

February 24, 2016
Issue 9



THE DIAMOND

Global Agriculture Summit last call to register

Lydia Marcus – Staff Writer

Spring break is within reach, but before you head out, check out the Global Agriculture Summit. The conference begins March 3 and wraps up on March 4, but those interested can choose to attend either one or both days. At the conference, participants have the opportunity to attend workshops, exhibits, and keynote addresses with scores of agriculturists, community developers, business people, and NGOs from all over the world.

Through the Summit, Christians engaged in agriculture will have the opportunity to celebrate successes, address challenges, and prepare to take action through agriculture to alleviate hunger and poverty in the world.

Rev. David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World since 1991, will deliver the opening keynote address, “The Call to Flourish.” As president of Bread for the World, Beckmann

has led large-scale and successful campaigns to strengthen U.S. political commitment to overcome hunger and poverty at home and abroad. Beckmann, who won the World Food Prize in 2010, also helped found the Alliance to End Hunger, which engages a variety of U.S. corporations, religious institutions, and universities to increase political motivation to end hunger.

“The World Bank estimates that the number of people in extreme poverty has dropped from 2 billion people in 1990 to 1 billion people today,” said Beckmann in an interview for the N’West Iowa Review. “In a fundamental sense, this is an example of our loving God moving in our world. I think of it as a great exodus from hunger.”

Attendees will also have the opportunity to hear from Haron Wachira, owner of Akili Holdings Ltd. in Nairobi, Kenya. Wachira will share his experiences with transforming agriculture for



small-scale dairy and crop farmers in Kenya by helping small-scale farmers partner with the private sector. In this model, both parties invest in each other’s success, and this mutually beneficial partnership helps farmers earn more while improving the capacity and revenue of the private sector partners.

“As of 2016, we are a business 100 percent dedicated to partnering with groups of farmers

to implement inclusive value chains,” said Wachira in an N’West Iowa Review interview.

These men are only two of the many of inspiring and educated speakers who will share their experiences and visions at the Summit. Registration is open through March 4, so it is not too late to sign up to participate in this informative and encouraging conference.

Biomechanics lab target of new grant

Lauren Bird – Staff Writer

Dordt recently received a grant to build a biomechanics lab, an addition to campus that could open the doors to opportunities for students of many different majors.

Dr. Kayt Frisch, assistant professor of engineering at Dordt, co-wrote the grant with Dr. Nathan Tintle, Director for Research and Scholarship at Dordt, for a biomechanics lab can record the three-dimensional positions of objects.

Frisch says that the lab will be useful for a variety of projects:

“Think of Lord of the Rings and the way that the creature Gollum was created by using biomechanics and the actor Andy Serkis. The digital media department can do the same thing with animations (produced by the lab),” said Frisch.

But digital media students are not the only ones who will benefit from use of this lab. Frisch says that the engineering, art and kinesiology students will also find it useful. There is an intro to engineering biomechanics class that will spend a lot of time using this lab.

“This lab can record force over time. In that way we can record the force acting on the body and answer questions like ‘how walking loads the body?’ which is useful in making prosthetics,” said Frisch.

Frisch is interested in using the lab for research purposes. She is interested in looking at the ways that volleyball loads the body and how overuse injury is created. She says that it’s an exciting opportunity for Dordt students to have research-quality tools at their disposal.

The spot that Frisch is looking at to set up the lab is in an old racquetball court on the second floor of the Rec Center (above the lobby of the De Witt). Sophomore Jordan Severson will assist Frisch in setting up the lab this summer. He will be installing the equipment and setting up the programs.

“It will be up to me, with the guidance of Dr. Frisch, to do any experimental and/or design work to aid in the successful operation of the lab. I’ll need to figure out the ins and outs of the system so that it’s dependable,” said Severson.

Students can expect to be using this high tech equipment in various classes next school year.

Tech in class: personal or professor choice?

Eric Rowe – Staff Writer

In a world where six-year-olds have smart phones, and your mother has more Facebook friends than you, the issue of proper technology use is becoming more important. Is there a value to a personal, mature choice in circumstances surrounding education and technology or should it be required or banned from a classroom?

In the education program’s classes, laptops are not banned and students are expected to bring their personal devices to class. These are used in assessment applications and for reading electronic devices.

Though personal notes are the responsibility of students, education department head professor Tim Van Soelen says the instructor should be in control of the situation and know when to intervene. In his classes, when he needs their full participation in discussion, he will tell his students, “Lids down,” so they know to close their laptops.

History professor Walker Cosgrove thinks differently, claiming that the right to take notes is like any other individual right that is given up for the benefit of society. He makes his decision to ban personal tech in core classes based on current research claiming that note-taking by hand is more beneficial and feedback from previous classes where he allowed computers.

“My bigger concern is the learning environment as a whole,” Cosgrove said. “Not just individual students.”

Freshman Keithen Drury doesn’t use a computer to take notes and says that professors have the right to restrict technology based off of the nature of their job.

“Teaching is more like a dictatorship than a democracy,” Drury said.

Senior Ian Veenstra is in favor of using technology in classrooms. He says it would be better to adopt a desk with a built in computer. The activation password could be a student

ID swipe. The educators could then be able to control the software and the content of the computers.

“That way we can get the benefits of technology,” Veenstra said. “Without the negatives.”

The generally accepted negative of using a laptop or other device to take notes is the distraction that it can be to yourself and other students.

Senior Bryan Hannenburg sees the problem with technology as related to the maturity level of the students. He remembers kids in high school who would use technology as nothing but a distraction.

“Even if they couldn’t play games, they would swipe back and forth between aps,” Hannenburg said. “Anything to keep their attention.”

The history department’s general policy is to not allow personal devices in its core classes. Professor Paul Fessler pointed to the distraction that laptops can be to others. Fessler has a story of when he was sitting in the back of a classroom doing an evaluation and a young woman was multitasking and searching for swimsuits as well as taking notes.

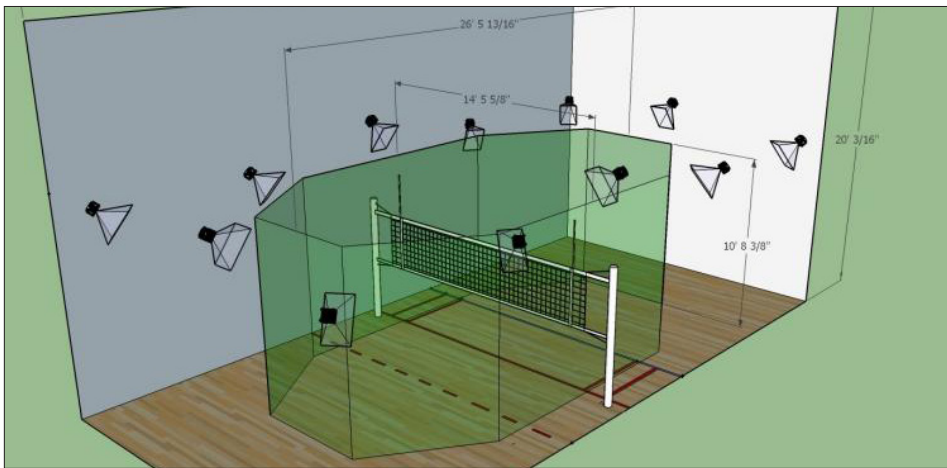
“Do you see how that could be a distraction to those around her?” Fessler said. “It’s not just you. Other people are affected by the choice.”

