President's new house more hospitable

Jeremy Vreeken
Staff Writer

Dordt students have many places on campus to get together, share meals and hang out. The newest one on the list: the president’s house.

Early last fall, renovation began on both the president’s house and the alumni house, which are located across the road behind the classroom building. Dordt has owned the two houses for nearly 15 years, but neither had been renovated until last fall.

When former President Carl Zylstra retired and the search committee began looking for a new president, hospitality was very much on their minds. Dordt needed a facility that could accommodate new presidents for years to come, as well as campus guests and visitors.

When President Erik Hoekstra was chosen, the college decided that it was time for the houses to be remodeled.

“The [president’s] house wasn’t remodeled around the Hoekstra family,” President Erik Hoekstra said. “It was built with all future presidents and their families in mind.”

Since neither the alumni house nor the president’s house had been renovated in the last 15 years, they needed to be improved in order to better serve the campus. Now, the alumni house has five individual bedrooms with attached bathrooms, a large common room and a shared kitchen. The new facility houses campus speakers and special guests and is also available for rent.

One of the biggest changes to the president’s house was the addition of a large banquet room. The room is equipped with a serving kitchen and all the necessary equipment for catering events. Catering is provided by Creative Dining Services, who also run the Commons and Defender Grille. The banquette room was built to host campus guests, special events and even Dordt students.

“Every freshman this year will eat at the house,” said Hoekstra.

Pairs of Core 100 classes will take turns being guests in the banquet hall. Other student groups have already been hosted there, such as members of the Kuypers Scholars Program and the entire residence life staff. President Hoekstra hopes to be able to host as many students as possible at the house over this year and the years to come.

“It’s important for us to live so close to campus,” Hoekstra commented. “It helps us engage with students and be a part of campus life.”

The campus community has long been an important part of Dordt College, and Dordt’s presidents have all lived on or very nearby campus. The first two presidents lived in what is now the nursing building between North and West halls; this renovation was a logical next step in that tradition.

Workstudy wage raised 25 cents

Lauren Bird
Staff Writer

This fall, the pay rate for workstudy students at Dordt College was raised from $7.25 to $7.50 an hour. A group of main administrative staff, including the provost, vice president of enrollment, and vice president of student services at Dordt, received a recommendation to raise the rate, and they felt this was necessary.

“When the rate has been minimum wage for a long time,” said Nederhoff, “there has been discussion on the national level to raise minimum wage, and so we want to start making steps now.”

Making steps now will ensure that there isn’t as drastic a change in the rate if it goes up more in the future.

“We also look at the convenience of working on campus,” said Nederhoff.

There has already been talk of raising the minimum wage to $10 an hour in California, so the panel at Dordt wants to be on their toes, preparing for any future changes to the current rate.

Dordt’s workstudy rate is somewhat low compared to some other colleges. For example, Penn State has a rate of $8.50 an hour and Texas Southern University pays anywhere between $8 and $10 to their work-study students. Other colleges give awards at the beginning of the year to students who apply to workstudy programs.

Nederhoff believes that Dordt’s program has more to offer, which makes up for the slightly lower rate.

“We don’t want people to take jobs based on the dollar amount,” said Nederhoff. “We want them to fill positions that are most helpful to them and their future career. We want them to pick a job they like and that they will value.”

This pay rate change affected all workstudy positions on campus.

“We’re flexible about working around students’ schedules, unlike most employers off campus,” said Nederhoff.

This theory seems to have worked at Dordt. Workstudy students received an email at the beginning of the semester about the increased salary, but many students didn’t pay much attention to it since it is only by 25 cents.
News

AGILE project kick-off

Lauren Kleyer
Staff Writer

“Every little thing matters; you make a difference.” Smith said. “I hope that this can be done again in the near future to bring Dordt’s community together on a global issue,” Veurink said. “I think we can keep the same excitement and high involvement throughout the rest of the events and fundraisers throughout the whole semester.”

“If anybody can make a difference, it’s Dordt people,” said Volkers. 

The hope is that students will keep open minds about this project and the effect that they can have. Schuite- man gave this advice to stu- dents: “Trust in the Lord, because sometimes God has other plans.”

