sun's beaming rays while being splashed with numbing, ice cold water is the ultimate experience. The thundering Yosemite Falls boom down upon the valley floor and soon join the crystal clear waters of the mighty Merced. The naturally immense granite structure of El Capitan and the rounded, smooth Half-Dome cause me to look in of awe of my Creator. Raising my heavy eyelids to the heavens, I see a hawk gliding effortlessly in circular patterns above the valley. Allowing my eyelids to gradually close awakens my other senses to the environment of the valley. Hearing the laughter of children as they play along the beach, the song of the Red-Winged Blackbird as it chirps its melody to the heavens, and the gentle swishing and swaying of the river adds to the awesome mental picture forming in my mind. The light breeze across my body helps the cool water chase away the sweltering heat of the sun.

The relaxation soon takes over my whole body and seduces me with the atmosphere of the Yosemite Valley. I continue to float aimlessly down the river, adopting the carefree attitude of the valley, searching my mind uselessly for a more perfect place to be.

— Steve Kortenhoeven
English Major



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From the Editor . . .

Congratulations! You have picked up what I consider to be the most exciting issue of the Canon yet! Yes, Canon is still Dordt's literary magazine, and I can't wait for you to enjoy the many fine poems and essays submitted by students.

But this issue is exciting because we have expanded the Canon into a magazine which explores different aspects of Dordt College. In this issue we probe into the beginning of Dordt, not 1955, but when it was a glimmer in many a Midwesterners' eye.

Our cover story focuses on an event few people know about—Sioux Center's movie controversy. During 1948, Sioux Center's Legion Theater caused quite a stir. Forty years later, Sioux Center takes a look back.

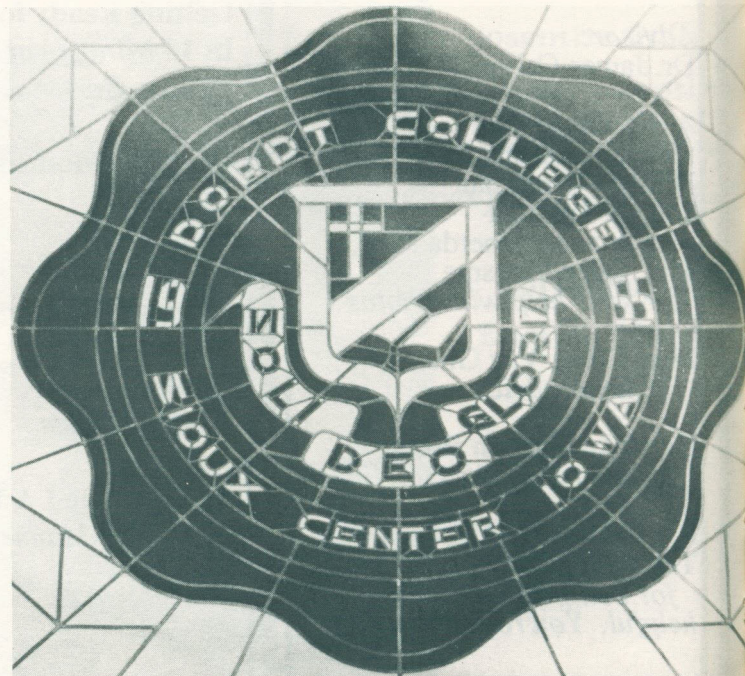
We also talked to former Dordt College president, Rev. B. J. Haan about his involvement in getting Dordt started. As he reminisces, take an up-close look at former president Haan's day-to-day routine.

Then, don't miss Al Bandstra's fortellings of the future. Dordt never looked better!

I'd like to get feedback from you. If you have any comments or suggestions for the next Canon, please feel free to write to me, Miriam Keen, care of the Canon.

Again, I hope you enjoy reading the Canon, as much as I enjoyed putting it together!

Miriam



Sioux Center's Movie Theater Controversy

PLEASE BE FAIR WITH US AND BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF--VOTE YES

Dear Sioux Center Voter:

Next Tuesday afternoon you are asked to make an important decision for your friends in the American Legion. We do not have a great deal of money or a great deal of time and opportunity to get our message to you. We will not have expert speakers to sway your judgment

hold ourselves responsible, and earnestly solicit your active support next Tuesday. Vote as early in the afternoon as you can.

This is being settled the American way—Tuesday afternoon you can make your choice.

PLEASE BE FAIR WITH US—VOTE "YES" (X)

Life magazine of April, 1948, tells the story of an anti-movie faction's bitter campaign to close down Sioux Center's theater. The issue was so hot that a town referendum was taken: 488 citizens voted to close down the theater while 427 supported the theater. Despite the small majority opposing the theater, the town council decided to renew the Legion's lease anyway.

by Karla Kamp and Gina Vos

In the late 1940's emotions ran high in Sioux Center as the town was split into two factions: one opposing the town's Legion Theater and one supporting it. The issue was so heated that national news magazines Life and Time covered the controversy. Suddenly, the small midwest town of 1,860 people became known nation wide.

which opened on Friday , March 28, 1947, right where the town offices are located today. This is the same Rev. Haan who Life refers to as "a hellfire-and-brimstone preacher." Life also states that Haan "does not claim to have seen any movies but says he knows all about them. He approves light drinking, smokes, plays golf himself."

According to the article, the campaign was fought from the pulpit and through the press. Ads such as "Sin needs no encouragement—vote no!" and "The Honor of God Demands it—vote no!" appeared in the Sioux Center News before the referendum. Pro-movie ads were also placed in the papers. One ad

**Sin
Needs
No
Encouragement
VOTE NO!**

**The Honor
of God
Demands it - -
VOTE NO!**

Sioux Center was bombarded with ads like these during the controversy.

Today, Dordt students see Haan as he speaks in chapel. He grins from ear to ear looking at what he calls "the sharp and beautiful students" in front of him. Normally, he tells a few jokes, his favorite being how Dordt is a great place to go to college, and, as he tells his wife, not only to find a mate.

However, forty years ago, this same man led a crusade to close down Sioux Center's only movie theater—the Legion Theater—

A PLEA OF 450 FARMERS

To The Voters of Sioux Center
We The Farmers Can Not Vote....

BUT WE ARE DEFINITELY INTERESTED IN THE ISSUE CONFRONTING THE TOWN PEOPLE NEXT TUESDAY!
WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, CONSIDER SIOUX CENTER TO BE OUR HOME TOWN AS WELL AS YOURS. SIOUX CENTER IS OUR HOME AND THE HOME OF OUR CHILDREN AS FAR AS CHURCH, BUSINESS, FRIENDS, AND MANY SOCIAL ACTIVITIES ARE CONCERNED. WHAT HAPPENS IN THE TOWN DEFINITELY INFLUENCES US AND OUR CHILDREN.
WE ARE OPPOSED TO MARRING THE CITY OF SIOUX CENTER WITH A THEATER WHICH AS SATAN'S TOOL WE BELIEVE TO BE A SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DETRIMENT TO OUR PEOPLE
THEREFORE WE STRONGLY URGE UPON ALL OUR FRIENDS IN SIOUX CENTER AND ESPECIALLY THE BUSINESS MEN WHOM WE CONSIDER OUR FRIENDS TO GO OUT TO THE POLLS AND VOTE NEXT TUESDAY

No X

The above petition was signed by the following farmers:

Chas. Van Der... Tom... John... [Names are partially obscured]

sold." However, the article does point one area where the community might not be so innocent: "There is little routine juvenile delinquency in Sioux Center, but a

didn't always use a mild tone; and according to Mouw, he certainly was "not afraid to speak out and speak up."

Mrs. Te Paske claims that the media made the issue much bigger than it really was. Eventually the controversy faded and, as Mouw put it, "T.V. pretty much eliminated the theater." In about three years, the theater quietly closed and there hasn't been a theater since. It is ironic, however, that today the only place one can see a movie in Sioux Center is at Dordt College, Haan's legacy.

Fortunately, as Mr. Mouw says, "[the controversy] didn't leave any permanent marks." For the most part, the details and the name-calling are forgotten and what forty years ago was opposition, is now friendship.

Looking back, it is apparent that God was directing a battle over a movie theater. Haan now believes that because of the movie issue, Sioux Center was in the limelight and thus established a name for itself—just at the time when a new college, a dream still years away, needed a home. †

criticized preachers who opposed the theater as being "lenient and liberal to their own habits," and added "... some of our boys and girls are too young to take up smoking and drinking just yet. God give us strength to offset the example for the youngsters of this community. Sources also indicate that some tactics weren't so civilized. Burning piles of manure were sometimes placed on Haan's front step, in the hope that the minister would run out and stomp on the pile to put the fire out. Obviously the groups were not afraid to resort to mudslinging.

