Justice Matters Club helps at ‘The Banquet’

Jessi Rieken
Staff Writer

Last Saturday, several students from the Dordt community traveled to Sioux Falls to feed a hot meal to people living on limited means. Each year the Justice Matters club hosts a lunch at ‘The Banquet’ in Sioux Falls.

“The Banquet” was a success. The Dortmund community graciously opened their pockets and supplied more than they could have imagined. “The Banquet was a success.”

Soulforce Equality riding to Dordt

Cheryl Korthuis
Staff Writer

A group of people lobbying for gay, lesbian, transgender and other sexual orientations will visit Dordt College on March 8 and 9. The group, called Equality Ride, wants to challenge organizational policies that discriminate against other-than-straight sexuality.

The Equality Ride is a department of Soulforce, a non-profit organization from Lynchburg, Virginia. Soulforce was founded Rev. Dr. Mel White, and his partner, Gary Nixon. “The pair believes ‘we must develop their inner lives while working to transform society.’ They want to protest in a nonviolent, Martin Luther King, Jr. style.”

Soulforce targets institutions that have antigay policies, and Soulforce wants to provide Dordt faculty, staff and students with informational films and materials. They have fought against Focus on the Family, a Christian ministry, and are concerned that Dr. James Dobson’s views are “dangerous and misleading.”

Dr. White claims that there is Biblical evidence for backing up homosexuality. Soulforce.org gives vague references to the Bible, saying, “The Bible is a book about God. The Bible is not a book about human sexuality.” and, “the Biblical authors are silent about homosexual orientation as we know it today. They neither approve or condemn it.”

The website also has a tab labeled “Anti-GLBT Watch,” where they describe several church denominations’ views on homosexuality. They include trials against pastors who have admitted they are gay and summaries of how a denomination treats homosexuals.

The Equality Ride contacted the leaders of Dordt, including President Zylstra, last semester. Dordt discouraged the group from coming to campus, but Soulforce decided to continue with their plans to come to Dordt. “We want to be hospitable and courteous, and engage in dialogue,” said Ken Boersma, Vice President for Student Services.

Boersma, and the rest of the planning team of students, administration, faculty and staff ask for prayers from the community for wisdom and strength. “We want to speak the truth in love,” said Boersma.

Obviously, Dordt and Soulforce have different ideas concerning the truth of God’s design for sexuality. Dordt’s planning team is trying to be careful and wise with the Soulforce visit. The conservative Dordt and Sioux Center communities starkly contrast the liberal Soulforce. Dordt students and the Sioux Center community will need to face their ideas about sexuality if they dialogue with Soulforce.

Student Services is gathering materials to give to those who want some Christian resources, including the Christian Reformed Church’s Synod decision and a pamphlet on homosexuality versus the Bible. Any further concerns can be directed to Dordt’s Dean of Chapel, Rod Gorter.
The third front in Somalia

Joel Veldkamp
Staff Writer

When most Westerners think about the war on terror, they think of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, where thousands of U.S. troops are engaged in combat with radical Islamists. But there is a lesser-known third front in the war — in the impoverished, war-torn nation of Somalia. The U.S. military is currently engaged in a struggle to make sure that terrorists do not gain a stronghold there, and that struggle is now at a pivotal moment.

Somalia has been without an effective government since 1991, when its dictator was overthrown by warlords, throwing the nation into a devastating civil war. A U.S.-led humanitarian mission to protect food shipments for Somalia’s starving people ended in 1994, after 19 American soldiers were killed in the infamous Black Hawk Down incident. In 2004, a UN-recognized transitional government took power, but in the summer of 2006, a radical Muslim group called the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) swiftly swept into Mogadishu, the Somali capital, and took power.

Intelligence analysts had long feared that terrorists might find a new safe haven in the numerous power vacuums of Africa. The ICU is believed by many inside the government to be linked to al Qaeda, and to be sheltering al Qaeda operatives involved in the 1998 embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. With the ICU’s takeover of Mogadishu, many began to fear the rise of a “new Taliban” in Africa.