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$12 million phase one construction on schedule

Haley Mulder
Staff Writer

The construction of the science building is well underway. The official groundbreaking was last May. Arlan Nederhoff, vice president of business affairs, remains positive about the progress.

“We are on schedule with where we are supposed to be and where the contractors said we should be,” Nederhoff said. “We are currently on phase one of three.”

The $12 million Phase One construction adds a link joining the Ribbens Academic Complex to the science building and expands the building to provide lab space for the engineering program.

“The new building will also have all of the science department’s faculty’s offices in one location, in order to have better collaboration together as a department,” Nederhoff said.

For the time being, some of the science professor’s offices have been relocated.

“We are going to make things work temporarily this year with two science faculty occupying offices in the BJ Haan mezzanine,” said engineering professor Ethan Brue.

“Some faculty members have to teach in other buildings, but overall we can manage for a year as we look forward to the new space that will serve both faculty and students.”

The new facility will be equipped with a solar wall, photovoltaic panels, an ice storage system, high efficiency windows and a variety of other energy management and conservation components, along with a new greenhouse and astronomy observatory.

“We hope the building will serve as an example of the ways in which a building can be designed with an eye toward good stewardship of energy resources,” Brue said.

Brue also said that the building will have better facilities for students to work on class projects, and for other science co-curricular activities, something students are excited about.

“I’m excited to see that there’s going to be rooms focused more on project based learning, sophomore engineering major Ian Veenstra said. “Doing projects is a great way of learning and I personally can’t wait to start.”

Animal science major Cora Okkema agreed. “I’m excited for the updated labs they are going to have...the way the air and temperature will be controlled sounds pretty neat as well.”

The interconnection of the science building to the classroom complex hopes to encourage interaction and collaboration between all of the departments.

“We look forward to ending our isolation from the rest of the departments on campus,” Brue said.

The project will take place in three phases and is expected to cost $20 million.

“Any building is a waste of materials, time, and money if it does not enable the people in it to become the servants of the Lord that we were created to be,” Brue said.

The building is set to be finished August of 2014, just in time to welcome students back for the upcoming year.

“I hope it provides the space for us to learn from each other and serve each other,” Brue said. “Building a living community that can go out from Dordt to serve and love his world.”

A Drinking Party?

Reuben Van Gaalen
Officer of the Press for Student Symposium

The origin of the word “symposium” comes from ancient Greek, meaning: a drinking party which followed the evening meal, was attended only by men and typically featured entertainment by hired musicians or performers.

While we do like to party in our own way, Dordt College’s Student Symposium is not limited to men and does not get together to drink alcoholic beverages. However, we do meet at 7 p.m., which does happen to follow the evening meal.

One might wonder, “What does Student Symposium accomplish if they do not convene to consume adult beverages?”

Well we at Student Symposium deal specifically in two areas. Our ultimate goal is to pass information from the students to the faculty, staff and administration, and vice versa, in order to promote positive communication and interaction among all groups.

Symposium also serves as the financial board for all student clubs on campus, organizing and processing funding requests as well as distributing funds. In other words, we are a voice for students to ask questions and convey thoughts geared toward making Dordt College a more effective institution.

Help us to be more effective by sharing your thoughts with us! Find us in the Terrace Room at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, email us at Student Symposium or look for us on Facebook and Twitter. We look forward to hearing your thoughts and questions.

When there’s a situation on campus it’s not just the Sioux Center Fire Department that comes, but also the department from Hull. In total, approximately seventy people come to campus when called, so Dordt makes sure to call it off if it is not an emergency situation.

“Anytime there’s an emergency, we have an automatic system that lets dispatch know and they choose which emergency personnel should come,” said Taylor.

When dispatch is alerted, they also notify the on-call maintenance person as well as Dordt Security.

Sometimes the alarms in on-campus apartments are triggered by things that don’t require emergency personnel to respond and in a situation like that Dordt pro-staff will call it off.

Dordt doesn’t pay anything per call because it’s a service of the community and it’s paid through taxes, but according to the Sioux Center website, members of the Sioux Center Fire Department are 100% volunteer.

The Sioux Center Fire Department has two fire stations, seven trucks, and over forty volunteers and they respond to approximately 80-100 calls from the community per year.