The Life article presents Sioux Center as a stiff-necked, legalistic Dutch community. Under a picture of downtown Sioux Center, a caption reads: "Main Street in Sioux Center is almost deserted on a Sunday, when no place of business, not even the movie theater, is open. . . Life's photographer was sharply criticized for taking this picture on the Sabbath day. Some yelled angrily, 'Don't you know that it's Sunday?'"

The only business mentioned is Doc's as being "Sioux Center's only bar. It closes before midnight and nothing stronger than beer is

good many hasty weddings."

According to the media, the Sioux Center of 1948 was a community torn by the movie issue. Today the Legion Theater no longer exists. During the past forty years, memories have faded, and in some cases, people say, that's what should happen. Mrs. Vera Te Paske, the wife of Sioux Center's former Mayor Maury Te Paske, says the specifics of the controversy have now slipped away.

Mr. Vernon Mouw, who at the time was a member of the American Legion, says, "Rev. Haan is a valued friend, and I wouldn't want to endanger that. He has done great things for Sioux Center and Dordt College. He's a dear and revered friend of Dordt College and of the town."

Apparently some details are best left forgotten.

At the same time, it was a "hotly contested—very verbal issue," says Mouw. Life portrayed Haan as a fire and brimstone preacher, but Mrs. Te Paske remembers, "He was a good preacher."

However, Mouw remembers that Haan "was—what is the right word?—forceful, dynamic." One infers from memories that Haan



SCHOOLGIRLS CAMPAIGNED TO KEEP FILMS IN SIOUX CENTER

The Beginning of Dordt College

An interview with B.J. Haan

By Dave Tebben



Canon: *How did the idea of Dordt College come about?*

Haan: Well, the idea of a college out here started as far back as 1936. There was an attempt made with Calvin College to start a branch of Calvin out here in association with Western Christian High. That progressed quite well; until 1938 it looked like it might take place. You see, before that there was Grundy College in Grundy, Iowa. That was a flourishing place until Synod of the Christian Reformed Church made, I think, a very big mistake by withdrawing support from it. The Dutch were supporting that place, so when they withdrew from the college, the Fresian people tried to support it, but they couldn't do it without the Dutch. A leader from that classis worked with some men

out here, but then the war came and that stopped everything. After the war, some overtures from a group of classis tried to pick up the idea again. Synod made some studies, but they were down on the idea.

Canon: *How did you become involved with the idea?*

Haan: I moved to Sioux Center in 1945, right after the war. At that time our local Christian School was in poor shape, and I got involved in that. We had an old school and we had poor support. That was a real battle. Through this I got interested in Christian education. Some prominent men in the community were down on the idea of a college out here, and I would discuss it with them even though I was just a young man—28 years old. I disagreed with them, I told them they were all wrong. We

needed a junior college to prepare Christian school teachers who were better qualified to teach. You see, before this, many of our teachers only went to summer school for six weeks after high school before they started to teach. I guess that was the major reason we thought we needed the college. I was eager to have a college that was—and still is today—a Kuyperian college, after the example of Abraham Kuyper and the Free University of Amsterdam. Our people wanted a world life view. That was my vision, a thoroughly Calvinistic college, if we ever got a school out here.

Canon: *When did the idea begin to take shape?*

Haan: In 1950, the Synod gave the idea the death kiss. They pushed it off. Soon after that

A Day With Reverend B.J. Haan

by Jean Zondervan

Every morning at 6:30 a.m., the alarm clock goes off at the Haan residence, and Reverend B.J. Haan begins his morning routine. At the breakfast table, he reads the daily newspaper, searching for an interesting article of news he could use for "Observations," his morning radio show broadcasted each weekday on Dordt College radio, KDCR.

Once he finds a suitable topic, he leaves for the radio station on foot, a one mile trek, thinking about his speech enroute. Haan reaches the KDCR station around 8:00, just in time for the show which airs at 8:10 a.m..

When the short program is finished, he begins his homeward journey. For twenty years, Haan has done this radio spot for KDCR. His wife, Deborah, also has a radio show which airs later in the morning at 11:05 a.m..

After lunch Haan keeps busy with a variety of activities. He likes to read for a couple of hours. Often he and his wife go golfing, a sport they both enjoy.

"I've always got plenty to do," says Haan with a satisfied smile..

Haan also works on committee reports for the various committees he is presently on, including the Christian School Task Force and the Synodical Committee. He also

spends some time preparing sermons. Although he has been retired from the ministry for several years, Haan still enjoys preaching in many area churches on Sundays.

If this doesn't keep him busy, he and Mrs. Haan often entertain friends--old and new.

"We love to have visitors," says Haan, grinning. "We enjoy a good talk with our friends."

Once the college year begins, the Haans like to attend the various plays put on by Dordt's theatre arts department, as well as the programs given at Dordt's chapel.

"Of course, we go to the basketball games, too," smiles Haan.

Haan's largest project at the moment, however, is writing his memoirs. He has finished six chapters so far on the early years of his ministry. In the book, Haan hopes to eventually tell about the birth and development of Dordt College.

Haan recalls the struggles. "There are a lot of battles with starting a college--fierce battles, but I know God used those struggles to make Dordt come."

What has this former president and founder of Dordt College and former minister learned through all these experiences?

"I think," says Reverend Haan thoughtfully, "I think I know better than anyone else how little we do and how much God does."

I talked to a large group of district teachers in Sanborn, Iowa, and gave a strong plea for action to promote the college without synod. If they wouldn't do it—the Synod—then we would. It was amazing to watch the leading of the Lord. All the support was right there in that church, it even surprised me. A motion was passed to set up a committee to look at the idea. I was put on that committee, that was when my actual involvement with the idea started. Dordt wasn't my idea, I just gave it a shot in the arm. I became viewed as sort of the leader because of the Christian school happenings in Sioux Center and the whole theater thing. I was in *Life* and *Time* magazines while that battle was raging. Oh, that was something—quite an excitement. Through that my name was in front of the people. I still don't know how to look at that, the whole leader thing, because at the time I wasn't a leader, I was just busy. There were even men on the committee who tried to kill the idea, very prominent men, but luckily that never came about. It

was always touch and go, but I never doubted.

Canon: *How did you begin to promote the idea, did you form a society?*

Haan: Yes, we formed a society. After we met for a couple of years, we decided to hold a society meeting. It was a crucial

meeting to gain momentum for this whole idea. We set the meeting for January 31, 1953 in Rock Valley. You know how Iowa weather can be that time of year, but oh, what a day the Lord gave us! Bright, sunny, and still! We had to see how many people we could get behind us. We invited just the men. I remember we couldn't

decide how many donuts to get for the lunch afterwards. They thought a hundred donuts would be plenty, but I said, "Let's think optimistically and get two hundred donuts." You can always get rid of donuts, right? They thought I was a little wild, but they did it anyway. I drove up there and saw cars and buses, I thought there was another meeting! Walked into the auditorium to see six-hundred men! I joke now and say I hardly got to speak because I was in the kitchen breaking donuts all night. Oh, that was tremendous! You could just see all the support we had. Then we were organized.

Canon: *How did you get the land and buildings?*

Haan: We had many communities who wanted us: Rock Valley, Pipestone, Sioux Center, and Sheldon. Interestingly, the Sheldon church wasn't that strongly in favor of the idea, but the Chamber of Commerce wanted us there badly. We finally decided on Sioux Center because the churches here strongly supported us. We couldn't decide whether to build on the southwest edge of town, or where the college is now. The land where Dordt is now used to be a mink farm, with seven acres and a house. We moved the house off and had plans drawn up for a building. We needed \$150,000. We could only raise \$75,000. So I talked to the DeStigter Brothers—and even their wives—to get us a building for the money we had. Finally, they agreed to build one for \$85,000. Then in 1957 we

added another large section, which is now the whole theater department. That was the first time we were allowed to borrow money. Dordt has never been in the red, I'm quite proud to say, except for capital.

Canon: *Where did you find the first professors?*

Haan: Oh, that was something. We put an add in the *Banner* for five positions, and we received 28 applications! We had Rev. Van Schowen for Theology, Leonard Haan taught for us, but we needed history, philosophy, and all these education classes. Well, here came Nick Van Till with a masters in History and Philosophy from Grand Rapids. Then we got Douglas Ribbens—who had all these wonderful education degrees—to come. Then we were set. Oh yes, Dr. Peter Van Beek came out of retirement at the age of 72 to teach German, Latin, and Greek. He did such a good job. Twenty-eight applicants, we couldn't believe it.

Canon: *How many students did the college have those first few years?*

Haan: The first year we had 35 students, all freshman. The following year we had a total of 75, then 103, and it just kept growing, and growing, and growing. I knew that this college would appeal to many people after that. It just kept going.