By late 2006, the ICU controlled nearly all of Somalia, seventeen terrorist camps were functioning in Somalia and Muslim fighters from various regions were traveling to Somalia to train and to fight with the ICU. Then the ICU began its counterattack. As the ICU began a final attack on the transitional government in southern Somalia, the Ethiopian military, with U.S. backing, responded with force to defend the transitional government. The U.S. military itself carried out at least two air strikes on al Qaeda targets, and according to some sources, American Marines, Special Ops forces, and CIA paramilitary forces were active in the fighting from the beginning. On Dec. 28, Ethiopian forces expelled the ICU from Mogadishu. By the end of Jan., the final ICU stronghold had been destroyed, and the ICU’s leader, Sheik Sharif, had been captured.

But the problem is far from solved. Since the ICU’s overthrow, violence in Mogadishu has shot upwards. The ICU’s fallen leaders are promising an Iraq-style insurgency, and it appears to be beginning. On Monday, Islamic fighters attacked the presidential palace and a police station in Mogadishu with rockets. In the ensuing violence between the fighters and government forces, a father and his young son were killed in their home by a mortar attack. A few hours before the fighting broke out, a bombing at a pro-government rally in Somalia’s third-largest city killed five people. The violence will likely continue.

If the transitional government is to hold on to power and prevent a return of the ICU, it is critical that security be restored to Somalia’s cities. The United States has pledged $40 million to help Somalia, and Nigeria and Uganda have pledged to send 8,000 troops for an African Union peacekeeping force there. But Sheik Sharif has warned that a foreign peacekeeping force will only add to unrest in Somalia. Whether Somalia will turn into a new Iraq, or find its way towards peace, only time will tell.

A new type of illiteracy develops

Grace Venhuizen
Staff Writer

When bored, most college students would prefer to watch a rerun of the sitcom Friends before picking up a classic American novel like The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. It is precisely for this reason that a new trend is developing in college graduates — illiteracy.

Reading is a privilege that is taken for granted in current American society, especially within colleges. My great uncle Carl Mulder tells the story with pride of how he earned his very own chalk slate for knowing the entire alphabet. Mulder learned the alphabet more than 70 years ago when he was being taught to read. Today, one current Dordt College student calls reading a “chore.”

The Boston Globe reported a 10 percent overall drop in reading rates across America, and a 16 percent drop in rates among college students in 2004. According to this study, less than half of all Americans—and even fewer college students—have read a short story, play, poem or novel in the year preceding this study. The USA Today found that more than 50 percent of four-year college graduates and 75 percent of two-year college graduates cannot perform complex literary tasks. These tasks include understanding arguments made in newspaper articles or analyzing poems.

“It’s appalling — it’s really astounding,” says Michael Gorman, president of the American Library Association in an article by the Washington Post. Gorman believes that this type of drop is linked to the drop in college students reading for pleasure.

A high school graduate in Wisconsin recently said it wasn’t the words with which she was struggling—it was the meaning. This is a different kind of illiteracy, one caused by students’ failing to read for pleasure.

Renae Venhuizen, a middle school English and literature teacher, says that there is a “clear cut line [in grades] between the readers and the non readers.” She says that if the readers find the work to be easier, they get it done faster and they do it well. Venhuizen admits that she has taught smart students that don’t read for fun — but it doesn’t happen often.

Reading as a hobby is quickly being replaced by virtual entertainment such as computers or TV. Reading takes more work, time and effort than learning from something visual on a computer or TV. Readers imagine the picture; TV watchers have nothing to imagine. Reading sparks creativity in the imagination; the mind is active and ingenuity develops.

TV so easily spoon feeds information to its watchers, but books give readers no such luxury. Readers are forced to think critically and dig deeper into the story. Practicing these types of skills by reading is an important way for them to develop in the classroom.

The privilege of reading can no longer be taken for granted in American society. Americans, next time you’re bored, don’t settle for reruns of the same unoriginal TV series. Pick up a classic and float down the river with Huckleberry Finn.
Preparation and response to the Equality Ride

Nathan Smith
Staff Writer

A month ago, Dordt College was not expecting that the Soulforce Equality Ride would come to our campus, but expectations have a way of sinking it to you just when you think you know how things are going to go down. So, the plans that were not being made are now in the works, and Dordt has begun the task of gearing up its cogs of preparation. (Never fear though, the cogs have been oiled a little and a bit of extra coal has been shoveled into the furnace to get things moving a little quicker.) This turn of events is not ideal, no sirs and madams, but the game of ideal situations is not one we can really play unless we initiate it long before anyone else does (and even then sometimes it’s still not ideal).