“Remember to thank the firemen,” said Taylor.
Lee Ver Burg
Staff Writer

Some will say the answer to this question is obvious. In the words of one of my roommates, “Of course they should, this is Dordt College.”

Adam Vander Stoep, a junior here at Dordt and an aspiring lawyer, said this in response to my question: “Absolutely!” When asked for an explanation, he said the answer was as simple as that.

Anderson Clare, a senior at Dordt, had a lot to say about this topic, which has apparently been coming up in his CORE 399 class.

“This is a class on discipleship, and we spend time on how we should not be praying. That is puzzling time on how we should not be required to do anything.”

Connor Leppink seems to be caught in the middle of the argument, both seeing the good in praying before class, and not wanting to mandate on professors.

“Within the Christian environment, I think it’s a good idea to pray before class,” Leppink said.

Despite this mixed report from the student body, the professors interviewed unanimously came up with the same answer: no.

Chemistry professor Carl Fictorie asked, “If prayer is habitual, does that make professors feel like that’s their stamp on class?”

Fictorie elaborated, saying that habitual prayer before class can sometimes make professors feel content with just that, failing to incorporate Christian beliefs in more aspects of the classroom.

“Prayer is a big part of our environment, I think it’s a good idea to pray in class,” Van Vliet said.

“Christian education is more than praying in class,” Van Vliet said.

- My Take On It -

The student’s comments were not surprising. There is a vast array of students on this campus from all different backgrounds, so their varied opinion is expected. On top of that, it’s hard getting a thoughtful (bold?) answer from a student, especially when I tell them that they may be quoted in the paper.

That being said, it was surprising hearing from professors that they do not believe in mandatory prayer before/during class. Now of course, there may be some professors who are all over this idea (although I didn’t find any). But the overall consensus seems to lean away from mandatory prayer at beginning of class.

At first, this surprised me. Prayer is a big part of our reformed worldview, something many of us were taught at a very young age. We do it before meals, in church (like 5 different times) and during personal devotions etc. So why shouldn’t we all do it before class?

But at the same time, the explanation I got from the professors made sense. Christianity is more than just prayer: it’s discipleship and servitude and many more things. Overemphasizing one element of Christianity relative to the others almost seems unnatural.

And on top of that, requiring anybody to do anything has its negative connotations. In theory, professors would begin performing their prayer before class strictly out of habit and nothing else.

Prayer is a great thing and I advocate it. It is a great idea for professors to pray before class, yet it is not a necessary one.

What do you think Dordt College?

Editors Note: The opinion(s) expressed in this article are strictly limited to those who said it, and do not represent the opinions of this publication.
Will you ‘tip toe’ on out of the movie theatre? An ‘Insidious 2’ review

Megan Kaiser
Staff Writer

Personally, I am not someone who handles films like this well. At one point in my life, The Mummy was the top scary movie on my very short horror list. That is pathetic.

I was that goon that would not let any limb hang off the bed at night or that would continue to lay there in the dark even though I thought my bladder was going to implode. There was no way that I was going to walk around in the dark.

So one would think that I probably never went and saw Insidious 2, right?

Wrong.

I saw Insidious two years ago and after that movie I decided that I would never dream again. Then last week I found myself sitting in the theatre surrounded by college students and good company of the like, waiting for that creepy soundtrack that does not disappoint. Eerie violins and that freakish song that talks about ‘tip-toeing through the tulips’. Make that song your morning alarm. Go ahead, I dare you.

For those of you that have absolutely no idea what Insidious is even about, there is a young boy named Dalton, who is able to leave his physical body and travel with his spiritual body into a place called “The Further.”

In English, it’s like one big coma dream. Josh, his Father, goes out to save him, and in the process of saving him, something follows Josh back in the real world and, in a sense, possesses him. The sequel is all about Josh and his childhood connections to this place called “The Further” and what is spiritually possessing him.

I’m a panz. I am admitting it here and now. Pushing that aside though, I was not that scared in all honesty. I mean, don’t get me wrong. There are plenty of scenes where you jump and your heart starts to race. I do this thing where I squint my eyes so I can’t completely tell what is going on, but I did that like, once in this film.

Instead of being scared beyond all belief, I actually laughed in this movie. The two goony Ghostbuster dudes killed me every time they were on screen. There were a couple of scenes where I let a good giggle go, but I don’t want to ruin those scenes for you.