Freshman Andrew Yoon agrees that technology can easily become a distraction to others.

“I don’t think there’s a good way to control it,” Andrew Yoon said.

In his physics class in high school, Yoon’s teacher was boring, so he would play games on the tablet that he was supposed to use to take notes. Now, Yoon is more concerned about how he is affecting his classmates and takes notes by hand.

“I matured as I grew,” Yoon said. “I am



Contributed photo

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Pour showing: concrete canoe takes shape

Eric Rowe – Staff Writer

Road, sidewalk, foundation, canoe. One of these is not like the other. For the past six years, the Dordt chapter of the American Society for Civil Engineers has competed in the Concrete Canoe competition. This year’s canoe, Serenity, was poured last Saturday.

The pour day is the largest step in the process that will culminate at the competition in Ames this April. Dordt will present a physical, floatable vessel to be judged on its aesthetics, a paper presentation documenting the process, and a race.

Over 20 students mixed batches of concrete based off of an original recipe and slathered the mix onto a wooden canoe shaped frame. The workers started at 9 a.m. and had pizza for lunch. Only four people left at a time so that the unfinished concrete wouldn’t have an opportunity to dry.

“If you have a cold joint,” Co-captain Stephanie Pausma said. “It will break easier.”

Theatre major, Taylor Leach, the design head for the project, worked to develop the theme that will be incorporated into the entire process for this year’s canoe.

“Serenity is about finding the peace and tranquility in teamwork,” Leach said.

During pour day, a dark blue dye was used in the concrete mix to color the bottom half of the canoe. The top was kept in the natural white concrete color to highlight adhesive vinyl decoration. Last year’s canoe, the Tulip Defender, featured a flower petal base using external staining techniques after the concrete set.

“We finally hit a homerun on staining and they changed the rules on us,” said Wade Vollink,

who helped design last year’s canoe.

Junior Stephanie Pausma served as a co-captain for concrete canoe last year and thought that the rule changes were one of the biggest differences in her experience. When the new rules come out in November, the co-captains thoroughly read and double check them.

As well as outlawing staining, the competition leadership added requirements for the written paper including handwritten calculations for the force analysis, documentation of the steps taken for safety throughout the build and a project management piece.

Dordt’s concrete canoe team has historically done poorly in the racing portion of the competition, so another change this year is a regular schedule for paddling practice. Laura Baridon, the paddling head for concrete canoe, has been organizing sessions in the All Season’s Center with an aluminum canoe. Eight Dordt paddlers are registered with the American Society of Civil Engineers, four women and four men.

During pour day, the students used a process called pre-tensioning. They ran steel cables lengthwise along the canoe and placed them under tension. When the cables are cut, the steel tries to contract and pulls the concrete together into a stronger bond.

Between layers of concrete, the pour day volunteers spread a fiberglass mesh to further strengthen the concrete. Pausma is excited for an upgrade in the mesh this year.

For the previous years, the canoe team used a black mesh that notoriously caused an unpleasant aroma when it bonded with the concrete. Dordt alum and admissions counselor, Andrew Deelstra, bought the roll when he was involved in the concrete canoe as a student for



Photos by Taylor Leach
The concrete canoe team carefully assembles this year’s competitor.

three years.

“It was dirt cheap,” Deelstra said. “Probably why it stank so bad.”

The seemingly endless roll of mesh ran out last year. The crew there had to substitute and cover the last quarter of the canoe with some hastily obtained screen door material.

“I went to Bomgaar’s and looked for anything with small holes,” Vollink said.

For students interested in joining the canoe project, Pausma points to future workdays including several days sanding and a decorating day for adding the adhesive letters.

“You don’t have to be an engineer,” Leach said. “We want all people to come and be a part of the canoe.”

A look back at Dordt forensics

Lydia Marcus – Staff Writer

The Dordt Forensics team finished its main season strong this month, with team members advancing to the semifinal and final rounds at both debate tournaments the team attended.

On February 5 and 6, the team competed in the Icebox Classic at St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, Minnesota. Seniors Justin Vos and Ranae Boonstra advanced to the semifinal round in debate. In addition, senior Courtney De Wolde and freshman Matthew Ojo competed in Duo Interpretation. Ojo and De Wolde finished sixth overall in Dordt’s first individual event entry.

“My favourite part, hands down, of being a member of the team is the people who make up Dordt Forensics,” De Wolde said. “I’ve been able to meet students and develop friendships with them solely because we are all on the same team.”

De Wolde joined the Dordt Forensics Team as a freshman. Among other advantages, her role in the club has helped her present class projects better.

“The main skill I’ve been able to develop through being a part of the Forensics Team is becoming a better public speaker,” De Wolde said. “I’ve also become better at thinking quicker and taking those thoughts and forming them into ideas I can use while standing at the podium debating a resolution.”

On February 9, the team attended the final Parliamentary League of the Upper Midwest (PLUM) Tournament of the year, hosted



Forensics team displays their awards from another victorious competition.

Contributed photo

by Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota. Here, all three of Dordt’s two-person teams made it to the elimination rounds: the team of Ojo and sophomore Ben Kuiper finished in the Bronze Round, and both the team of De Wolde and junior Caeden Tinklenberg and the team of senior Chris Slice and Vos finished in the Gold Round. The tournament doesn’t make teams from the same school compete against each other, so the tie between team De Wolde and Tinklenberg and team Slice and Vos was called a closeout. In the tournament’s individual speaker’s competition, Kuiper came in first, Ojo came in second, Vos came in third, and Slice came in fifth.

The PLUM consists of many separate one-day tournaments, so the season’s overall highest scoring schools and individuals are

also awarded. In that tally, Vos came in first, Boonstra came in third, and De Wolde came in sixth. As a school, Dordt came in first this season.

Ojo, who joined the team last fall, claimed internal support as his biggest encouragement.

“This growth and success has been made possible by the team effort of the Forensics Team and diligent coaching of its directors,” Ojo said.

Director of Forensics and Debate Coach Donald Roth also complemented his crew.

“I’m extremely proud of how the whole team has debated this season,” Roth said. “The last PLUM was a testament to how much they’ve all grown over the year, and I couldn’t be happier about the overall results.”

Resident life applications, more every year

Meagan DeGraaf – Staff Writer

Resident Assistant (RA) responsibilities are very important to the well-being of students. RAs help incoming freshmen manage their new surroundings and get acquainted with college life.

There are about 4 to 6 RAs in every dorm building, and each is in charge of monitoring his or her wing. RAs are also encouraged to plan entertaining extracurricular events for students living in their wing.