As a whole campus, we haven’t addressed the issue of homosexuality (or sexuality in general) as regularly as we should have been doing, and now our hand has been in many ways forced. The last time sexuality was discussed campus-wide was about four years ago, and in this light the event presents itself as a good opportunity for Dordt to revisit the important difficulties that are made manifest through our fallen sexuality. To put it bluntly and slightly comy: we’ve been missing the bus for several years now, but this bus isn’t going to miss us.

The planning team that began meeting several weeks ago has not definitively determined the parameters of the Soulforce visit (at least when this article was written), but it will likely consist of opportunities for students, faculty and staff to interact with and show hospitality to the riders. These opportunities may take the form of information booths, forums and panel discussions. The task force is also working on ways to provide opportunities for the campus to prepare before the event actually occurs:

The West. However, there are lies mixed in with the truths. The artist failed to convey the fact that these fundamentalists are extremists and not a part of mainstream Islam. The average Muslim does not go to bed at night plotting how to destroy America. Rather, the average Muslim goes to bed worrying about how he will feed his starving children the next day. Every westerner has his nuts. Islam has Bin Laden and Zarqawi. Christianity has Timothy McVeigh, Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, the Branch Davidians of Waco Texas and bombers of abortion clinics.

The Koran commands Muslims to kill polytheists. In the Bible, God commands his people to wipe out the Canaanites. On the surface, when you place them side by side, Christianity doesn’t come off looking much better than Islam. Christians often quote verses from the Koran which seem to incite Muslims to declare jihad upon unbelievers. However, ripping Koranic verses re-

mously (At least you didn’t say, ‘I have this friend… it’s not me, but my friend was a loser last night…) I don’t do this for everybody, but I like your face— I’m giving you the nice face special. I made a mix for you to study and give to someone. You’ll probably want to have this in the hands of your girl some time before next year’s Valentine’s Day)

1. Neighborhood #1 (Tunnels) — Arcade Fire
2. Better — Regina Spektor
3. O Valenci — The Decemberists
4. Love And Some Verses — Iron & Wine
5. Wild Honey — U2
6. Delicate — Damien Rice
7. The Luckiest — Ben Folds
8. The Dress Looks Nice On You — Sufjan Stevens
9. Dear Valentine — Guster
10. Hotel Yorba — White Stripes

(Feel free to throw in some Barry White)

Who is your girl? Why her? Decide to hang out with her. Immediately later, we’ll discuss what you should wear. Feel free to throw in some Barry White

You people. I don’t understand you. I haven’t felt easy on the cologne and ‘find her. Go to her. Hold out your hand and, with a straight face, say, “I’m going to go on a walk. Can you hold this for me?” Nice.

One of the desires of the committee is to establish a framework that could be used at Dordt to continue to address human sexuality on a regular basis. There’s no dancing around the fact that many at Dordt haven’t had a lot of extensive exposure to outward lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender lifestyles. Creating a framework to address human sexuality will hopefully be an effective way to approach the ignorance, fear and hateful disgust that can too readily grow like weeds out here in the Midwest.

Our best preparation, though, will come not through the planning committee, but through the prayers of the entire campus. It is through prayer and submissive hearts that we will be able to prepare our campus as a place of love, understanding and obedience to God. Through prayer we can come together as a community that humbly seeks both the forgiveness for the sexual sins (and sins of hatred or ignorance) that we all have likely committed as well as how we can obediently follow God’s design for sexuality.

Misinformed at heart

Micah Schuurman
Staff Writer

“Hero at Heart,” a piece of art depicting Osama bin-Laden and the World Trade Center, hangs in the art department’s gallery in the classroom building. What makes this piece of art particularly noticeable is the piece of paper which the artist placed next to his creation. In the third paragraph of his explanation, the artist lays forth his understanding of the struggle between Islam and the West.

