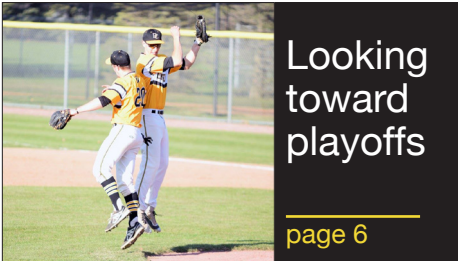




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THE DIAMOND

Musical talent abounds at NCDC 2016

Meagan DeGraaf – Staff Writer

Last Saturday, students from Dordt and Northwestern intermingled in an effort to find the best seats possible for NCDC. With many talented acts performing, the B.J. Haan Auditorium was almost full, and each student sat ready to hear their peers battle it out musically.

Four acts were chosen to advance to the finals: two acts from Dordt and two from Northwestern. Then those four acts each had the chance to prove themselves to the judges and the audience, as well as make awkward conversation on the awkward couch with host Chris Soodsma.

The two advancing groups from Dordt, AK Squared and Gopher Broke, both played songs utilizing the modernized classic rock sound they uniquely possessed. Both of the groups from Northwestern played music with a more mellow sound. Their song choices ranged from a piano-driven Maroon 5 medley from the duo Jenna and Sam to a relaxed styling of Alessia Cara’s Here, performed by Mansion Pants, a laid-back trio.

The boys of Gopher Broke surprised everyone when they got on stage for their second song, wearing tuxedos in replacement of their casual clothing. The change in dress matched the vibe of their second song, ZZ Top’s Sharp Dressed Man. The band also agreed they wanted to see front man Levi Smith dress up in his bright yellow jeans with a tuxedo jacket.

Despite the fun costuming, strong musical passion and exciting stage presence of Gopher Broke, Dordt’s other group AK Squared was the



NCDC team “AK Squared” from Dordt College take first place.

Photo by Winnie Obiero

winner at the end of the night.

“When our name was called among the Final Four, we thought, ‘that was all we needed,’” said Harry Lee. “Frankly speaking, we didn’t expect to win.”

Lee added that it was a great joy for the friends when they did capture the victory.

Another all-male group, AK Squared decided to enter the competition together because they were all friends who liked to make music. Ariel Gomes, Benjie Lee, Harry Lee, Sam Roskamp and Sun Yong Lee used their gifts of guitar, keyboard, percussion and vocals to form their

group.

From the crowd’s cheers, it was clear they were a fan favorite from their first song. Their second performance, led by the strong vocals of Sun Lee, was If I Ain’t Got You, and the crowd somehow surpassed their excitement from the first song.

The band wants to thank everyone who voted for them, as they were just happy to get the chance to play in front of the excited crowd.

And the money they won as champions? The guys are grateful for a way to pay for their room deposit next year.

Ideafest: a recital for academics

Lydia Marcus – Staff Writer

Twelve years ago, a group of professors at a Faculty Forum discussed the idea of creating an opportunity for students from all fields of study to share their work and ideas with each other. As a result of that meeting, thirty-four students presented 26 projects at Dordt’s first Ideafest.

Since then, Ideafest has grown in magnitude, scope and student participation with every passing year.

This year, from 1:00p.m. to 3:30p.m. on April 21, over 163 students from all areas of study—including business, education, history, English, engineering, biology, chemistry, art, and theology—will present a total of 100 projects.

“We often get together on campus for athletic events, music events, and theatre events to celebrate as a community,” says history professor Paul Fessler, who has helped organize and plan Ideafest since the event’s beginnings in 2004. “Students work hard on their scholarly activities all year, and it is often a very solitary approach. Students often don’t really know what their roommates and friends actually do in an English class, or an education class, or an engineering class.”

Ideafest allows students to learn about the activities of their peers and encourage each

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Dutch international students: ain’t Dutch ain’t much

Jaden Vander Berg – Staff Writer

Sioux County prides itself in being a ‘Dutch’ community. Residents have Dutch last names, families try to keep traditions alive and towns like Orange City have Dutch architecture and hold festivals celebrating their heritage.

Rik van Os and Geanne Vredevelde, two nursing students, are the most recent people to come from the Netherlands. After a decade or so in the Dutch education system, they are trying their hand out in America.

Sitting in what was once a wooden shoe factory-now turned popular coffee shop, the two reminisce on the past few months in America and all their experiences.

“We tried to come to America without any stereotypes,” van Os said. “Everyone is always saying Americans are fat, and in America everything is big, but we wanted to see first then judge. The first moment we got off the plane, we were sitting down to wait for our next plane, and we saw people walking by and we were like ‘oh my, the stereotypes are true.’”

It is widely known that food is more processed in the United States than in other places. That, paired with a more inactive lifestyle, can cause people to gain the ‘freshman 15.’

“People eat a lot more junk food,” Vredevelde said. “Here, junk food is super cheap. I try to eat

healthy, but it is really expensive.”

The stereotypes are not all negative, however. People in other countries comment on how inviting and social America is.

“Everyone is super friendly; they invite you to their homes for dinner,” Vredevelde said.

“So many people want you over for dinner,” van Os said. “They are so polite and hospitable. I feel so welcomed and, in a strange way, at home.”

One of the biggest differences they have encountered is the commute to class.

“When you go to school in the Netherlands, you have to commute for an hour—bus, train and bike, but here, you can just roll out of bed and walk to class in five minutes and you are in the classroom building,” Vredevelde said.

Another difference is fashion. While Dutch people spend a large portion of their day traveling from place to place, people in the United States often have the luxury of having things close by or an easier way of accessing it.

“The way people dress here, you see a lot of sweatpants, sweatshirt,” Vredevelde said. “People just get out of bed and go to class. I don’t get it. We spend more time on our outfit, and people in America seem to spend more time on their hair and make up but then wear sweats.”

Campus life also differs greatly in the two

countries. In the United States, most people live on or near campus, with different activities going on during the week. In the Netherlands, no one lives on campus. They either live in the same city as the college, or they live at home and commute an hour or so to school every day.

“Campus life is really awesome,” van Os said. “If you want to hang out with someone, you just walk over there. It really is a community.”

People in Sioux County like to say they are Dutch or Dutch-American, but van Os and Vredevelde disagree. In their opinions, in order to classify yourself as a certain nationality, you have to speak the language and practice the customs.

“The people here have Dutch roots,” Vredevelde said. “They have lived in the Wtates their entire lives, so they are super American.”

“Orange City is just a representation of Amsterdam,” van Os said. “I think most American people think that the Netherlands is just like Amsterdam—every place in Holland is the same. That is what this town represents in my opinion.”

Now that they are wrapping up the semester and looking back on everything they have experienced, they are grateful for their time here.



Contributed photo
Dutch students Geanne Vredevelde and Rik van Os pose in front of a familiar Dutch sight.

Most boring campus?: Dordt’s secret drinking culture

Jaden Vander Berg & Aaron Ladzinski – Staff Writers

College. A time to earn a degree, find a spouse and consume alcohol.

Each of these activities are ‘rites of passage’ that many college students undertake at some point during their scholarly years. Again and again, movies portray wild, out of control college parties with students incapable of making sound decisions. Popular culture sees this as part of the college experience.

For students on ‘dry’ campuses, this lifestyle is not the reality. Dordt College is one such campus, its handbook proclaiming, “The consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages by anyone is prohibited on campus or in college-controlled areas, in college-approved housing facilities, in vehicles, and at college related activities.”

This rule, however, can seem to serve more harm than good. Banning alcohol on campus causes students wishing to break the rules to smuggle it into their rooms. It also does not eradicate the issue of underage consumption as much as it pushes this drinking off campus where further complications can occur.

Local coffee shop and wine bar The Fruited Plain became a fast favorite for Dordt drinkers due to its discount and karaoke nights and its short distance from campus. Proprietor Laremy

De Vries claims that bars feed into a healthy drinking culture, arguing that they provide a controlled environment of accountable drinking in a public space.

“They may leave a trail of solo cups behind them, but that is better than a trail of blood”, said De Vries, commenting on the number of students who walk to his establishment.