Because of the position, RAs are able to experience another side of campus life—one that often leads to interactions with students they might not have met otherwise.

For students like sophomore Sion Yang, being part of the residence life staff helps create comfortability on campus. Sion is from South Korea, and she believes that being an RA helped her feel more at home in a new community.

“I especially loved getting to know and work with new people,” Sion said of her RA status.

Tori Mann, current sophomore and RA for Covenant Hall, likewise feels that her position has been nothing but a blessing. She was able to meet more students and grow friendships with other RAs and the girls on her wing. Tori also had some advice to pass on to the future resident life staff.

“The best advice I can give comes from Sita Riblet, the building coordinator from last year, who told us that we weren’t hired because we fit the cookie-cutter mold. In other words, it’s ok to be different than other RAs!”

While 90 students vied for a position as RA, the residence life staff could only choose a few students. Lisa Smith, Derek Buteyn and Kimberly Brinkerhoff, under the leadership of the Dean of Students Robert Taylor, interviewed all of these students and were responsible for making the difficult decision.

Some members of the residence life staff were chosen to return for RA positions, while other spots will be filled by current freshmen and sophomores next year. They will have the chance to help new students love their years at Dordt.

Tech in class: personal or professor choice? (cont.)

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becoming more aware of my surroundings.” A project and discussion based class provides a more multi-dimensional aspect to the use of computers than a lecture based core class.

Cosgrove bans personal tech use in his core classes, but has no restrictions on upper level history courses which are often more intimate and structured around discussion. Cosgrove would be more conducive to allowing technology in core classes if the classes were smaller.

“It’s easier to manage classes with 20-25 students. I can more easily deal with improper use of tech,” Cosgrove said. “At that point there’s more relationship. We are more like a family and less like a massive lecture.”

The issue of proper use of technology is not related to an educational setting. Both Cosgrove and Fessler pointed out that if they sit in the back at faculty assembly meetings, they can see how people use their computers.

“It’s not a student issue, it’s a human issue,” Cosgrove said. “Human beings are distractible people.”

Saying farewell: Visser retires after 40 years

Ellen Ingrid Dengah – Staff Writer

Dr. John Visser, Professor of Business Administration, is retiring from Dordt College this spring semester. Despite his conviction when he was young that he would never be a teacher, Visser has been teaching at Dordt since 1976.

“Although I didn’t plan to be a teacher, I love every minute of it,” Visser said.

He mentions his interaction with his colleagues as one of his favorite parts of teaching at Dordt.

“Camaraderie is really good in our department and it expands outside of our professional field,” said Art Attema, Business Department Chair.

Aside from joking with each other in the Campus Center business pod, Attema and Visser bond over fishing and canoeing. “We have a long history of arguing, publicly even, about how to catch fish,” Visser explains. Visser uses the latest method to catch fish and claims that Attema is “100 years or so behind me, but he did okay.” While Attema recognizes they do not always agree, he is content knowing they always leave any kind of arguments in good terms.

Attema truly sees Visser as a person who lives out what he teaches. On the same note, Dale Zevenbergen, Visser’s former student and current colleague, remembers him as one of the professors with a deeply reformed perspective. Visser’s perspective on how Christians could reform business has impacted thousands of business majors over the course of 40 years, Zevenbergen said.

He also remembered Visser as one of the toughest professors. Looking back at Visser’s finance classes, Zevenbergen said graduate school finance courses are a piece of cake, even for alumni who pursue graduate programs in highly-ranked universities.

Corporate Finance is one of the courses Visser



taught for years. Visser commented, “If it had not been for the tears after the test, I would have really enjoyed teaching that course.” He said that he loved the materials, but the class was extremely difficult for some students.

Attema jokingly mentioned how “they [the students] tremble at Visser’s test announcements.” Junior business major Sarah Fopma agreed that Visser’s classes, especially the tests, are difficult, but she admitted she learned a lot after every test.

Visser plans on spending more time with his wife and grandkids after retirement. He also plans on teaching abroad and writing a book about the questions we no longer ask as a society. After building a career for four decades, Visser has grown into one of the most respected figures in the Business Department and has been recognized nationally for his teaching and scholarship from a Christian perspective. When asked about this, he is quick to acknowledge that he could not have done these things without the help of others, including his wife, Dordt and especially his business department colleagues.

Dordt’s core program: valuable for students?

Janelle Cammenga – Staff Writer

One of Dordt’s claims to fame is its liberal arts education. Online, Dordt boasts of providing a “complete comprehensive education from a solid, Reformed, Christian perspective.” The college wants to make sure that students graduate with competency in both their field of study and in all other areas of life. One of the ways the school tries to accomplishes this is through the larger-than-average core program. Whether or not this fulfills its purpose is worth investigation.

English Professor Bob De Smith, a member of the core program committee, thinks this is an important issue to consider. He finds that the core is especially important in pre-technical majors like engineering, since it provides the only real variety in their education.

“The difference between a Dordt engineering major and other colleges’ engineering programs is that these students have had some theology and have read some literature,” De Smith said. “They will be more broadly shaped.”

De Smith spoke highly of the core program, but he voiced concerns, as well.

“I think we do a better than average job,” De Smith said. “But inside our core, we still struggle not to make it boxes that you check off.”

De Smith explained that the goal is not only to give students a taste of everything, although that is included; the goal is to show a reformed perspective from many different subject areas.

Senior Ben DeVries, a mechanical engineering major, has been through the core program. He sees it a different way than De Smith.

“I didn’t feel like it was a worldview from different perspectives, but different schools of thought on what humans are,” DeVries said.

“For example, what humanity is in literature, philosophy, etc.”

De Smith spoke of continuing to improve the core program. He is especially involved in his department’s efforts to make humanities classes more attractive for non-majors. He has had relative success with 1.5-credit night classes, as half of the current students are English majors and half are not.

Even with his passion for the humanities, De Smith values the scientific part of the core just as much.

“Everybody could probably use more biology than you get in a core class,” De Smith said, “Especially with the level of scientific knowledge needed in today’s world.”

While it may not have expressly accomplished its purpose for DeVries by De Smith’s definition, Dordt’s core program has its benefits. DeVries enjoyed much of the core, such as specialized classes like Lifespan Development and Intro to Literature.

“If not for the core,” DeVries said, “I would have gone to a trade school.”

Having a variety of different skills is an important part of succeeding in America today. De Smith cited a statistic that people entering the job market today will change their career seven times- not just their job.

“The long-range view says that these things are important,” De Smith said.

Even though students may not readily understand why they have to take so many classes outside their major, Dordt’s core program is a benefit for students. While students and faculty may have differing opinions as to the specific purpose of the core, it helps broaden students’ perspective and give them a taste of subjects they may not have encountered otherwise.

Interview a student: Jahn Kuiper, author extraordinaire

Ashley Huizinga – Staff Writer

How often do you really think about the fact that, one day, your lab partner may be famous? In ten years, you may be telling people that you went to college with the Boy Who Lived—metaphorically speaking, of course. Writers, rappers, politicians, inventors and even presidential candidates: everyone who’s anyone these days had to start out somewhere, so why not Dordt College in Sioux Center?

