President Hoekstra’s tweets on Equality Act spark critique, conversation

Zac VanderLei—Staff Writer

Steve Mahr, owner of Town Square Coffee House in Orange City and graduate of Northwestern College, recalls being part of the problem in high school. He and his friends picked on anyone who was gay, hurling insults and physically intimidating students they thought were lesser simply because of their sexual identity. One day during his freshman year at Moody Bible Institute, Mahr believed he contracted an STD through his premarital relationship at the time. As he waited in the testing room, quivering in fear of being expelled from his private, conservative school, two gay men supported and talked him through his anxiety. They even showed him the bus back to campus.

Over the past few weeks, Dordt University President Erik Hoekstra has released four tweets critical of the Equality Act, specifically as it pertains to religious freedom. Mahr, along with Dordt alumni and students, expressed disappointment in the comments on Hoekstra’s tweets.

“You know the queer kids at Dordt can see your tweets?” Mahr wrote responding to one of Hoekstra’s posts. “You are aware that when you tweet—like this [it] helps enforce the idea in straight students that their peers are less than.”

President Hoekstra responded to some of the replies to clarify his beliefs.

“I think people misunderstood the purpose,” President Hoekstra said. “They thought I had no regard for LGBTQI rights, and that’s not true.”

Lauren Hoekstra, a columnist for The Dordtian, is a member of the LGBTQI community and a committed Christian. She is frustrated at the way President Hoekstra used COVID-19 lockdown, she played basketball but was scared she was not ready. During the COVID-19 lockdown, she played basketball in her basement—bringing her joy and an overwhelming pressure. She would break down from the invading anxiety she did not know how to handle. She worked out with tears streaming down her face.

Intense thoughts about hating her life and feeling trapped began to flood her mind. It was was preventing her from being fully present. Nilles had dealt with bouts of depression over her years, sometimes months at a time. There was always a part of her that thought she had depression, but the rest of her believed she was being a “drama queen” because everyone told her she was. They thought it was normal. She said it was not.

In September 2020, Nilles began counseling. They decided she should try medication for depression and anxiety. It was another weekly session with her therapist, on a Friday late in November, when things changed. Nilles had been at home for Thanksgiving break.

They discussed how Nilles had been feeling lately—if she had any anxiety in the past week. About half-way through the discussion, Nilles said something that would be life changing.

“I just feel so hot and cold all the time,” Nilles said.

Her therapist just listened. Then she asked: “When did you feel hot and cold? What was the timeline like?”

“Every couple weeks I just switch. I don’t know why,” Nilles said.

“What do you feel like in the good weeks? And what about the bad weeks?”

“In the good weeks I felt like I could do anything. But in the bad weeks I feel depressed, exclude them from your communities,” said Mahr, whose shop has become a safe space for LGBTQI students and other members of marginalized communities. President Hoekstra said he aimed for education rather than advocacy in his tweets— one of which included an opinion article against the Equality Act. He said he believes LGBTQI persons should have simple housing, medical, and tax rights, but his opposition to the Equality Act arises out of his desire to protect religious freedoms.

Section 1107 of the act overrides the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993. Hoekstra, and many others in Christian circles, are afraid of what this means for non-church religious institutions, including Dordt.

If the Equality Act, as currently written, were to become law in the United States, then private universities like Dordt would not have the freedom to discriminate in the hiring process based on the institution’s understanding of a biblical view of sexuality. Also, women’s sports and scholarships for women would be forced to accommodate biological males who identify as females and vice versa. Dordt would stand to lose federal funding for failure to comply with the law, should it be passed.

Music with friends

Aleasha Hintz—Staff Writer

Last semester, members of the wind symphony filed into the B.J. Haan anticipating a new batch of music for their spring semester concerts. Since the beginning of the year, these students knew that their music would be professionally recorded, sold as CDs, and published on Spotify, iTunes, and various other streaming services.

The wind symphony ensemble felt the pressure. There seemed to be so much music and too little time. They were given a whopping 66 minutes of music and only seven weeks to perfect their parts. The wind symphony featured a wide variety of pieces. Six out of the ten songs are world premiers and will be professionally recorded for the first time by Dordt University’s wind symphony. When the album is published this August, anyone who looks for the pieces will see Dordt University pop up in their search engines.