Local business owners are not alone in their thoughts concerning student drinking. Chief of Police Paul Atkins said that he is primarily concerned with the safety of the drinker and the adherence to the law.

“If we are too strict here, the students are going to go a location out of town because they don’t dare to do so in Sioux Center,” Atkins said. “I don’t condone alcohol consumption by students, but I am looking for them to not break the law and for their safety.”

For some students, drinking is cultural. They may come from a country where they are of legal age to drink but when they get to school here, they are no longer able to.

“In Canada, I can go out to the bars on weekends with my friends or have a beer at home, but in the States I am still underage,” said one student, who wished to remain anonymous. “Sometimes I want to drink here, so we just have to be more secretive.”

It is no lie that students drink on campus but not everyone gets caught. Another student



shared that he isn’t worried about being caught. “We’re never really paranoid,” said the student. “You just have to be smart not let to many people in the apartment, always lock your door, and keep the music down.”

Students aren’t afraid of being caught, even with two arrests reported for alcohol for the 2014 academic year, a scar on the spotless record from the previous two years. Even more have been “referred for disciplinary action,” according to Dordt’s campus crime statistics,

with 37 students involved in alcohol-related incidents over the past three years – 14 alone happening last year.

While Dordt has been described as the ‘most boring school’ in Iowa by Total Sorority Move. com, the underground alcohol community, if taken into consideration, may have skewed the college’s rankings. To those who would equate ‘fun’ with ‘drinking’, perhaps Dordt isn’t as ‘boring’ as it seems.

Double feature: twins on campus

Eric Rowe – Staff Writer

It is one thing to be mistaken for your sister, but when you mistake yourself for your sister, that’s something entirely different. When junior Mara Van Essen looks in a mirror, she has to double check that her twin sister, Macy, isn’t in the room.

From kindergarten through high school, they have lived, played and been seen together. Now, the world is a little bigger. Dordt twins share about how their relationships have changed as they stepped into the realm of higher education.

Van Essen and her sister both decided on Dordt because it seemed like a natural choice to attend college together after so many years.

“We both loved Dordt, too,” Van Essen said. “It wasn’t necessarily that.”

Jesse Hooyer attends Dordt with his twin brother, Aaron, and sees a difference in the way he is treated in college as opposed to high school.

“People do more to think of you as two separate people,” Hooyer said. “They place a higher emphasis on you as individual people. Not calling you Jesse, for Aaron.”

Mixing up sibling for sibling can be annoying, but for senior Jessica Lillo, it was detrimental to her education.

Lillo’s mother had to put her twin daughters in different classes in grade school because the teachers were prone to treating them as the same person. Jessica Lillo was behind in English and Jennifer Lillo was behind in Math, but the perception was that they were both doing well.

Van Essen could see benefits to attending different colleges to get a more individualized experience, but she is glad she is attending with her sister.

“I’d never wish not to be a twin,” Van Essen said. “I couldn’t imagine my life without a twin.”

Lillo and her sister didn’t necessarily consider the other’s choice when deciding on colleges. They followed their own interests.

“In college, we really became ourselves instead of being ourselves together,” Lillo said.



Contributed photo
Juniors Mara and Macy Van Essen are one set of easily-confusable twins at Dordt College.

Sophomore and twin, Ashley Huizinga, found that her identity shifted when she came to Dordt. “A lot less of your identity is tied up in family while you’re in college,” Huizinga said. “Whereas in a small Dutch high school, everybody knows everybody else’s family and tends to judge you based on that.”

Huizinga’s twin sister, Erin, attends Calvin College

“When you identify yourself for your whole life as ‘someone’s twin’ and even your parents mix up your names sometimes,” Huizinga said. “It’s hard to learn to describe yourself as an individual and not as part of a unit.”

Lillo found it nice to have a friend. Her brothers had problems with bullying growing up, but she and her sister never did because there were two of them.

“I’d recommend it,” Lillo said. “Not that you can do anything about it at this stage in your life.”

Juggling club tosses around performances

Lauren Bird – Staff Writer

For junior and Juggling Club founder Eric Rowe, juggling is not just a fun hobby. It’s enjoyable for him, but he doesn’t only juggle the typical three or four juggling balls; he juggles performances too.

Recently, Dordt’s juggling club has had the opportunity to perform for several organizations in the community. They’ve visited Kidzone at First Reformed Church, Franken Manor in Sioux Center and Kid’s Connection in Orange City.

Rowe has been using various methods of advertising for the juggling club this year. For example, he says that the director of Kidzone approached him at the club’s booth during the Taste of Sioux Center at the beginning of the year. In addition, Rowe did a little advertising in his bio for the recent Dordt mainstage theatre show, Lazzi Moliere, which he says got the attention of the event coordinator for Franken Manor.

Rowe says that he hopes to have more

performances within the community in the future.

“Once we have more connections and contacts with the community, it will be easier to set up the performances,” Rowe said.

Rowe says that public performances are good for the club’s members. While the club is conducive to helping its members improve their abilities, the performances provide a unique and necessary opportunity for them to showcase their hard-earned skills as well.

“I enjoy the performance nature of juggling,” Rowe said. “It’s fun to share skills with others, and it’s important for club members to see how their skills can be impressive. Sometimes after hours of practice and countless drops, you can get discouraged with what you know juggling-wise. But when you juggle for an audience, it’s easier to see that your hard work is worth it.”

Even as juggling proves itself to be more than a fun distraction for Rowe and the other juggling club members this year, the club members continue to challenge themselves in different ways and with different audiences.



Yearly graduation ticket shortages

Janelle Cammenga – Staff Writer

Packed seats. Excitement in the air. Hundreds of cameras and phones held aloft, ready to catch the pivotal moment. A mass of identical black robes and caps.

These are just a few of the classic images that signify a Dordt graduation.

In just a few weeks, hundreds of Dordt students will don their black robes and caps, walk across the stage of the B.J. Haan Auditorium and accept their diplomas. Seats in the B.J. Haan will be packed with people, mostly friends and relatives of the graduates. These friends and family add up quickly, and the number of seats is not infinite, so this means there must be a limit on the number of people each graduate can invite to see them walk across the stage.

Since the graduating class of 2016 is bigger than years past, the sides of the stage will be extended to fit all the graduates. This is a good problem to have, but it also means seating is more limited than normal. Each graduate receives four tickets to give to whomever they want. For many students, this is not enough for all the people they want to invite.

The administration realizes the seating scramble this causes and has considered different plans. In the end, they decided that holding graduation in the B.J. Haan is still the best option. It has a large stage, good sight lines and acoustics, seating suitable for elderly guests, an organ, a grassy area to mingle after the ceremony and video equipment to broadcast the ceremony. All these aspects combined are impossible to find elsewhere in Sioux County.

“I believe we’ve thought through all the options and have come up with a way that works pretty well, given everything the college is trying to do to make the ceremony meaningful and comfortable for everyone.... We’ve been clear that we aren’t limiting guests, just guests



Contributed photo

Every year, the BJ Haan auditorium is packed with family and friends of Dordt graduates.

in the B.J. Haan,” said Registrar Jim Bos.

To accommodate larger numbers of guests than can fit in the auditorium, the administration has organized overflow seating. They have done this for many years. Most recently, they have used lecture halls like SB1606.

Overflow seating is comfortable and often includes refreshments. Other possibilities Bos considered for easing the seating process in the future included hosting a December ceremony or limiting guaranteed tickets to two and allocating the rest through an online ordering system. These are only ideas at this point, and nothing has been formally decided.

Senior Ben Vermeer joins the large group of students trying to find extra tickets

for graduation, but he agrees with the administration’s decision.

“I suppose a case could be made for a new location for better seating,” Vermeer said, “but as setting goes, the Beej is probably the most fitting.”

Seniors like Vermeer resort to creative solutions in order to find more tickets. Many use online groups like Dordt Deals in order to connect with people who might have unused tickets.

Dordt administration continues to consider new ways in which to make the graduation process more inclusive and meaningful for all involved.

Ideafest: a recital for academics (cont.)

Continued from page 1

other in their academic endeavours.

“It is called Ideafest,” says academic services and language studies assistant Sanneke Kok, who has enjoyed attending Ideafest for many years. “There is an atmosphere of celebration and joy.”