One Dordt student who seems intent on leaving his mark on the world is Jahn Kuiper, super senior, English/Language Arts Secondary Education major and Kuyper Scholar. Beyond being a current and future teacher, Kuiper is also in the midst of writing his first novel. With both a novel and a new baby on the way, Kuiper’s life is in for some big shifts in the future, and the Diamond staff takes this opportunity to put him in the limelight.

So, how long have you been writing this book? How did you get started?

Jahn Kuiper: “I’ve been working on my novel officially for about three years...Actually, the idea for the book didn’t come all at once... but rather, as layers built from different sources of information. From wow, that’s a good story, to wow, that’s a better story...”

“I think back to when my two-year daughter Dany was born, and how [her mother Rogue and I] wanted her to retain Rogue’s Chin culture [from Burma]. At the same time, I had been looking at the relationship between the natural and supernatural in my Dordt studies, and I was thinking about how this kind of stuff looks in a

day-to-day manner.

“My wife and her sisters were telling me all these rich cultural stories about changelings, anthropomorphic animals, and—most of all—demons. I started wondering what it was about Chin culture that made these stories so real for them, and then asked myself, ‘Why do we Westerners always seem to dismiss them as fantasy?’ This was the seed for my book. In a nutshell, it’s about an American man who travels to Burma to inherit the land his wife left for him in her will. In his journey into the jungle, he must come to terms with his fallen faith by reconciling the reality of the supernatural world he comes in contact with.”

Did you have any other inspiration for this?

JK: “In addition to the life experiences I draw on, I’ve also gleaned a lot of inspiration from my studies at Dordt. From the Education department, I’ve learned a lot about cognitive development theories and social interaction theories. I’ve noticed how the English culture and language has changed through the ages and how this affects what is deemed important in literature. This was a base of inspiration for me to pursue myth in the Kuyper Scholars Program. While myth is often viewed as archaic and interesting from an academic standpoint, I was much more interested in how as a living force it shapes us and lives with us day-to-day...I’ve come to explore how God has created science [in order] to learn the knowable, and myth [in order] to surrender to the unknowable—to live in awe at God. If we can accept that awe of the unknown as valuable...then myth takes on much more than academic value.”

What is writing to you? How does writing matter in your life?

JK: “Writing is my conduit of thought. As a child, I stuttered and was uncomfortable with speaking...[but] writing stories gives me the fluency to express thought, especially because I tend to see the world in terms of environment, time, characters, and arch.

“[My writing voice] is entirely a reflection of who I am as a person. If I hadn’t been in the Marine Corps and then come to Dordt, my voice might be different, because who I am would have been shaped by different events. Only Tolkien could write The Lord of the Rings and only Chaucer could have written The Canterbury Tales...”

Based on a department reading that you participated in last semester at the Fruited Plain, I would wager that this novel won’t be for the casual, faint-of-heart reader. Do you have any comments to that effect?

JK: “I think some might say my writing is for the mature audience. It’s a world full of grit, terror, and sorrow. But I would say that it’s equally full of hope and awe...So, while it takes a bit of stomach to read parts of the novel, I would suggest it also takes a bit of stomach to go through life. In that sense, I would say this novel is for everyone. Certainly, I feel it is a calling of mine to reach as many people as I can through my writing, which I hope is an honest portrayal.”

What do you want to do with it – publish after you graduate?

JK: “I don’t feel rushed to publish my

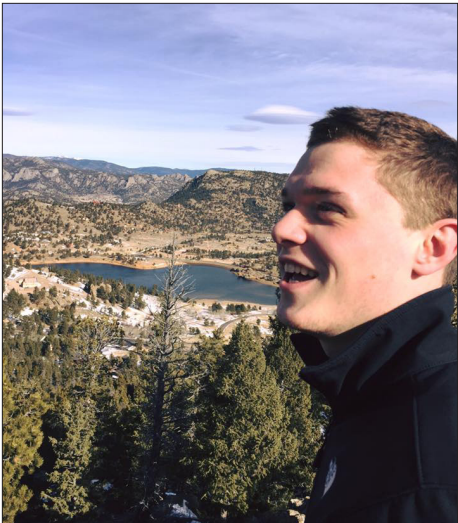
novel...I know I’m a better writer after four years in the Marine Corps than I was before, better after four years at Dordt than before, so I’m taking in as much as I can to make myself better as a writer, which then makes my novel better.”

It’s a cliché question, but do you have any advice for aspiring writers?

JK: “Being good at writing isn’t ultimately about theory or what others have to say about writing. Writing is self-expression. As a child, I spoke to a child, but now I speak to a man because I’ve had the experience of becoming a man. Likewise, to be a writer you must practice it, entrench yourself in it, and live it. It is okay to fail...you need to expose yourself and try different things with writing even though it might not feel perfect. Reflect and learn from yourself. If you live closely with your writing, you will find that it begins to express your truest self, and that is always good writing. No matter if you want to be a casual writer or a professional, just take time and a breath with your writing.”

So, that guy with his nose buried in a book? That girl who never seems to look up from her homework? That human being sitting across from you in the Commons—who knows? Maybe he or she will turn out to be the next J. K. Rowling, or Stephen King, or Fyodor Dostoyevsky. At Dordt, and in all walks of life, one can’t deny the possibility of being surrounded by faces that may one day be famous. Especially, we laud Kuiper as a reminder that, *Oh yeah. Some English majors do write books.*

Academic legitimacy and the cancer of prolonged adolescence: does Dordt measure up?



Jonathan Janssen – Staff Writer

We live in a world of icons like Mike Rowe pleading for vocational degrees to be considered alongside liberal arts degrees. I applaud this movement, but it – and its contemporaries – has inadvertently exposed a deeply ingrained flaw in higher education: liberal arts degrees are jokes.

In a recent debate, Marco Rubio called out philosophers, driving young people towards welding degrees with the tantalizing promise of a welcoming job market and good pay. This is not an independent example. An internet search on “worthless college degrees” reveals scores of articles lamenting the cancerous denigration of value in a liberal arts education. Colleges all-over are scrambling to ensnare students to their institutions in the wake of this economic shift. U.S. News claims that colleges have started offering “amenities ranging from laptops and tablets to gourmet dining plans and over-the-top housing and recreational opportunities” as enticements for incoming students (“How Do Schools Market Themselves to Attract Students?”). The problem lies in the fact that this system of “free” amenities – which are, many times, paid for by students – is unstable. Offers will continue to escalate until it is unsustainable. Another idea being implemented by colleges is a push towards STEM (read, “marketable”) degrees. It’s no wonder that Dordt just installed a \$12 million cathedral-to-science over the past few years. It makes perfect sense. And now, in the previously mentioned revolution of technical colleges, we see Dordt introduce the