Overall, I enjoyed the movie. The beginning took a bit too long to set up, but I was able to sleep without a problem that night. That’s a solid win in my book. The movie wasn’t utterly scary. It encompassed the right amount of horror, if that makes any sense. It was pretty rad how it all came together in the end. In my mind, the plot is fairly sturdy. Sturdy like a good shed. If I had to give it a rating, I would give it a 3 out of 5. Will you want to ‘tip toe’ out during the movie? Nah. I’d say it’s definitely worth the 8 bucks, or whatever movie tickets even are anymore. The bigger question here is, is it better than Sharknado? I don’t know man, what could top a tornado of sharks? Maybe someone getting railed in the head with a teapot… I’ve given away too much.

Dordt theatre to perform School for Scandal

The play is a Restoration Comedy, set in 1777 and written Richard Brinsley Sheridan. According to Ter Haar, Dordt’s Theatre Arts department hasn’t done a Restoration style play since 1992 and she is excited about their modern rendition of this style.

“School for Scandal is all about intrigue, gossip, and hiding behind masks. It features a high-class society addicted to creating scandal—something it does very well,” said Ter Haar.

The play already and actors have run through the entire play line to line, agreeing that rehearsals are going very well. The cast would agree that rehearsals are proceeding with tails. Be prepared for lots of physical comedy and the women are getting used to their corsets and the men have to deal with coats and tails. Be prepared for a raucous theatrical experience!” said Ter Haar.

“School for Scandal is a Restoration play written by Richard Brinsley Sheridan. It features a high-class society addicted to creating scandal—something it does very well,” said Ter Haar.

The play is all about witty language and humor, so it is a challenge for the actors to memorize such stylized dialogue,” said Ter Haar.

In English, it’s like one big coma dream. Josh, his Father, goes out to save him, and in the process of saving him, something follows Josh back in the real world and, in a sense, possesses him. The sequel is all about Josh and his childhood connections to this place called “The Further” and what is spiritually possessing him.

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The play is approximate-ly two and a half hours long with intermission. Students should keep in mind that admission for the final dress rehearsal, held on October 9, is free.

Eric Rowe and Carolyn Van Der Aa running lines

Rachel Mulder
Staff Writer

The Dordt theatre department has been hard at work preparing for their production of School for Scandal, which will begin October 10 at the TePaske Theatre in Sioux Center, IA.

“(The play) raises interesting questions about honesty, integrity, and who we are in community with each other,” said Teresa Ter Haar, director of School for Scandal and chair of the theatre arts department.

The play is approximate-ly two and a half hours long with intermission. Students should keep in mind that admission for the final dress rehearsal, held on October 9, is free.
New junior varsity coach no stranger to Dordt program

Typically, collegiate athletes move up the ladder from junior varsity to varsity—not the other way around.

Danae Geels is an exception. The 2013 Dordt graduate and four-year varsity volleyball stand-out returned to coach the program’s JV squad this season. As Geels frankly admits, it wasn’t a role she ever anticipated having.

“I guess I’d never really considered it,” said Geels. “[Coach Hanson] called me one random day this summer and just asked if I had decided on anything yet, and I said ‘Nope.’”

Geels, an education major, was still in limbo about her future plans as the new school year approached. Dordt volleyball coach Chad Hanson, having known Geels for two years, thought she would be perfect as a mentor for the young athletes.

“She is able to connect and relate very well with these student-athletes,” said Hanson. “She understands what they are experiencing and possibly what they might be thinking at different times.”

It helps that Geels, 22, has been in the same position as many of the 18, 19 and 20-year-olds that she coaches. Geels began her Dordt volleyball career at the JV level without any certainty she’d continue.

A mid-season varsity call-up in 2009 helped Geels’ cause, but the strong mentorship she had along the way solidified her love of the sport.

Four years later, she gets the chance to reciprocate.

“I see this in any other kind of ministry,” said Geels. “I just want to be able to pour into these girls and invest in their lives and make them feel special for the season.”

Freshman Hope Kramer is thoroughly enjoying her time under the new junior varsity coach.