Kok believes that Ideafest plays an important role in emphasizing the validity of our vocation as students. “Often, being a student is seen as a means to an end,” says Kok. But, she noted, Ideafest reminds students that there is joy in being a student and, by engaging in academic research, we are fulfilling our vocation of being students.

Cindy Nederhoff, who also assisted with last year’s Ideafest, says that her favorite part of Ideafest is that, “our students have this great opportunity to share what they are passionate about with others on campus. It’s a good way for faculty, staff and students to see what those in other disciplines are doing.”

“If every student decides to show up to hear not only their friends’ presentations but also at least two other presentations that interest them, I’m a happy man!” says Fessler. “Plus, you get free pizza!”

Shakespeare in college: students present at Early British literature conference

Ashley Huizinga – Staff Writer

“Better three hours too soon than a minute too late” (William Shakespeare, The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act II, Scene II).

In terms of life as a college student, perhaps wiser words have never been spoken. But then again, in terms of life as a college student, perhaps another Shakespeare quote might be more suitable: “Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, creeps in this petty pace from day to day...” (Macbeth, Act V, Scene V).

Regardless of the usefulness of Shakespeare quotes for college students, a passable knowledge of the great playwright is a given for any student pursuing a career in the field of English.

Enter junior Jon Janssen, English: Literature major, and sophomore Erica Liddle, English/ Language Arts Secondary Education major.

Both students, as members of English professor Dr. Bob De Smith’s Shakespeare class, attended and participated in the Northern Plains Conference on Early British Literature last Saturday, April 16.

“The conference meets annually to discuss the scholarship and teaching of EBL,” Dr. De Smith said. “This year, I invited students from my Shakespeare class to present their portfolio work. [Jon and Erica] took up my offer.”

“Sometimes you just stumble onto things,” Janssen said.

The email invitation from De Smith came as somewhat of a surprise, but Janssen says, “I had had a good experience at the American Writers and Writing Programs Conference last year, so the idea of actually presenting at a conference was tantalizing.”

At the Conference, Janssen and Liddle took turns presenting their work.

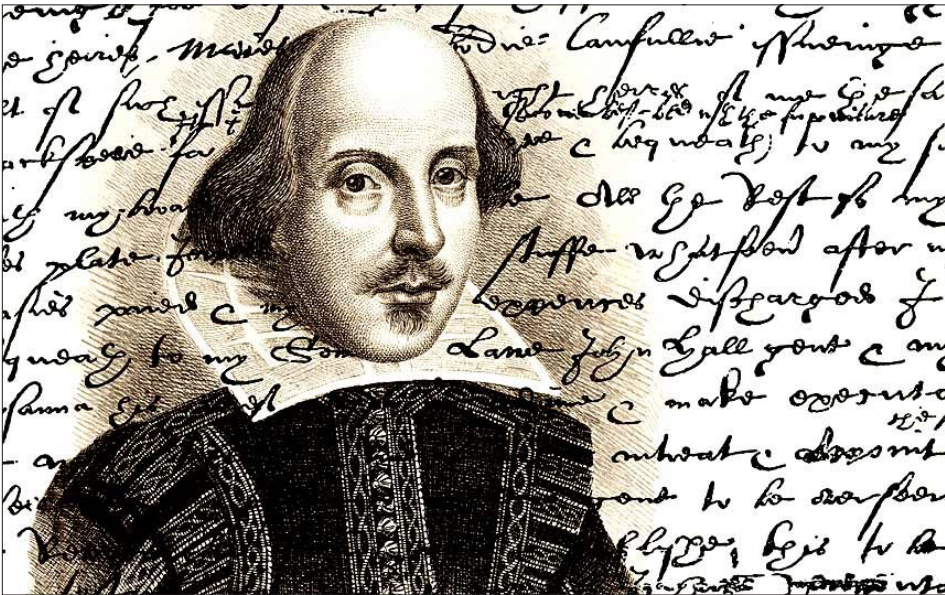
“Jon was especially interested in reading reviews; Erica discussed how they analyzed a set of playbills and also the design work they did for the play,” De Smith said.

Overall, responses to the Conference from the Dordt attendees interviewed were entirely positive.

“From my perspective, they did very, very well,” De Smith said. “Afterwards, my colleagues at the conference told me that Dordt was ‘doing it right’ and that these students were exceptionally poised and skilled... I was extremely proud of Jon and Erica’s presentation—their first public academic talks. They acquitted themselves, the English major and Dordt very well.”

“Disregarding the resume-boosting nature of the experience, it is always good to get an external perspective,” Janssen said. Stepping into “a broader community of academia than Dordt’s sometimes humble offerings” is certainly a worthwhile way to spend one’s time.

Student responses to De Smith’s Shakespeare class were also promising.



“Jon and Erica both suggested that the Shakespeare class was one of their best classroom experiences at Dordt,” De Smith said. “They cited not only the portfolio work, but the small class size and the stimulating class discussions.”

The non-traditional approach to student work (for each play studied, students choose two items of interest on which to discuss and expand

in-class) may not be for everyone, but Janssen was enthusiastic about the benefits of the class.

“My advice for anyone with an open mind and schedule for electives is simply to take the Shakespeare class,” he said. “It is one of the best classes I have taken at Dordt, and I had constant epiphanies throughout the semester.”

Dordt’s future: administration and students weigh in

Tori Mann, Emily Postma, Jessica Setiawan, and Jaden Vander Berg – Staff Writers

Dordt College’s current expansion phase includes the construction of new buildings as well as the creation of two new technical programs.

Dordt President Erik Hoekstra told The Diamond at a press conference on April 11 that the college plans to offer a pair of professional-technical programs starting in the fall of 2017. Both the Manufacturing Engineering Technology and Farm Operations and Management would be “hands-on” two-year programs where students can earn associate degrees. Additional tech programs could follow in future academic years.

“I probably would have chosen one of them as a freshman,” said Sarah Grubbs, a Dordt sophomore now studying Environmental Science.

However not all Dordt students like the idea of adding the professional-technical programs. Some think such two-year programs go against Dordt’s current purpose to provide four-year liberal arts degrees.

“It looks like Dordt’s just going to start producing workers,” said junior Sam Boman, a biblical studies major.

Hoekstra said for the first eight years of Dordt’s existence the school only offered associate’s degrees. He argued it is part of Dordt’s mission to provide programs when it can do it “distinctively and financially.”

“It’s our educational task that wherever biblical insight is required, Dordt is called to provide,” Hoekstra added.

Hoekstra said he believes “there is a hole in Christian education.” He said that hole is technical training combined with the worldview training Christian schools typically provide.

“We looked specifically at the geographical location [of Dordt College]. Manufacturing is huge in this region,” said President Hoekstra. “I’ve talked to employers in surrounding counties. They’ve expressed a need for employees with a worldview Dordt brings in addition to the skills they master.”

Hoekstra said Dordt also would incorporate into these new offerings the educational humanities foundation that comes from the Core program.

“I think we are called to do it, and we’ll see how it works out,” he said.

As far as Dordt’s physical growth, Hoekstra said the ten year, two-phase, \$25 million Science and Technology Center project has finally reached its closing phase.

This completion phase includes the construction of a skywalk connecting the science building to the Campus Center.

However, Dordt still needs to finish fundraising for this project. Part one cost \$12 million while part two will also cost \$12 million. Added to this is a \$1 million maintenance endowment, a fund for building maintenance such as cleaning and heating.

Hoekstra said twenty-two million dollars has been raised so far for the construction. To address this, Dordt will have twenty-five fundraising events across North America, emphasizing their “STEAM” majors (Science, Technology, Engineering, Agriculture, and Mathematics).

The college’s Board of Trustees also enacted a new policy for fundraising: Every time Dordt holds donor events for a new building on campus, 15 percent of the dollars raised will be put in an endowment, or “permanent trust,” to pay for any upkeep of the building. Hoekstra called this idea “wise.” He said this new policy will keep maintenance costs from coming out of students’ tuition.

President Hoekstra also said the Commons may receive future attention as part of the Campus Master Plan. Many students already know about the updates or “remodels” done, but that is not all in store for the eating area. Other future changes include moving the copy center.

