The Student Union Building has been a fixture on campus since the early 1970's. This March the building will be closed for good to eventually make room for the Campus Center (in the background).

Lori Parchot

Van Ee, Van Den Hul to present recitals

Van Ee says she's not nervous yet, but preparing for a recital has been a lot of work. Many of the songs were selected already last summer.

Van Den Hul's recital will be held on Friday, March 8 at 7:30, also in the B.J. Haan Auditorium. The program features accompanist Bethany Ehlers and a violin duet with Van Den Hul's sister, Jennifer Frens. The program will include music by Beethoven and Prokofiev, among others.

"I'm not really nervous for the recital," says Van Den Hul, "but I am feeling stressed out." In addition to the music she has to prepare for the recital, she is also preparing audition music for graduate school. As a result, she has doubled her daily practice time.

Both Van Ee and Van Den Hul plan to pursue Master of Music degrees in performance when they graduate.
Campus clubs invite students

Lindsey De Jong
Staff Writer

Faculty and students alike milled around the Student Union Building for Club Day on Tuesday, January 29. Mr. Ken Boersma could be seen having his reflexes checked by the pre-med club while various objects flew across the room in an attempt by the Juggling Club to teach other students their trade.

Tammie Veenstra, co-chair of Student Activities Committee, explained the need for Club Day: "Dordt's first semester registration showed there are so many things to sign up for and schedule that students often do not think about possibilities for extracurricular involvement. Second semester Club Day is a good reminder of the activities available for students to get involved with. They can take a closer look at each club and how it fits into their schedule."

Various clubs set up booths in order to show students what they are all about. Positive Airwaves provided music, the Juggling Club showed their dexterity with rings and flaming clubs, and the Pre-med Club checked reflexes and blood pressure.

"When Scheur, a second semester transfer student said, "Club day was very informative; I found out that I have high blood pressure!!!" Andrea Pausma, a member of the Pre-med club said, "Don't take our word for it; we're not doctors yet!"

Many groups participated in Club Day. Devotional Club was present to hand out copies of "Onesimus," devotionals written by students; ROAC (Reaching Others For Christ) recruited students for their prison ministries; and Shamar promoted their book benefitting a significant group of people.

Return policy to change in bookstore

Students will not be able to return books as usual

Mitch Beaumont
Editor

Next fall Dordt students will have to go through a bit more of a process to return any unwanted books they purchased from the bookstore.

The bookstore has announced a change in their return policy, effective next school year. Under the new policy, students will need a signed class drop slip in order to return a textbook.

Bookstore assistant manager Edy Van Essen says the last thing they want to do is make the book-buying process harder for students. "We don't have a problem with students going elsewhere for books," she said. "The problem is when they return them all after going elsewhere."

Rylaarsdam says the return policy being replaced is among the most flexible ones he knows of among similar-sized colleges. "Some schools charge students a restocking fee when they return a book," he said.

"The students of Dordt College have been very supportive of the bookstore and we are grateful for that," said Rylaarsdam. "We are just trying to cut our costs so we can offer our merchandise at as low a cost as possible."

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Lori Panchot
Forum, said that they were there to remind the students who their representatives were and to promote events like their recent blood drive.

Other clubs present were the Dordt Defenders of Life, FACT (Future Active Christian Teachers), the Photography Club, College Republicans and the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers.

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Doug Dirksen was hired this December as the Coordinator of Student Services for Minority and International Students. The position fell open last year when Samneke Kok, who was working another part-time job as Academic Advisor for Minority and International Students, resigned from the Student Services position.

Dirksen graduated from Dordt last year with a B.A. in Political Science and married Dordt student Becky Hathaway over Christmas break.

“Student Services is glad to have Doug on Board,” said website for the club, and several fundraiser ideas were brought up. They discussed reaching out to international students not involved in Spectrum, and also the idea of contacting and helping new international students. They took time to reflect on cultural differences.

Dirksen announced happily that the club funds are showing a surplus. They reviewed plans for a conference they hope to attend in the next two weeks.

Spectrum’s members discussed Chris Wilson’s charge of Dordt not accepting culturally diverse students and several of them asked for a reprint of the articles on that subject. They talked about hosting a discussion on the radio about diversity or bringing in a speaker for chapel. Dirksen mentioned, from his own life-long Iowa experience, that it’s easy to become content with “where you’re at.”

