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December 9, 2015
Issue 6



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THE DIAMOND

String of arsons spark confusion in Sioux Center community

Jonathan Janssen – Staff Writer

Sioux Center, long considered an oasis from the types of crime usually prevalent in highly-populated areas, no longer holds its spotless status. Several suspicious building fires have occurred throughout the past few months. The latest target of the increasingly malicious attacks, a Sioux Center’s Heritage Village, went up in flames as authorities responded to a call on the afternoon of Thursday, Nov. 5.

The Heritage Village marks number 5 in a string of arsons dating back to July 10 of this year. The preceding fire occurred earlier this summer. The fire destroyed the structure and items within English Professor Joshua Matthews’ livery stable. The stable, 100-years-old and original to the 1914 house, stood as a piece of history in the Sioux Center community.

On the night of the fire Matthews was on vacation with his family.

“Our neighbors called us and said there are firetrucks at our barn,” Matthews said. “I thought, what? What stupid thing did I do? He didn’t tell me anything about why there was an investigation, so I stewed about what could have happened.”

It wasn’t until he arrived back in Sioux Center that he realized the significance of the occurrence.

“The police officer showed up to my house and told me there was someone in there who had dumped accelerants,” said Matthews, shaking his head. “It is something I can’t inhabit. I can understand thieves. I can, to some extent, understand murderers. But I can’t understand arsons. I never cared for fire.”

English Professor Bill Elgersma poked his head into Matthews’ office to offer his opinion.

“It’s a rush,” Elgersma said. “It may not be in your world, it may not be in my world, but this guy is just thinking, ‘It’s a worthless piece. It doesn’t have any value, it’s not hurting anybody, and it brings a charge.’”

Elgersma then suggested the police look at the

pattern of incidents.

“If you look at it geographically with their close proximity, I think it’s absolutely somebody in the area,” Elgersma said.

Police Chief Paul Adkins confirmed the police are considering this idea.

“Through our findings and our investigations, we are tracking the motive behind this,” Adkins said. “Are they targeting buildings owned by older people? Are they targeting the city for not building newer buildings in their place?”

He noted that the problem with arson in small towns is that the fire department and police are not inclined to suspect a crime when they respond to a fire.

“If you’re a firefighter driving to a scene, you’re not thinking about arson at that time,” Adkins said. “Your adrenaline is pumping. You aren’t watching for anyone.”

“Look, I’m confident that eventually we will find the person or persons to solve this,” Adkins continued. “I’d like to say before Christmas we can wrap this baby up, but that would be presumptuous. We’re not CSI Miami. Cases don’t get solved in an hour. You work at it and work at it. You follow some leads.”

Adkins spoke optimistically when responding to questions concerning Dordt College’s safety.

“The Dordt community is certainly not in any danger,” Adkins said. “We believe they are safe. We would welcome with open arms any help they could give us. If they notice anything in particular, they should come and let us know.”

As for Matthews, the professor remains bewildered.

“It’s a very sick, disturbing feeling,” Matthews said. “At the same time, it wasn’t as terrible as it could be. I thought it would be more gone. Still, I don’t care if I get new stuff; it doesn’t matter. I got a huge check in the mail, and I still felt sick.”

When faced with the hypothetical opportunity of facing his transgressor, Matthews referred to the original owners of the house.

“After I learned about it happening, I would



One of the first houses built in Sioux Center, Heritage Village’s house contained many artifacts from the late-19th and early-20th centuries.

have been happy to sermonize,” Matthews said.

“But after some time thinking about it, I’d like to have that person talk to the people who used to live there, whose names are up on the walls in there, whose lives were wrapped up in the place.”

Dordt College Accounts Payable Clerk Andrea Westerbeek lived in the house in her childhood and her name was on the wall Matthews referred to. When asked what she would say to the perpetrator, she echoed Matthews.

“When I first heard about it, it was very shocking,” Westerbeek said. “Now that the Heritage Village house was burned, I feel even worse. My only real question is, ‘Why?’ I don’t understand why in the world someone would do this.”

Her response, no doubt, hits home for anyone connected to such a confusing, troubling crime.



Only a portion of the damage committed to the Matthews family’s livery stable.

Careful consideration surrounding proposed pro-tech degree

Abigail Olson – Staff Writer

A new type of student may soon arrive at Dordt College. Answering the increasing demand from industry leaders, Dordt may begin to offer two-year degrees in professional-technical programs. The change would introduce a new contingency of students here as early as the fall of 2017.

While two-year degrees have been a part of Dordt’s history since its start in 1955, this recent conversation was rekindled early in 2012. Over the past year, a Professional Technical Educational Task Force has met weekly to investigate the feasibility of ProTech programs at Dordt College.

A professional-technical program at Dordt College, as suggested by this Task Force, will include a significant internship component and result with an Associates of Applied Science (AAS) degree. Potential programs could include Manufacturing Industrial Technology, Engineering Technology, Machine Tool

Technology, Agribusiness, Agriculture GPS Technology, or Farm Management.

The student profile would be a student who is more concerned with tactile learning than with the theoretical framework of education, desiring a quicker entrance into the working world. The program will focus on producing a “Dordt-branded” student who possesses the needed soft skills—such as communication, problem-solving, and adaptability, complete with a Reformed perspective—to fulfill industry’s demand.

President Erik Hoekstra contends that a ProTech program fits perfectly with the college’s mission and educational task.

“Any legitimate occupation should not be precluded from the educational programs at a truly Reformed college,” Hoekstra said. “While Christian institutions serve K-12 and higher education, the lack of Christian technical schools is a shameful hole in Christian

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Minimum class size study leads to miscommunication

Janelle Cammenga – Staff Writer

Within the last few weeks, confusion surrounded the issue of mandatory class sizes for the upcoming semester. Professors were under the impression that the administration implemented a new policy of an 8.2-student minimum, while administration said that they passed no such policy. Where did the confusion come from, and what resolutions have been reached?

For many years, it has been Dordt’s policy that each class should have at least six students. If the number is any lower, administration takes a look to see if the course is necessary for graduation, if it can be combined with another course or cross-listed or if it can be cut out completely. This does not mean that no class can have fewer than six students, but that course will be carefully considered before it is allowed to happen.

Recently, Dordt’s administration calculated how economical this six-student policy was.

Was that really the minimum class size needed to break even? Taking into account how much each faculty member is paid, how much each student pays and how many classes each student takes, they found that the correct size was actually higher: 8.2 students per class.

They then sent out an email alerting faculty to their discovery in which they advised professors to take this number into account. The language was not clear in stating this was a suggestion and not a new policy. Many faculty members were under the impression that a new policy was in place.

Due to the confusion, faculty members met with Provost Eric Forseth, who clarified that there was no new policy and the minimum number of students remained at six.

New policy or not, the difficulty of supporting small class sizes still exists. The humanities remain the most affected by class size requirements. English professor Mary Dengler

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Dordt Professor Visscher publishes new space theory

Ashley Huizinga – Staff Writer

Imagine the scene. It’s a Monday evening in the depths of November. Even without snow on the ground, the weather hints of winter. The bitterly cold wind howls in the thin air and cuts through the thickest of parkas to make all but the toughest of the Canadians shiver. Not many people would choose to be outside, but look closer. On the rooftop of the Engineering building, figures appear. They’re not birds, or planes, or Kryptonians.

They’re astronomy students. Fearlessly braving the cold night air, they huddle in packs while each waits their turn for the large white telescope on a corner of the rooftop. The lab is led by 3-year Dordt professor Channon Visscher, affectionately-dubbed “Skymaster V” by a few of the more creative students.