Parking is also addressed in this master plan. The biggest change could be the removal of the lot between the Commons and East Hall. Hoekstra said that the space would be converted into another green area along with an expansion of the Commons. There is also talk of increasing parking lots for nursing majors, internships, and visitors.

In meeting with the Diamond news staff, Hoekstra also addressed the current status of Dordt’s case now before the U.S. Supreme Court. Dordt along with other religious institutions are challenging a federal requirement to provide certain types of birth control that are seen as against the religious views of many Christian colleges. This mandate to pay for abortion-inducing drugs in the college’s healthcare plan has its roots in the mammoth healthcare bill signed into law by President Obama in 2010.

Previously churches and other places of worship have been exempt from providing such medication. Dordt, along with Cornerstone University in Grand Rapids, Michigan have taken this matter to trial to win a similar exemption.

The colleges won an initial lower court ruling but it is now being brought to the Supreme Court.

When asked how the Feb. 13 death of conservative Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia could impact the High Court’s decision, Hoekstra commented, “however the vote comes out, we lost a vote with Scalia’s death.”

Athletics vs. academics — or is it?

Ashley Huizinga – Staff Writer

The sun sets early on the evening of April 11 as Diamond staff find their way to the Diamond newsroom for a press conference with Dordt President Eric Hoekstra. The interrogation begins as questions are asked and answers given, ranging from the soon-to-be-implemented tech changes to the end of Science Building renovations that have been ten years in the making.

But one question that interests this writer isn’t asked until near the end of the hour.

“What’s the purpose of a sports program at an academic institution?”

That may seem a dangerous question to ask, but the balance of athletics and academics is a question that’s crucial for colleges to be able to answer. Every year, countless tuition dollars from students around the country are poured into athletic programs and buildings like the Rec Center and All Seasons Center, scholarships for student-athletes, team uniforms and field upkeep, etc. If this is really the case, shouldn’t students and faculty be able to answer for the purpose of those dollars?

President Eric Hoekstra wasn’t deterred by the murmur of staff responses to the question. His answer was simple but clear, consisting of four parts: aesthetic, social, enrollment and alumni.

Aesthetically, he mentioned that, “there’s a beauty to be expressed in athletics.” There’s something beautiful about watching Christian students use the gifts that they’ve been given for a purpose greater than their own satisfaction, and as a college, “we glorify God in the aesthetic sphere of life, too.”

Sophomore Jessica “Tetta” Askeland agreed. “Especially for Dordt, it’s a way to show the gifts that God has given you,” she said.

Askeland also noted that the programs “pull a different type of community to the college and add a different culture, diversity and some sort of camaraderie,” which ties into the second point of Hoekstra’s answer—the social benefits to the college.

“Socially is mostly the team aspect,” said sophomore soccer player Sun Yong Lee. “Putting others before you first, learning to work with others, pushing others to get better and holding one another accountable.”

Also, as Askeland mentioned, the programs

tend to bring in a “different type of community,” challenging students and athletes alike to step out of their comfort zones and get to know others from different backgrounds and even different countries.

Student-athletes, said Lee, “are disciplined, team-oriented...they don’t give up easily until they achieve their goals, which could also reflect in their daily lives” as a positive influence on those around them.

Even so, the second aspect—socially— has always been more of a danger than the other three parts of the answer. We have to be careful that students aren’t “overdoing their sphere,” as Hoekstra said, and “we have to always be on the watch for student athletes blending well [with the whole campus community].”

Third, there’s little doubt that part of a sports program at an institution of higher learning is the “enrollment” aspect.

“We use [the programs] as an admissions tool, often offering scholarships to prospective student athletes in place of a work study job,” Hoekstra said.

Finally, sports programs serve as a way of “continuing the robust connection with the alumni” for which Dordt strives. Many alumni who were once college athletes continue to show up for games and meets, strengthening the student-alumni bonds at Dordt.

Of course, Hoekstra notes, there are certainly dangers to having sports programs at colleges and universities. As primarily academic institutions, “[colleges] have to make sure that academics doesn’t become subordinate to athletics.”

And of course, this writer wasn’t able to approach every student or professor on campus to ask for an opinion. But in general, the interviewed students and faculty alike appear to believe that the benefits outweigh the risks.

Maybe part of it’s a cultural thing?

“Yes, the form can be cultural, but every school has some kind of sports within it, whether a PE class or a group of clubs,” said sophomore Ellen Ingrid Dengah.

In the sports-crazed society of America today, it’s important for every student to be aware that questions like this exist. These questions can and should be asked, and we should all be able to answer sincerely to them when they are.

Letter from the editor

Jonathan Janssen – Staff Writer

Two friends sit in the Eckardt Lounge, not speaking. One slouches, flipping through Facebook feeds on his phone; the other ruffles the pages of The Diamond, straightening the paper so he can turn the page. He turns to his friend, showing him an article detailing the history of snow days at Dordt. A minute into their conversation, several other students show up: a study group has assembled.

As I sat across from this scene, what came to mind was not visions of paparazzo chasing down their prey like starving coyotes. Nor did I envision pajama-wearing Internet users churning out dozens of cute kitten picture compilations or GIF-filled articles promising “18 Simple and Beautiful Ocean-Inspired Tattoos.” These things have their place, no doubt.

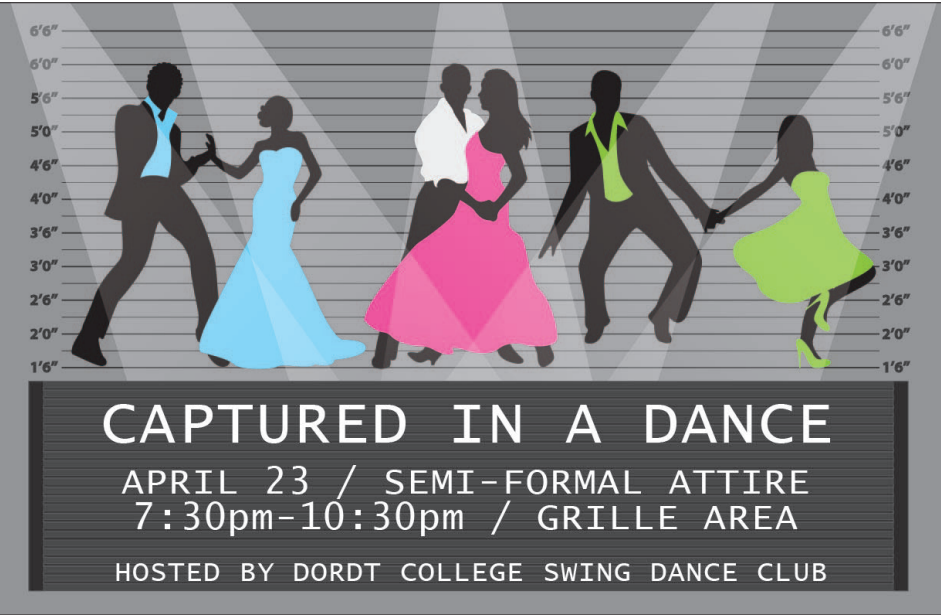
What I saw was the student who emailed different administrators and faculty members, who sat down with them to try to understand the rules concerning snow days. I saw him asking his friends and peers – perhaps people to whom he had never said a word before – about their variety of opinions on snowfall habits at Dordt.

I saw him bent over his keyboard, piecing together sentences of dialogue and exposition. I saw his face light up when he entered the library to behold his work published in the newest issue of The Diamond.

What I saw was a journalist.

It has been a delight to see The Diamond transform over my three years at Dordt. It has been overhauled aesthetically, thanks to Wade Vollink for the updated masthead, and especially thanks to Vanessa Blankespoor for her continual outstanding design work; stylistically, due to Prof. Pitts’ wisdom and guidance; and substance-wise, due to a wonderful, hardworking staff. We have been continually exploring ways to move ever-upward and will be implementing several new ideas next fall in the attempt to deliver quality news reporting.