“There’s so much diversity, and there’s such a richness that we can learn from our international students,” Dirksen said. “They bring different views of the world to our campus.”

Dordt uses several different assessment tools to determine the quality of education at this institution.

Second semester includes Assessment Day, when upperclassmen and students within certain major programs take tests to determine how well they are doing as a whole. However, Dordt has decided to implement one more kind of assessment to indicate what learning activities students are participating in both in and outside the classroom.

Over the next few months, first-year and senior students at Dordt College and other colleges and universities across the United States will complete a short web-based survey called “The Student Report 2002,” conducted by the National Survey of Student Engagement. This survey takes students less than 15 minutes to complete online. The questions are about how and where students spend their time.

Schools use these results in several ways: as an indication of areas that need improvement, as a frame of reference compared to other institutions of similar size and purpose, as a way to document changes in effectiveness over time, and for institutional research.

Dr. Jasper Lesage, Dean of the Social Sciences, says that the other assessment tests used at Dordt are focused on outcome assessment, or how well students can do and evidence that they are improving. This new addition takes assessment a step further, and is geared toward seven principles of good teaching: student-faculty contact, cooperation among students, active learning, prompt feedback, time on task, high expectations, and diverse ways of learning.

“This will give us a good indication of where we might improve student learning,” said Lesage. He said that while assessment does not give immediate answers, it gives a starting point.

Dordt seniors and freshmen should expect to receive e-mails within the next few months with a link to the online survey. Dordt will track the survey and send follow-up e-mails to ensure that every student participates in the short questionnaire. Students should contact Dr. John Hansen with questions and concerns about the survey.

Doug Dirksen poses with the international students of Dordt College.

Steve Kloosterman
Staff Writer

A Dordt alumnus recently joined the Student Services staff to work with international students. Doug Dirksen was hired this year and senior students at Dordt College and other colleges and universities across the United States will complete a short web-based survey called “The Student Report 2002,” conducted by the National Survey of Student Engagement. This survey takes students less than 15 minutes to complete online. The questions are about how and where students spend their time.

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Where's the love?

Josh Bowar
Assistant Editor

February 7, 2002

Our campus has finally settled in and the excitement of beginning a new semester has died down considerably.

The new set of classes have become routine for many students; new friendships are being made and old ones are becoming stronger.

The middle of winter brings a very special day. Yes, the day that, even though you are busy with schoolwork, you can't help but celebrate one day out of the year. Yes, Make this Valentine's Day special.

The reason for this is simple: the day that you love someone. You may be talking about your boyfriend or girlfriend, or you may think that you never got any gifts on this day.

I guess I do see valid points in this area. This will be the first year that I have a girlfriend on Valentine's Day, and I must say that I am looking forward to it. Hopefully she will read this and just might gain a few extra points from me. I hope that some day I can be a boyfriend or girlfriend to have a good time on this day.

There is no law that says you can't celebrate in other ways. You looked in the Defender Handbook and there is nothing that restricts Valentine activities: well, nothing besides open houses, but we wouldn't have those anyway to be discussed in different ways. What's this guy talking about?

Well, I have come up with several suggestions on how to have a happy Valentine's Day, even if you are single. Don't wallow in self pity. Spend time reflecting on all the "loves" you have in your life. Like the ones I stated earlier in this writing. Be thankful for these things. Get together with friends and thank them for their friendship. Maybe go out for dinner. Write a letter to your best friend from high school. Call your family and tell them you love them.

It's been good for the students involved. It's been better for them than all-freshman buildings. We have freshmen through seniors living together. We find it to be a very positive experience in the residents favor.

Rationale for blended housing

Dear editor,

As a journalist I understand these concerns, but I must tell you they are unfounded coming from the school of thought that I subscribe to and that most journalists subscribe to as well.

I will not deny the fact that there are journalists out there who misquote and misrepresent their source's meaning in a story or report. It happens and there's no two ways around it. The trouble comes when the public hears about such an incident and then holds all journalists responsible for that one mishap.

Not all journalists are the same; they don't all go into interviews telling themselves, "Hey, I'm going to misquote this person in my story." The conclusion you have come to about with one journalist will not necessarily apply to the next one you meet. If you're being interviewed by a journalist you've never met before, assume they are honest and assume they are accurate.