idea of pro-tech degrees: two-year technical degrees of the same type that someone could receive from Northwest Iowa Community College in nearby Sheldon. There are serious pros and cons to all of these endeavors. In the seemingly-altruistic to make sure that students are getting “good education for good jobs,” one can easily forget the merits of humanities degrees such as philosophy, history, literature, etc. This is not a politically partisan issue either, as, along with Rubio’s debate remark, President Obama called out the seemingly-worthlessness of art history degrees while touring a General Mills factory in Wisconsin. If I may, I would like to suggest a refocus upon an actually altruistic idea that encapsulates students in all walks of life: Colleges, please take every measure to remind students that being a student is, in fact, a serious vocation. Help us remember that higher-academic scholarship is an absolute privilege, not a right of independent adults. Encourage us to love life, but remind us that our lives’ main concern is the growth in knowledge and wisdom. We are students, much the same that doctors are doctors, engineers are engineers and teachers

are... you get the point. But as well as helping us remember our main function, please remember your own. Do you, Dordt College, want to be considered a serious institution amongst many, admittedly, older and time-tested universities? All it takes is a different approach to academic life. Consider, for instance, the naming of positions and facets of student life. At Dordt, we do not have “Orientation Week” or “Orientation Leaders” like every other respectable university - we have something called “WOW (Week of Welcome)” and “Über Leaders.” Look around. Do you see a “Student Government”? No, you get the chance to explain that a “Symposium” of students was originally a drunken Greek orgy. Please, try seriously writing that on a résumé. While these are merely a few examples, they are symptoms of the larger disease - college is no longer taken seriously. If we desire for any growth towards legitimacy, the perpetual childlike-manner in which students, professors and faculty approach higher education at Dordt College may be the proper place to begin applying the metaphoric chemotherapy.

Why be single?



Jaden Vander Berg – Staff Writer

This weekend I went to the movie, ‘How to Be Single’. I was expecting a typical Rebel Wilson

R-rated comedy, however, I left the theatre realizing that even though I was 21 years old, there is still so much I needed to learn about myself and my approach to dating. Society tells us that our worth is often found in the people we associate ourselves with, often in a dating relationship. We go from one relationship to the next, never really knowing anything about ourselves apart from us and a significant other. Now I know I am seriously going to anger some people, but I feel like in a community such as Dordt, people get married without really knowing themselves. You go from dating someone in grade school, going to the same college and getting engaged somewhere between sophomore and senior year. You never spend anytime with anyone other than them. You only know yourself through the eyes of that person. How do you know if you want something different in life if you don’t go looking for it? A common excuse is ‘I’ve already put so much time/effort in this relationship’, but is that a good enough reason for staying with someone? Psychology Today published an article in 2014

by Juliana Breines, Ph.D. about ‘4 Reasons not to Settle in a Relationship’. They are all science based explanations to why you should wait for a person that makes you truly happy. ‘Fear of being alone can skew your priorities.’ This comes to Dordt in the form of Senior Scramble. It is often thrown around as a joke, but for many students it can become a real fear. Once you leave college it becomes harder to find someone because you aren’t constantly surrounded by 750(ish) people of the opposite gender. However, settling for someone just because you are scared of being alone can leave you just as unhappy if not more than if you just stayed single longer. ‘Being single has its benefits.’ Single people are often seen as selfish or immature. They are often not taken as seriously the older they get and are told to just ‘grow up’. However, singles often have a more developed sense of self-worth and identity. They have an easier time creating and maintaining friendships and when they do find a significant other, they have more realistic expectations when it comes to that person. ‘The possibility of finding true love may be

worth the risk of not finding it.’ In a society of instant gratification, waiting is not our strong suit. People don’t want to wait it out for the perfect person, because what if that person never comes. The thought of being alone forever is unimaginable so we justify settling. ‘Accepting a person’s flaws does not mean having to settle for them.’ In our heads we dream up the perfect person. This idea is something we have imagined since childhood, molding and changing as we grow, but is always there in the back of our minds. I want him to have brown hair, be 6’0, have blue eyes-all these characteristics I thought were important to me when I was younger now become less on the forefront. Is he kind? Does he love Jesus more than he loves me? These now take precedent, and physical attributes are less of a necessity. This doesn’t mean every couple needs to break up for fear of settling but rather take a look at yourself. Are you happy in your relationship and more importantly is your relationship a God honoring one?

Letter to the editor: on flag etiquette

Aaron Van Beek

In all my years of managing basketball, and attending sports events in support of high school, college, and national teams, and various other events that play the “National Anthem” before beginning, I’ve noticed the lack of respect for our nation’s flag. I’ve seen children, students, and even adults not fully participating in the proper etiquette for our “National Anthem,” our nation’s flag, and the brave men and women who fought protecting our freedoms. After all these years of observing silently, I’ve decided it’s time I say something. Children sitting, men with hats and caps still on their heads, students walking to their seats, ladies fixing their hair, spectators checking their phones, and team members tucking in their jerseys are just a few disrespectful actions I’ve seen out of the corner of my eye. Our forefathers wanted our flag to be treated with respect at all times. Up until June 22, 1942, there were never any codes or laws

on flag etiquette. Through all the wars and technological advances, respect for our nation’s flag was lacking. That is why on June 22, 1942, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed the Federal Flag Code, which led to Congressional enactment on December 22, 1942. According to this Flag Code under 36 U.S. Code § 301 - National Anthem, “(1) During a rendition of the “National Anthem” when the flag is displayed— (A) individuals in uniform should give the military salute at the first note of the anthem and maintain that position until the last note; (B) members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute in the manner provided for individuals in uniform; and (C) all other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, and men not in uniform, if applicable, should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart; and

(2) when the flag is not displayed, all present should face toward the music and act in the same manner they would if the flag were displayed.” Why must one show respect for a piece of fabric? One must remember that the flag more than just some fabric pieces stitched together. It’s our nation’s symbol of freedom. Thirteen stripes representing the first thirteen colonies established in the New World, 50 stars for each of the states in our nation under God, white signifies purity and innocence, red for hardiness and valor, and blue for vigilance, perseverance, and justice. By respecting our flag, you are sending a powerful message to those who have fought and those who are currently fighting for you and me as well as others in countries across the globe. Think about it this way: by simply having respect and etiquette for the red, white, and blue, you may sit in your home at night knowing that someone else is out there protecting you, your family, and our nation. It’s part of your allegiance towards the flag of the

United States. It’s your duty as an American even if you don’t agree with everything being done in Washington, and that’s the best part! Because of our military having strong beliefs in what our Stars and Stripes represent, you have the freedom of religion, speech, press, and assembly. You have the freedom to own and bear arms. You have rights under arrest, search, and trial, and all of this is possible because of our veterans who fought to give us these and more! My request is simple. Respect our flag, respect our nation, and respect our veterans by standing at attention, removing your headwear, facing the flag with your right hand over your heart during the “National Anthem,” during the Pledge of Allegiance, and whenever a flag is presented or passes by you. By this simple act, you are sending a silent, yet strong message of patriotism and gratefulness to all those who have sacrificed for our freedoms. Thank you, and may God bless the United States of America.