As those students concluded their study group and continued into their other engagements, I noticed that The Diamond was gone, escaping in some student’s backpack. It may have ended up in the trash. It may have been used as fire-kindling. Ultimately, it doesn’t matter. What matters is the moment between two friends who, waiting for their study group, decided to read the paper.



The Netflix Corner: An Idiot Abroad

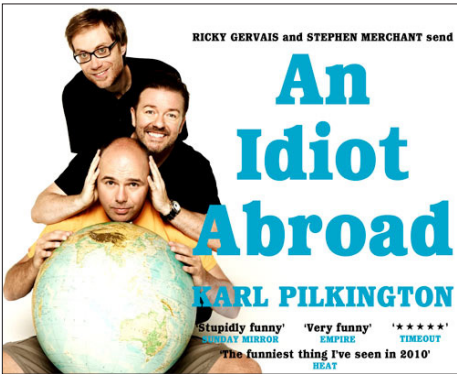
Ellen Ingrid Dengah – Staff Writer

I’m going to review a Netflix TV Show instead of a new upcoming movie (*cough* The Jungle Book) because my reimbursement never come back for the past movies I reviewed. After hours of browsing Netflix’s extensive library of TV shows, I finally decided to watch An Idiot Abroad (2010).

Ricky Dene Gervais and Stephen Merchant are the celebrity producers of this British documentary travel TV show. The show is about an “idiot”, Karl Pilkington, who is paid to see the Seven Wonders of the World. He is less excited about this dream job than I am less excited about my lousy summer job. An Idiot Abroad is about Pilkington whining and throwing ignorant and sharp—most of the time, hilariously honest—comments about the countries and tourist traps he is forced to visit.

Karl Pilkington is a close-minded British guy with a negative attitude towards the world—an attitude that is probably caused by the horrible London weather. He does not want to leave Great Britain because he thinks no place is better than the place you were born and grew up in. No, really, seeing the literal Wonders of the World does not impress him at all. He thinks anything different than his normal way of life equals being wrong.

His skeptical view, unfriendliness and lack of spontaneity are annoying but somehow hilarious and honest. For example in the episode where he goes to China, Pilkington hates the Great Wall and calls it a fraud. That is a move no other travel documentary host will ever make. Other travel hosts, who are more informed and



full of life, will see the grand history behind the Great Wall. Pilkington only sees the Great Wall as unexciting, certainly not worth flying 20+ hours for.

He carries some truth that nobody else will or wants to talk about. Nobody wants to talk about the disappointment of travelling, but Pilkington will because he has no sense of travelling euphoria.

An Idiot Abroad is for people who like practical jokes and seeing Pilkington suffer, freak out and get annoyed while travelling. Producer Ricky Dene Gervais himself says that this TV show is the most expensive practical joke he has ever done. Even though the jokes get old after a couple of episodes, An Idiot Abroad is still fun to watch. It will make you see the world in a more realistic way—if you have a romanticized idea about travelling—and make you want to travel more, unless you are like Pilkington and do not want to know about the world. 3.5/5

Final thoughts of a graduate

Jeremy Vreeken – Staff Writer

I never imagined that I would graduate from Dordt College. But here we are. If you would have asked me in high school if I was going to Dordt, I would have laughed at you. The joke is on me, I suppose.

I don’t have an easy answer as to why I came to Dordt in 2012, and throughout my first two years here I seriously considered transferring out at the end of each semester. Since my freshman year, I have spent much of my time frustrated, confused, and doubtful. Whether it was the cost, the value, the religion, the content and major of my education or uncertainty of post-college life, very little has been firm during my time at Dordt.

This begs the question of why I am still here. I may have thought about transferring each semester, but I never did. Something kept me coming back, something made me get in the car each fall and make the 18 hour drive down here, so what was it?

It may sound clichéd or like a PR move, but it was relationships that brought me back. In my first year or two I was fortunate enough to find faculty who were willing to mentor an angry and confused freshman, affirm my questions and direct my interests. They were willing to take the time to listen and give me much needed advice. I had made some key friends that inspired me to think differently and to look outside of my perceptions of faith, ideas, and education.

College has given me more questions than answers when it comes to faith, learning, and life in general, but I think that might be the point of an education – especially one that seeks to make students live in faith and engage with the world better. At this point, it seems more important to be able to ask big and incisive questions than to find a few answers to live by. I came back to Dordt because I found people here who were interested in helping me find the important questions to ask.

The value of an education does not come

from whether or not you get a job at the end. Hundreds of thousands of people will graduate with bachelor’s degrees this spring, and all of us will be looking and applying for the same jobs. So, if we are all competing against our equally or better qualified peers, what will set us apart, or make our education valuable?

The true test of your degree and your education should not be what it does for your career path or even your bottom line; the true test should be how well it equips you to ask questions, and how ready it makes you to wrestle and live with uncertainty and change. If a degree is more concerned with information than formation, with competition rather than community, and if it focuses on definitions rather than discernment—no matter the area of study—then it is useless in a world where there will always be someone more informed, more highly skilled, and better connected.

Graduates, no matter how the job hunt goes, challenge yourself to gauge the quality of your education based on something other than the starting salary it gets you. Ask instead if your degree has made you kinder, more interesting, or more helpful; ask if it has shifted your perspectives or entrenched them; ask yourself if you have been truly challenged and pushed to improve while at Dordt. Ask if your time here has made you humble and graceful enough to accept and do well a job that is not exactly what you want or even in your field. If we are not more or less qualified than our peers, then let’s be less entitled, and more adaptable.

If you are not graduating, take the time you have left here to challenge yourself. Don’t let classes be easy, engage things seriously and ask as many questions as you can. Get to know professors, attend a church you disagree with, and use your education as a chance to discover and to form who you are and what you believe. Instead of focusing your education on what you want to do for the rest of your life, focus your degree on who you want to be for the rest of your life.

Immigration stipulation

Caeden Tinklenberg – Staff Writer

There are many issues that I feel confident defending my position on. Immigration is not one of those issues. Nonetheless, it is a very important issue that I think is most in need of honest, humble discussion. There’s no better time than the present to start talking openly about any concern, but immigration is particularly pressing due to both Obama’s 2014 executive actions (designed to shelter some 4 million illegals from deportation) that are currently being considered by the supreme court and the competing GOP presidential candidates’ hardline approaches to curbing illegal immigration. Enough is being said about the SCOTUS hearings, and even more about the candidates; this article won’t be about either.

Instead, let’s try to think independently about the issue for once. Let’s stop regurgitating the same arguments that are put forth by each side of the fight. I was spurred to write this column in response to an event held here on campus that was hosted jointly by the College Republicans and the social work department. World Renew and the CRC Office of Social Justice gave a clinic to a group of community members and Dordt students concerning the history of U.S. immigration policy and the difficulties of immigrating currently. I left with more questions than answers that night.

Is immigration a right? As a conservative, I view rights as inherent traits belonging to all peoples from birth (opposed to granted by another person or government), meant to be protected by the government from violation by any other being or power. I view the rights of an immigrant as equal to my own. If I have the right to live here, why doesn’t he or anyone else for that matter also have that right?

How has the U.S. approached immigration in the past and why is our system set up the way it is today? The U.S. has a very discombobulated history that I couldn’t possibly summarize here. I encourage you to check it out and see how popular opinion (fears, obligations) drove certain policies during the development of this great nation.

What is the issue with our current immigration policies? Very few people can come here legally; the allowances are very small and preference is given to very specific groups primarily based on affluence and projected contribution to society. Depending on how we view the right to immigrate to the U.S. our immigration policy

is either flawed and cumbersome or outright unjust.

What is so bad about illegal immigrants? Really? According to some people illegals are just here to live off the system. Others claim that they’re stealing jobs. Despite every statistic I’ve ever seen, illegals are believed by many to commit more crimes than naturalized citizens.

Are immigration laws so sovereign that those who break it are thrown out as unfit for even participating in society? It would seem so for some people who insist that amnesty should never, ever be an option for anyone who has ever been on U.S. soil illegally. I guess I just don’t understand who was harmed by such a crime as that and why the punishment must be so severe.

Should we be trying to stop illegal immigrants? Our current system is based on a “most wanted” list where priority for deportation is given to the criminals, repeat offenders, etc. and the low profile illegals are mostly unaffected unless their name somehow gets on that list.