I have come to a temporary conclusion that people base their mistrust of the media on stories they hear of journalists misquoting and damaging people's lives and reputations. (This is temporary only because I've deduced this from my own thoughts and have not asked around to other people on campus.) The majority of the stories conveyed by the Dordt employees I talked to had to do with stories in the media that weren't quite right, or the journalist misinterpreted the meaning of the source.

The "con" side to blended housing was discussed by the writer of "Housing Hijinks" (published in the last issue of the Diamond). He used the Dordt web page to accurately describe what we believe the "pro" side of our current housing arrangement is. Unfortunately, the "con" side of all-freshmen buildings was not discussed, and that's a fairly lengthy discussion.

I'd like to give some balance to the issue by sharing the "pros" of blended housing with you. Blended housing is well researched and widely used. The effects of blended housing have been good for the students involved. It's been better for them than all-freshmen buildings. It's time for Dordt to respond, admit that we need to change, and make that change happen. It's time.

Rational for blended housing: 1. Blended residence halls have monitoring potential. 2. Younger students can benefit from the modeling of older students (academically, attitudinally and behaviorally). 3. Older students will temper the living community.

"Pros" of blended housing:

1. Blended residence halls have monitoring potential.
2. Younger students can benefit from the modeling of older students (academically, attitudinally and behaviorally).
3. Older students will temper the living community.
4. Blended housing brings diversity into the building.
5. New students benefit from experienced students.
6. Older students have a stabilizing effect.
7. Effects of the "Sophomore Slump" will be reduced.
8. Sophomore identity improves.
9. Reduces the "High school mentality" in the entire community.
10. Reaches the "High school mentality" in the entire community.

Some quotes from other college housing professionals:

"My personal philosophy on all freshmen buildings (and even floor living) is that a student is not making a totally inexperienced crew on a sailing voyage. All-freshmen buildings are a mistake."

"All halls at Northwestern are blended. We have freshmen through seniors living together. We find it to be a very positive experience for our students. We find that our younger students benefit from the monitoring experiences that blended living invites. 80% of our students refer to their positive experience in the residents halls as the "fourth year."" Northwestern College

Sincerely,

Sandi Altena
Director of Residence Life
Below: Every year during homecoming week students break from studying to enjoy gutter sundaes.

Left: After Dave and Jody Van Kley gave their concert, alumni and current students were treated to ice cream by the Alumni Association.

Below: While alumni take in a game or two of Defender basketball, their children can take part in the children's carnival in the SUB. Each booth was run by student clubs.

Left: After the women and men's varsity teams competed against Doane College, the Junior Varsity and alumni took the court against each other. Here, Dan Aardsma goes up for a dunk.
En-Joy Electric
One step from live

Chris Maust
Staff Writer

Are you tired of the boy bands and bad-boy radio that plague the radio today? Joy Electric, a three-man techno-rock group more interested in music than in dance, is advertised as a Christian band, however, their technique seems to come from the book of Esther, as God is overtly mentioned only once. But he’s implied nearly everywhere else through veiled metaphors.

What fascinates me most about Joy Electric is their musicianship. This entire album was made using analog synthesizers and microphones. No computers were used to repeat rhythms, add samples, or cheat in any way. This CD is one step away from being a live recording.

What truly sets this music apart, however, is that Joy Electric is not afraid to make emotional techno. To be accurate, they play electronic music, but they much prefer being referred to as a rock band.

Throughout their album, references are made to being forgotten, begging for company, and being lost without direction. The band’s lyrics hold turmoil, questioning, and internal strife. The vocals sound almost like a synthesizer, but they’re not defined quite as precisely.

Impulsive and metaphors and strange comparisons are used almost constantly.

If you resonate with it, you tend to understand far more than what’s being said. If you don’t get it right away, the poetry becomes utterly confusing and you sit wondering what the meaning could possibly be. I myself find nearly half of the CD indiscernible, which keeps it mysterious—and keeps me listening.

Joy Electric makes absolutely great music for listening to alone. Their lyrics are odd and difficult to understand. Their passion can be heard in their voices. Not to put too fine a point on it. I like Joy Electric.

I give it seven out of ten Superstars.

For more information, check out beercracking.com.

Dordt theatre graces the stage in Lincoln

Several Dordt students and faculty receive awards at regional competition

From January 22 to 27 the Dordt Theatre Department was in Lincoln, Nebraska, at the University of Nebraska to participate in the American College Theatre Festival sponsored by the Kennedy Center.