In addition to teaching Astronomy as professor of Chemistry and Planetary Science on Dordt’s campus, Visscher participates in a series of research projects as a visiting scientist at the Southwest Research Institute, headquartered in Boulder, CO. His team, headed by astrophysicist Dr. Robin Canup, strives to explain the origins of Earth’s Moon - that is, they use science infused with a Christian worldview to posit how God may have created the universe in the beginning.

Recently, the group published an article detailing their creation of what is now known as the “Twice-Baked” Theory.

“We [our research team, consisting of three other scientists from Washington University and the Southwest Research Institute] have been working to figure out the way that the moon was made,” Visscher said. “We found a new mechanism that explains the composition of the moon...that succeeds at connecting how it was made with what it looks like.”

Visscher gave a basic explanation of the theory.

“Chunks of magma called moonlets resulted from the disk of debris after something impacted the Earth,” Visscher said. “Eventually, all the moonlets were drawn together and became the moon that we know today.”

So, why astronomy - or planetary science, as the professionals say?

“I liked space as a little kid,” Visscher said. “Plus, just this Pluto thing - the idea of discovery, seeing something never seen before - that really interests me.”

This love of the unknown is a personal motivation for the astronomer.

“I like to hike, but I always go too far because I want to see what’s on the next ridge,” Visscher said. “The scientific drive – wanting to know the why and the how.”

“What I really want my astronomy students to come away with is a love of the night sky – even just to have them noticing the night sky,” Visscher said. “Of course I want them to be interested in the knowledge, too, but I’m most interested in the heart.”

Visscher strives to make students of all ages



Photo by Daniel Seaman
Prof. Visscher with a globe of the moon, the object of study in his most recent paper.

realize that there really is no conflict between creation and Scripture when viewed from a proper point of view. His goal in work like this moon project has always been to “inspire a love for God’s works and a basic appreciation for the beauties of creation.” After all, “the nature of science is to hone the truth. Creation reveals His Truth, so I study creation.”

Visscher and his team are currently seeking NASA funding to order to expand on their

current and future research. So far, they have had no success, but they remain hopeful. After all, there is so much else to be discovered, and so much that may lie just beyond “the next ridge.”

For a detailed explanation, search for the original paper, “Lunar volatile depletion due to incomplete accretion within an impact-generated disk.”

Dordt forensics wins the debate time and time again

Lydia Marcus – Staff Writer

Between jousting jackrabbits and earning places at plums, the Dordt College Forensics Debate Team has had an eventful semester.

The twelve members of the Forensics team meet regularly to hone their rhetoric skills. There are two types of tournament events Forensics participates in- debates and individual presentations. Debate teams meet for two hours every Thursday to prepare for upcoming tournaments. They discuss current events, debate techniques and reasoning, and practice debate rounds. Students participating in individual events, ranging from dramatic interpretations to persuasive speaking, meet with assistant coach Bruce Kuiper as needed.

From September through mid-November, Forensics participates in tournaments nearly every week, though not every student participates in each event.

On Nov. 3, at the third Parliamentary League of the Upper Midwest (PLUM) tournament, Justin Vos and Michael Gomes came in 2nd place as a team and Vos came in 2nd as an individual speaker.

“I’m pleased with Justin’s continued performance, and it was really exciting to see Michel do so well in his first tournament ever,” says Donald Roth, Director of Forensics and Debate Coach.

Earlier in November, two teams of two students competed at the Vocal Viking tournament hosted by Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, MN. Both teams made it to the quarterfinal rounds. Jordan Swanson and Vos were recognized as the 6th and 8th best individual speakers, respectively.

Dordt also took home the Michael Dreher Quality Award. This award is presented to the team who earns the highest points per participant in the tournament in both debate and individual events. The trophy is the second the Defender Forensics earned in the past three years.

“This one is especially meaningful to me because it is a testament to the high quality and hard work of each and every one of the students,” said Roth. “I’m pleased with the hard work of everyone on the team, and I am extremely proud of this group in particular for their achievement.”

Defender Forensics earned success earlier in this fall. In the first PLUM tournament, Ranae Boonstra and Vos made it to the Bronze (Quarterfinal) Round. Vos also came in 4th place in the individual speaking category.

At the second PLUM tournament of the year, Boonstra and Courtney De Wolde made it to the Bronze (Quarterfinal) Round. Vos came in 1st place as an individual speaker.

Vos joined the team a few months after its inception in the fall of 2013. “Throughout my time on the team I have grown in confidence,” says Vos. “The forensics team is a great way to improve your public speaking and your knowledge of contemporary events.”

Forensics is active from late September through mid-November, though they attend some spring tournaments as well. They will participate in their final tournament – the National Christian College Forensics Invitational (NCCFI) – this spring. Point Loma Nazarene University, located near San Diego, California, is this year’s event host.

When Roth selects tournaments for Dordt Forensics to attend, he searches for nearby competitions featuring debate and individual events. He also looks for tournaments that do not compete on Sundays.

“There are several tournaments which this excludes us from, but we believe that protecting the Sabbath for those who value its observance is an important part of our identity,” says Roth. “We do make one exception a year, and that, oddly enough, is to compete at NCCFI.”

Though it is unfortunate that NCCFI insists on competing on Sunday, Defender Forensics “felt the limited exception to our normal practice was acceptable given the opportunity to compete and commune with our sister schools at the event,” says Roth.

Defender Forensics grew to twelve students this year and seasoned students have continued to grow. “I hope to see us continue to solidify our ability and to compete at a high level through the rest of the year,” says Roth. “I have a lot of hope for a few of the new folks, and I hope they can accumulate adequate experience so that we have a killer team or two to compete in the novice (1st year) division at NCCFI along with a quality showing in the varsity division.”

Students reevaluate Syrian refugee problem

Jaden Vander Berg – Staff Writer

Since September, there have been numerous attacks both domestic and foreign that can be attributed to ISIS. However, on November 13, the city of Paris, France was hit with a series of attacks, later claimed by ISIS, that killed 130 people and left 368 injured.

Ever since the Paris attacks, the United States has been in a constant state of fear. Over half of the nation’s governors have refused refugees in their states, with a bulk of them backing out in the days after the attack.

When the Diamond released an article at the beginning of the semester, five students were interviewed and asked about their feelings toward ISIS and the ever growing refugee crisis. Now three short months later, much of the nation’s opinions have shifted, but did Dordt students suffer the same effect?

In September, junior Rachel Du Mez felt strongly about helping those who were suffering and dying. It seems as though not much has changed.

“It is obvious in the Bible that Jesus would not shy away from this type of thing—he would go full force and that should be a model for what we are doing,” Du Mez said.

It seems that too often in the United States, especially in small communities, we seem sheltered from the harsh realities of the outside world.

“The Paris thing was such a big deal that we were exposed to it here, by media and people talking about it, and that’s a good thing,” said senior Lauren Eekhoff. “But also with that, because Paris was such a big thing, that was the only thing that was focused on. There were so many other things that were happening, but Paris was the only thing that people were talking about, even when bad stuff was happening all over.”

After a major city in the Western world gets attacked, it seems that everyone begins to panic.

“The only thing that is different now is that it hits closer to home,” Du Mez said. “That shouldn’t change how we respond, necessarily,

but the urgency in which we respond. It has the potential to look even more real than it does now.”

There is the ever-present threat that eventually the United States will send troops to battle ISIS on their territory.

“In order to stop these threats, there needs to be some form of military action,” said sophomore Alex Werkhoven. “We need to play offense, not defense.”

Tyler Couperus, the representative for Dordt on World Renew’s board, said that their position has relatively stayed the same.

“They are helping to equip churches to bring people over and finding partner communities to support families coming over, integrating them as quickly as possible,” Couperus said.

This then begs the question, what part should the church take in all that is happening?

“It is nice to say it should be church funded,” Werkhoven said. “But is it possible? Maybe. Will it ever happen? No. The government will step in if it ever come to that.”