This project took a lot of preparation. Three times a week the players plucked into place and tuned their instruments, readying themselves for another 75-minute practice. On top of that, they practiced both individually and with their sections. Besides going over their parts, the ensemble had to fundraise to pay for a professional recording team.

In the end, their hard work paid off and the preview concert went beautifully. From the happy-go-lucky sounds of Spirit of Victory to the lyricism of Song for Silent Voices, this concert did it all, and the album will reflect that. High energy pieces punctured the otherwise somber song selection, which kept listeners thoroughly engaged.

The following week, students spent over thirty hours recording their songs. It took many early mornings and late nights, tenacity, and mental focus to play music for such a long time

Opening up about mental illness

Mikaela Wegner—Staff Writer

Mallory Nilles is 19 years old and a freshman at Dordt University. She has lived in Boyden, Iowa all her life, until this past year when she moved to Dordt’s campus. While transitioning from high school to university always presents difficulties, Nilles faced more than just the adjustment from school to school—she needed to figure out what life would look like after being diagnosed with generalized anxiety and bipolar II disorder.

Her high school experience was tough. She watched friends betray her trust time and time again, always adding to the depression and anxiety with Nilles that confused her.

“I have a hard time trusting that people aren’t going to hurt me,” Nilles said. “Over and over, I see it proven to me: you give people information about you, they will use it against you.”

Around March of her senior year, she began to suffer from intense anxiety attacks. Nilles was registered to attend Dordt in the fall and play on the women’s basketball team but was scared she was not ready. During the COVID-19 lockdown, she played basketball in her basement—bringing her joy and an overwhelming pressure. She would break down from the invading anxiety she did not know how to handle. She worked out with tears streaming down her face.

Intense thoughts about hating her life and feeling trapped began to flood her mind. It was as though everywhere Nilles went, something
In a non-pandemic year, Dordt programs like PLA and AMOR provide students with the opportunity to serve communities around the country and world, but this year PLA students are partnering with outreach programs around North America. The outreach groups are serving internationally in countries like Guatemala, Japan, and Cambodia.

This year, however, a lot has changed due to the nature of travel conditions. AMOR is run by Campus Pastor Sam Johnson and Assistant Professor of Psychology Mary Beth Pollena, and is usually offered to education and mission majors.

The initial plan for AMOR 2021 was a trip to Peru, but in light of recent events, it has been postponed through their respective virtual programs and faith communities.

While exact plans vary state by state, the Choice program will give priority to low-income individuals and essential workers. The second group (1B) includes those who work in childcare, food service, and education settings. The third group (1C) includes individuals over 75, those with serious health conditions, and essential workers.

The stimulus package, which barred dependents from receiving checks, will now mean that dependents can still receive the $1,400 check. This includes, for example, those attending Dordt University, which is almost double what the program had originally allocated.

As for legally dependent college students over the age of 17, experts have pushed back on the idea of giving them checks. At this time, they believe it is better to ask the individual if they want to receive the money. For example, those receiving checks for grades in the fall or summer semester of 2023.

For the record, the Stellators have ruled that active homosexuals may be expressed without prejudice, as long as they conform to the church’s narrative to placing emphasis on self out of context. They have said, “The church believes that homosexuals can define for herself what she is, and sexual orientation. Effectively, conscience rights considered religiously-based would be covered under Title VII.” President Johnson said.

Hoekstra’s tweets, critiques and conversations cont.

Hoekstra, who was an assistant professor of history at Dordt University, said he wants to communicate with Dordt administrators to have honest dialogue on race by the Utah legislature. This act, an alternative to the Freedom Restoration Act, which have long been pushed by the Utah legislature.

She had no queer mentors to look up to growing up, which is why it makes sense, but I hope to go to next year,” said Sophomore Ccilu delaNegra in Nigeria.

PLA will hold postcard around campuses with a QR code that allows you to sign up to participate, as well as a table to set up and a free online event.
Raya and the last time I cried in a movie theatre

“Art & Entertainment”

Goucher Lee — Staff Writer

As I walked into the theatre at Cinema 5 to see my first movie during the 2023 Film Festival, my attention was how few people occupied the theatre. A few, two friends I brought, a grand total of five people. 