The festival is held nationwide in nine different regions; Dordt is in the fifth region with numerous other colleges from the Midwest. The festival hosts a wide range of activities from acting to design competitions, workshops to play performances.

This year Emily Deutschman, Laura Green, Ethan Koerner, Mayagyn McCarthy, Rachel Persenaire, and Adam Smit participated in the Irene Ryan Acting Competition, with each of them having an acting partner from Dordt as well.

This competition started with about 300 actors competing for 64 slots in the semi-finals round, only sixteen of which were selected for the final round, with two final winners chosen. Each participant prepared a scene with a partner and a monologue, which, when combined, totaled no more than five minutes.

Unfortunately, no Dordt acting participants proceeded to the semi-final round. However, the participants later received feedback from their three judges, thus obtaining valuable criticism.

Every Dordt Theatre production is entered into the festival, which not only allows a judge to critique the performances during the school year, but also allows that production the possibility for awards at the festival.

This year Esther Van Eek, Dordt’s costume designer, won a Meritorious Achievement Award in Costume Design for the productions of “A Strindberg Evening” and “Scapin.” The costumes for “A Strindberg Evening” were shown in a costume parade.

Mark Janes, who composed the music for the student production of “The Glass Menagerie,” Eric Van Wyk was awarded the alternate spot for the national set design competition at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

The workshops presented at the festival ranged widely, from acting to directing, from lighting design to theatre history, from improv to the theatre. More specific workshops such as Shakespearean acting, designing for film, and building marionette puppets were presented as well.

Dordt Theatre professor Simon du Toit presented a workshop entitled “Acting in Good Faith,” which was a discussion seeking to unravel the acting process in its relation to the faith of the actor.

The workshops provided a wealth of information, new ideas and insight on many aspects of the theatre.

Another exciting part of the festival was the many shows presented by different colleges and universities. The shows were invited to the festival based on the judge’s response to the original performance.

The shows range in size from full-length plays to one-act shows, and they vary in subject matter and style as well. The tremendous benefit of seeing as many shows as possible is that students and professors can view what other colleges are producing and critique and learn from those productions. Plus, viewing all that theatre is incredibly enjoyable.

The festival created a euphoria for those involved with theatre and allowed theatre artists from Dordt a chance to critique and learn about theatre, while also forming a vision for theatre here at Dordt.

The festival was a chance to celebrate the theatre productions done at Dordt, to realize that size makes no difference and that artistic dedication and faith can create exciting theatre.

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http://homepages.dordt.edu/~diamond
Track seniors to be missed

Jill Schreurs powers herself over the bar in the high jump. (Lori Panchot)

Jason Mulder
Sports Writer

Tony Rietema, Jon Dekkers, and Greg Van Dyke are all completing their final year on Dordt's track team. These fun-loving guys bring leadership and laughs to the team and have great stories to tell.

Rietema, an individual studies hurdle specialist, grew up in Sheldon and has run with Jon for 8 years. He also loves the outdoors and enjoys participating in intramurals and anything involving a group of people.

Rietema has competed six times so far this year, each time less than two tenths of a second from qualifying for Nationals. He also runs the 400 meter hurdles in the outdoor season and the 4x400 meter relay. His love for running is to be seen in his need to win.

Dekkers hails from a farm near Harwood as an Agriculture-Business major. Soccer, cross-country, track, tennis, and baseball were all part of his extracurricular activities.

Dekkers takes his “To do” list. He says, “College isn’t my thing. I’m just here because of the mild climate.”

Dordt’s second all-time hurdler, Rietema has competed six times so far this year, each time less than two tenths of a second from qualifying for Nationals. He also runs the 400 meter hurdles in the outdoor season and the 4x400 meter relay. His life-long dream is to be an All-American, Dekkers wants to begin paying off loans and debts and enjoy the outdoors, hiking, biking, basketball, and baseball were all part of his childhood. After getting married this summer, Dekkers wants to “get out of northwest Iowa” possibly in a job involving landscape architecture.

A 3-time All-American, Dekkers has qualified for Nationals in both indoor and outdoor track all four years. Specializing in the 800m, he continually shows solid improvement in mid-distance events.

Jon’s goal for this year is to get Jeff Taylor, whose friends lovingly call “Susquatch,” to shave his legs and chest for Nationals. This is a tradition among the guys and Jeff refused to do it last year.