There is some truth in what the artist wrote. Bin-Laden and his followers have indeed declared war upon the West. However, there are lies mixed in with the truths. The artist failed to convey the fact that these fundamentalists are extremists and not a part of mainstream Islam. The average Muslim does not go to bed at night plotting how to destroy America. Rather, the average Muslim goes to bed worrying about how he will feed his starving children the next day. Every westerner has his nuts. Islam has Bin Laden and Zarqawi. Christianity has Timothy McVeigh, Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, the Branch Davidians of Waco Texas and bombers of abortion clinics.

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...with Alvin Shim

Ask Alvin

...with Alvin Shim

Alvin, it’s post-Valentine’s Day. I did nothing yesterday. I have nobody. I sat in my dorm and watched Wedding Crashers alone while my roommates (one dating, the other engaged) were out. They said they came back and found me in a pool of melted Super Fudge Chunk ice cream and self-pity. I don’t remember it all too well—I had a pounding headache this morning. How do I secure Valentine’s Day for next year?

You people. I don’t understand you. I haven’t felt this way since I was a freshman girl at Unity Christian HIGH SCHOOL! Ha! But seriously, folks…

Ok, this is really not my department. Romance and planning ahead, that is. I’m no good. But I’ll do my best because you put yourself on the line accidentally.
Changes considered for Gen-Ed requirements

Bridget Smith
Staff Writer

This past month, Dr. Hubert Krygsman, the Chairman of the General Education Committee, and Jim Bos, Registrar, met with Student Forum to discuss the GEP (General Education Program) Review Team Report, which has been in the works for the past three years.

The report explains the goal of the proposed changes: "Broadly stated, this review is intended not to reinvent Dordt's GEP, but to develop and strengthen our current program by implementing our General Education Framework more fully."

The new proposal seeks to strengthen the weak areas of the current GEP. The changes include more efficient sequencing, more thorough worldview training and improved interconnections of studies within students' major programs.

One of the changes that will occur under the new GEP is that mandatory courses will be given the prefix CORE instead of maintaining the department-specific title (such as ENG 100). The GEC believes that this change will help to set apart the GEP as a distinct program. Lantinga, a member of the GEP, comments that the decision to change the GEP stems partly from the feedback from Assessment Day testing. The assessments reveal that Dordt students are not as well-prepared — especially in areas regarding the greater community and history — as they ought to be.

The report explains, "The requirement in history is inadequate to equip students either with a broad historical-redemptive worldview or with synoptic understanding of the main developments underlying spirits of Western culture." The report reveals concerns of these shortcomings affecting students' education within their majors, as well.

Additionally, the team members working on the report expressed a desire and a concern with equipping students with a broader knowledge of "the cross-disciplinary understanding about culture and creation," says Dr. Lantinga. Currently, she says, the "focus of some courses is narrowly disciplinary instead of cross-disciplinary."

The proposal of the GEP Review Team is to use ACT scores to place students in the appropriate level of the GE competency courses. Dr. Lantinga explains, "ACT scores will direct students to the best courses to help them develop their skills."

According to Jim Bos, Dordt registrar, the ACT is used because it is the "best standardized score we have."

Courses currently offered as ASK courses — which do not receive transferable college credit — will now be offered as regular 100 level courses. For example, the course currently designated ASK 060 will be offered as ENG 100 and given 4 credits.

The team members also dealt with concerns with course sequencing. The concern is that juniors and seniors are often taking courses that should be taken during freshman or sophomore year. The new program will provide better sequencing so that core courses will be taken during freshman and sophomore year. "Taking these courses earlier in college will allow later core and major courses to build on that foundation."

Dr. Lantinga says the GEP Review Team has been "talking to people all along about our ideas. We've been in continual contact with faculty." If the proposal passes, the GEC hopes to begin implementing some aspects of the new GEP by the fall semester. Changes will affect only incoming freshman.

Students help with campus entrance landscaping

Jacob Kroeze
Staff Writer

In less than three months, flowers will be ready to bloom though the sub-freezing temperatures that are now, if not annoying, utterly menacing. Butterfly milkweed, blazing star, blanket flower, daylilies, sedums, catmint, lavender, aster and native switchgrass will be flourishing in the new campus entrance area, thanks to the work of Dr. Goedhart and his horticulture class. Along with trees, signs and landscaping, these varieties of plants have been chosen as part of the final plan for the new campus entrance.