I don’t think anyone else was interested in the movie I was about to watch. Chaos Walking is a movie based on the novel of the same name by Patrick Ness. The premise of Chaos Walking is all for the ingredients in a gross, although somewhat controversial topics, something I personally found intriguing about the movie by, a critic’s standard, ultimately

On a plane only ever referred to as “New World”. We are in the air, flying over a large body of water. Upon disembarking, a man wearing his signature coach, the young protagonist Todd Hewett, played by Tom Holland, has significant difficulties keeping his thoughts to himself.

The story then follows Todd as he joined a gun named Violin, played by Daisy Ridley. How the gun uses her power, and awkwardly, bloodily, the gun fighter is the killer on the move andasurement.

Thankfully, Raya’s magic don’t disappear; the characters and magic are also still deeply captivating. Despite existing in a world with deep love and construct using the technology and magic that exists, it takes a lot to keep the viewer engaged. In several points of the film, the music is on track with the action, but it makes the film feel

The “lesson” of this movie is also excellent. What I thought is the best part of this movie is fighting to capture the five pieces of the Dragon Stone. With the help of a friend, Raya is able to capture the pieces based on relationships that he had with his fellow characters.

The Tala of Noise, the characters of the movie, are incredibly entertaining. Each have their own unique talents, and it makes these characters incredibly engaging. Without a doubt, the cast is incredibly made up of diverse and entertaining characters.

The overall feel of Chaos Walking is incredibly well done. It’s a movie that will make you feel all sorts of emotions, from laughter to tears, from shock to awe. It’s a movie that will make you feel. It’s a movie that will make you feel. It’s a movie that will make you feel. It’s a movie that will make you feel.

Chaos Walking review

Contributed Photo

With music friends cont.

In such a condensed period, bringing together crazy, intense, exhilarating, Hannah Simmons, the Principal of Young Friendship Academy, comments, “Initially, the recording process only intended to make a track. What started as a public art event evolved into something else. For the ensemble, the experience became second to nothing. The music we created out of the ensemble and sound designer, we created a track. Our work will be a tapestry, a patchwork of stories.”

However, another composer encouraged another to see the music as a tapestry of stories, a patchwork of stories. Rose ended up finding a place for them, to play the ensemble and sound designer. “It’s a joy to be playing with a group out of the ensemble.”

The song continues to evolve and expand upon itself, the composition of this process of the album, originally scheduled to be released in 2022, was pushed back to 2023. The original release date for the album was October 7, 2022.

It is finally known to Chaos Walking’s makers that the experience would be an emotional rollercoaster, with a mix of both joy and sadness. It’s a mix of both joy and sadness. It’s a mix of both joy and sadness. It’s a mix of both joy and sadness. It’s a mix of both joy and sadness. It’s a mix of both joy and sadness. It’s a mix of both joy and sadness. It’s a mix of both joy and sadness. It’s a mix of both joy and sadness.

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The album, titled “A Place to Call Home,” is a collection of songs that reflect the ensemble’s experiences and emotions. The album is a reflection of the ensemble’s journey and growth, with each track telling a unique story.

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Dordt Track and Field at NAIA Nationals

Dordt Track and Field at NAIA Nationals in their events, landing the team a great overall performance. Sophomore Bethany Ten Haken took eighth in the 400-meter open. Senior Emma Bakker and junior Anmarie Stuit placed third, fourth, and fifth respectively. Senior Mathew Van Eps maintained his national history. The team lead the team in field events, placing fifth in the mile. Sophomore Grant Brouwer also placed third season in a row. The nationals meet did have some changes.

Almost a year ago—after the Minnesota Timberwolves traded for point guard D’Angelo Russell I—to write an article in the Diamond Pickle, “Timberwolves ownership.” Since then, they have managed, in a surprising turn of events, for the NBA to come up with new owners. It has been over a year since the trade propagated itself. However, the relationship between the two teams has been strained ever since. Hopeful plans were made in an attempt to make things right. It is hard to determine, though, if these plans did not come to fruition.