Van Dyke, also a Unity alum, grew up in Sheldon and has run with Jon for 8 years. He also loves the outdoors and enjoys participating in intramurals and anything involving a group of people.

As history major, Van Dyke hopes to get a teaching job that will take him away from NW Iowa, preferably to a big city with a warm climate. He also would like to coach track and cross-country.

Van Dyke has run outdoor track all four years at Dordt, focusing primarily on the mile race. He has a reputation for working hard and sticking with it even when things aren’t going as well as he would like. "The main reason why I went out for track was to find a wife." Head coach Sue Allen said that he "puts a lot of responsibility on the seniors" and uses feedback he gets from them. However, Tony commented, "Coach almost killed us driving the bus.

They anticipate a good outdoor team and have some very talented underclassmen.

Dekkers specifically looks forward to Nationals this year. He says that last year some girls hid some small alarm clocks in their room when they came over to play cards. When the first one went off at 4:00am, one of the guys pulled the hotel’s alarm clock out of the room and threw it. After finding the clock behind the dresser, he threw it against the wall when he was unable to turn it off. As alarms continued to go off every half hour, they figured out how to turn them off but were not very happy.

Jeff Taylor never woke up through the ordeal and the guys who saw this year "payback time!"

Jacque Scoby
Sports Page Editor

Amanda Te Kromy and Emily Kauk share a common task. Both seniors believe part of their job as senior members of Dordt’s women’s track team is to encourage the rest of the team. “My goal is to be an encouragement to others and to work hard,” says Te Kromy. “I want to be there to listen and encourage.” A psychology, human services major from Castlewood, South Dakota, she specializes in throwing events, primarily the shot put and discuss.

Like Te Kromy, encouragement and leadership rank high among Kauk’s individual goals. She also had one other goal to add—a trip to the national track meet at the end of March. “I wanted to run on the 4x800 team and I wanted us to qualify for nationals,” she says. And she has. Kauk and the rest of her relay team qualified at last Saturdays home meet, finishing nearly two seconds under the automatic qualifying time.

Yet as far as team goals go, Kauk says the biggest one is, again, encouragement. “We have a pretty small women’s team this year, so it’s hard to set big team goals,” she says. “Something like winning the conference title isn’t what we’re after, but more to be an encouragement to each other.”

Both Kauk and Te Kromy will leave this team with definite highights. For both, the team trip to San Antonio two years ago was one of the best. Kauk also pointed to last year’s indoor national meet as one of her favorites. “We knew we had a chance at placing,” she says, “but it was great just to actually do it and be All-Americans.”

Kauk and Te Kromy are two of five senior women on this year’s team. The remaining three will be featured in the next issue of the Diamond.

Terefric Track Teams

Congratulations to the women’s 4x800 meter relay team for qualifying for the National Indoor Track Meet at last Saturday’s Homecoming meet. The team, consisting of Tanya Holtop, Rebecca Demarest, Kristi Meendering and Emily Kauk, finished with a time of 4:43.10, almost two seconds under the automatic qualifying time of 4:45. This year’s National Indoor Meet will be held in Johnson City, Tennessee, February 28 through March 2.

Also, congratulations to Aaron Klein for setting a new school record in men’s indoor long jump. Klein jumped 22 4/" in the meet at Buena Vista University, placing second in the event. The jump also surpassed all outdoor records, making it the longest jump in school history. Dordt’s men’s track team took eighth place at that meet.

Stats

MENS BASKETBALL
(17-7, 9-4 GPAC)
1/23/02 Dakota Wesleyan
I 73-78
OT Scorers
Kyle Van Arendonk (13)
Jeff Ver Stieg (12)
Shawn De Stigter (11)
Evan Beineme (10)
1/26/02 Sioux Falls I 72-77
Scorers: Eric Maas (17)
Kyle Van Arendonk (13)
Evan Beineme (12)
Brett Van Wyk (12)
1/30/02 Briar Cliff W 98-82
Scorers: Kyle Van Arendonk (23)
Evan Beineme (15)

WOMENS BASKETBALL
(4-18, 2-11 GPAC)
1/23/02 Dakota Wesleyan
I 45-64
Scorers: Serenta Van Beek (7)
Dana Press (6)
Colleen De Groot (6)
Angie Kazma (6)
1/26/02 Sioux Falls I 76-96
Scorers: Serenta Van Beek (28)
Colleen De Groot (12)
Katie Bleeker (10)