Canon: *Where did you find the books for the Library?*

Haan: We had people looking for books, and we'd get letters from regional library suppliers. The majority came from York College in Nebraska because they folded a few years beforehand.

Canon: *How do you feel about Dordt being rated nationally for its academic achievements?*

Haan: Wonderful, wonderful! It almost brings tears to my eyes when I think of all the battles fought over our college, and then to see it recognized not only by our church, but by the whole nation. It's the icing on the cake! †

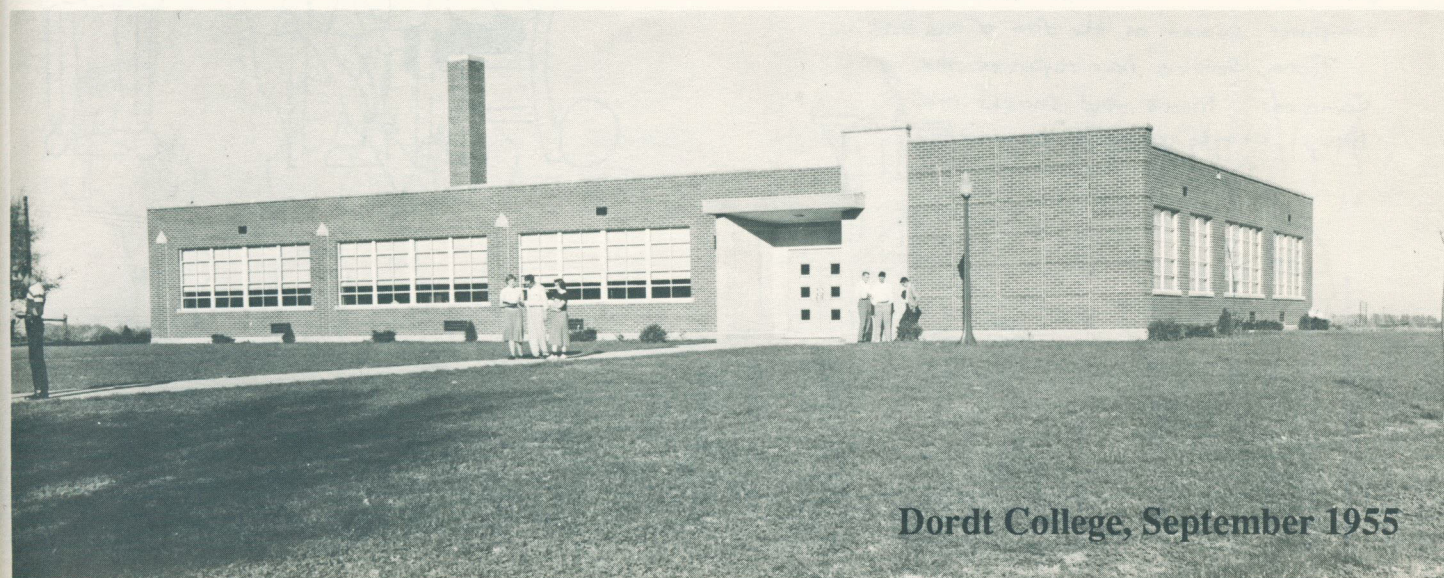


Dateline on Dordt's History

—Compiled by Dr. Mike Vanden Bosch

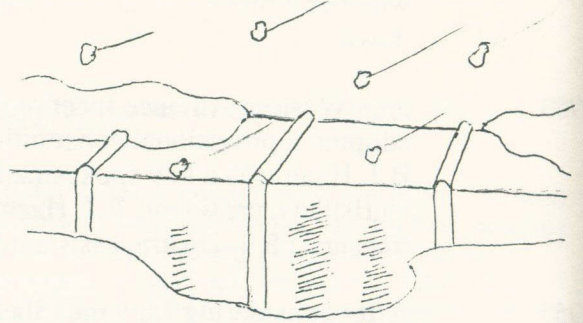
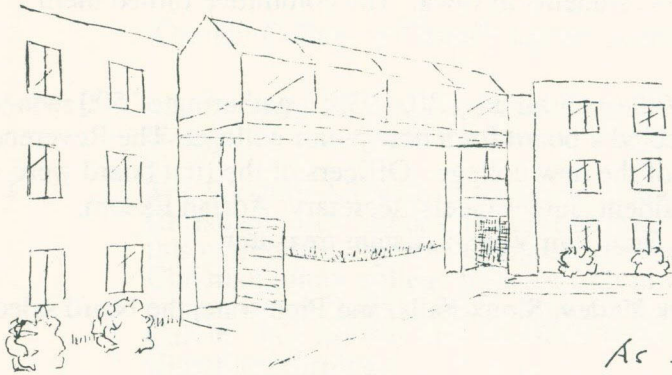
- 1934 Grundy College in Grundy Center, Iowa, closed.
- 1935-1941 Midwestern classical committees tried unsuccessfully to re-open Grundy College. The last committee was dismissed due to "World conditions" in 1941.
- 1944 The Western Alliance of Christian Schools appointed a School Expansion Committee (Arnold Christians, J.C. Lobbes, H.L. Verhulst, Arie Van Grouw, Peter Wielenga). At its first meeting this committee urged a "Christian summer normal school" and laying groundwork for a Christian junior college because Calvin was too far away. (Of 57 teachers in the Christian elementary schools in Iowa, Minnesota, and South Dakota in 1944, only 7 were alumni of Calvin. J.C. Lobbes said that for Christian teaching to happen, teachers must experience prior Christian learning.)
- 1945 Calvin turned down a request that it offer summer school in Iowa.
- 1945 School Expansion Committee was expanded to include appointees from the board of Western Christian High: Reverend J. Hanenburg, John Vander Ark, Sam Wiersma, W.C. Kooiman. This committee recommended establishing a "Christian normal school" in the area because it would "keep our Christian schools distinctively Christian" and help teacher meet the new Iowa code requiring 45 semester hours of college.
- 1946 The Western Alliance decided to operate a "junior college summer school with state recognition" and ask Calvin for advice and professors. Steering Committee: A. Christians, J.C. Lobbes, L.R. Haan, A Van Grouw, P. Weilinga.
- 1946 The committee was informed such a summer school could not be accredited, so they asked Calvin to set up a branch summer school. Calvin declined.
- 1947 The Western Alliance asked the advice of Classis. This brought the matter to the CRC Synod that year. Synod appointed a study committee to study the issue of junior colleges. (Dr. H. Kuiper, Reverend J. Hanenburg, Reverend R.J. Bos, Dr. R. Bronkema).
- 1948 The committee recommended starting a junior college but Synod rejected the idea and appointed a new committee, this one with men from each section of the country.
- 1950 New committee suggested to Synod that "no other school be developed which might force a "curtailment of retrenchment of the development of Calvin College and Seminary." Synod asked the churches to discuss the issue for a year.
- 1950 Because of Synod's delay, the School Expansion Committee of the Western Alliance met again and recommended organizing a society-controlled junior college.
- 1950-1953 The CRC debated the issue of junior colleges in *The Banner*, *Reformed Journal*, *Torch Trumpet*, and behind the barn.
- 1951 School Expansion Committee postponed further action due to the building program at Western Christian High School.
- 1951 Synod delayed action on a junior college because the Korean War was expected to lower Calvin's enrollment from 1200 to 800 that fall, but appointed another committee.
- 1951 Reverend B.J. Haan urged the Western Alliance delegates to keep working for the junior college. The Alliance expanded its committee to include Haan, Reverend Siebert Kramer, Reverend Gerrit Vander Plaats, Tim Fikse, Leonard Vanden Bosch of Sheldon.