The cooperation of staff and faculty brought out this plan, to provide needed directions and information for visitors and beautify Dordt's campus. The new landscaping will also provide an intriguing stop on a bicycle path around Sioux Center. The decision to grow many of the plants in Dordt's greenhouse provides practical experience for the horticulture class and keeps money on campus that would have gone to a contracted greenhouse.

The students have seeded the plants and have begun to transplant the seedlings into individual pots. The horticulture class is excited to learn more about pest control, fertilization and other necessities of the plants in order to produce a beautiful contribution to the entrance.

According to Harlan Muilenburg, Dordt's grounds supervisor, care for the new area on campus will add about two hours of work to the grounds crew's week. Maintenance intends to install edging, plant trees and perennials, lay mulch and help with seeding the grass, beginning in early April.

Opinion Poll:

"Should Diamond photographer Jeremy Westra shave off his beard?"

"No, because it's cold, and because I have one." — Josh Cheney

"Yes, he should be preparing for senior scramble. No one knows what he looks like, because all you can see is hair." — Heather Kooiman

16 February 2007

Naomi De Boer

Dr. Krygsman, chairman of the General Education Committee, explains the GEP to students at a recent Student Forum meeting.

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Looking for God in the movies

Emily Sajdak
Staff Writer

Last Friday, Dr. Roy Anker, Professor of English at Calvin College, spoke at a film seminar for English professors, majors and area high school students. In a series of three sessions, Anker showed them how to analyze films from the Christian perspective.

In the first session, Ancker discussed films that show the biblical story within the movie plotline. One of the movies discussed was Wide Awake by M. Night Shyamalan. The film is about an inquisitive young boy, Joshua, whose grandfather has just died. Throughout the movie, Joshua searches for God and goes many places to try to answer his questions.

Using Joshua's experiences, Shyamalan asks the question: "How do you find evidence for the existence of God?" Anker also addressed the older version of Superman, which shows the Christ story in a new way.

The second session that Anker presented was on the problem of violence in Hollywood movies. The group looked at a series of three movies, including Lethal Weapon and Nightmare on Elm Street. The movies showed how violence pervades all of Hollywood's movies and how the violence people are exposed to within the entertainment industry also affects their actions in the real world.

When the group looked at Nightmare on Elm Street, Anker demonstrated how the camera angles affect how the audience views the movie. In Nightmare, the camera shoots from the point of view of Freddy, the antagonist, which makes the female victim look like prey. Anker pointed out that studies have been done that "show that young men who watch these films are more willing to show violence towards women, have a decrease in sympathy to rape victims and are more likely to sexually victimize women themselves."

In the last session, Anker focused on the movie Heaven to illustrate how filmmaking and a biblically-centered story can work together to make a beautiful film that shows the importance of real relationships with fellow human beings and God. Most of the people who attended this seminar thought that the seminar was very insightful and were also surprised at how detrimental violent films can be.

Faculty and program reductions cause controversy

Bridget Smith
Staff Writer

The decision of the Academic Council to reduce certain faculty and department programs has elicited varied reactions among both students and faculty at Dordt.

Students are raising questions about the college’s priorities. In light of the new football program, students wonder whether Dordt is shifting its focus. One question is whether football program will bring in more students than improving or maintaining the status of other departments.

Dean Sherri Lantinga explains that the council’s reasoning with the football program was based on in-depth research. "A lot of research was done regarding the interest of the constituency," she says. The decision to implement a football program was also based on the feedback from various high schools — feeder schools — that have numerous students typically interested in attending Dordt College.

Dr. Henderson, Professor of Philosophy at Dordt, expressed his concern about the faculty/program reductions: "It is unfortunate that while substantial cuts are being carried out, the college is at the same time presently investing substantial amounts of time, energy and money in grounds, sports and other non-essential... There seems to be an unspoken but deep disagreement going on at the college about priorities."

Dr. Lantinga says that the council endeavored to "reduce programs in ways that would hurt the fewest number of people." The council understands, however, that some students will be adversely affected.

Amber Wiersma, a music education major at Dordt, says, "As a music student, I was quick to question the necessity of such a reduction [in music]. One of the major reasons I chose music at Dordt is because of the highly competent professors comprising the department... In losing any member of the faculty, the opportunity to learn from their lives is also lost."