2/2/02 Doane I 79-84
Scorers: Serenta Van Beek (19)
Katie Bleeker (15)
Rachel Schutte (13)
Darcy Wissinger (12)

WOMENS INDOOR TRACK
Hy-Vee Open @ USD 1/26/02
1st place: Jeff Taylor—one mile—2:46.33
2nd place: Tony Rietema— 60 m hurdles—8.60
3rd place: Matt Ruetter, Tim Klein, Tony Rietema, Jon Dekkers—4x400 relay—3:33.60
4th place: Chris Fransen—high jump—6’2.25"
5th place: Jon Dekkers—800 m—2:00.86

Dordt College Invitational @ Dordt 2/2/02
1st place: 4x800 m relay—8:00.94
2nd place: Tony Rietema— 55 m hurdles—8.02
4th place: 4x400 m relay—3:33.67
5th place: 4:200 m relay—1:36.40
Jeff Taylor— mile run—4:42.01

WOMENS INDOOR TRACK
Hy-Vee Open @ USD 1/26/02
1st place: Jill Schreurs—pole vault—19’9”
2nd place: Rebecca Baber—triple jump—33’8”
4x800 m relay—9:43.02
4th place: 4x400 m relay—3:55.09

Dordt College Invitational @ Dordt 2/2/02
1st place: Jill Schreurs—pole vault—9’9”
2nd place: Amanda Te Kromy—shot put—36’10.5”
Rebecca Demarest—mile run—5:44.10
Kauk—800m—2:27.36
Liz Decker, Teresa Gerber, Heather Heijerman, Tanya Holtop—4x400 relay—4:23.36

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Jacque Scoby
Sports Page Editor

Amanda Te Kromy and Emily Kauk share a common task. Both seniors believe part of their job as senior members of Dordt’s women’s track team is to encourage the rest of the team. “My goal is to be an encouragement to others and to work hard,” says Te Kromy. “I want to be there to listen and encourage.” A psychology, human services major from Castlewood, South Dakota, she specializes in throwing events, primarily the shot put and discuss.

Like Te Kromy, encouragement and leadership rank high among Kauk’s individual goals. She also had one other goal to add—a trip to the national track meet at the end of March. “I wanted to run on the 4x800 team and I wanted us to qualify for nationals,” she says. And she has. Kauk and the rest of her relay team qualified at last Saturdays home meet, finishing nearly two seconds under the automatic qualifying time.

Yet as far as team goals go, Kauk says the biggest one is, again, encouragement. “We have a pretty small women’s team this year, so it’s hard to set big team goals,” she says. “Something like winning the conference title isn’t what we’re after, but more to be an encouragement to each other.”

Both Kauk and Te Kromy will leave this team with definite highights. For both, the team trip to San Antonio two years ago was one of the best. Kauk also pointed to last year’s indoor national meet as one of her favorites. “We knew we had a chance at placing,” she says, “but it was great just to actually do it and be All-Americans.”

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Contemporary political opinion

Peter Anderson  
Staff Writer

Should anyone live at the expense of another person? Unfortunately, people living at the expense of others are what get votes for our political leaders. The coercive taking of money from citizens (i.e. taxes), by the government and then redistributing it to other citizens is what drives our modern American republic. This has been exemplified with Congress' recent allocation of funds for the highway transportation budget.

Recently, the states were to receive $59.6 billion to be used as they saw fit when it came to dealing with instate transportation. Congress had set aside around $3 to $4 billion for special projects such as for the Congressman's constituents.

Apparently $3 to $4 billion wasn't enough to satisfy the constituents of the Congressmen that sponsored this bill, so money was removed from the transportation bill and allocated to finding more special projects for constituents.

What was this extra money needed for? Two examples: Senator Pat Murray, D-Washington, used $3 million for Seattle's Odyssey Maritime museum and Tom DeLay, R-Texas, sent $2.9 million to be used for airport construction in his hometown. The list of the Republican's and Democrat's special projects goes on.