- 1952 The expanded committee asked Calvin to set up a branch summer school in Iowa. Calvin declined, so the committee began to work for a society-controlled junior college. James Geels replaced P. Wielenga on the committee.
- 1952 Representatives of Northwestern College in Orange City met with the committee, asking whether Northwestern could not serve CRC students in Iowa. The committee turned them down.
- 1953 At a Western Alliance meeting in Rock Valley on January 30, 1953, a gathering of 500 men adopted a provisional constitution and elected a board for a new junior college. The Reverend B.J. Haan was a key spokesman in favor of the new college. Officers of the first board were A. Christians, president; B.J. Haan, vice president; James Geels, secretary; Adrian Eksom, treasurer; R.J. Dystra, assistant secretary; Stan Van Vliet, assistant treasurer.
- 1953 After considering Luverne, Sheldon, Rock Valley, Sioux Falls, and Pipestone, the board selected Sioux Center as the site for the college.
- 1954 The board decided to open the college in 1955, but appointed the Reverend Cornelius Van Schouwne to begin promoting the college in September 1954. It also hired four other professors: L.R. Haan, Douglas Ribbens, Peter Van Beek, and Nick Van Til.
- 1954 The board bought the Doornink mink farm on Fourth Avenue for \$14,900 as the site for the new college. Serving on the executive board at this time were the Reverends B.J. Haan, Henry Van Deelen, Gerrit Vander Plaats, Martin Zylstra; teachers J.C. Lobbes, L. R. Haan, A. Christians; and J. Geels, S. Van Vliet. Egbert Meyer, E. Starckenberg, R.J. Dykstra, Everett Fikse, and John Bonnema.
- March 1955 Ground-breaking ceremonies were held.
- May 1955 The cornerstone was laid.
- September 1955 First classes were held and the college was officially dedicated to the service and glory of God. †

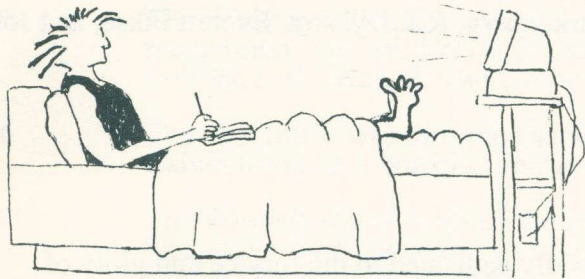


Dordt College, September 1955

The Campus Development Committee has released a few of its long range goals for Dordt's campus. Below are some sketches of changes that may take place in the next forty years.

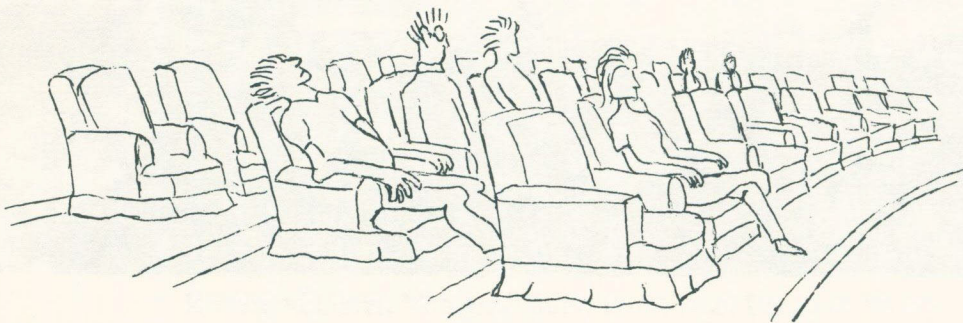
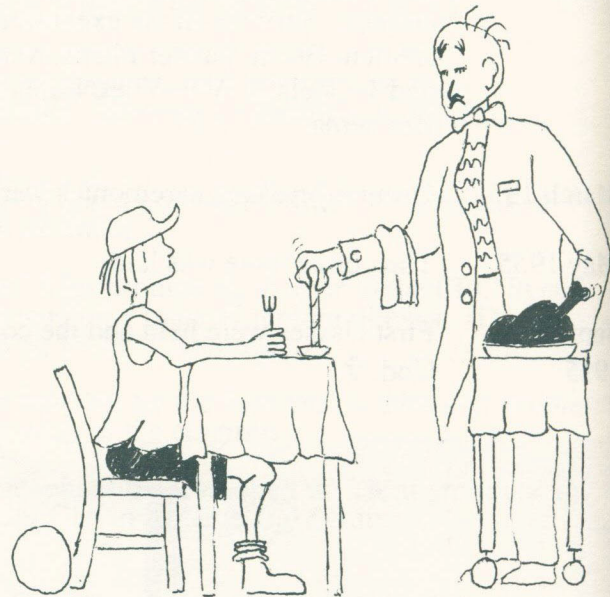


As shelter from the inclement weather of North-west Iowa, a skywalk system connects residence halls. Students from East Campus walk to class in heated glass tunnels (above)

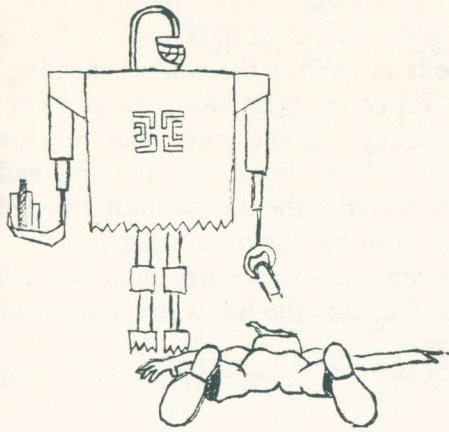


A person not wishing to attend his 8:00 class can take notes from a computer screen at the foot of his bed.

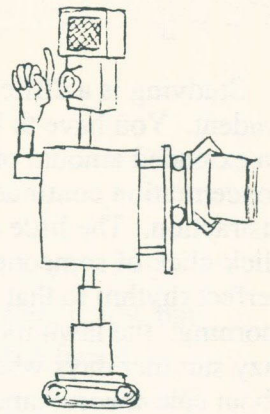
Room Service has replaced the Commons. Meals and snacks are brought at the students' convenience.



Easy chairs in C-160 minimize discomfort during lengthy lectures.



Our Library has made several improvements. The beeper machine at the entrance was removed for its tendency to injure the lower abdominal organs and for its general distractiveness. Now when a person fails to check out a book the robot (at right) waits until the offender is outside and then tackles him.

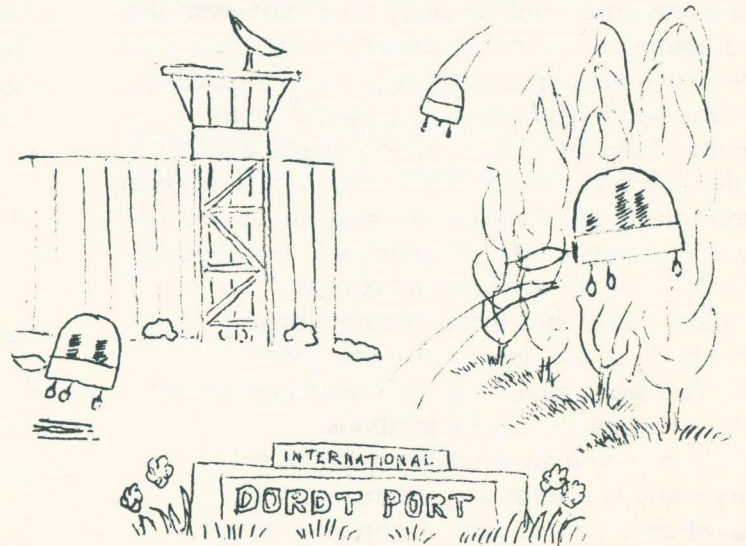
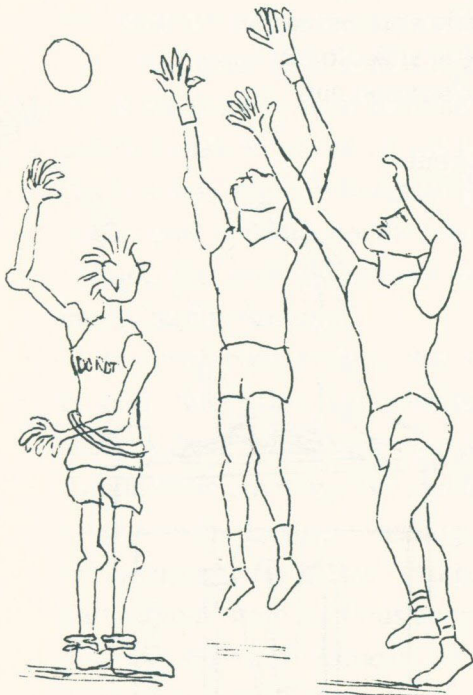
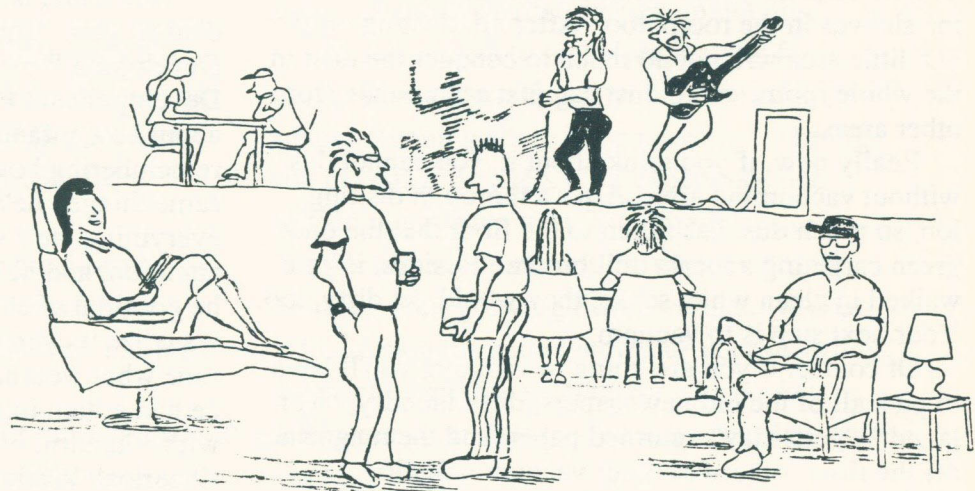


"Sarge" (right) finds books by their call numbers and raises a reproofing finger at noise detected by its built-in sound sensor.