Dr. Lantinga says the college will definitely "find a way to help students finish their program if necessary courses are cut." She also explains that the requirements of certain programs are much vaster than the state requirements. She says this is particularly true for programs like music education.

The question to be asked is whether Dordt’s enrollment, academic standing and strain on professors will be affected. Dr. Henderson comments, "Hard to predict. Generally such cuts, unless they involve cutting extra, i.e. unnecessary people and classes, students and programs suffer. By 'suffer' I mean the varieties of courses taught shrinks, the class sizes grow, professors may be a bit over-worked. People sometimes speak about these questions in terms of 'investing' in the educational endeavor. Cuts tend to be the opposite and people tend to be put off."

While questions and concerns continue to be voiced, the Academic Council still seeks to work with the decisions they have made. Dr. Lantinga says the Council is "not mandating the details" of the program changes. She says, as well, that the council consulted faculty and kept people in the loop.

Dr. Henderson, on the other hand, feels insufficiently informed. "It would have been nice if the administration had not merely called us together to tell us what they had decided to cut (after the fact) but had consulted with us before they decided on the cuts." He adds, "Broad consultation with faculty (and student groups) might have helped find alternatives and even if not would have given us a sense of our real present situation."

The Academic Council went through two rounds of decisions when deliberating on faculty and program reductions.

One and a half positions are being cut. People sometimes speak about these questions in terms of 'investing' in the educational endeavor. Cuts tend to be the opposite and people tend to be put off."

While details continue to be worked through, questions will continue to be asked. Dr. Lantinga says, "Many faculty understand because the Academic Council already made reductions to staff and restricted the budget. Some are not going to accept it, and may decide this is not the place for them to be."

The Diamond would like to formally apologize for two errors in information in the previous issue’s article, "Dordt Reduces Faculty and Programs." According to Lantinga, "one position from the Political Studies and Criminal Justice Department will be cut; faculty will be retrained or hired to enable the college to have one person offering most of the political studies courses and another person offering most of the criminal justice courses." In the environmental studies program, one contract will not be renewed after this year; no further cuts are planned for the department, and the program will continue to be offered as a major.
Theatre production comes to Te Paske

Andrea Dykshoorn
Editor

The Dordt College Theatre Arts Department is again hard at work preparing for the upcoming production of "As It Is In Heaven." The play is set in a Shaker community in Pleasant Hill, KY, during the late 1830s. The Shakers, led by Mother Ann Lee, had come to America in 1774 to establish a zealous, utopian religious community. By 1837, however, the group—who received their name after being referred to as the "Shaking Quakers"—because of their outward expressions of religious devotion—began to experience divisions.

"As It Is In Heaven" is set in this context. In the play, a group of Quaker girls claim to receive messages and visions from angels, disrupting the relatively static Quaker settlement.

The production follows the stories of these girls as they challenge old ideas and traditions of their community. While not a musical, the play incorporates the singing and dancing of the Shakers, including Jonathan Shaffstall, who is the stage manager.

"It brings up the question of how to make space for the visions of the young in the traditions of the old," says Director Jeri Schelhaas.

Joelle Riezebos, a senior art major, designed the costumes, which were made from unbleached muslin dyed with authentic colours. Numerous others are involved in everything from make-up and hair design to sound and lights.

When asked about why she chose this play, director Jeri Schelhaas said that it poses important questions: "It brings up the question of how to make space for the visions of the young in the traditions of the old."

"The structure of the piece as a performance is also very interesting," notes Schelhaas. Each of the roles is a "lead role," and the actresses never leave the stage. In addition, Schelhaas notes that "because most of the actresses are also singers, it gives us the opportunity to showcase the things we're good at in one production, without it being a musical."

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The Theatre Department will be performing "As It Is In Heaven" on Feb. 22, 23, 24, and March 1, 2, and 3 at 7:30 at the Te Paske Theatre. Student tickets are on sale and can be purchased for $5.00 at the Box Office.

Alumni art show

Jamin Hubner
Staff Writer

Two art majors from Dordt are presenting some of their best works now until March 4 on campus. Chloe Hilden and Sam Gutierrez both received their B.A. in Art and will be showing a combined total of over 30 pieces in the Campus Center Art Gallery as a part of the Dordt College Alumni Weekend.