Morgan Spoelstra seemed to have a different view.

“The government should be a part of it, but I think the churches should carry what the government isn’t now,” Spoelstra said. “But the government should still, because it is still more of a national issue than it is a religious issue.”

As of now, there is a strong chance that Sioux Center will be getting refugees in the next few months. There are some reservations with letting them into our country and community.

When asked if she thought refugees would be well received, Lauren Eekhoff shared these thoughts.

“I would hope that they would be,” Eekhoff said. “But it’s like with the Hispanic population as well, I feel like they are not well received—it’s a group of us and a group of them and I am afraid that is how it would be. With anyone who is different than you, you need to promote community and find your similarities.”

Either way, individuals will soon have to face their conflictions in light of further American actions concerning Syria.

Student led club represents Dordt by hosting dance

Eric Rowe – Staff Writer

What do you do on the first snowfall of the year? Curl up by the fire with a good book or curl up with a partner on the dance floor? On November 20, many Dordt students chose the latter and attended The Garden of Lights dance held in the De Witt Gym.

Building upon its seven year history, the 2015-16 Dordt Swing Dance club continues to establish its profile as a hub of student activity on campus. Dordt’s Student Activities Committee, the organization responsible for the Talent Extravaganza and Airband, funded the event. The Garden of Lights dance proves that the Swing Dance Club engages a significant number of students.

The night averaged about 12-15 couples on the dance floor for each song. With the snow still falling outside, dancers grooved to 50s tunes such as “Rockin’ Robin” as well as less conventional songs such as Michael Jackson’s “Thriller” and “I Wanna be Like You” from Disney’s the Jungle Book.

“We hope this dance will set the tone for future events,” Club leader Courtney Braun said.

One of the more exciting parts of the night came when the Club leaders decided to play an impromptu mixing game.

“All right everyone,” Braun said over the microphone. “We just decided to play a game of snowball.”

Braun’s announcement sent a wave of excitement through the room from individuals who regularly attend the weekly club meetings. Students with sporadic attendance caught on fast as everyone sat in a circle on the gym floor with one couple in the middle.

As the intro to ‘Footloose’ started, Daniel Lucht and Fayth Ponson started dancing. After a bit, when Braun called out “Snowball,” Lucht and Ponson separated and each grabbed a new partner. Braun called out “Snowball” at intervals as the people dancing in the middle grew larger and larger until everyone was up and dancing.

Lucht, a regular swing dance club attendee, thinks that that the opportunity to dance on campus is unique and more enjoyable than other overdone and limited traditional Dordt outings.

“It’s nice to dress up and dance,” Lucht said. “Not too many people do it.”

Braun and fellow leader Joshua Evans have



Photo by Courtney de Wolde
Calvin Wunderink dips Fayth Ponsen at the Garden of Lights dance.

been involved in organizing three on-campus dances in the past, but this is the first time that they have invited people outside of the Dordt community.

Over the last year, the club attended monthly dances in Sioux Falls at the El Riad Shrine Dance Hall. This connection acted as one of the inspirations for hosting the Garden of Lights. Evans and Braun were expecting 40-60 people to travel from Sioux Falls for the event.

Most of the Sioux Falls dancers are several generations older than Dordt students. The group selected the De Witt as the venue to accommodate elderly guests who may have trouble with stairs. In order to ensure the dancers were comfortable, Braun added a few older tunes to the playlist along with the modern music that students usually dance to in the weekly club meetings.

The extra effort could not be enjoyed by the Sioux Falls dancers because the snowfall kept them from attending.

Even though heavy snow marked the night of the dance, about 12 Northwestern students braved the cold weather. Braun said that the Northwestern students have signed up for the weekly email list and may come to the Tuesday evening meetings.

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Careful consideration surrounding proposed pro-tech degree(cont.)

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education. There is no difference between a pastor and a plumber.”

Hoekstra thinks the biggest issue will be convincing everyone—students, parents, and the broader community—to buy into the idea.

English professor Bill Elgersma expressed his opinion after serving on the Task Force.

“What does Christian education currently serve? Every square inch—expect for the trades,” Elgersma said.

The goal of a ProTech program, for Elgersma, is to maintain a Reformational worldview but mix it with pragmatic application, but he knows some of his colleagues will be hesitant about teaching students in ProTech programs.

“Some professors will ask, ‘But surely I don’t have to teach this population, right?’,” Elgersma said.

Elgersma concedes that Dordt must answer many logistical concerns and practical questions before ProTech can become a reality. How much will the new students pay for tuition? What companies will they intern with? Where will they live? How will they be integrated into the campus community?

Sophomore Riley Schaap thinks it may be hard to attract students to a trade school at Dordt when there are other more reputable, less

expensive tech schools that are also closer to home. He doesn’t know if it’s right to expect students who will enter technical jobs to pay the price tag for a Dordt education. However, the diversity the programs would bring to campus is a good thing for Schaap.

“It’s more people to be friends with, I guess!” Schaap said.

The addition of these programs would significantly alter the student body of Dordt. If Dordt rolls out seven ProTech programs by 2022, as the Task Force predicts, ProTech student enrollment would number 242 students. This would account for nearly 15% of the total Dordt population. A large portion of these ProTech students would be male, further skewing the male-female ratio at Dordt.

For this reason and others, students, professors, and the broader community who want to maintain the status quo at Dordt are likely to push back against this change. Current students may worry their degrees will become “watered-down” or that some of Dordt’s intellectual nature may be lost.

Yet, for President Hoekstra, reaching out to serve this new population of students interested in the trades is still the obvious next step for Dordt College. In his words, “It’s like two plus two equals blue.”

Minimum class size study leads to miscommunication (cont.)

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shared her opinions on the matter.

“Of course, small classes are always desirable, especially in 300-level classes, for those are the classes where students generally give the most input, carry the most responsibility for learning,” Dengler said. “But the continued luxury of multiple small classes in the humanities seems to be threatened by numerous factors, not only at Dordt, but in colleges and universities everywhere.”

Fewer students enroll in the humanities to start with. The English program in particular has varied class offerings and fewer required classes. This means that their students are more spread out which increases the problem of class size.

“In the weeks ahead, we will be doing a program review to rethink our offerings,” Dengler said.

Dordt’s administrators realize the benefits

of small classes, but also see that they need to think practically about these issues.

“Our goal is offering what students need to graduate,” said registrar Jim Bos.

Because of the limited number of faculty, this means dropping under-enrolled classes every once in a while; however, there are ways around the enrollment requirements. Bos mentioned that on several occasions a professor has stepped forward and volunteered to teach a large class so a different professor can teach their specialty class with very few students.

“It’s great to hear that spirit,” Bos said. “More of that would be good! We want classes where our faculty are gifted and really want to teach.”

Dordt’s class size policy remains at six students. Many complex issues surround these requirements. While problems still arise with finding enough students and deciding which classes need to be dropped, especially in the humanities, this confusion has at least brought this necessary discussion to light once more.

Adoption month sees students reflecting upon adoptive connections

Jaden Vander Berg – Staff Writer

November is a month of thankfulness, family and community. It can be a time of great stress and great love. We hold those closest to us a little tighter and celebrate a time of togetherness. But November is more than just Thanksgiving and the beginning to the Christmas season: it is National Adoption Month.

National Adoption Month includes National Adoption Day on the November 21st. The month, and more specifically the day, is dedicated to raising awareness for over 100,000 children waiting for a loving ‘forever family’.

Dordt has many students and faculty that have been affected by adoption and a few were willing to share their stories.

Kim DeVries, a senior from Indiana, was born in South Korea. She comes from a family of all adopted children with her two older siblings from Indiana and she and her brother from South Korea.