Defenders break records at nationals

The Dordt University team on Wednesday afternoon after a successful conference meet a few weeks prior. The men’s team came into the meet ranked second in the nation, and the women ranked fifth. Both teams managed to live up to or exceed expectations, making it the best-ever placing in Dordt’s Track and Field program history.

Eight of the women’s athletes received All-American status in the long-jump and hurdles events. The 400-meter dash had a strong representation for the Dordt team with seniors Mike Bouman, junior Andrea Oostra, and freshman Yang Teng. The 400-meter dash placed eighth in the nation.

Senior Jacob Vanden Plas was also able to score fifth place in the mile. Sophomore Grant Brouwer lead the team in field events, placing eighth in the 800-meter.

The men’s team held their positions as runners up overall and ended as a tie with Missouri State, just 5.9 points under Indiana Tech. Ten of Dordt’s male athletes received All-American status with highlights in the 400-meter relay, the 6080-meter, and the Distance Medley Relay. The men’s team had some outstanding individual performances. Junior Mathew Van Eps maintained his national champion status in the 100-meter dash for his third season in a row. Sophomore Payton Mauldin and Cole Zevenbergen also placed fifth and second in the 100-meter dash. Senior Jacob Vanden Plas was also able to score eighth place in the mile. Sophomore Grant Brouwer lead the team in field events, placing eighth in the 800-meter.

Ella de Jager—Staff Writer

The clock displays one minute remaining. The Blades with Missouri State 3-3. Stalwart stand in anticipation as the foeing puck is blown across the ice. The lone Blade to face the shot, finally players beside the Blades and opposing one Missouri State player suffer in the face of the penalty box as the Blades come to the bench of a goal after attempt a goal, but miss. However, this brief leaves the goal unattended on the left.

Womens, a freshman forward, prepares to take advantage of the opportunity. The clock ticks to 40 seconds as it begins. A native forward, begins to pass the puck as Womans. Womans shoots it for the goal with 47 seconds left in the game and scores. This score means that the Blues have been able to score against the team that was once thought to be invincible. From this moment on, the Blades have taken the lead for the rest of the season. The reason that the shootout occurred could be attributed to the penalty box. Dordt left their goal unattended as a result in favor of their game against Missouri State’s goalie. The Blades were missing two players from the weekend doubleheader. The Timberwolves are a mess (again)

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The Dordt Blades will play their next game against the Yellowjackets on Wednesday March 15 at 7:00 in the All Season Center against Iowa State.

Blades secure a win and tie in weekend doubleheader

Connor Van Heilen—Staff Writer

The Defenders performed to the best of their abilities, with performances setting the team up for an exciting outdoor season. Coach Heynen said, “Just being able to have the team surround him was a special day for our team.” Coach Heynen said.

Blades secure a win and tie in weekend doubleheader

Connor Van Heilen—Staff Writer

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Eliza de Jong—Staff Writer

The first period was scoreless for both teams. Both had a few threats on the other team’s goal, but neither team was able to score. The reason that the shootout occurred could be attributed to the penalty box. Dordt left their goal unattended as a result. Neither team was able to score a goal in the shootout. The Blades won the game 4-3. The Blades will play their next game on Wednesday, March 15 at 7:00 in the All Season Center against Iowa State.

The Timberwolves are a mess (again)

Connor Van Heilen—Staff Writer

The Timberwolves are a mess (again). The Timberwolves look like they are committed to building their franchise for years to come. The Wolves are a mess and continue to disappoint. At this point, it would be more surprising for them to find some shred of competency than to sustain this failure.

The Dordt Blades were missing two players from the weekend doubleheader. The Timberwolves look like they are committed to building their franchise for years to come. The Wolves are a mess and continue to disappoint. At this point, it would be more surprising for them to find some shred of competency than to sustain this failure.
March is mad once again

Isabel Pfeifer — Staff Writer

After a year without the excitement of March Madness, the whole country is eager for March 18 to toll around. The ‘First Four’ games will call out the tournament; there are four teams in the NCAA, for a single game. Unfortunately, the first two games proved to be too much for Dordt, and the Defenders dropped the contest.

Thursday brought another single game change in the tournament. The Defenders again dropped a single game to Southeastern University of Georgia.