Should we go further and attempt to deport all undocumented persons in the country? If we as a nation have decided that immigration is not a right, that it is not something that we should be obligated to do, that it is not beneficial to the economy or any other tangible aspect of society and must be stopped at all cost; should those living here already be subject to that new premise?

How would we go about deporting 11 million undocumented immigrants? Some people think there should be a train running to Mexico piled high with illegals. It worked in 1939 Germany. Realistically, the cost for process, housing, and transporting all these people would be somewhere between \$400b and \$600b according to the American Action Forum. And that’s just the cost to the federal government, not to mention local economies, business, and non-monetary costs of such an undertaking. Are we willing, even able, to follow through with such a costly plan? It’s certainly not conservative or economically beneficial in any way.

I don’t have the answers, just a lot of questions. I don’t think that the problem can be fixed, or even addressed, unless we all understand why the system works the way it does, what the actual state of immigration as a whole, both legal and illegal, it’s impact—recognized not just assumed—and finally, what actual, realistic, but nonetheless idealistic, solutions to the problem would look like.

ARTs: not the advanced reformed thought kind

Lauren Bird – Staff Writer

I don’t know about you, but I was heavily involved in the arts in high school. Band, choir, theatre, yearbook, newspaper, art class, speech competition—you name it. And it was doable! But obviously, these activities were not held to as high a standard as collegiate art programs are. For example, just take a look at a few of my thoughts that were actually published in my high school newspaper, for which I wrote on a regular basis.

On staying warm during the winter: “If all these tips fail you, think of something new. This feeling is only temporary anyway. Try putting your hands in your shirt. If that is uncomfortable, put your hands in someone else’s shirt. That may make them uncomfortable, but at least you’ll be warm.”

On dressing appropriately: “Men, ladies do not need to know that your boxers are decorated with little dancing dinosaurs.”

Needless to say, my understanding of journalism changed vastly once I entered college (and yes, I do consider journalism to lean a little more towards the arts side of college academics). I learned what it meant to be fully

involved in the arts and to be successful in artful endeavors. And honestly, I’ve learned a lot from my time as a part of college art programs.

I think that the biggest thing I’ve learned from being in theatre and music is to be aware of the beauty that surrounds us. Call me cliché or sappy. From what I’ve gathered from other majors, it seems like it can be easy to get caught up in writing papers in front of a computer screen or solving math problems. And don’t get me wrong; there can certainly be beauty in those things.

But the arts can be a great vehicle for clearing your mind of the clutter in your brain that can be caused by words or numbers. It’s a good way to get in touch with your body, your voice, the earth, other people and your deepest thoughts.

I get that college is a time to focus more on what you love, and you may not love theatre, art or music. You may see the arts as a waste of time. That’s fine. The world needs doctors, engineers and farmers. But I hope that you’ll consider finding some art form that could at least be a hobby or serve as a study break here or there. I think you’ll find the benefits are rewarding.

New football culture culminates in spring finale

Christian Zylstra – Staff Writer

Players conglomerate on the southern end of the field. Half of the football team is proudly wearing white; the other half has delightedly donned black. Suddenly, the whistle blows.

Shouts and yells erupt as the Defender Drill gets underway. This moment is where pride is gained; these few minutes are where respect is earned.

One player in a white jersey gets down into his stance. He’s ready for the black-jersey challenger, crouched one foot away. They’re teammates for the season, but for the next five seconds, these two players couldn’t be farther from it.

The whistle blows again. Each player bursts forward, lunging and colliding with the other. The impact sends sound waves towards the handful of fans in the stands.

Damn, THIS is football.

Our two challengers continue their duel. The player in white gets lower in his stance, constantly churning his legs. His motor continues to rev until the moment he has the upper hand. Driving his head into his challenger’s thighs, the white-jersey player lurches forward and removes the challenger from the circle.

The white team bursts into a frenzy, swarming and leaping onto the shoulders of their victor. THIS is football.

There’s been a bit of a culture switch in the Dordt College football program over the past several months, beginning with the hiring of Head Coach Joel Penner.

Building on the base that previous staffs had left, Dordt continues to make strides towards becoming an “industry-standard” program, starting with the coaching staff now in place.

“One of the number-one priorities for me was to get the staff together,” Penner said. “We had

to get on the same page; none of us had ever worked together.”

Penner started as the head football coach of the Dordt College Defenders on New Year’s Day. From that moment on, he and the retained coaches got to work on filling the empty and necessary pieces of the puzzle of Dordt football.

“I can’t say enough about how smooth and how great this transition is going with the staff,” Penner said. “I am blessed with such coaches that I could literally take the week off, and I think things would get done just the way they’re supposed to.”

Aaron Mingo, offensive coordinator, and Lynn Nutt, defensive coordinator, have made vast improvements within this Defender football program. Despite their short and limited time thus far on campus, their impact on helping establish a new football culture at Dordt isn’t going unnoticed.

“Both of them bring some unique strengths and enthusiasm,” said Athletic Director Glenn Bouma. “I think they have a very neat mix of abilities and talents within the three, but they’re all very good promoters in their own effective ways.”

Such enthusiasm and promotion is evident in a multitude of ways, perhaps most notably with the recruiting job that the new coaching staff has done.

“Recruiting has gone pretty well for us,” Mingo said. “We’re a little behind the eight-ball, a little bit behind with the recruiting class [because of] getting here in January, but we’ve signed over 40 guys now in the class, and we’re very excited about the guys we’re bringing in.”

Football is a year-round job for coaches, and recruiting is a big determinant in whether a program can and will be successful. With the coaching staff unformulated until the past month, the recruiting job that Mingo and the rest of the staff has conducted is remarkable,

including signing recruits ranging from California to Florida.

“[It takes] Great staff and hard work,” Penner said. “Mingo is a great recruiting coordinator. He knows how to do it; he knows how to get it done. Obviously it’s not just one man doing it—it’s all of us—but he’s pointed us in the right direction.”

Not only are there dozens of recruits coming in for the 2016 season, but there is also a large portion of players returning from last season’s team as well.

Dordt football has its highest retention rate from fall to spring in program history. With more upperclassmen returning than ever before, Dordt has been easily set up for its largest roster in program existence; there could be up to 120 players on the sidelines next fall.

“In football, it is so important to get a year or two of maturity in the weight room, in strength training, and in coaching of the proper

techniques,” Bouma said. “It is going be an advantage to have the experience of last year back out on the field.”

The recruiting and development of previous staff members is also crucial to any success the Defenders have this year or moving forward.

“These guys are like sponges,” Penner said. “They want to be challenged; they want to be great. We’re not starting a program from scratch. We are standing on the shoulders of hard-fought territory. The baton has been passed, and we’re the beneficiaries of a great group of men.”

The drive for an industry-standard program and industry-standard culture continues for the Defenders, and its process can be seen in the way that practices are facilitated.

The Dordt team conducted a night practice under the lights on April 12, and early morning practices persist throughout the week—even

Continued on page 8



Good weather finally prevails at Sioux City Relays

Alli Young – Staff Writer

As a state notorious for unpredictable spring weather, Iowa has proved itself once again to be a tricky place for outdoor track & field.

The team’s season opener, scheduled for Saturday, April 2, was moved to Sunday due to cold weather. Under the schedule change, Dordt chose not to participate because of school policy regarding Sunday activities. The following weekend, April 9, Dordt hosted a home track meet in 30-40 mph wind gusts and chilly temperatures.

After this rocky start to the outdoor track season, Dordt track & field athletes finally had a chance to shine at the 52nd annual Sioux City Relays on April 15 and 16. In spite of warm temperatures and wind, there were many high quality performances. Joscelyn Wind, Justine Van Zee, Sam Wensink and Keith Heidema each stood out with individual performances in multiple events.

Freshman Joscelyn Wind is having an incredible track & field debut. She competed in six events at the Sioux City Relays. On Friday, she set personal best marks in the Triple Jump (34-3 1/2), High Jump (5-3 3/4) and 200m (26.29 seconds). On Saturday, she ran legs in the 4x100, 4x200, and 4x400m relays, which finished fifth, second and second, respectively. Junior Mycah Hulst led Wind to place two-three in the high jump.