Chloe Hilden graduated from Dordt in 2002, holding a Fine Arts degree with sculpture and photography emphasis. "I enjoy capturing and celebrating the everyday details of life in new and inspiring ways through abstracted representation," she says. Hilden is the membership coordinator of a small membership-run gallery in Robbinsdale, MN, where she lives.

Sam Gutierrez's last art show explored what it means to be human. The exhibit now showing features a "much more playful collection of works" that encompasses a variety of subjects and content. While much of his art can be seen as simple expression and colorful and original experimentation, many of his works explore serious issues — some positive and some negative — like mental illness and the effects of the Fall.

Support these fabulous alumni artists anytime before March 4 in the Campus Center Art Gallery.

Alumni art gallery exhibit

A linocut by Sam Gutierrez, which is currently on display in the Campus Center Art Gallery.
"Stomp the Yard"

Jurgen Boerema
Staff Writer

Life is about finding yourself, having as much fun as possible and fighting great inner battles. It is out of these ideas that we get Stomp the Yard, the latest Hollywood version of the college experience. The movie opens in a sweaty, claustrophobic LA club where D.J. (Columbus Short), our hero, is leading his friends in a tense dance battle against a rival group. His brother tells him to back off, but D.J. wants to win big. Unfortunately, this backfires and his brother ends up dead in the street. D.J. is charged with assault and is forced to go to fictional Truth University in Atlanta.

When D.J. arrives, he notices (surprise!) a pretty girl, and they fall into nausea-inducing love at first sight. He also discovers "stepping," which is a lot of heavy boot-stomping and clapping. After showcasing his dance skills, he is recruited by both of the rival fraternities on campus. After initially resisting, he decides to join the underdog fraternity (the Pythons), and this is where the raucous stepping begins. In between the gaps, he focuses on his tutoring (history) and work study (gardening). He injects new, life into his frat with some street-wise moves one can only be born with. The rivals (the Wolfpack) are cartoonishly mean and haughty.

Several other obstacles creep up along the way as the plot switches between the dance floor and the classroom. The rest stays true to procedure, as D.J. learns a few lessons about brotherhood, relationships, and how to embarrass your opponent. The entertaining "stepping" in this movie almost saved the stale plot in this movie, but it didn't go far enough. I couldn't escape the feeling that I had been down this whole "find yourself" road before. I went there in "Drumline," and I went there in "Step Up." It's too bad, because it would have made a great music video—if no one had opened their mouths.

Jon Ayee, Jamin Hubner, Brandon Wipf, Tim Vande Griend and Andrew Roozeboom perform a number at the recent Talent Extravaganza auditions. This year's TX will be held Saturday, Feb. 17 at 7:00 in the BJ Haan Auditorium.

www.SudokuPuzz.com
Karen Klynsma  
Staff Writer

The Blades definitely kept the fans entertained this past weekend when they defeated SDSU with an 8-7 win in overtime on Friday and a 4-3 win, again in overtime, on Saturday. The games were fast-paced and hard-hitting, but the Blades came out on top.

The Blades were scheduled to play St. Olafs last weekend, a team which they needed to beat to secure their rightful place at Nationals, but due to unfortunate complications, St. Olafs cancelled both of the weekend's games. The Blades, not wanting to disappoint fans, scheduled a game on Saturday against the Division II team St. Thomas. This team also ended up canceling due to the weather conditions.

Since St. Olafs and St. Thomas were unable to come last weekend the Blades fell to 6th place in the standings and the Blades needed to place in the top 4 to go to Nationals. After that streak of bad luck that kept the Blades from making Nationals, the team is now focusing on the Regional playoffs. The Blades will take on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln next Friday and Saturday and then they head to the playoffs in Brookings, SD on Feb. 23 and 24.

Nate Woudstra states, "I will give the fans a hint about playoffs; we will stop at nothing to win, neither blood nor concussions will stop us. So make the couples trips to Brookings, and we will not let you down!"

These playoffs look to be an action-packed couple of games, and the Blades say they will settle for nothing less than another Champion Banner hanging from the rafters.