Men’s volleyball snags varsity program’s first win

Christian Zylstra – Staff Writer

Dordt College men’s volleyball grabbed its first win in varsity program history on Feb. 13 in five sets. The victory came at the De Witt Gymnasium over Ottawa University.

Not only did Feb. 13 see Dordt snag its first program win, but it also was the first conference win and home victory. The Defenders finished off the Ottawa Braves 25-23, 18-25, 25-18, 21-25, 20-18.

It took six match points before Dordt overcame the Braves to seal the victory. Dordt never surrendered a match point as Dordt led 14-13, 15-14 and so on until the final set score was reached.

“It’s an exciting time to go extra points,” said senior captain Eric Geels. “It was nice to have that one point cushion pretty much the whole way through. Not a lot of nerves, but there were definitely some at certain points.”

The opening set was tightly contested from the beginning. Neither team led by more than two points and featured eight ties. When it appeared the set could go to either team, Dordt rattled off three straight points to take the first set, 25-23.

In the second set, Ottawa started gaining momentum. After a 10-10 tie, the Braves took 10 of 12 points, including a stretch of six straight. Ottawa finished Dordt off from there, 25-18.

The match’s third set might as well have been

vice versa. After a 5-5 tie, scored four straight points. Following more back-and-forth play, the Defenders rattled off six straight to build a 21-13 lead. Dordt was in control, winning 25-18.

Volleyball is often a game of runs, and set four personified that belief. Down 9-8, Dordt went on a five-point run. Ottawa immediately answered with six straight points. To close out the fourth set, the Braves scored the final three points (25-21) and forced a decisive fifth set.

In the wild fifth set, neither team strung together more than two consecutive points. Dordt never trailed, and on its sixth match point, it made program history.

“Starting off the year a little slow, it was just really exciting to get that last point,” Geels said.

It wasn’t perfect, but the performance was enough. For a program in its inaugural season, that’s good enough.

“This match was a great accomplishment for our guys,” said coach Chad Hanson. “The fans were very much into the match. We played some wonderful stretches of points and grew in our composure through tense moments.”

Kyle Vander Zee led Dordt with 17 kills; Mark Tiemersma followed Vander Zee up with 14 kills of his own. Geels finished with seven kills, 31 assists and 12 digs. Tyler Hoover and Geels registered two service aces apiece.

“Tyler and Eric stayed aggressive for us from the service line, which was a struggle for our team,” Hanson said. “Davis (Konynenbelt)



Contributed photo

The men’s volleyball team celebrates win over Ottawa University.

demonstrated great net presence with smart offensive shots and some huge blocks. Our serve receive passing was strong for most of the match, led by Andrew (Kotsier), Nathan (Struyk) and Kyle. Mark Tiemersma provided some stellar points with his blocking and attacking.”

As a team, Dordt totaled a program-high 61 kills. The Defenders also had five service aces.

With the inaugural season moving forward, it will be interesting to observe what other program firsts Dordt men’s volleyball garners.

A look inside the wild world of intramurals

Aaron Ladzinski – Staff Writer

The magical world of intramural sports, where regular students across campus can square off against each other.

Although they might not be the best basketball players, they are having fun. It is competitive in all sports, especially when certain teams face off. Then there is the question of if you’re going to meet your future husband or wife during a co-ed game. Unfortunately, I cannot tell this is going to happen, possibly because of the competitive nature of the games.

An example of this competitive nature is the Dordt Blades floor hockey team. Teammates are constantly pitted against one another. This is where you really get to know each other, but the games are mostly for the bragging rights that come with winning.

“Floor hockey, like any of the intramural sports, is a good way for students to release all the pent up energy they get from sitting in classes and studying all day,” said junior Dylan Bartels. “For this reason, intramurals, especially floor hockey, can be full of competitive rivalries between teams from year to year.”

Then, there are the bonds that bring people together in the co-ed sports. Nearly every weeknight, students play intramurals with some of their closest friends. This brings teams and students together that might not be together other than during a game.

“Playing intramurals with the soccer team is like a big pick-up game between both girls and guys,” said sophomore Nathan Struyk. “It tends to bring us together and gain relationships with each other that we don’t throughout the year.”

Lastly, there are the people who play just for fun and would not otherwise get to participate in a sport. These people tend to play intramurals to bring out the competitiveness they don’t have in other daily activities. They may not be the next Michel Jordan, but they are out there to have fun.

“Intramurals are great; I love to play,” said sophomore Trevor TeKolste. “It helps me to do something outside of just hanging with friends and doing something different from what we do.”

Intramurals are used for a multitude of different things, so go out and try them. They are a blast and something new to do. Stop by the rec center and ask about joining a sport today.

Seasons of highs and lows for Defender basketball

Christian Zylstra – Staff Writer

Marquee wins and frustrating losses characterize the 2015-16 season for Dordt men and women’s basketball. As the season winds both for both squads, both will be looking back at what could have been.

Women’s Basketball

The GPAC is a cruel beast. Despite increasing the in-conference win total from two during the 2014-15 season to five during this season, Dordt still finished 9-20 (5-17 GPAC), five games out of the final GPAC tournament spot.

“A roller coaster is a pretty accurate description of what this season has been like so far,” said senior guard Abby Chapman. “We have had some pretty high highs, like beating Northwestern twice, but we’ve also had some pretty low lows, like all the struggles we’ve had with injuries.”

Ask nearly anyone associated with Dordt basketball, and they’ll likely tell you Dordt’s

two victories over Northwestern in conference play were the highlights of this season. The Defender women had not defeated Northwestern since 1997, and they did it twice—first time since the 1993-94 season.

“I think for any Dordt athlete, you are instantly going to get motivated playing Northwestern; everybody wants to beat them,” said senior center Mycah Hulst. “So I think that was definitely part of it, and our team just happened to click on both nights.”

But in the gauntlet that is the GPAC, some nights just won’t be pleasant. Last season, the GPAC had the final four teams remaining at nationals. This season, six different GPAC teams finish the regular season ranked, most of which will be playing in March.

“The GPAC is the best conference in the nation, and we are consistently competing with these teams and getting better each game we play,” said junior guard Paige Engbers.

In 22 conference games, Dordt squared off against 11 ranked opponents and two receiving

votes. With such a difficult schedule, the Defender women needed to be playing at a high level for 40 minutes twice a week.

While the program is moving in the right direction under coach Katie DeWitt-Severson, there is still plenty of room to grow.

Men’s Basketball

Inconsistency describes GPAC men’s basketball during the 2015-16 season. Excluding Mount Marty, nearly every GPAC team has the ability to beat another. Case and point: Doane (10th in GPAC) defeated Midland (4th in GPAC), who defeated Briar Cliff (1st in GPAC). Dordt (7th in GPAC) has even topped four of the six teams ahead in the standings (0-2 vs. Midland and Briar Cliff).

This theme of inconsistency applies to Defender men’s basketball as well. But rather, the conference schedule could be split more in two halves: before and after Christmas Break.