“I am not sure if my parents were really wanting to adopt internationally, but the adoption agency contacted them and said they had a little boy and if they would be interested in adopting him,” DeVries said. “They prayed about it, looked into it, and adopted my brother. Then, a year and a half later, they adopted me with the same type of situation – the adoption agency contacting them about another baby.”

Dale Zevenbergen has four children and two of them are adopted.

“For us it really was a God thing,” Zevenbergen said. “We had our two daughters. We had been through a lot with pregnancies and everything, but in 2004 a bunch of things happened that made it clearer and clearer that God wanted us to adopt.”

Most people are young when they experience their families going through adoption; however, Annie Pinkerton was 18 when her brothers were adopted out of the foster system. The senior from Arizona already had three siblings, but her mother never felt like their family was finished.

“We met Bryan and Angel the day before school started for the first time at Applebee’s and they were so shy,” Pinkerton said. “They came home with us that night because school was starting the next day and the agency didn’t want them to switch schools two weeks in. At this point, we knew we were getting them, but it was just a matter of integrating them into the family and legally getting it through. They lived with us from August until May and they were adopted May 15.”

For children adopted internationally there can be an internal struggle between what outward appearance and inward feeling.

“I remember growing up when we had to check the boxes for the ACT, I didn’t know what box to mark,” DeVries said. “I never felt Korean. My mind is so white, Dutch-American, but I am 100% ethnically Korean.”

This causes people to develop a type of ‘Third Culture’ outlook. On the outside they look like they are from their birth culture, but on the inside they have been shaped by their home culture.

“My mind is shaped more Dutch-American, like my family, than ‘Oh, I’m Asian-American,’” DeVries said. “I never could say I was Korean-American, until last year when I studied abroad because I learned about the culture. You can’t claim something that’s not yours until you have experienced or done it.”

Fear of children not being accepted or having a difficult time is often why people have their reservations on international adoption; however, this was not the case for Zevenbergen’s family.

“We didn’t really worry about racial tensions as much - just the family and how the older girls would adjust,” Zevenbergen said. “We wondered about how the family was going to come together, but there was never a fear about them being from China and us being very Dutch. People say how it’s such a good thing that we did, but they are just our kids—God put our family together, that is just how it is.”

Other concerns are also a possibility, especially with children coming out of the foster system. Annie Pinkerton’s two brothers had a rocky beginning.

“They don’t respond well to any kind of violence,” Pinkerton said. “Once my mom told me that they were with the ‘dad figure’ at a gas station, and he was holding up the station. The cops were called and everything. So one time, my dad and I were joking with them in the kitchen and Bryan said that his foot hurt, and my dad goes ‘Oh, lets cut it off’ and they freaked out. Angel threw himself in front of my dad, yelling ‘No’ being all protective big brother. It’s heartbreaking at times, but their capacity for love is just so obvious— it’s amazing.”

Even in lieu of all the possible concerns, when things become difficult, whether it be with adoption worries or other issues, we can always rely on the fact that we are all adopted as sons and daughters of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. One big happy family.

A reason to dress fancy



Three students showcase their dresses in the midst of Iowa’s snowfall.

Lauren Bird – Staff Writer

If you’ve been looking for a reason to dress to the nines and raise awareness for a cause at the same time, Dresseember is for you.

Sophomore Annie Sears is heading a project called Dresseember to raise awareness for human trafficking. In order to participate, students can dress up – women in dresses and men in ties – every day in December. Sears hopes that this project will spark conversation.

“People will notice when you dress up,” Sears said. “They’ll ask why, and then suddenly a door has been opened for meaningful conversation. A lot of the reason that human trafficking, especially sex trafficking, is so rampant nowadays is because it’s such a private transaction. So by dressing up, we’re speaking out for these people that can’t speak for themselves.”

Both Sears and sophomore Cory Van Gilst are resident assistants and have used this position to get Dresseember started at Dordt. Van Gilst explains his reasoning for participating.

“I’m passionate about this because there are victims who suffer daily,” Van Gilst said. “Some women are in terrible situations and they’re crying out for help. If wearing a tie raises awareness, creates funds for relief groups, or even allows me to focus on the hardships of others rather than myself, then I have no reason not to help out.”

Sears says that Dresseember is about more than just wearing a dress or tie.

“When we go to our closets every morning to pick out something dressy, we’re forced to remember these people, to remember that they are enslaved in that very moment,” Sears said. “Wearing a dress or tie forces us into conversation and it also forces us into prayer,

which is so powerful. That’s the primary goal, the primary way Dordt students can participate.”

Along with students dressing up every day in December, the Dresseember team has a fundraising site, which can be found via links on Facebook or Twitter. Students can donate to the site as well as share the link with friends on social media.

So dig into your closets, and borrow clothing from friends. For ladies, any dress will do, though you may do well to find fleece-lined tights for the cold Iowa winter. Van Gilst offers some fashion advice for men.

“You don’t need to wear a suit or the full dress attire of dress pants and a nice shirt,” Van Gilst said. “Khakis are a great fashion choice, if you can find a nice tie to go with them. Be bold, be you!”

Photo by Christina Chahyadinata

Student led club represents Dordt by hosting dance (cont.)

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Swing dance club members could not decorate the gym until basketball practice ended at 6:30. They worked together to hang lights from the bleachers, make a ring of lights around the gym floor from the four basketball hoops on the sides and set up tables with centerpieces. The dance had been scheduled to begin at 7:00 p.m. However, because the décor and lights took time to set up, the dance officially began when the lights dimmed at 7:27.

The Student Activities Committee decided to fund the dance because of the club’s large and growing momentum. Beginning in the fall of 2008, the swing dance club offers on-campus music, dance and lessons on a weekly basis. At the 2015 Taste of Sioux Center event, 96 people signed up for the email list. Though not all of its members regularly attend, the Swing Dance Email group has around 160 recipients.

Robert Taylor, who oversees SAC, said the group’s decision to fund the dance proved to be strategic because it allowed them to serve the student body without expertise in swing dancing.

“It’s a way to reach another population of interests,” Taylor said. “For some, swing dancing will be the only organized activity that students go to in college.”

Taylor and Student Services Assistant Lisa Smith were impressed by the budget’s sustainability for the Garden of Lights. The décor and strings of lights they purchased can be reused for future dances, making the only loss the cost of refreshments.

The Swing Dance Club meets on Tuesday nights in the REC Center Aerobics room. The warm up dance begins at 8:00, the lesson begins at 8:30 and the music ends at 10:30.

International agriculture conference: networking to improve lives through agriculture

Lydia Marcus – Staff Writer

On November 17 through November 19, three agriculture students, two biology students, and two professors attended the 22nd annual ECHO International Agriculture Conference in Fort Meyers, FL.

“ECHO (Educational Concern for Hunger Organization) is an organization of Christian scientists, missionaries, and people who are passionate about how agriculture can be used to further God’s kingdom and empower impoverished people,” said biology major Renee Ewald, who attended the conference. “The conference was focused on bringing in people who had extensive experience in the mission field to talk about the successes and failures of their different missions/agricultural practices around the world.”

ECHO gathers solutions to hunger problems and shares these solutions through its network of farmers and educators. The solutions promote “sustainable farming techniques, nutritional plants, and appropriate technologies” that have proven to be successful. ECHO has centers in Thailand, Tanzania, Burkina Faso, and South Africa.

“In light of Dordt College’s emphasis on serving Christ in all areas of life, the fit is a natural one,” said agriculture professor Wayne Kobes. “Many of the Dordt students who attend minor in Ag Missions or at least have a deep interest in it.”

“I knew the founder, Martin Price, before we started going,” said emeritus agriculture professor Ronald Vos. “The conference began 1995-ish and Martin urged me to attend and to

take Dordt students along.”