“She genuinely cares about us and is a ton of fun to play for,” said Kramer. “She knows how to get us to compete in positive ways, and I am so thankful to get to play with her as my coach.”

Geels defines herself as “chill,” never the most intense person on the court. She encourages her team to have fun.

“If you’re not having fun, then what’s the point of playing?” she asked.

Geels’ opponents over the previous four years may not have had much fun dealing with her on the court. Over her four years at Dordt, the 6-foot-1 Geels hammered over 1,100 kills. Her team-leading 331 attacks last season helped the Defenders finish 11-5 in conference play.

As Hanson explained, her athleticism on the court is tough to replace.

“She played with a free spirit on the court. She was instinctive at finding an offensive opportunity to score. She is also very athletic and a tremendous jumper,” Hanson said.

Former teammate and current senior Lindsey Floen points out Geels’ intangible strengths.

“[Danae] led on the court by her actions, and she always seemed determined to do her best,” said Floen. “She was a great spiritual leader on and off the court.”

Now leading as a coach, Geels gets to pass on the knowledge she gleaned from 129 varsity matches played.

“She definitely knows her stuff,” said Kramer. “I have learned so much from her already this season, and I’m excited to keep learning more.”

“Danae is a great listener,” said Floen. “I think that is a necessary quality when you are a coach.”

Geels never planned on coaching volleyball, nor does she necessarily plan to pursue it further. The Sheldon, Iowa-native is still considering a future in education as she substitute teaches part-time in local schools.

But if her young team keeps up its current pace, Coach Hanson may want to remove the “interim” label from Geels’ name. The JV team is 7-2 through nine contests.

“Coach keeps cracking jokes that he’s going to extend my contract,” said Geels.
We're in L.A. Do You Care?

Hi, we’re Kyle and Darin, and we’re going to talk about Los Angeles and stuff.

Darin: For you readers back home, we just want to start off by saying that we’re not columnists. We’re terrible. We’re just modern-day Platos, trying to pass on knowledge from our learning class here in Nicaragua. I and several other students...

Darin Lammers and Kyle Dykema Columnists

Our purpose is to visit these families and record their stories -- who they are, how they are involved in ETU, how ETU has impacted them and how they have subsequently impacted the community. The very first house we visited was home to a woman and her mother, who was sick with cancer. The meeting ended as we prayed together. We’re in L.A. Do You Care?

Darin: Also, I got cussed out by a Black man for not knowing where the nearest Subway was. He started following me, calling me ***!ing white trash. I still don’t know where the nearest Subway is.

Kyle: You should probably get on that.

Darin: Yeah I know… Kyle: Everyone at Dordt’s going to think the people in L.A. are thugs and crude gay club sniffer.

Darin: No, those are just the most memorable people. Kyle: True. But there are other things we’ve noticed that don’t just involve weird people.

Darin: Yeah. On a more serious note, something I’ve noticed is that the poor and the rich are not isolated into separate communities. Really nice buildings and apartments will neighbor trashly little houses. It’s just something that jumped out at me. What about you?

Kyle: Being here, and being on this program (Los Angeles Film Studies Center), I’ve learned that there’s actually quite a lot of Christians here, and they all seem pretty close to one another. They all want to be each others’ hero. It’s a smaller community of Christian filmmakers and artists within the larger community of L.A.

Darin: There’s a ton of people in the film industry that you wouldn’t expect to be Christians. We met Doug Jones (Pans’s Labyrinth, Hellboy), and he talked about being a Christian actor here.

We also sat next to Link from Youtube’s “Rhett and Link” in church, which caught me off guard. You just don’t expect semi-famous people to be sitting next to you in church pews.

Kyle: One of our professors served as an elder alongside Tony Hale (Buster from Arrested Development). So things like that. You’d be surprised who’s a part of the Christian community in L.A.

Darin: It’s cool to see.

Kyle: Agreed. Well, we should probably wrap it up. Thanks for reading everyone.

Kyle: It totally was.

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Clarification

Part of the final quote in the story about Sam Ashmore in the Thursday, Sept. 12, edition of the Dordt Diamond was cut off. Here is Ashmore’s full quote, “I want my legacy to be a follower of Christ,” said Ashmore. “Someone who loved Jesus, loved the Lord and caused his teammates and his coaches to know the Lord more.”