Continued on page 8

Dordt athletes take home four golds at Indoor Conference Championship

Alli Young – Staff Writer

Three Dordt men earned conference champion honors in four events at the Indoor Great Plains Athletic Conference Championship meet on Feb. 19-20. Xavier Caffee swept first place in both the 60- and 200-meter dashes. His times of 6.97 and 21.73 seconds, respectively, were both personal records for the sophomore.

Sam Wensink, who was recently named GPAC Athlete of the Week, dominated the 1,000 meter run. His winning time of 2 minutes, 28 seconds broke the conference record. Jacob Moats took top honors in the high jump with a jump of 2.04 meters (6’ 8.25”). All three of these men have earned automatic berths to compete at the Indoor National Championship meet on March 3-4 in Johnson City, TN.

Sophomore Keith Heidema clinched runner-up honors in the 60-meter hurdles. His 8.47-second performance in the finals was a personal best.

Dordt women had a strong showing in the mid-

distance events. Justine Van Zee’s personal best of 1 minute, 38.07 seconds in the 600 claimed third place, while her 3 minutes, 0.07 seconds time in the 1,000 took fourth place. Freshman Jenna Wilgenburg, one of three sisters to have run for Dordt, ran a gutsy 600 in a time of 1 minute, 39.68 seconds for fifth place. Kelsey Lewis placed fourth in the 800-meter run, in spite of getting boxed in and jostled amongst a tight pack of runners.

Nicole Slater finished just behind Van Zee in the 1,000, placing fifth in 3 minutes, 0.72 seconds. Kayla Byl and Slater placed third and fourth in the mile, respectively. Byl’s 5 minutes, 8.32 seconds was a personal best.

Later in the evening, Byl ran an excellent 3,000 for second place honors. In an extremely loaded field of 3K runners, sophomores Erika Douma and Audrey Brooks both ran personal bests by more than ten seconds to take eighth and eleventh, respectively. Samantha Bandstra also ran her best race in the 5,000 meter run, completing 25 laps on the 200-meter track in 19

minutes, 42 seconds.

The women’s 4x400 meter relay team set a season record as well as hit “A” standard in a time of 3 minutes, 58.63 seconds. Miranda Velgersdyk, Elizabeth Rankin, Jenna Wilgenburg and Marisa Broersma passed the baton in that order. Broersma and Rankin competed in the open 400 as well, placing fifth and sixth.

In field events, Dordt performed well in the jumps. Raquelle Mouw placed fourth in the triple jump. She set a personal best of 10.95 m (35’ 11.25”). Dani Wubben, who had been sidelined part of the season due to a broken wrist, came back in the long jump to place fourth with a leap of 5.16 m (16’ 11.25”).

In team standings, Dordt women placed fourth with 70 points, while the men placed sixth with 55 points. Both the men and women of Doane College took home the team championship trophies.

Spring mainstage production promises humor and reflection

Janelle Cammenga – Staff Writer

If you are observant, you have probably noticed posters going up around campus with a variety of student faces and masks on them. Maybe you found a business card with the words “Del Dordte” and promises of popcorn printed on it. These developments are only the latest in a series of promotions for Dordt Theatre’s spring mainstage production, Lazzi Molière.

“Lazzi” is a French word meaning “comedic action.” As its name suggests, Lazzi Molière is a comedy production. It involves amped-up emotions, large actions, and stock characters who each have their own way of moving across the stage.

Sophomore Erica Liddle, actress in Lazzi Moliere, shared what she likes about the production. “It’s so physically expressive and playful! It brings out the humanity that sometimes gets hidden.” Liddle also enjoys the lack of subtlety in Lazzi. In order to get into character, she has to amp up all of her everyday emotions.

Lazzi combines two comedic plays by French playwright Molière. This was a challenge because Lazzi creator and director Josiah Wallace was using English translations of the French scripts. Those scripts were also written more as outlines than as specific lines. The process involved a lot of combining, adding and improvising.

Wallace shared that he was “banking on the genius of Molière for the plot,” as parts of the plays have been lost in translation, modified, and even improvised, with new characters being added and the actors bringing their own physical brand of comedy into the original script.

There is a lot of ensemble work in the

production, meaning that the actors have to “bring something to the table” and trust that their fellow actors will do the same. “It helps actors rely on their own creative juices,” Wallace said.

The show is not only full of slapstick humor—it also serves a purpose. The over-the-top characters and acting serve to help audience members recognize something about themselves.

“It highlights our foibles and hopefully does so in a way that helps us recognize our failures,” Wallace said. This follows along with Molière’s own thoughts on what comedy should accomplish: “It is a vigorous blow to vices to expose them to public laughter.”

Liddle experienced some of this recognition in her acting. For example, her character is often angry. “[It makes] you think of people who are that angry on a regular basis and how exhausting that must be!” she shared.

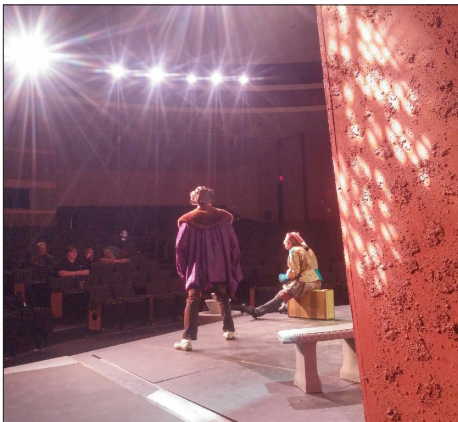
Wallace was inspired to take on this project by time spent in Italy for graduate school. He spent a month intensively learning about Molière and the acting style that accompanied the playwright’s work.

There were many challenges involved in the making of Lazzi, from the script to mask-making to teaching an unfamiliar acting style. The show has been a lot of work to produce, but the results proved rewarding.

“At the beginning, it was, ‘How is this possible? It’s too much work!’” Wallace said. “Then you look back now and say, ‘We did it.’”

Liddle encourages those who come to the show to “Be willing to laugh with us, at us, and at yourself.”

Performances take place Feb. 24, 25, 26 and 27 at 7:30 p.m., and on Feb. 27 at 2:00 p.m.



Contributed photos
Cast of Lazzi Moliere rehearsing before opening performance on February 24.

Deadpool: doesn’t die, doesn’t shut up

Kyle Fosse – Staff Writer

I feel dirty. Firstly, because I voluntarily went to see this month’s “very R-rated” comedy. Secondly, because I enjoyed it more than I hoped I would.

In this fast-paced, edgy, yet catchy, new chapter for Marvel characters, Wade Wilson (Ryan Reynolds) finds himself turning to the wrong people to try find a cure for his condition. When the process goes horribly wrong and Wade finds himself invincible and his girlfriend kidnapped, “Deadpool” must fight through his enemies with the help of some X-Men to win her back.

If this sounds clichéd, that’s because it is. The film makes no apologies for how shamelessly it steals and insults ideas, jokes and themes from other superhero movies. That’s probably the main reason it’s worth watching – it takes a step back and laughs at its own absurdity. You’ll struggle to find many more reasons to see it.