A new "C-section" has been added to the library as well. ("C" for casual)

Here the mood is less formal, and students are encouraged to talk about their assignments. Guest bands liven the atmosphere and stifle the annoying hum of the fluorescent lights.

In order to remain competitive within the NAIA the Dordt Defenders must now play with one hand tied behind their backs. (below)



Preparation

Studying is a difficult task; it takes much out of the student. You have to keep your mind on a subject for an extended amount of time, making sure that your concentration continues without one little bit of distraction. The little distractions can kill: the click-click-click of someone's heels strikes the tile floor in perfect rhythm to that new song you heard just this morning; the lawn mower outside reminds you of the lazy summer days when you did not have to worry about calc-theory; and the laughter down the hall makes you wonder what the joke was. To concentrate fully on studying, you must get rid of all tempting distractions before beginning.

Start by dusting the whole area. A dustball rolling across the desktop in the gentle breeze from an open window can be so captivating that you can watch it for long periods of time. While you are at it, you might as well surprise your roommate and dust the rest of the shelves in the room, too. After all, dusting only one little area will not do much to conquer the dust in the whole room; more dust can just accumulate from other areas.

Really now, if you think about it, you cannot dust without vacuuming also. After a thorough dusting job, so much dust has fallen to the floor that the once-green carpeting appears dull brown. Besides, if you walked in clean white socks, they would get dirty, too. Your next step is to vacuum.

Of course, if you are going to vacuum, you'll have to pick all of the old newspapers, dirty laundry, clean laundry, yesterday's returned paper, and the magazines off the floor; otherwise your vacuum will clog.

One word of caution: make sure you go over everything twice. Vacuum in both directions to pick up all of the dirt. This will take a few extra minutes, cutting into your valuable study time; however, the overall outcome is a much nicer appearance.

Now that your environment looks conducive to studying, you must make it feel conducive to studying. Find the most comfortable place to sit, whether it is a chair, a couch, or the floor (it is clean, so you can sit here without worrying about getting your white pants dirty). Propping a few pillows up will help make the job more relaxing, which will allow you to stay there studying longer. Grab a blanket, too, just in case you get a chill. You won't have to get up later to get it and lose your place in your textbook.

Of course, you are probably going to get thirsty while you study so prepare yourself ahead of time for that, too. A cup of coffee or hot chocolate will usually do the trick; both

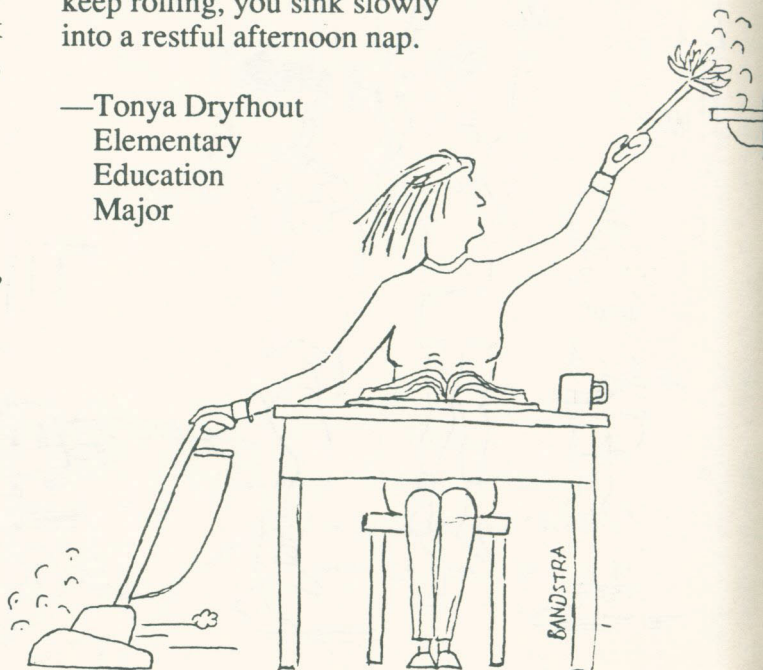
have caffeine in them which will keep you awake. Fill your hot pot with water, enough for two cups so you can have one later. While the water is heating up, get the cup out. Notice the stain along the sides of the mug from your last cup? Don't worry about it. Just squeeze a little dot of Ivory liquid into the mug and wash it out. If the water in the hot pot hasn't boiled yet, go ahead and wash out the other mugs too. Measure the right amount of coffee or hot chocolate mix into the mug, then add the hot water and stir until the mix is dissolved.

Turn the stereo off. The beat really doesn't help much at all.

Sit down with your cup of coffee or hot chocolate, relax against the pillow on the couch, and look at how clean your room is! Just think, you killed two birds with one stone, so to speak. You got the room spotless, something that you realize has not been done for the past two weeks, and you have an environment conducive to studying.

Your mind is clear. Nothing in the room can distract you. You open the book to chapter eight "The Developing Person through the Lifespan" for Developmental Psychology, and you begin to read about how infants grow and change. You read on, remembering how your baby brother used to do the same things: he'd crawl around and get into everything, he'd scream for no reason except to get attention, and he'd throw his food on the floor when he got tired of eating. You close your eyes to visualize it even more closely. You remember the time when you had to babysit him, and he had gotten into the newspaper with a handful of mushy Cheerios. While your memories keep rolling, you sink slowly into a restful afternoon nap.

—Tonya Dryfhout
Elementary
Education
Major



Getting Ready for Class— In 10 Minutes or Less!

That annoying alarm goes off again, and you sling your arm in the direction of the snooze button. Opening your eyes, you're alerted to the digital clock's sterile warning: 7:45.

You rush to get up. The ceiling obliges to meet your head. Painfully plopping back down in the loft, you skim silently through your schedule for the coming day. Class at eight. A quiz—one you diligently studied for. You've got to be there.

The strategic area for the following ten minutes will be in the bathroom. Elbow your way in. Ideally place yourself in the vicinity of the sink. Proceed to brush your teeth vigorously, because:

- 1) You will not be eating breakfast.
- 2) The fresh taste will wake you up.
- 3) Ever sit beside someone with morning breath?

After brushing, keep the water running on cold and splash water by the scoopful onto your face. Rub your face furiously with a towel to bring out color in your face and to remove any pillow marks engraved on your cheeks.

You have eight minutes until you must leave, give or take a couple due to resistance factors, like your roommate's body or an empty toothpaste tube.

Inserting contact lens: this is especially crucial. Stay calm. Don't bring your panic to the lens case! Make sure that you haven't dwaddled in anything like makeup tubes or toothpaste blobs since washing your face. If necessary, opt for glasses and pass them off as part of your more studious apparel. Decide on clothing selection. Choose something accessible—the T-shirt you threw on the couch

last night and the jeans slung over your chair.

Hair is always a factor in getting ready, but it should not slow you down in the face of a major quiz or lecture. Guys shampoo or comb their hair back with a wet comb. A Twins' cap also can come in handy. Ladies are often not as agile in leaping from a head full of snarls to just-shampooed smoothness. Gels and mousses are a real blessing. Slick back your hair with these liquid wonders for the "wet look" or put your tired tresses up in clips.

Three minutes to go before leaving for class. Dress according to your pre-meditated plans. Running shoes are a necessity. Hitting the pavement in heels is an experience one should never have to suffer. Grab a coat. You've already overslept; frostbite will only enhance your growing list of wounds. A coat will cushion the sound waves of your growling stomach from fellow lecturees. Its pockets hold your roommate's confiscated chocolate-chip cookies well.

Five needed minutes left to get to class. Scoop up that darned Management book and a No. 2 pencil (you do have a quiz, don't you?) and a trusty ballpoint. Walk briskly to class or run, depending upon where you live. Congratulations! You made it. Smile and show off your freshly-brushed teeth. Turn to your neighbor. Casually notice his Cubs' baseball cap.

—Elane Gorter
Social Work Major

The Last Moment

It was too hot in the cabin, so I stepped out to the bowside to get some fresh air. As I stretched my arms and took a deep breath to get the chilly air into my lungs, I took a good look around.