Let us look at a hypothetical example to illustrate what is unjust about someone legally living at the expense of another. A banker is not allowed to embezzle money from his bank so that his family can live at the expense of those who bank with him. What if this banker took money from his bank and redistributed it to the poor? Would this be any more just? No, he would still face stiff legal penalties for embezzlement if he were caught. What if the banker again stole money from those who banked at his establishment and used it to fund a museum or an airport as Mr. Murray and Mr. DeLay did respectively? He would still be in trouble, unless he was a member of Congress. Only when you belong to Congress can you legally take from others through taxes or inflationary practices, and give to it those you see better fit to have money that isn't their own.

Sadly, this very much runs our republic. Who has a chance these days of getting elected on the promise of not giving anything back to his or her constituents? I think we would all venture to say no one.

Might I again suggest the free market could do much to remedy the situation? If people are able to keep more of the money they earn instead of giving it up for taxes, they will then have more money to give to the poor or to fund a museum. When money is redistributed through and by the Congress, no matter how just the purpose may sound, it always is done inefficiently, often times by being used to build an airport or statue for hometown voters. People taking back power and money from the Washington leviathan is the only remedy to inefficient and wasteful spending by Congress.

Earth Watch: ANWR drilling

Rebecca Vande Grief
Guest Writer

"America's Last Frontier," the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, is a proposed area for oil drilling that is raising much controversy. The primary mandate for the ANWR, as laid out by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is "to protect the wildlife and habitats of the area for the benefit of people now and in the future." Many people argue that drilling can occur with only minimal damage to the environment, and will only benefit the staggering American economy.

However, there are a number of key issues that block drilling. The Porcupine Caribou Herd lives in the ANWR and uses the area proposed for drilling as calving grounds. Without this area, the caribou population will most certainly decline. Human safety could also be threatened if musk oxen, polar bears and grizzly bears are driven from their natural territory.

Environmentalists say that "just as there is no way to be half-pregnant, there is no 'sensitive' way to drill in a wilderness."

Local Inuit tribes will also be negatively affected by drilling. The Gwich'in Indians depend on the Porcupine Caribou Herd for food and are opposed. The Inuit group favors drilling because of the money it will generate. However, more money from easier access to alcohol—a problem about which young Alaskan natives have already expressed concern.

Lastly, there is simply not enough oil in the ANWR to make a significant improvement in America's oil supply, according to the National Resources Defense Council. The oil in the ANWR would last less than one year, and would not be available for consumption for a number of years. The oil taken from the ANWR will not boost the economy and will do nothing to ease the dependence that the U.S. has on Middle Eastern countries for oil.

In the midst of an economic and defense crisis, finding and funding new approaches for energy is the best option for the U.S., instead of continually developing a fossil fuel dependent society that will never be sustainable. Americans must be willing to stand up for what will benefit the people now and in the future.

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AFGHANISTAN
Heavy snow has blocked all routes into the area worst affected by hunger in western Afghanistan and no supplies are getting in. Vehicles piled with grain are stranded in Qala now, where aid organizations have been struggling against appalling conditions all winter.

IRAN
Iran has said it will not seek nuclear weapons for any reason, dismissing allegations by the United States that it wants to develop weapons of mass destruction. Defense Minister Ali Shamkhani was quoted as saying the existence of nuclear weapons would "turn us into a threat that could be exploited in a dangerous way to harm our relations with countries of the region."

ISRAEL
Israeli bulldozers have begun demolishing several Palestinian homes in occupied east Jerusalem, which Israeli officials say were built without permits. The destruction comes a day after Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert accused the Palestinians of using illegal construction to try to undermine Israeli sovereignty over the city. Palestinians say they have no choice but to build without permits, because Israel routinely refuses them.

FRANCE
French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine has accused the U.S. government of pursuing a "simplistic" foreign policy since the September 11 attacks in New York and Washington. "Today we are threatened by a simplistic policy in U.S. policy that reduces all the problems of the world to the struggle against terrorism. It is not properly thought out," Mr Vedrine told French radio. He said the United States was acting unilaterally without consulting others and was refusing any multilateral negotiation that would limit its freedom of action.

POLAND
At least 10 miners have been killed in an accident at a coal mine in Poland. An explosion ripped through the mine in the southern region of Silesia. Officials say another 37 miners managed to escape, one of whom was injured. It is not known what caused the blast, which happened about 2,300 feet underground.

HONG KONG
The authorities in Hong Kong have quarantined 24 chicken farms in the rural New Territories in a bid to control the third outbreak of avian flu in the territory in the last five years.