Justine Van Zee placed second in a competitive open 800-meter run with a time of 2 minutes, 16.90 seconds. Van Zee also led the Defenders in the 1500-meter run, finishing second in 4 minutes, 44.54 seconds.

“Justine has continued to improve as the outdoor season has progressed, said Dordt coach Nate Wolf. “Her performances this week were a capstone on a great week of practice, and



Contributed photo

Junior Justine Van Zee surges ahead to overtake her competition at the Sioux City Relays..

I really look forward to seeing what the rest of the season holds for her.”

Van Zee was joined by an impressive group of mid-distance teammates in both races. In the 800, Nicole Slater, Kayla Byl and Kelsey Lewis finished close behind her in third, sixth and eighth, respectively. Slater and Lewis also earned top-10 honors in the 1500, snagging fifth and eighth place in the end.

Wensink, another standout junior, ran a fantastic open 800 on Friday night, finishing second to an unattached runner from SDSU. His time of 1 minute, 52.98 seconds is his fastest outdoor 800-meter run and places him first in the GPAC and 10th in the nation.

“This race was a continuation of a great year for Sam that goes back to cross country,” Wolf

Continued on page 8

Baseball and softball still have opportunity for playoffs

Aaron Ladzinski – Staff Writer

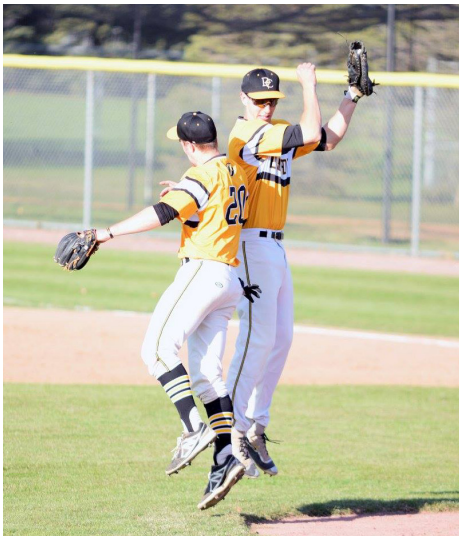
Both the softball and baseball teams had good starts to the season. Though there are only two weeks remaining until the conference playoffs, both teams still have multiple opportunities to make the playoffs. As of April 18, Dordt softball sits in fourth in the conference standings, while baseball sits in ninth. Defender baseball is trying to make the GPAC playoffs for the first time.

Dordt baseball is 16-19 overall and 4-8 in GPAC play. Their biggest wins include Doane, who was one of the preseason favorites to win the GPAC, and Midland. The top hitters on the team are juniors Jake Thayer and Cameron Gingrich. Thayer is batting .420 with 30 RBIs, and Gingrich is batting .350 with 12 RBIs. Both players have on home run on the season.

Pitching is another key facet for the Defender baseball team. The top pitchers thus far, statistically speaking, are junior Connor Hopkins and sophomore Brandon Fokkema. Hopkins has an ERA of 3.56 and 54 strikeouts; Fokkema has a 4.28 ERA in 27 1/3 innings pitched.

“We have played well throughout the year,” said Dordt coach Jeff Schouten. “We’ve worked through some injuries. We have good team chemistry and leadership by upperclassmen. We need consistent play through the remainder of regular season. Our motto this year is Personal Best for Team Success, based on Proverbs 27:17.”

The softball team is in a good place to make the GPAC playoffs with a record of 19-15 overall and 8-6 in the GPAC. Their biggest wins were on the road at Doane and at home against Northwestern. Dordt softball swept Northwestern in a doubleheader and helped knock the Red Raiders further away from the



Contributed photo

Dordt baseball players celebrate a successful play.

playoffs.

The Defenders’ best hitters are junior Samantha Johnson and senior Kassidy Van Voorst. Johnson is batting .333 and leads the team in RBIs with 18. Van Voorst owns a .330 batting average with 3 triples, 2 home runs and 37 stolen bases. Although those two lead the team in hitting, the team average is outstanding. The Defenders have are hitting .272 as a team.

Dordt’s pitching has been lethal as well. The two top pitchers are freshmen Tianna Top and CJ Van Der Zwaag. Top’s ERA is 2.16 and Van Der Zwaag’s is 2.58. These two are hoping to help the Defenders to a deep playoff run.

The two teams will continue their season into finals week if they make it into the conference playoffs.

**All statistics and records accurate as of April 18.*

1 festival, 9 choirs, 575 voices

Ashley Huizinga – Staff Writer

It’s the afternoon of Friday, April 15. You wake up late and prepare for your earliest and only class—if you’re one of those people with a schedule to be envied—being careful not to bother your roommate any more than usual. After a quick shower and little or no lunch, you walk out underneath the sunshine and blue skies surrounding the college and see—high schoolers.

High schoolers everywhere. The surprising thing is a noticeably small percentage of them showcase the characteristic black folder, parental figure and confused look, which typically accompany prospective students on visit day. Have aliens disguised as high schoolers finally invaded? Are you the only normal one on a campus full of students who have been transported to the past? What is the source of this madness?

You realize the majority of the crowd is arranged in various positions around the B. J. Haan Auditorium, and then you remember: It’s High School Choral Festival weekend.

Beginning last week Thursday, high school students flooded the halls and green space of Dordt’s campus for the biennial High School Choral Festival, which lasted from April 14 to 16, with a mass performance of all the choirs in the De Witt Gymnasium on the evening of April 15.

From the 14-student group representing Loveland Protestant Reformed Christian

in Colorado to the 115 voices hailing from Covenant Christian High School in Grand Rapids, MI, there were a total of nine choirs attending the festival, holding individual performances for clinical assessment and participating in the mass concert. The combined choir of 575 voices, high school students and college students alike, performed a variety of pieces, from a traditional gospel version of “Khumbaya” to a rousing rendition of “Battle Hymn of the Republic.” Eyewitness accounts indicate the shedding of a tear or two at the majesty of the “Battle Hymn” during the audience participation portion of the song, but such statements have yet to be proven.

Benjamin Kornelis, director of Choral Music Ensembles and Choral Music Education at Dordt, stated that the Festival has been a piece of Dordt’s history since “before I got here,” which accounts for over 22 years. Many current Dordt students have been involved in the Festival before, either as members of the collegiate choirs or as high schoolers themselves.

Kornelis joined the elite group of directors who participated in the Festival when he led all four of Dordt’s choirs in songs for the solo performances, followed by directing each of the five massed choir pieces.

“The quality of the repertoire keeps getting better, and the choirs’ seemed to be very well-prepared for the massed choir numbers [this year], which was nice,” Kornelis said.

Although not every choir that has made an appearance before was able to attend this



Contributed photo

9 choirs fill the DeWitt Gymnasium with melodies at the High School Choir Festival.

year, Kornelis was confident of the Festival’s overwhelming success.

“The Loveland school had never been here before, and it had been several years since Central Minnesota has been able to come, so the overall number of schools is about the same as usual (higher than two years ago, actually),” Kornelis said. “I don’t think that the massed choir was the biggest it has ever been, but it was one of the best sounding – hard to know if that’s because the repertoire was a little bit easier than some years or because the choirs were better-prepared.”

With overwhelmingly positive experiences, and with the benefits from the Festival for both the high school choirs and the campus community, it’s not hard to make the assertion that this biennial event is one that will keep coming back for years and perhaps generations to come. Perhaps the only people entitled to a complaint or two about this event are those chosen few employed by the Commons under work study, who had to feed every one of those high schoolers in the limited amount of time between mass rehearsal and mass concert. Bon appetit, future Defenders.

Come see a stupid play: Dordt theatre presents Fools

Janelle Cammenga – Staff Writer

Senior Taylor Leach drags a cart, which holds a papier-mâché cow onto stage. Her task is made more difficult by the fact the cow is balanced upside-down, and the cart has square wheels. Junior Nathan Ryder blows on a ram’s horn that sounds like some animal’s dying screech. All in all, just another day on the set of Fools, Dordt’s student-directed Spring 2016 show.