There were a few clouds slowly moving toward the sea. The moon was in its full size, innocently hanging just above the trees on the other side of the fairly big river. By its light, I could tell that my little boat was ported at the intersection of the river and small canal that started somewhere in a vast tropical forest. From where I stood, I could hold on to any of those branches nearby to lift myself up to the land and disappear into the jungle. The night was so quiet that you could hear the sound of monkeys jumping from one tree to another mixed with the high tone sound of insects and the sound of birds diving into the water to catch fish. From far away, came the echo of wild dogs barking. The chilly, damp night winds easily shook the leaves. The river surface was filled with small waves that cut the moon into thousands of tiny pieces.

I was one of the sixty-five persons who would escape from the communist government that night by boat. According to the plan, we divided into seven groups using different paths from the capital to the coast to board the main boat which would, at a certain time, pick us up and then head out to the ocean if nothing went wrong. After two days of travel by different methods, I was finally here, hiding, waiting for the main boat.

I had been out at night many times to fish, but I never did experience this kind of feeling. I fell in love with the peace and beauty of my country. I fell in love with the river that flows consistently night by night, and with the moon that holds many secrets and stories. I felt my heart beat in a wrong rhythm as the thought of escaping passed through my mind. What would tomorrow be like? When would I be back here again? I don't know. I raised my hand, carelessly detached a leaf from a branch nearby, then sat down, my feet hanging a few feet above the water. I slowly tore the leaf to pieces and released them one by one.

They flew into the river. What had I done wrong? What had my people done wrong? How come my country has never had peace? Were we all born just to suffer? I do believe there is a God, but sometimes I wonder where He is; has He forgotten about us? I prayed to Him then as I do now: "My Lord, please forgive us as you always did; please stick out your mighty hands to comfort those who are not as lucky as me, who are in pain and are suffering."

A black spot appeared and grew larger from the other end of the river. When it reached about thirty yards from my boat, my group leader exchanged secret codes with them by flashlights. A voice whispered from the cabin: "The main boat, ready." I stood up, did a quick exercise to warm my body and got ready to jump for the unknown destinations.

—Loc-Le
Engineering Major

*The following poem was
submitted to us anonymously.
So all you campus cops out there,
beware, you might be being
stalked without knowing it!*

Social Security

Do you ever do things
Completely out of line?
The things that aren't expected
In current space or time?

Of course you do—I know that.
We've done these things before.
We've acted out of character
To find out what's in store.

Even as I write this rhyme
I'm acting as described.
I'm chasing after a man or two
With a campus job prescribed.

So while I write this poem,
Though I'm feeling quite inspired,
I'm using it as an excuse
To get a result desired.

I'm in the Student Union.
Now my dorm is locked.
Upon completion, to return
I'll call the campus cop.

We might have conversation.
We might not talk at all.
Somewhat out of character
A large amount or small.

They say the man's a shy one.
I do not know for sure.
But last time I was out late,
It was easy to endure.

I didn't even know him.
I barely knew his name.
Yet traded speech whas natural,
Nothing like a game.

That's when I became aware
That such a man existed.

And in the two weeks that have passed
Have all my thoughts been twisted.

To make one held in high regard
Notice me—a mere mortal!
It seems an almost impossible feat.
Though I've acted more than cordial.

For a while, things looked good.
I thought there was a chance.
But now I know it's not to be
Not even for a second glance.

Friends must be my decision.
Cronies we shall be.
I'll prove myself once and for all.
He'll know he does need me.

If we are only to be friends
Then why am I here now?
I guess that's not enough for me.
There must be more somehow.

I think that I will have to wait
Until another time
To figure out the reasons why
I've written such a rhyme.

Now that the task's completed,
I can get some sleep.
I will go dial the number
And speak clearly after the beep.

Apples

A weatherbeaten apple lost its perch,
I didn't see it land.

Will it lie there rotting in its place
Never giving, never adding, just lying?

Will the red jewel jostle to the cider mill to meet its fate?
Cider: sweet, see through, enjoyable, but no substance.
Mashings: worthless to higher forms, begged for by swine.
Swine yearning, then trampling it underfoot with their
wretched cloven hooves.

Lord, may I be the seeds.
Small but secure. Waiting for You to develop me.
Growing as You see fit, finally into hardened fibers to fight
disease and abusive animals.
May I offer shade to the weak, and though I
be plain and simple, may someone see the
Fruits You graciously let me share.

— Dave Tebben
English Secondary
EducationMajor



The Disciple I Admire

He's sitting in front of the computer, pensive, as if something in the screen has led him to ponder the meaning of life. His dark, thin eyebrows are knit in concentration, as his deep brown eyes stare into the depths of the monitor, searching for something—perhaps wisdom, or maybe inspiration. He's not a typical disciple though; I can smell a hint of Brut aftershave, and his puckered mouth is violated by a Bic pen.

Still, I stand in awe. My brother, a disciple of the ultimate machine, just seems to have computer knowledge emanating from his very life-blood. It's as if an intricate computer inside him is gradually explaining its complexities and revealing its hidden secrets, to Galen, and Galen alone. All I ask is that he touch me, that he bestow on me some of that precious knowledge, mixed with his wisdom in using it, and his dedication to the Cause.

I ask the disciple what is puzzling him, just in case I encounter the same problem after my apprenticeship.

"It's really not that complicated. I just have to change this Xenis system so five more terminals and 240 meg of memory can be added. No problem!" He sits back in his chair, raises his hand behind his head, and flashes a wide smile that says, "O.K. I'm exaggerating a little; it's not that easy, but I have this little computer inside me, so solving the problem should only give me a minor headache, if one at all."

Sure, that's easy enough for him to say; he's a disciple with two years of college courses, seven years of experience, and a computer for a brain. He can take almost any problem brought to him and find a quick solution for it. What about me? Will I be able to comprehend and apply everything I learn?

He leans forward in his chair, ankles crossed,

hands folded and another blank expression on his face—this time because he's had enough for one day. "Well, Amy-bob, it's getting pretty late. What say we call it a night? I'll come in early tomorrow morning and finish this up since I'll probably be out and about most of the afternoon and evening installing computers. Sound O.K. to you?"

Sure. Sounds fine. I don't know how he does it. For seven years, his life has basically been devoted to the sale, installation, and maintenance of computers, day and night. Often (before his wife, Marlene, came into the picture) he would deliver the computers after midnight, knowing he wouldn't be paid for those countless extra hours. I know disciples are usually dedicated to their cause, but this is a little ridiculous! What about me? Will I be as dedicated to my job and the people I serve? Will I even know enough to be able to effectively help them?

I'm sitting in front of the computer, pensive. No, I'm not pondering the meaning of life. I'm just wondering if I can follow in the footsteps of the disciple I admire.

—Amy Van Mannen
MIS Major

My life is heavy with lightness.

Moments like popcorn

Overflow into airy

Waves of cool sunshine

On hands that never

Tremble

Dreams that seldom wake.

Fiery breezes keep me from

Staying

In this place for too long

My legs often dance

Even tanned

By winter sunshine

I giggle

At the very idea of any kind of

Commitment

These sensible places and times

Don't occur to me to be

Actual

Because I am still

a child

Loving more than anything

The sunshine of my Father's

Love.

— Dorthea Grossmann

English Major

Wandered

Away from You, I've been so long,

Now I see You as a stranger.

Maybe come again in the manger,

So once again I'll sing your song.

— Todd Eriksen

Elementary Education Major

I'm not

Not in love

Yet.

Like the sound of

The wind

Carefully

Gathering its strength

Taking my

Breath away with it

And loosening my stance on

The ground

Unless

The force of it passes, only

Slightly lifting my hair from

My shoulders

And quickening my

Heartbeat

Only to feel breeze on my

Face

And hair against my cheek

Again.

— Dorthea Grossmann

At the Auction

A house is being sold.
But not the memories
Its walls could speak
Telling many tales
— some joyful, some not—
Of the friends who used to go
In and out the front door
To buy the week's groceries
From the store up front that
Closed long ago.

A house is being sold.
Inside, Grampa used to give us
Butterscotch candy, a hug, a kiss,
Or just a comfortable lap
To fall asleep in.
The first time I knew death
I stayed there and cried,
While Grampa held me tight.

A house is being sold.
Its rooms held many cozy beds
And feather pillows to lay
My head on or start a
Pillow fight with my cousin.
We tried to keep it quiet, late at night
Lying in bed with the
covers up to our chins.
Giggling and whispering.

A house is being sold.
No more walking through the attic,
No more hide-and-seek in the den,
No more giant Christmas trees,
No more family feasts on Sunday
Afternoons.