Since then, Dordt students have served as interns and in full-time paid positions at ECHO. This is the first time in about 20 years that Professor Vos did not attend the conference.

Conference attendees enjoyed days full of presentations, discussions and demonstrations on a wide variety of topics.

“In the mornings, there were plenary talks about various approaches to integrating new agricultural practices in various areas of the world, appropriate technologies, perspectives on community development and cultural engagement, and entrepreneurship within community development,” says biology professor Jeff Ploegstra.

The afternoons were spent at the ECHO demonstrational farm.

“There were workshops on propagating tropical fruit trees, grafting, cultivation of bamboo, urban and small plot gardening, Aquaponics, seed banking and forage diversity,” Ploegstra said.

“The most memorable part of the conference for me was walking through a tropical forest with an agronomist that just glowed as he talked about his plants and fed me random shoots and delicious fruits,” Ewald said. “Or staying at the farm with the interns after everyone had left and helping cut branches to feed the goats, catch cows, or cook dinner from the food harvested from the farm.”

“Honestly, I would recommend it to anyone who is interested in agriculture, biology, missions, or community development,” Ewald said. “It was educational, fun, and a great bonding experience as well.”

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Journalists: stop poisoning the public with “junk food”

Allison Young – Staff Writer

Sensationalized journalism is the junk food of our news diet. We scarf it down in spite of potential consequences. But just as it’s hard to turn down a brownie sundae, it’s also hard to pass up the temptation of writing what the public wants to read: fully-disclosed, up-close and personal details about the killer, his motives, his life story, etc. Americans are becoming increasingly conscious of the types of calories they ingest. Likewise, the media is starting to notice a pattern of copycat acts of crime emerging from the hype they give to individuals who commit public, violent acts of terror.

This phenomenon leads me to wonder whether the person committing arson in Sioux Center is laughing with glee as he or she reads about his or her own sabotage on the newspaper’s front page. What about ISIS? Are we doing the work for them as we circulate dozens of potential threats around Facebook? The issue regarding whether or not the media should publicize intentional, terroristic crimes defines journalism. Many would argue it is a journalist’s duty and right to truthfully and accurately divulge the truth to the public. These individuals contend that providing more information could prevent future crimes. After all, is it not a journalist’s job provide news for communities to react to? Without the provision of that news, some may claim that we are cheated out of further debate, analysis and discussion.

In my opinion, reporters face an even bigger responsibility due to the nature of our society. Reporters must stop sensationalizing crimes, and more importantly, the terrorists themselves. Journalists must stop indulging their sick and twisted desire for attention.

One does not suppress the truth by refusing to plaster the shooter’s name and face all over the front page. By prioritizing the public’s safety above the number of papers that fly off the rack, the media may protect the nation against future acts of violence. I’m not arguing that no violent

act should be covered, however. Journalists need to succinctly record these events in a fact-based way.

Ample evidence proves that the over-hyped, over-glorified coverage of mass shootings and similar crimes inspires copycat acts of violence. Thus, minimal attention should be placed on the perpetrator. Oftentimes, the people who commit mass crimes are not rash, hotheaded individuals. They scheme and plot their acts in an organized, calculated fashion well in advance of their chosen day of infamy. These killers’ minds construct a “woe is me” narrative and perceive their personal printed propaganda as a marked victory.

Killers should not be given the satisfaction of knowing how deeply the victims’ families are grieving. These criminals’ minds are clearly troubled and disturbed, so why flaunt the fruits of their labor by publishing detailed descriptions, photographs or videos of the event? Such articles confirm the concrete reality of an abstract fantasy. Writers should not even speculate the motive behind the committed act. While many criminals have dark pasts, the media tends to grossly exaggerate their behaviors that would be overlooked in the life of an innocent person. Additionally, publications that discuss the motive may come off as justifying the act.

Ari N. Schuman, journalist for the Wall Street Journal, said “The massacre killer chooses to believe it is not he but the world that is filled with hatred—and then he tries to prove his dark vision by making it so. If we can deprive him of the ability to make his internal psychodrama a shared public reality, if we can break this ritual of violence and our own ritual response, then we might just banish these dreadful and all too frequent acts to the realm of vile fantasy.”

I could not agree more. Modern day U.S. journalists must fill a role never before required of them—to protect and preserve. Let us not succumb to the temptation to take the easy route and feed the starving public the junk food they’re asking for.



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The Buffington Post: money from athletics sucking up college budgets

Elizabeth Bouwkamp – Staff Writer

In a recent article from The Huffington Post entitled, “Sports At Any Cost,” The Huffington Post and The Chronicle for Higher Education completed a study examining the \$10.3 billion flowing into university athletic programs from student fees and other subsidies. The study defined other subsidies as student fees, funds given by the school, and government support. The analysis poses potential academic and financial concerns for many university students who are concerned about the accumulation and obsession universities across the country have with sports.

Georgia State University’s athletic department brought in \$124.8 million for the 2010-2014 school years. Of that amount, \$104.7 million came from subsidies including 85 percent student fees. Georgia State University is only one of many universities with similar statistics.

The problem occurs primarily in schools with less successful athletic programs. For the University of Michigan, the numbers look quite different. Michigan made an astounding total revenue of \$693.5 million in the years 2010-

2014, yet 35 percent came from ticket sales, 19 percent from NCAA distributions, 46 percent from other revenue sources, and 0 percent from subsidies. However, this is not the case for many universities.

The study found that two dozen universities account for nearly half of the \$26 billion brought in to Division I athletic departments.

Dordt College operates on a \$35.9 million budget for the college as a whole each year. In that budget, \$2.25 million goes to Dordt College Athletics. Some aspects included in this designated athletic budget include team travel, uniforms, and coach salaries.

Arlan Nederhoff, Executive Director of Finances and Facilities at Dordt College, said students paid a student activity’s fee of \$480 for the 2015-2016 school year. He said the student fee did not go to a specific dollar, but rather, it got put in “one big pot.” According to the Dordt College 2015-2016 catalog, the student activities fee includes athletic events, co-curricular activities, game room, intramurals, access to student health services, music rentals, placement fee, yearbook, student teaching, technology fee, transcripts, vehicle registration,

recreation complex use, and All-Seasons Center use.

The Defender Gold Club is designated specifically for athletics. Special needs not covered by the athletic department’s normal budget are covered by this club through membership fees and events.

As a small school with private school tuition, Dordt College is blessed by the contributions of donors and alumni support. Additionally, Dordt explains the specifics regarding what each student fee entails. Unlike many large universities, we pay no specific fee just for athletics.

But what happens to schools with little donor support and schools trying to remain competitive with the athletic programs of the elite schools? The same subsidies that fund larger revenue producing programs such as football and basketball, fund swimming and track and field. Would these programs even be possible without money from student fees and government support?

Even when colleges and universities consider cutting back on particular athletic budgets, they are often met with opposition. Bill Curry, the

first football coach at Georgia State, admitted colleges are making “fundamentally flawed” business decisions in order to keep up with surrounding schools and our country’s love for sports.

David Hughes, a Rutgers Anthropology professor, puts this national problem in perspective in The Huffington Post article. He sees problems with raising student fees as a blatant tuition increase, and he is worried the increasing institutional support of athletics may be a detriment to what should be an academically-focused institution.

“Add these two together,” Hughes said, “and you have students paying more for a lower quality education.”

Along with Hughes response, this epidemic concerns the focus of our education. As students, it is easy to dismiss academics for extracurricular activities; however, what our country needs is not more students engaged in athletic games and bound by athletic fees, but students using their financial resources and engaging in academic books, clubs, trips, and learning activities.