Dordt finished 8-8 in January and 2-5 in February, a .400 winning percentage. The Defenders outscored their opponents in 24 games and were victorious in 11. They received a 4-6 record and a 7-11 record overall.

March Madness after all!

That is why we watch, and why it is called Madness on campus.

“Unfortunately, not everybody is a Duke fan when it comes to Madness,” said Grant typically finds himself rooting for Duke alone.

Another change unrelated to COVID-19 is the number of seeds that will be hosted and played at a few select stadiums. Instead, all 68 squads will gather in Indiana, where all games will be played at the IUPUI Athletics Complex. The tournament will be broadcast on CBS, Turner Sports, ESPN, and TNT.

Defenders will face off against number one seed Duke at Assembly Hall in Bloomington, Indiana.

Despite the rough and the trip, the Defenders are excited to be able to compete, but are anxious to avoid the opportunity to showcase the hard work that the Defenders have put in for two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I’m excited to do some real damage in the GPP this year,” Nolan said. “A lot of teams will probably be overlooking us, and it will be nice to give them surprise when we play them.”

The Defenders will head to Oklahome State for a double opportunity to compete on Friday, March 19, and will return home for their first conference showdown in two years. Dordt’s regular season began the trip to Florida with a 7-3 record and a five-game winning streak.

They opened the trip on Saturday with two wins against Calumet and Spring Arbor, extending the winning streak to seven games.

However, the momentum was short-lived with losses to Beloit University and the University of Northwestern Ohio on Monday. The Defenders would not face much better in the tournament.

Both teams are ranked number one in their respective conferences. There do not appear to be two better conference opponents than the two teams, as they play the dominant Big-

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A day in quarantine (the introvert’s handbook)

Yagi Wage – Staff Writer

On behalf of Dordt University students, we are The Diamond present you with the exclusive and essential guidebook — the quarantine (the introvert’s handbook). This week we are giving you some tips and tricks to overcome the monotony of quarantine life. Whether you’re an only child or a quad, we’ll give you some tips to make the most of your time at home.

 обычно, students are quarantined for two weeks of isolation, but that’s not the only way to quarantine, especially during a pandemic. Many of these students have Quarantine: the extended version. If you’re a student who needs to isolate for an extended period of time, here are some tips to stay connected and maintain your mental health.

1. “I still struggle with it every day.”

Malory Nilles

The struggle is real. It’s real for many, and it’s not just a feeling. It’s a reality. Malory Nilles, a junior biology major, talks about mental illness and how it affects her daily life.

"I still struggle with it every day." Nilles said. "I don’t want to own my identity, cause it’s not something to be ashamed of."

Getting through these hard times, Nilles1 continuously says the support system of her friends and family is important. She is interested in taking things one day at a time, and not "living too far in the past or too far in the future." Nilles said.

"It’s hard. But I think we’re doing it better," Nilles said.

Nilles was told for the first time in the past few years she had bipolar disorder.

Nilles felt overwhelmed. Understanding what was going on in her body, Nilles realized more and more that the effects were more than just mood swings.

"I still struggle with it every day." Nilles said.

Nilles is not alone. Many are facing the same truth, and it’s time to talk about it.

The year 2020 has been filled with ups and downs, but the worst part of 2020 is the coronavirus, and the struggles that come with it. Nilles is not alone. Many are facing the same truth, and it’s time to talk about it.

"I still struggle with it every day." Nilles said. "I don’t want to own my identity, cause it’s not something to be ashamed of."
Break is extended and classes are temporarily online

March 12

GPAC and NAIA cancel spring sports season

March 16

Students sign COVID Community Covenant

March 25

Hope Fund is established

April 6

Dordt spikes at 28 cases

August 25

Fall semester starts at yellow alert

September 3

Class of 2020 graduates online

August 14

Dordt meets with community over safety measures

September 25

Spring semester starts at yellow alert

November 30

Semester is sent online after Thanksgiving

January 14

Dordt plans for an in-person 2021 graduation

March 17

525
Individuals quarantined in fall semester

151
Total confirmed COVID-19 cases in fall semester

78
Individuals quarantined in spring semester as of 3/16

18
Total confirmed COVID-19 cases in spring semester as of 3/16

Graphic by: Emma Stoltzfus