Not since Zack Snyder’s “Watchmen” has a superhero movie been so grotesque or unabashed. Difference is, “Watchmen” felt like it had a point. Maybe that was even its downfall – it felt so heavy and broody that it hardly held any surface-level entertainment. “Deadpool,” on the other hand, is just the opposite.

Slathered in sex jokes, f-bombs and a few references that border on actual perversion, I felt constantly distracted from the elements that may have redeemed it. It was a very amusing way to be distracted, but it got tiresome after a while. It felt like seeing a decent plotline and an enjoyable character with a-b-a origins story getting revised a thousand times by one of the writers from “South Park”.

Tim Miller makes quite an entrance in his directors’ debut. The overall comedic timing and delivery of the film are spot-on, which is essential for a movie in this category. Miller is no stranger to entertainment. However, most of the few tender moments which approached



genuineness were shut down for the sake of amusement and entertainment. Cheap laughs, which felt like more adult, edgy versions of fart jokes interrupted anything which bordered on sincere.

And let’s face it, who doesn’t enjoy a good fart joke? But when the overall tone of a movie feels like it was designed to accommodate a string of innuendo, gore and surprisingly explicit sexual scenes, it gets a little tiresome after the first hour.

On the upside, Ryan Reynolds thrives in his role as the title character, exuding just the right amount of confidence, wit, sass and morbidly perverse panache to pull off what could otherwise turn out to be a painfully unbearable main character. His signature fourth-wall breaks, dripping sarcastic remarks and fast-paced, gross conversations are legendary in the scope of derisive superhero characters.

“Deadpool” is already listed as number 60 in IMDB’s top 250 movies, and I’m not sure what that says about today’s movie-going crowd. Of course, I’m missing the bias of having been steeped in the “Deadpool” games, comics and cartoons. Everyone I know of who already loved the character, loves the movie. As a movie-goer myself, and someone who tends to enjoy superhero movies, I won’t be seeing “Deadpool” again in a hurry. However, I won’t say I didn’t enjoy the process of making that decision.

Colorful Grammys and white Oscars

Meagan DeGraaf – Staff Writer

It’s that time of year again. No, not the springtime senior scramble—it is awards season! The Screen Actors Guild Awards were January 30, the Grammy Awards February 15 and the Academy Awards are on February 28.

As usual, Taylor Swift took home her share of Grammy Awards, winning most notably Album of the Year for her 2014 album “1989” and Best Music Video for “Bad Blood.” Bruno Mars also did well, taking home multiple awards for his popular song “Uptown Funk.”

Meghan Trainor took home the award for Best New Artist, Ed Sheeran won Song of the Year for “Thinking Out Loud,” Kendrick Lamar got Best Rap Album and Rap Song and the Alabama Shakes performed well in the alternative and rock categories. Even Justin Bieber picked up an award for his dance video “Where R U Now.”

Overall, the Grammy winners were a diverse group of people. Several African American artists took top honors, and Taylor Swift became the first female to ever win two Album of the Year awards. Winners varied in age, gender and race, and the competition centered clearly on music rather than differences in skin color. Host LL Cool J even commented on the grand assortment of the musical artists represented, saying that the love of music united the artists, even with all that divided them.

While the Grammy Awards featured more variety than ever, many claim the Oscars lack that same diversity this year.

Instead, there is a lot of controversy surrounding the award season regarding race misrepresentation of artists nominated. When the nominees were announced, many people took to social media platforms like Twitter to voice their displeasure and frustrations.

The 2016 nominees for the Academy Awards



(Oscars) were similar to the 2015 nominees—that is, the biggest award categories featured only Caucasian actors and actresses. Some argue that the awards for best actor or actress can be seen as the most important categories, so many see this as an insult to people of other ethnicities.

The offended individuals argue this: Film is art, and the fact that art created by other races is not equal to white art is not fair. Oscar nominations for minorities make up only about 15% of the nominations, while nearly 40% of the United States population is of minority status.

Some have taken these statistics and fought them to the extreme, even vowing to boycott the Academy Awards for their racism. The Academy has already issued a statement declaring they will change the situation next year. This change is an effort to nominate more diverse groups, and it will as much as double the number of minorities in the academy by the year 2020.

Besides the controversy, there is another important question: will this be the year Leonardo DiCaprio finally snags that Oscar for his work in The Revenant? He won a SAG Award, so he is on the right track. Watch the Academy Awards on February 28 to see all the talented nominees and winners.

Seasons of highs and lows for Defender basketball (cont.)

Continued from page 6

Before and during Christmas Break, Dordt went 7-3 in GPAC play, good enough for second place behind Briar Cliff. After students returned to campus for the spring semester, Dordt went 2-8 in GPAC play, including a five-game losing streak.

Part of this disparity is schedule strength. "I think, before and after Christmas Break, the schedule is a lot of it," said coach Ross Douma. "I think we played a more favorable home schedule over Christmas Break."

The other pieces of this disparity are the typical issues: defensive lapses, shooting slumps/free throw struggles and injuries.

In Dordt's eight conference losses after Christmas Break, it's allowed 90+ points seven times and 100+ twice. Also in those eight losses, opponents are shooting slightly over 50 percent.

Offensively, Dordt's main offensive struggles have come behind the three-point arc. Throughout the course of the year, the Defenders shot 33 percent from deep. Again in Dordt's eight losses, the Defenders are averaging 4.25 three-pointers per game.

Lastly, injuries have been a major factor, impacting Dordt's rotation for nearly the entire season. Bryan Sumner, Dalton Franken, Alex Terpstra and Taylor Feenstra are a few of the

many to miss time or be impacted minutes-wise due to injury.

"Every team incurs injuries to some degree," Douma said. "We've had five guys who've endured a lot of missed playing time. It's definitely impacted our team; it's hurt our team. It's put us in rotations that we near thought we'd ever play."

Yet despite the struggles and breaks not falling Dordt's way, the Defenders have an opportunity ahead. On Wednesday, Feb. 21, the Defender men will travel to Lincoln, Neb. to square off against Nebraska Wesleyan. It's a No. 2 versus No. 7 seed matchup in which both sides won on their home floor, splitting the season series.

Beyond that, with two wins and a Briar Cliff run to the GPAC Championship game, Dordt could clinch a nationals berth. The Chargers clinched an automatic bid to nationals when winning the GPAC regular season. If Briar Cliff makes the GPAC title game, regardless of the result, BC's opponent will receive an automatic bid to the national tournament.

So perhaps Dordt's rollercoaster ride may end on a peak after all. It will take some work, but three wins in the GPAC tournament—or two wins with some help (Briar Cliff)—will put Dordt in the national tournament over Spring Break.

All it takes is one solid run.



Cartoon by Jonathan Fictorie

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Humans of Dordt College



Thomas Beck, senior

“The funniest thing I have seen so far while student teaching was just standing in the hallways between classes and this little 5th grade girl walks up to a 5th grade boy, he kind of looks at her and she was like “Hey, so I think you are pretty cute.”

The little boy just looks at her, dead in the eyes, and says, “Yeah, my mom thinks so too,” and just walked away like nothing happened.

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