New cross country coach Wolf wins much-deserved honor

Allison Young – Staff Writer

As the new head coach of Dordt College cross country, Nate Wolf had big shoes to fill this season. Any first-year coach would find it difficult to match the accomplishments of former coach Greg Van Dyke, who led the women’s team to a 3-year streak of conference championships and Top 10 placings at the NAIA National Championship meets. Wolf not only achieved but also exceeded those high expectations; he was named 2015 Hauff Mid-America Sports/GPAC Women’s Cross Country Coach of the Year shortly after the Dordt women clinched their 4th consecutive Great Plains Athletic Conference team title on Nov. 7.

“It is humbling to receive this recognition,” Wolf says. “I feel it is an acknowledgement of the hard work that the entire women’s team—all 22 ladies—put in this year, along with their steady performances throughout the season. I am blessed to have the opportunity to coach amazing athletes who are even more amazing young women. I am incredibly proud of who they are, what they do, and how they go about accomplishing their goals,” says Wolf.

Not to be forgotten is the team’s assistant coach, Lori Wolf. “We get so much joy from coaching such wonderful men and women at Dordt College,” Lori says. “This honor results from the athletes’ dedication and hard work! Recognition should also go to previous coaches Greg and Lorilyn Van Dyke for all their work in past seasons building and developing DCXC.”

The Wolfs have been the first to give credit to the Van Dykes for setting up the Defenders for success in the 2015 season. “Obviously,” the pair says, “Coach Greg Van Dyke is a big part of this program’s history and sustained success. His work in recruiting and developing the ladies prior to this fall was an incredible foundation to start from. He is a good friend, and his support this fall has been priceless.”

As husband and wife, Lori and Nate make a dynamic pair of coaches, mentors, and friends for their student-athletes. When Nate began his coaching career at Northwestern, he and Lori started a tradition of inviting the team into their home every Sunday evening. Now that the Wolfs own a home in Sioux Center, they carry on that tradition with the Dordt team, too. The Wolfs’ black Labrador—Sam—exudes as much energy and enthusiasm as his owners when the team comes to visit.

The freshmen and transfer team members enjoyed the privilege of being a part of Wolf’s first incoming class, and any initial apprehension of a coaching transition that may have existed in the minds of the team’s upperclassmen has long since dissipated. Coach Wolf earned the trust and respect of his athletes by showing concern for every individual, by gradually easing the team into his style of coaching, and by simply being himself.

Freshman Tara Tilstra shared the press release on social media with the following caption: “Congratulations to Coach Wolf! He is so deserving of this honor. I greatly enjoyed my



Coach Nate Wolf

first season here at Dordt running with him as my coach and I can’t wait for the seasons to come! Thanks for being an inspiration and for demonstrating Christ’s love every day.”

Jordyn Visscher, one of seven female juniors originally recruited by Coach Van Dyke, also shared Tilstra’s comment, saying, “Congratulations to Coach Wolf for getting Coach of the Year! Honestly couldn’t have asked for a better replacement. You deserve this title and more for all your hard work this year. Thanks a million. Looking forward to next year already!”

And indeed, the team and the college seem to have much to look forward to from both Wolfs.

Next goal for women’s volleyball: Nationals

Aaron Ladzinski – Staff Writer

A 13-game winning streak. Then a 7-game winning streak. A 24-5 record. Defeating multiple nationally-ranked power houses. A regular season conference title. What is next for the Defenders? It’s simple, actually. Nationals: the end of the road, one that ends every teams’ season no matter if they win or lose.

The women faced a tough pool. They first challenged a strong Georgetown team and went down 2 games to none. The Defenders worked hard to rally back but lost the match 3-0. The women then battled a strong Viterbo team, a team the Defenders defeated early in the season. The match raged back and forth between the two teams. The game came down to the last set, ending with the Defenders losing 15-11. The loss would eliminate the team from the next round unless their final opponent Olivet Nazarene pulled an upset. Although the game did not end in a Defender win, the women played their best and ended the historic season with a victory over Olivet. Brooke Gransta said, “We had a great season. As always, you have your highs and lows, but I felt like we did great things this year. We have a lot of talented

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Women’s cross country continues historic run

Christian Zylstra – Staff Writer

Dordt College women’s cross country made its fourth consecutive team appearance at the NAIA Nationals Championship Meet on Nov. 21 in Charlotte, NC. The women finished ninth with 342 points after entering the meet ranked 11th in the national polls.

Northwest Christian University dominated the meet, finishing in first with 98 points.

This year was Dordt’s fourth-straight season at nationals with a top-10 finish. Dordt held off Westmont College for ninth place, finishing ahead of the Warriors 342-344.

“Finishing top-10 nationally is always a special accomplishment,” said head coach Nate Wolf. “I thought the ladies could achieve that goal, but knew it would take a solid team performance. To finish ninth is a great capstone on the women’s season and the all the work they have put in since June.”



Contributed photo
Senior cross country member Kayla Byl races ahead of the competition at the NAIA Nationals.

the first time since her freshman year, but this time as a competitor rather than an alternate.

Other veteran runners stepped up as well. Kayla Byl, another senior, returned to compete in the nationals meet for her fourth consecutive season, finishing in the top-30 for the second straight year.

“Hats off to the seniors on this year’s team,” said Dordt athletic director Glenn Bouma. “They truly represented Dordt well on the course and in the community. This team was filled with excellent leaders, and they were among the best.”

Erika Douma and Van Zee also made their second consecutive appearance at nationals.

Individually, the women performed at a high rate, but they excelled most as a team.

During the race, we wore neon jerseys so that we could see our teammates,” Ogle said. “Whenever I saw neon during the race, I wasn’t thinking about me, I was wondering how the rest of the team was doing and hoping they were doing okay. That motivated me to push myself.”

Dordt’s team camaraderie was evident throughout the season, and it carried over into the national meet. With a group of women that pushed each other to new levels and heights, Dordt women’s cross country continued its historic run.

Clash in the Corn a success for Dordt Blades

Aaron Ladzinski – Staff Writer

The Dordt Blades’ greatest efforts hit the ice during the Clash in the Corn hockey tournament held before Thanksgiving break. Perhaps the team displayed an exceptional effort due to the fact that Dordt hosted the annual tournament, or perhaps the fact that the Blades faced the best teams in the region ignited the fire amongst the players. Regardless of the cause, passion fueled the Blades’ effort.

The team’s game versus the Northern Arizona Ice Jacks began the weekend even. The game went all the way down to a shootout as possession between the teams flew back and forth. The Blades secured a lead going into the last minute of the game. Unfortunately the team could not keep the lead as the Ice Jacks scored on a 6-3. Not only did they had a two man advantage, but they also then pulled their goalie as an extra skater. Although the Blades

lost in a shootout, the books show the game as a tie. The game held exciting moments for the Blades, however, and Thomas Soodsma came out of the game with a first ever hat trick.

The following day the Blades faced Colorado Mesa, the number 14 ranked team. Scoring quick and often, the Blades battled once again. The score near the end of the first round was 4-0. While Mesa fought back and scored 2 goals, the Blades held off multiple attack to win the game 4-2. Defense man Levi Minderhoud said, “We won against Colorado Mesa because switched our focus to playing our game. We were more disciplined and stayed out of the box. We’re dominant five on five and so more full strength play was to our advantage. That was the key to success.”

The Blades played the 4th team in the region, Marquette, in the final game. Though the Blades

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Head football coach Greg Youngblood resigns

Christian Zylstra – Staff Writer

Greg Youngblood resigned from his position as head coach of the Dordt College football team after four years in the position.

The Dordt College football program went 8-36 under Coach Youngblood, and doubled its win total of four games in the four years prior to Youngblood’s tenure. Dordt College started its varsity football program in 2008.