The games this weekend and the playoffs will mark the last games with the Blades for senior Corey Dykstra and for goalie Jeremy Bakker, who will be graduating from the 2-year agriculture program. Corey says, "Going into these last games with the Blades will be some of the best yet. It has been a great time getting to know the young blood that will continue to make a name for the Dordt Blades on the national scene. I have no doubt that those returning next year will be a National-worthy team."

When asked if there was anything they wanted to say to the fans, Kurtis Heerema replied, "The Blades are very appreciative for the support they receive from the home fans and those that come with us on road trips. We feed off the energy they bring to the game and it's always more fun playing in front of a packed house," Jake Esselink adds, "You've been great! Hopefully you have enjoyed watching us this year. It's been a pleasure playing for you."

So come on out this weekend and support the Blades as they play their last home games and as they look to a Regional Championship!

Andrew Kuipers (#14), the Blades' newest player, eyes the puck in a recent game against SDSU.

Jesse Veenstra  
Staff Writer

As the season winds down, the Dordt men and women's basketball teams are batting for postseason positions, and first-round tournament home games. The last week of the regular season will prove to be crucial as the Defender men hope to remain in the 4th seed, and the women try to seal a home game by finishing in the top 8.

The Defender men find themselves on top of the four-team race for the 4th seed in the GPAC conference, locking up a first-round bye and a home game. Dordt won back-to-back close games against Mount Marty and Doane by 3 and 1, respectively. However, the breaks ceased as they fell to GPAC-leading Sioux Falls in the late seconds, 75-63.

In the game at Mount Marty, senior guard Derek Keizer broke the long-standing career assist record formerly held by Kevin Gesink with 489. Keizer now has more than 475 career assists, and is closing in on Shawn DeStigter's career steals record of 200. "I have been blessed with playing with a bunch of great players around me. The credit should go out to the players rather than me; they're the ones who have to put the ball in the basket. Breaking records isn't what the goal is, the goal is to get to the national tournament again," said Keizer.

Keizer is currently 18-10 overall, and 10-1 in the GPAC conference. Sioux Falls and Northwestern are tied on top with 13-3 marks, and Dakota Wesleyan is 3rd with a 11-5 record.

The Defender women's season has been a roller coaster ride filled with highs and lows. The women pulled off one of the biggest wins in DeWitt Gymnasia

um history as they beat then GPAC-leading and nationally 5th-ranked Morningside 83-81 on Jan. 21. Unfortunately for the women, the success against Morningside would be short lived, as they then dropped the next four conference games.

The women are now 7th in the conference standings with a 7-9 conference record and 10-16 overall record, and are clinging to a first-round home game in the tournament. They have one game left to go over Sioux Falls and Briar Cliff for 8th and 9th and have the tiebreaker over both with their win against Morningside. Mount Marty and Morningside are currently tied for first in the conference with 14-3 records.

Both Dordt teams travel to Mitchell, SD on Feb. 14, and conclude the regular season at home against Dana on Sat., Feb. 17, games that could have huge postseason implications.

Kyle Van Wyk  
Staff Writer

Many students and faculty do not know what is happening with the Dordt College football program. While the first semester did not show much evidence of the development of the program, the second semester has started off with a bang. Equipment is starting to find its way to the campus and recruits are now signing letters of intent. At this pace, Dordt will indeed field a football team for the 2007 season.

Starting with recruits, a total of eight players have signed letters of intent to play for Coach Heavener and more are looking to be added to the list. Reading the high school achievements of the signed recruits, talent seems to be finding its way to Sioux Center. One of the committed players is Brandon Hicks, a quarterback from Ripon Christian in California, who has thrown for over 4,400 yards in both his junior and senior seasons. Brandon was voted his league's most valuable offensive player his junior year.

Derek Kammerlocher, another recruit, is an all-district running back out of Texas who played for Colleyville-Heritage, a 5-A high school. Brandon Hopkins is a second team, all-conference defensive end out of Mount Vernon, Mt. He ranked 3rd in the state among all classes in the sack category, tallying 16. Joey Vander Schaaf out of Ripon Christian has earned all-conference honors as wide receiver and running back. To check out the rest of the recruits, go to Dordt's athletic website at http://www.dordt.edu/athletics/.

All the equipment is expected to be in by Feb. 25. The jerseys and some of the helmets have already arrived.

The schedule has been released for next year. Dordt will play their first game against Morningside at home on Sept 3, 2007.