The house is sold.
How can they put a price
On memories?

— Miriam Keen
English Major

The Run

Running? Running, running, running. Tired feet slam against the wet pavement like gunshots. Bam! Bam, bam, bam! Breath yanked from the bottom of the lungs. Raggedly, the breathing flows over lips that are set in an agonizing grimace. Lungs lacking oxygen, burn like acid. The mind screams for relief, but the legs continue their motion, unable to stop. They feel like rubber and no longer seem to be part of this fallible, weakening body.

The night hangs thick with drizzle and mist. The streets lie vacant except for the occasional motorist. Legs continue to pump. Sweat and the moisture from the air mesh as one body that swiftly slides from the damp hair to crease the face with watery rivulets. The night surrounds, then engulfs, and the body turns into an unlit alley. The glaring light of the streets lie behind now as the legs propel the body into the unseen brick wall at the back of the alley: a dead end.

Finally, the legs stop moving but now they throb motionlessly. The body lies on the wet, cracked cement; one hand clings futilely to the solid brick wall. The head still functions. It screams, "Get up! Get up! Get up! Get up?" But the answer is a weary "no." Safe at last in a place where there is no escape, and no more need to run. Rest. Yes, rest will soothe the tired body . . . yes, it will. . . peace. . .

So death slowly enters and easily takes the unresistant, unmoving body lying in the alley. The legs no longer pumping. The heart no longer beating. The lungs no longer gasping. The breath no longer ragged. The body is now still.

Blood drains from the bullet hole to be slowly soaked up by the cracked surface of the cement. Sirens wail nearby. Men with flashlights probe the alley's darkness. The diffused light faintly reflects off badges. One man says two words, "Got him."

—Winston John Visser
Animal Science Major

Revolt

Stillness echoes throughout the mountainous landscape where a bald eagle rules the sky above the lush, green carpet of trees. The trees beneath their interwoven branches effectively hide the form of the mountain. The slopes run steeply near the top, then shift to a gradual incline, and finally the land becomes submerged beneath ice cold water where forest sidles up to a large lake. The lake is a giant hand mirror reflecting the sky, the silver-white clouds, the crowded yet stately trees, and the eagle is on its throne. Each is in a world of its own but all are reflected in the mirror's world.

Solitude reigns as the eagle spirals its way across the surface of the sky. It sketches its own path across its domain. The trees calmly and serenely stand, finding their way upwards from the lake to the slopes of the mountains. They are subject to witnessing the rule of the eagle. He rarely touches their domain, but when he does, it is only to rest. Then he is not as glorious as when he is framed against the backdrop of the sky. But now he is in his element, attacking the expanse of blue sky with his authoritative yet minute body. At times he cracks the surface of the mirror and scoops a meal stored beneath its icy undulations. For an instant he touches reality, then soars away to another realm.

Peace settled the area long before man attempted to cause disruption and discord here. Peace continues to inhabit the mountainous sanctuary in order to keep its claim on the land it had always possessed. Man's destructive attempts lie defeated by the overwhelming force of peace that exists in every tree, every mountain, every valley, every lake, and every man that enters this abode with an open heart and mind.

Quiet circles of glass that magnify the successive portions of this natural palace focus on distances progressively further away. Two eyes follow the trail of the eagle as it arrogantly wheels its way across the sky. One man, one eagle; all is in balance as the two silently respect one another from their separate domains. The man leans against a large cushion of rock that lies conveniently behind his back. The

browned hands allow the binoculars to rest against his barrel chest. His ice-blue eyes are still, reflecting the inner calm that rules his body. His shadow lies beside him, cast by the skillful rays of the sun. The smile that lives on his face expresses contentment, but the eyes, the eyes--they are ice.

"Remember me, old Friend? Once I was in your domain. Once I challenged the right to your domain. But no more, my Friend. Life is too short, and why must I waste it trying to perfect a talent that belongs to you alone?" the man whispers in a serious tone that is but a dim reflection of his inner thoughts.

The man comes to his feet like a supple sapling springing back into position. He stands for a moment to honour the creature's autonomous rule of the sky. "Peace. Peace be with you, my Friend, until we meet again." The words are barely spoken aloud, yet they drift into the twilight silence with penetrating force.

The body turns, then stiffens as the peace is shattered with a sound of war. A gunshot reverberates off the landscape as its sound is enhanced, clarified, and increased through a natural sound system. It echoes and re-echoes across the forest, stopping all life for a heartbeat, then life beats on after a moment of silence.

The revolt is now fully completed with the graceful, unwarranted abdication of the domain's king. He is dethroned from his seat in the sky, but he majestically relinquishes his power as he dives slowly earthward. He lands in another domain that shall forever hold him as its prize. Once he touched reality only briefly; now it will restrain him always.

Stillness reigns again throughout the mountainous landscape where one man stands quietly, and another moves to claim the dead prize. The man who stands, his body a dark form, is outlined against the glowing, orange ball sinking behind him. Slowly, calmly, and deliberately he moves to begin a mission to avenge the assassination of a friend.

—Winston John Visser
Animal Science Major

I saw a jet fly
leaving its white stream behind
only two and a half weeks since he died
suddenly without notice.

I like to think
his soul was on that jet—
through and out of this world.
The stream quickly vanished,
but my memories of him will not die.

On that horrible morning
God took him quickly.
From this world, black and ugly,
to suddenly see our Father.

He was the best a man could be,
helpful, loving and friendly.
My heart longs to see his face
once more—smiling and happy.
Even though I know he is smiling,
Happier now with his sister, dad,
and heavenly Father,
singing praises.
He loved to sing before,
now he sings forever.

He fought the evil world and its destroyer.
He fought with God on his side.

There is a younger man that I must now forgive,
But how, when hatred has dug in so deep?

I like to think the younger man
took the other's life,
but it was his time to go,
and nothing could change it.
Only a miracle.
How I prayed for that miracle.
How I prayed this was a nightmare.
But when the dust was put back,
my dream did not end . . .
I was awake,
my father dead.

Still my father lives,
in my heart and in my memory.
He will remain there for eternity,
and I will see him again.
In a place beyond jets.
Maybe the younger man
will be there too.

I can't wait for the day when,
face to face I will meet my Lord,
and see my father also.

The jet flies out of sight.
When our work is done on earth,
we are called home to Heaven.
God could take me now,
but He has other plans,
what they are, I do not know.

Lord comfort me through this trial,
help me to forgive the younger man,
for what he did.
Lord, it was dad's time,
Give him a hug for me,
and tell him that I miss him.
Tell my father that I . . .
love him.

—Mark Buss
Broadcast Communications
Major

Doubting Thomas

by Virginia Stem Owens

Virginia Stem Owens is a professor of English at Texas A & M University. She came to Dordt as the guest speaker for the English Lecture Series held October 10 & 11, 1988. The following story was published previously in the Reformed Journal, and is reprinted here with the permission of Mrs. Owens.

This is the story of Dennis Klingman. He was about thirty years old, maybe a little younger, when Amy, my daughter, first went to work at Hicks, International, the screen-printing company on the feeder road to Interstate 45. He did some of the heavier work out in the plant, mostly in shipping. He was already alone then, though for several months he dated one of the women who worked in the plant. He was divorced and had a couple of children somewhere. Amy describes him as a blue-collar worker, a peculiarly archaic term since all the workers wear T-shirts now. She also called him one of her doubting Thomases, one of several people she prayed for.

He was morose and unpredictable, one of those people for whom nothing ever seems to go right, nothing ever works out. It seemed almost impossible to unravel the causes, whether his unrelieved failures were because of his own lack of perseverance and hope or whether he had lost hope because nothing had ever gone right. He had quit Hicks once already, quite unexpectedly. But he had come back after a month or so, and they had rehired him to give him a second chance.

The Hickses are good people, young and energetic. They work hard to make a success of a small company. Nor are their own lives untouched by tragedy. One of their three children, a daughter, is brain-damaged from having nearly drowned in their backyard pool as a baby. Perhaps their hearts were

softened by this suffering. Anyway, they hired Dennis again when he came back.

He worked in the plant again at his old job, still morose, smoking cigarettes alone out on the loading dock, keeping a six-pack iced down in his truck, ready for five o'clock. Sometimes the plant workers would get together at somebody's place on Friday after work. Occasionally Dennis came and hung around the edges. He had little to say, but that little was usually tinged with bitterness of the what-else-can-you-expect sort. He seems never to have expected much, and he got even less.

But who knows? In that heart he kept hidden from everyone, he must have expected something, maybe something he couldn't even name. Otherwise there would have been no bitterness. You only resign yourself to a fate that somehow has failed you. Dennis Klingman must have hoped once in his life. For love, for some skill that came with ease and grace, for forgiveness.