“Greg has worked to develop and guide the football program in a way consistent with the values of the Dordt College community,” said Dordt College Athletic Director Glenn Bouma. “We have seen growth in the program over his four years here, and much of that can be attributed to his leadership.”

Dordt football did see a considerable increase

in competitive football under Youngblood’s reign. Heading into his first season as head coach, Dordt had one Great Plains Athletic Conference win (Concordia in 2008). After Youngblood’s four years as coach, Dordt added two more conference wins to the record books-Nebraska Wesleyan in 2014 and Midland in 2015.

The 2015 season proved to be one of Dordt’s most successful seasons in program history in terms of consecutive seasons with a conference win and multiple offensive records.

“I felt like we made a lot of good strides from a football standpoint, particularly offensively,” Youngblood said. “We set a school-record in points scored and were fourth in the nation in

Continued on page 8

Dordt variety show looking forward to Mixed Revues

Eric Rowe – Staff Writer

From last minute dance submissions to juggling accompanied by violin, Mixed Revues has already delighted its organizers and looks to do the same for audiences at 7:30 p.m. in the New World Theatre.

Mixed Revues focuses on the joy involved with practicing a skill rather than winning a prize. The tagline for the event is, “a collection of art to celebrate as a community.”

“Technically, it’s a talent show, but not really,” Mixed Revues technical director, Jennifer Allen said. “We’re celebrating what we do as artists rather than pitting people against one another.”

Even though Mixed Revues has roots in the theatre – Allen is a theatre major and the others on the committee are all involved with the department – it has brought people from the music department, English department, juggling club and one Dordt graduate who lives in the community.

“My first thought was it would be a talent show, but as it developed it became more of a sharing of talents,” junior chair of the Mixed Revues committee, Anna Krygsheld, said. “It promotes not just the theatre department, but arts in general.”

Mixed Revues came about over the past summer, when Allen acted on her desire for more opportunities to perform to an audience at Dordt. There was always the main stage theatre

play and the talent show, but not much option between them.

Over the summer, Allen worked on details with theatre professor Teresa Ter Haar and invited fellow students to the committee. Though she is not sure how the committee will transfer personnel from year to year, Allen hopes to build a tradition of Mixed Revues.

Mixed Revues also provides a venue for Aryn Ryan nominees. On the second week of the spring semester, actors nominated in Dordt theatre participate in an acting competition at the American College Theatre Festival. Each of this year’s nominees plan to perform at Mixed Revues as an early preparation for January.

Because Mixed Revues’ open invitation includes acts of singing, poetry, juggling, dancing and theatre, there is a lot of opportunity for unexpected surprises along the way. With her insider knowledge, Krygsheld is interested in experiencing one act in particular. It was described on the audition form as, “Something Amazing.”

“When I asked Luke Venhuizen about it,” Krygsheld said. “He said that it turned into a comedic act that consists of analyzing a selfie.”

Krygsheld and her fellow committee leaders will have the chance to watch and screen “Something Amazing” and all of the other acts Wednesday evening at the preview night before the public performance on Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

One Act festival displays wide variety of acting chops

Janelle Cammenga – Staff Writer

It is not every day that you get the opportunity to watch shows that combine zombies, a medieval band, mountain climbers, romance, tragedy, the breaking of the fourth wall and a deranged ghost. Dordt’s One Act festival provided all of the above and more.

The One Acts were composed of 10 15-minute plays. Each member of the theater arts directing class directed one play. Senior Taylor Leach was charge of producing and stage management in addition to directing her own one act.

“Normally, those roles are divided amongst three students, so it was a bit daunting to realize what I was taking on,” Leach said.

Freshman Isaac Larson experienced the other end of the festival by acting in one of the plays. He enjoyed the process and shared his favorite part of the festival.

“It’s not as big of a commitment as Godspell, so it lets numerous people who aren’t usually in acting try out and possibly act,” Larson said.

Not only do One Acts give non-theater students chances to act, but it gives the theater students their first experience with directing.

“One Acts showed me that I could potentially fall in love with directing and want to try it again,” Leach said. “Directing is something I had never really considered until I actually tried it. Now I look forward to my next chance to direct.”

Instead of charging admission for the



Photo by Josiah Wallace
Eric Rowe pleads for his lost love Jalyn Vander Wal to stay in their one act play “Perfect”

performances, the theater department requested donations of canned food. These were donated on Wednesday.

Leach has been involved in many of Dordt’s productions but sees One Acts as different from her other projects.

“What makes the one acts unique is that each show is picked by the director who is directing them,” Leach said. “To me, that allows for each of their personal styles to show through in their work.”

Despite the heavy snowfall on Friday, the One Acts were still well attended. Actors, directors, producers, and stage hands alike worked together to make the One Act festival a success.

The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part 2: Remember the Real Enemy

Ellen Dengah – Staff Writer

The Hunger Games series has been a cultural phenomenon since the first film in 2012. Since then, at least three other young adult dystopian literature, with a similar feel, have been adapted for the big screen. The Hunger Games: Mockingjay – Part 2, the last one from the series, premiered in late November and generated more than \$100 million on its opening weekend.

The finale to The Hunger Games franchise ends on a high note. Francis Lawrence directed an excellent delivery of Suzanne Collins’ novel, successfully adapting the written story without looking and sounding like an audiobook with a video illustration. Audiences can connect instantly with what happened in the previous movie right from the first glimpse of the opening scene.

Part 2 starts with Katniss, played by Jennifer Lawrence, struggling to speak because Peeta, Josh Hutcherson, her former fiancé and survivor from the last two Hunger Games, tried to kill her at the end of Mockingjay Part 1. Audiences are then presented with how Katniss constantly tries to resolve conflicting ideas, starting at the beginning of the movie, leaving no room for unnecessary flashback explanation or exposition.

The most interesting concept from this movie is perhaps how sometimes friend and foe are not so clearly distinct from each other. This first scene shows how Peeta a pillar in Katniss’ life and her most devoted supporter, suddenly turn violent against her. The film comes full circle with resolution scene playing out the concept of knowing your real enemy.

My favorite scene from this movie also pokes



at this idea. A civil conflict arise when the rebel forces attempt to take over a train tunnel from a district that is affiliated with the Capitol. Civilian turns against each other as they forgot the root of the problem, President Snow.

Mockingjay Part 2 is packed with social commentary presented in an entertaining story. The story of Katniss trying to kill Snow carries much more weight than mere revenge due to the complex characterization, motivation, and challenges. The action and suspense in this movie is already entertaining on it’s own, but with the crafty storytelling and unbelievable acting performance from the casts, the film raise raises the bar for teenage action movie. 4.5 out of 5 stars; because even though it’s so well made and enjoyable, I still can’t forgive that the bad ending from the book got shoved into the movie as well.

Defector filmmakers showcase work

Lauren Bird – Staff Writer

Professors here at Dordt like to give students hands-on projects and experience that prepares them for the future. The digital media department provides an example of this.

This past Tuesday, December 8, student filmmakers presented their film, Defector, which has been in the works for a good portion of the semester. The film is written and directed by Kyle Fosse, produced by Jessica Lillo, edited by Jason Miller and Andrew Cameron and Sam Malan were the cinematographers. The main casts consist of Tebi Njilefack, Bailey McKee, Josh Bootsma, and Gideon Wamala.

Malan says that his favorite part of working on the film was working with the actors.

“We have a great cast and I could see from their acting that they were giving 110%. The film expresses a lot of fear because it takes place back in World War II and the actors expressed that fear remarkably,” Malan said.

The film is set in World War II and focuses on two soldiers. Malan’s fellow cinematographer, Andrew Cameron, explains the plotline of the film a little more in depth.

“It’s about a person that faces challenges in life and learns from another person in trying to be a better man in the midst of a war. There

is action and drama, and it should be a good study break for people to come out and enjoy,” Cameron said.