The play centers on a Russian village, which has been cursed with stupidity for the last 200 years. The actors implement this stupidity in a variety of ways, including mannerisms and facial expressions. The costume, scene and prop designers have also played around with the stupidity aspect, which explains the cart with square wheels.

“It’s been such a joy to see how the actors and designers have been playing around with their roles in this show,” said senior Lauren Bird, the student director of Fools. “The show is about a bunch of stupid people, so there’s a lot of room for silliness and playfulness.”

Bird is directing the production for her senior capstone project. When deciding which play to direct, she was inspired to choose a comedy.

“Laughter is very important to me,” she said, “and I feel very called to bring people joy by making them laugh. Fools is such a quirky show, and I’m told it fits my personality well.”

The production has involved people from many different majors, not just those directly tied with theatre. For example, freshman Emily Currey, a nursing major, plays one of the main roles in Fools.

“Since my major is based heavily in the sciences, I don’t get to see many people in the arts,” Currey said. “This play has been a great opportunity to meet and work alongside an amazing cast and crew. Every day, they surprise me more and more with what they can do, and I love it!”



Contributed photo

“Fools” cast member cluster around each other while rehearsing lines.

Cast and crew cite personal growth related to the play, both in their knowledge of theatre and in their relationship to each other. Bird, too, has grown through the experience of directing.

“I have learned so much about leadership during this process,” she said. “In a directing position, so many people are relying on your thoughts and ideas to guide the show. I had a lot of questions thrown at me and I had to make some tough decisions, but it was a really great challenge.”

Bird hopes the students will come and enjoy the play along with the cast and crew.

“If you’re looking for a good laugh, you should come to Fools!” Bird said. “This show provides a unique opportunity for the audience to get up-close-and-personal with the cast.”

Performances of Fools are Thursday, April 21, at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, April 23, at 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$1 for Dordt students and can be purchased online.

Lights, camera, dumpster: student documentaries

Megan Kaiser – Staff Writer

At this point, editing is necessary and sleep is secondary. Junior and senior digital media students are feeling the crunch of time as Ideafest and the end of the semester approaches. Their big project has been trying to create a 10- minute documentary of their choice with a partner in one semester.

As easy as this may sound, imagine scrubbing through five hours of footage and trying to pick out what parts are best. That is only one of the many things that digital media students have to do to make a “grade A” documentary.

Junior Jason Miller and senior Andrew Cameron are showing some love to the Dordt football players with their documentary.

“We’re showing how college football players have to deal with academics and playing a sport that takes about 20 hours of your life,” Cameron said.

Cameron and Miller’s dedication reaches past just filming some afternoon practices.

“Waking up a couple of days at 5 a.m. wasn’t my cup of tea,” Cameron said.

“I thought it would be cool to do a time lapse on the clock tower at 5:30 in the morning. It was efficient in our documentary, but waking up at 5, getting the camera equipment, setting up the camera equipment outside in the month of February, and I was like, ‘Why am I here, again?’”

Seniors Lance Wunderink and James Newhouse have been trying to create a documentary on the tough subject of political correctness and its effects on academia.

“What I hope people take away from our documentary is awareness of how political correctness can affect us in a negative way and hinder proper communication/discussion,” Wunderink said.

On a less serious side, there’s also a film with people jumping into dumpsters.

“‘Get Trashed’ is about how picking up the hobby of dumpster diving can help save money and feed you for quite some time,” said senior Domenic Vermeulen. “It also informs the audience that there are myths when it comes to food going bad.”

“I want people to take away the idea that there are ways to reduce the amount of waste that is produced in the United States,” Vermeulen said. “They don’t have to necessarily start dumpster diving, but we want to remind them that there is a problem with how wasteful our country is.”

Junior Kyle Fosse and sophomore Ellen Ingrid Dengah have also covered some tough material.

“We hope our film ‘Even As I Am’ makes people want to question their faith and look further into their humanness and Christianity,” Fosse said. “It’s great to hear people talk about their lives and share their stories. You can gain so much just by listening to people, and making this documentary has really opened my eyes to understanding how powerful personal struggles can be.”

Senior Jessica Lillo and junior Lucas Simonson are creating a documentary about not being Reformed at a Reformed college.

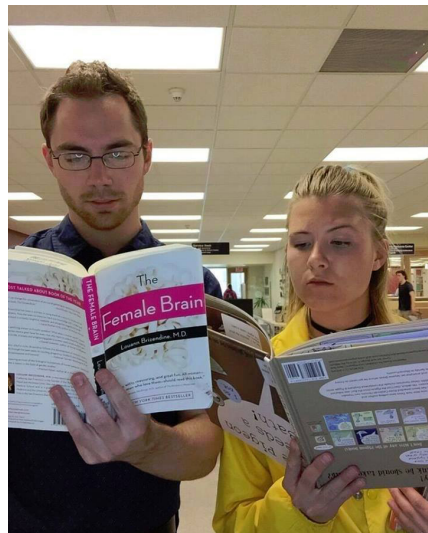
“What we want people to take away from our film is that people are aware of differences in people’s denominations, and that they are willing to be in open and helpful discussion with others,” Lillo said. “We hope it will spark some questions and keep the discussion going.”

The creative juices have been flowing all semester in the digital media lab, so don’t be afraid to take a peek at the Ideafest schedule and check out the different documentaries. They will all be shown in room 319 in the Campus Center on April 21.

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National Library Week 2016



New football culture culminates in spring finale (cont.)

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on Saturdays. The renewed emphasis and enthusiasm placed on these “rigors of training” will better prepare Dordt for Saturdays in the fall.

Other athletic teams and departments on Dordt’s campus have also been invited to interact with this new football culture and coaching staff. At the night practice on April 12, the engineering department enjoyed a kicking competition with the football team; the agriculture department went to the team’s practice and threw some footballs around on April 7; and the men’s volleyball team enjoyed a dunk competition with the football team at practice on April 5.

These are a few of the many opportunities at which the new coaching staff has opened up practices and engaged with other communities at Dordt.

Social media is another piece of the culture that keeps those on the outside involved. Tweets, pictures and videos are shared almost daily from the football program’s Twitter account (@DordtFB) to give fans and families an inside look at which drills are being conducted or which players performed well.

Twitter has even given fans some insight into Nutt’s “popsicle reward system” for the defensive members of the team. Any time a defensive player registers an interception, fumble or sack, they receive a refreshing popsicle after practice. As of April 14, Gerrit Wybenga leads in the Popsicle standings.

All of this renewed excitement, enthusiasm and change in culture will be evident on Saturday, April 30. Starting at 6p.m., Dordt football is hosting its first annual Spring Finale. Apart from what fans can see on the field—1-on-1 pass rush drills, 7-on-7, drill work, competitions and up-tempo play—a tailgate will be taking place in the parking lot adjacent to the football field.

“I just want to expose people to our players, because I think they’re a joy to be around,” Penner said.

“We’re creating a culture of enthusiasm and excitement around the program,” Mingo said. “We want to take advantage of any chance we get to draw people in and draw recruits in.”

If you’re looking for football, food and fellowship, stop by the football field on April 30. Witness the brand of enriched enthusiasm that the team brings, and experience the culture of Defender football.

Good weather finally prevails at Sioux City Relays (cont.)

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said. “With his focus and quality practices, I think he will continue to race well throughout the outdoor season.”

Keith Heidema ran two solid hurdle races, setting personal bests for himself in both the preliminaries and the finals of the men’s 110-meter high hurdles. Heidema placed fifth overall in a competitive field. His time of 15.08 seconds is currently fourth best in the conference.

Veteran leader Kayla Byl rounded out her four-year career at the Sioux City Relays with a

fourth-place finish in 3000-meter steeplechase and sixth-place finish in the 800-meter run.

Sophomore Audrey Brooks placed seventh in her debut steeplechase. The steeplechase is a unique race that requires runners to clear a hurdle barrier 28 times and a sloped water pit seven times over the course of the race, all totaling 200 meters shy of two miles. To make things more interesting, Morningside College, the meet host, stocks goldfish in the water pit.

The Defenders are preparing to compete again in a two-day meet at Northwestern College on April 22 and 23.

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