At any rate, what was left of that hope was translated, silently and secretly, into the purchase of several acres of land northwest of Corpus Christi, a piece of flat, alluvial plain inland from the Gulf Coast a few miles. This is the part of Texas where the famous King Ranch begins, only one of a number of huge cattle ranches stretching miles beyond the horizon. There are virtually no towns there other than the clusters of ranch buildings. A number of rivers meander sluggishly across this plain to the Gulf of Mexico. Old letters and diaries written by early white settlers describe it as a land of prairies and wooded streambeds. But after a century of overgrazing and sand blowing inland from the coast to cover the prairies, sometimes to a depth of sixty feet, what remains today is brush, a thorny tangle of mesquite, catclaw acacia, huisache, black chaparral, and prickly pear. The ranchers fight the brush with bulldozers

since neither man nor cattle can make their way through its tangled maze. But certain kinds of wildlife flourish there—wild turkey, quail, coyote, rabbit, javelina. The biggest deer in Texas live in those sandy thickets, browsing the twigs and leaves that cattle can't eat, hiding in the thorny bush.

Maybe Dennis had some notion, when he bought his handful of acres there, of living off the land, hunting the abundant game. At any rate, one day he quit Hicks again, this time for good and, as before, with no notice. He headed southwest along the concave curve of the coast, chose a spot, and started buliding, by hand, a house out in the middle of nowhere.

What, I wonder, was in his bruised and blunted mind when he faced that immense sky yawning over the emptiness of the coastal plain? The dried mesquite and acacia beans would have rattled in their pods as the wind blew through their thorny thickets. No one would have bothered him there—no neighbors, no visitors. He could have heard the trucks whining by, out of sight, on the distant highway, hauling between Houston and Corpus Christi.

I have no idea what kind of house he built. But in my mind's eye it was not yet painted and certainly not finished on the inside; the studs and the pipes were still exposed. It would have been small, of course. He wouldn't have had the time or the money to build a big house, nor the need, since there was only himself. It would have sat in a space he had cleared in the brushy maze, surrounded by all debris of half-finished building—piles of plywood and two-by-fours, a roll of roofing paper, empty five gallon buckets, a cement mixer. Stretched from the pole where the electric company had put the meter box, the power line would sag on its support toward the house.

It would have been a desolate place, I know that. A Sheraton or Hilton would have looked desolate there. I see the house under a sky occluded by grey Gulf clouds, as it often is. The orange scrap of a survey marker blows from the barbed wire.

Nevertheless, it would have been his statement to the world, the last will and testament of someone for whom things never worked out. To build under that sky is defiance, not hope.

No one knows just how it happened, if it was deliberate, or if he fell asleep with a cigarette still burning, or if it was his own faulty wiring. But the house went up like a pyre, the fire crackling and scorching the ring of brush around it. Out of the heart of the Texas night, its blackness undiluted by any neighboring lights, the flames licked upward like an incadescent saffron lotus, blossoming for an hour in the wilderness night. It took with it, dispersed into the air, the soul and body of Dennis Klingman. For once, ablaze with light.

The story of Dennis Klingman is unutterably sad. I would be naive to think that he died other than a doubting Thomas, although htere is always, as Agustine said, the space between the bridge and the water. Yet even so, even if his doubts had not been diminished by the desolation, I find myself hoping. Maybe something finally did go right for Dennis Klingman.

Can there be, perhaps, martyrs to doubt as well as martyrs to faith? It is the suffering of Christ that doubters like Dennis cannot believe in, a suffering to overwhelm their own. Like Thomas, they want to see the wounds. Could not this pyre purge those thirty years of bitterness and failure? Is all that's left to this story the charred remains of a body and the stump of a house, sitting now like a rotten tooth in the blackened clearing?

I do not want to be romantic about this. As I said, I never knew the man, and there are many possibilities. Perhaps failure is the final truth about him. But I can always hope.



Author Virginia Stem Owens

Rhetoric of Death

What is death? Is it the passing of one's life to be reincarnated into another life as a pig? Is it the act where the body's soul leaves and goes to either Heaven or Hell? Is it the point at which the life of a person stops on earth and the person goes to be one with the universe? Is it the Grim Reaper? Christians believe that death is the transition from time into eternity in heaven. Non-Christians believe that death is the way to another reincarnation, or a way to reach a higher level of perfection.

How does death come to us? Does it come like Carl Sandburg's fog on little cat feet? Does it come loudly like a circus parade down Main Street? How long does the act of death take to happen? Ask the eighty-year-old grandmother who longs to see Jesus, or the mother of a child who was hit and killed by a car.

All people have to deal with death; there is no avoiding it. Most people ignore death until it is screaming in their ears. How then do people face death when it comes? How does the pilot of the passenger airplane with double engine failure handle this screaming? How about the person trapped in his car during a violent blizzard? What about the child who watches in horror as his pet dog is hit and killed by a car? How do they view death in these instances? Are they avoiding death then? Do they fear death?

Death is extremely personal and impersonal. When your father dies it is personal. When an airplane crashes in the Orient is it impersonal? Why? Does it mean that the deaths of unknown people mean nothing? Do their deaths affect other people in any way? How?

Does death actually help people? Is there any way to get a traffic light in a dangerous intersection without someone dying there? Is it possible to start an organization against drunk drivers without a mother having her child killed by a drunk driver?

Does death teach any lessons to people? How about the death of a child playing with matches? Does this teach? What do we learn when a child dies because of playing with an electrical outlet? How about the teenager who is driving too fast on an icy road and kills himself? What about the adult who drinks too much and then kills herself driving home? Do incidents like these teach any lessons?

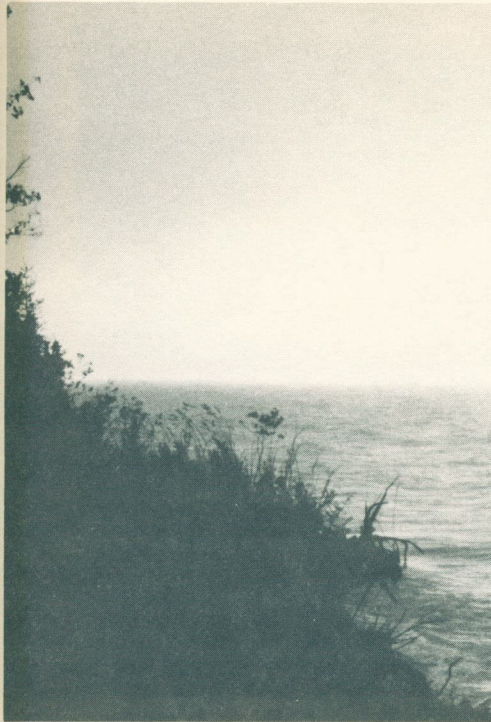
Why do some deaths affect people more deeply than others? Why do people remember the crew of the space shuttle Challenger more readily than the people who died in a car accident last weekend? Does anyone forget how John F. Kennedy was killed? Why don't they remember how Dwight Eisenhower died? Are not the deaths of all people important to remember?

How do people respond to the death of a loved one? Do they mourn with their whole church congregation, or do they eulogize the dead person with their family and friends? Who handles death better, the Christian or the non-Christian? How would a person's religious beliefs make a difference? Do religious beliefs make death any easier to handle?

How do children handle the death of a parent or grandparent? Do they actually know what is happening? How long does it take them to realize that daddy is never going to play football with them ever again? Is it possible to explain to them what death is? Will this make them fear death?

Can life go on without the acceptance of death?

—Jim Bowser
Business Administration Major



All of God's Creation

As the sun bakes my back, the sand warms my toes, and the breeze cools my face, I watch, with my mouth open in awe, the waves rolling and crashing in their endless cycle. I see the white and grey seagulls gliding across the sky, landing occasionally to get a closer look at a sparkling object. I notice two children, best friends, building sand castles by the water with buckets, shovels, and smiles. I see all of this beauty and wish that I could be as carefree as the expanse before me.

My eyes drift back to see an old, scraggly bum digging through the "please pitch in!" trash barrels that are strategically positioned along the golden coast. My heart overflows with a desire to help, but being unsure of what I can do, I allow him to pass on by.

Doesn't God's creation extend from the blue ocean to the golden sand to the innocent and pure children—and to the old man? All of this is God's creation but I'd rather watch the beautiful children at play so I turn my head and ignore the not-so-beautiful; ignore a part of God's creation.

Watching the children, the ocean, and the gulls, I remembered the money crinkled in my back pocket for ice cream on the way home, and I remember the Priest, the Levite, and Jesus' good Samaritan. I leave one part of God's beautiful creation and chase after another: the beautiful, worthy, old man.

—Steve Kortenhoven
English Major