While those involved have said that the experience has been exciting and fun, there have been some challenges along the way. Cameron shares one of his stories.

“One challenge in particular was when we were doing this travel scene around the river and it was very muddy and wet. During that scene I was walking across the mud and started sinking really bad. I lost my shoe in the mud and never got it back. It’s probably still there buried in the mud, but oh well, you have to make some sacrifices to make a great film,” Cameron said.

Malan also mentioned that dealing with nature was a challenge while shooting.

“I remember a shoot that we had to do by a river and there were bugs flying everywhere. I’m glad we brought a can of bug spray. It was also a challenge to get perfect audio for some scenes at times because we were next to a road in one location and had cars flying past while shooting an emotional or action sequence,” Malan said.

The filmmakers are confident that their high caliber work may be used to strengthen job portfolios for future employers. The team also hopes to enter the film in multiple festivals.

Art exhibit looks at immigration

Meagan DeGraaf – Staff Writer

Immigration evokes many questions in politics and ethics, but there is another aspect of immigration: art. The collection of art currently in the gallery across from the Eckhart Lounge showcases the various artworks of people from different backgrounds, many of whom immigrated to the United States.

The exhibit features artists of different nationalities and reflects their struggle in defining what it means to be American for them. Sergio Gomez, who created an art exhibit in the classroom building this fall, compiled the exhibit in order to showcase the complexities of

the American experience from the perspective of those regarded as outsiders.

“All people are created in the image of God, regardless of nationality,” said David Versluis, Dordt College art professor. “Though the art varies greatly in style and meaning, each artist grappled with similar issues upon adapting their lifestyle to the standard of the United States.”

Professor David Versluis urges students and Christians to take the opportunity to view such a diverse collection of art from people of different cultures, as we don’t always have the chance to experience their perspective of our

◆ The Back Page ◆

Seven things not to do over Christmas break

Elizabeth Bouwkamp – Staff Writer

1. Stop Listening to Christmas Music after Christmas Day—Come on...the 12 days of Christmas start after Christmas day!
2. Spend All Your Time with Your Friends—Let’s be honest, your family gets only a few weeks with you and your friends get the whole school year.
3. Go on a Diet—If you want to miss out on the best food of the year, go for it. But I wouldn’t recommend it.
4. Stay Inside—Find some little kids to go sledding with. You will make their day!
5. Miss out on Christmas Specials and Movies—Don’t underestimate the power of a cheesy and sentimental movie.
6. Forget to Go Under the Mistletoe--After all, what happens under the mistletoe, stays under the mistletoe.
7. Get Stressed—Keep Calm and Drink More Eggnog



Typography by Christina Chahyadinata

Women’s volleyball: Nationals (cont.)

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players coming back and I think we will go back to Nationals next year and come back even stronger.”

Enough about the competition; let’s talk about the players- the GPAC conference winners. The team is greater than ever. To win the GPAC title, the Defenders defeated Northwestern in the last couple of days in the season. Coach Hanson reflects on the year with “a tremendous feeling of accomplishment as this season was the most competitive in my 5 years at Dordt. The players and staff earned this championship together and grew closer to each other and the Lord in our efforts.”

Brooke Gransta leads the team with an average of 3.42 kills per set, a .344 kill efficiency and 32 aces. Ema Altena greatly contributed to the team with a .266 kill average and a .226 kill efficiency. The team rounds out with other names such as Haley Moss, who brings a .235 kill efficiency, Jenna Hortsman and Jamie Gesink. Coach Hanson said, “Our team is very balanced and dependent on each person to bring their very best to the match. This includes players who are in support roles to those who never come off the floor.”

Clash in the Corn a success (cont.)

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performed with everything they had, the team lost 7-0. Despite giving up many goals, the game turned out closer than it seemed. Overall, the team finished in the middle of the pack against some of the top teams in the nation. Their weekend performance pleased the team. The team is looking forward to the future. According to Assistant Captain Lucas Koomans “Clash proved to be our best weekend of hockey so far this season. Despite the loss to Marquette, the guys battled hard every game and that’s always encouraging to see”

The Blades will take on Iowa State this weekend at the All Seasons Center. Iowa State is currently ranked 3rd in their region and will enter the game with a 10-0 record.



Cartoon by Jonathan Fictorie

Football coach Greg Youngblood resigns (cont.)

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rushing. And we did all that with really only one true senior, so there’s a lot of optimism on my part.”

Dordt set numerous offensive records this season, including eight individual and 11 team records. The many records include total points scored (233), total offense (3,768 yards), rushing TDs (25), individual rushing yards (Loken Vande Vegte with 838 yards), all-purpose yards (Xavier Caffee with 1,471 yards) and first-ever 1st team all-GPAC player (Xavier Caffee).

“As a coach, it’s great to see some results of the plans you lay out, but plans mean nothing without players,” Youngblood said. “It doesn’t happen if those guys don’t buy in, work hard and execute.”

Dordt’s players were recruited to buy in. 2015 marked Youngblood’s 4th season as Dordt’s head football coach, and he recruited each player in the program to play under his watch.

With a team Youngblood recruited himself, Dordt started to make major progress on the offensive side of the ball.

“This year, our offense was finally able to put it all together and be successful doing what we set out to do,” Vande Vegte said. “Coach Youngblood has been bringing in triple-option talent for the past four years, guys that he believed fit our offensive scheme and would be able to get the job done.”

Coach Youngblood was successful off the field as well and helped young men grow into Christian citizens. For Youngblood and his family, these four years at Dordt meant more than just football.

“It’s been great to integrate our family activities with team activities,” said Kelly Youngblood, Coach Youngblood’s wife. “My kids love going to football games. It’s helped to show that this is more than a sport; it’s helped to build relationships outside the sport as well.”

During the season, Coach Youngblood invited

a different position group to his home to enjoy a homemade meal and camaraderie.

“We have never felt God’s leading more in our lives than the way we did when we moved here [Sioux Center, IA],” Kelly Youngblood said.

Her comment aligns with Dordt’s athletic mission. As the football program moves forward in search of a new head coach, it holds several key values above on-the-field prowess and experience.

“As we [search committee] look through the candidate pool, our primary criteria will be for a coach who is a professing Christian, rooted in the Reformed tradition and can fulfill Dordt’s mission,” Bouma said.

There’s plenty of work to be done to make Dordt a constant competitor in GPAC play, but the program has been fortunate to have two head coaches—John Heavner and Youngblood—who have pushed the program in the right direction.

Art exhibit looks at immigration (cont.)

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American lives. This art gives us a look into that perspective.

There are several different art forms within the exhibit. Not only paintings decorate the walls, but three-dimensional art in the form of sculptures and hanging pieces fill the room. Each piece is a different image of someone’s experience with moving to America.

“The exhibit is being featured in part to help us realize that we should challenge ourselves to live out the biblical call to care for the sojourner,” Versluis said. “We should

welcome these people with open arms and try to understand their view of America.”

This opens up an entire new set of questions, especially with the refugee crisis happening around us. Should Christians open up their homes and communities to people seeking refuge, furthering the diversity in America? The definition of an American is already hard to describe, as there are many races and cultures represented in the country.

Still, we often prefer people who look like us, so those who come to America as immigrants can feel out of place. This exhibit aims to point out some of the differences between cultures

and the way in which immigrants struggle to merge their traditions with the ideals of their new country.

Each piece of art, compiled from works of immigrant artists from more than ten different countries, has its own statement from the artists. Some have simple meanings while others are complex concepts invented by each particular artist. It is important to read the statement to understand the meaning behind the piece.

Each one of these works gives a different perspective on the answer to the exhibit’s overarching question: What does it mean to be American?