Vandals deface campus

by Dan Mennega
A few weekends ago, on the evening of December 2, vandals attacked the chapel, KDCR radio studio, and the outdoor light fixtures on the Dordt College campus. No names have been released yet.

According to Dean of Students Dr. Nicholas Kroese, the damages were extensive, and costly. The offenders threw stones through the plate-glass windows in the lower entrance lobbies of the chapel, and destroyed eleven light fixtures on the walkway in front of the chapel. They also threw stones through three of the back doors on the south side of the chapel, and knocked some lights off the KDCR building. The vandals dented one student's car and broke the lights of the "Dordt College" sign at the gym entrance parking lot. The estimated repair cost is $5,500.

Due to the severity of the crime, Dordt College staff has asked the Sioux Center Police Department to investigate the happenings. A group of suspects is being interviewed at the police station.

"People have been very cooperative--students and staff--to resolve the situation," says Kroese. Open wires along the chapel's sidewalk were potentially hazardous to those attending a music concert the following Sunday, but the "college's maintenance department responded very quickly" to prevent any accidents, according to Kroese. The police are working together with the college, and there has been a great deal of honesty displayed by those involved.

This is the first incident of vandalism at Dordt reported this year.

Vandals left live wires exposed along the chapel's sidewalk.

Dordt policy needs change

by Sheryl Schuring and Rhonda Haagsma
Dordt College has many rules and regulations that were established for the benefit of its students. One of these is the visitation policy.

There are several problems that arise in association with this policy. One of these appears when family members or high school students come to visit. It is not open hours, but the visitors would still like to see the rooms. Must they sit and wait for an hour or two in the lounge which is full of other couples who cannot enter their rooms? Do we want our prospective students to view this kind of activity that occurs in the lounges, and associate it with Dordt as a Christian college? If we can allow a father to enter the room (which by the way is not stated in the policy but has become an accepted part of it), what about a cousin or a brother-in-law? Where do we draw the line?

Another problem is that many feel the requirement of the door being open is an insult to their maturity. Not very many of the students at Dordt College were forced to keep the door of a room at home open when they entertained members of the opposite sex.

There is also a problem involved with the punishment system. Who receives the fine if there is a number of people in a room with the door shut? Why does one student have to make a poster while another who committed the same felony must write a three page paper. Is this an equal punishment for an equal crime?

Many students at Dordt College feel that this policy is very restricting and feel there is need for change. There needs to be a clear definition of exactly who is permitted in a room during non-open hours and who is not. There also needs to be a recognition of the fact that the students attending college are adults, and should be treated as such. A door being open a crack is not a preventative rule. This seems to be an unnecessary part of the visitation policy.

A final need for change occurs within the punishment system. The student should know what his punishment will be if he disobeys this rule. At the present time, the student knows he will be referred to the judicial board, but this means little since the punishment from the board can vary so much. The present judicial board system could allow for prejudice towards the friends or enemies of the members of the judicial board.

Why should the visitation policy be any different? The judicial board should lay out a definite punishment for each of the various ways in which the policy can be broken. These rules should be published in the Defender handbook or at least be made known to the students.

Some students will never be satisfied with the visitation policy as long as there is one. However, as a Christian college, there needs to be such a policy. The present policy is a necessary policy, but could be improved in several ways to become more effective and beneficial to the students.
It's not the giving; it's the getting

by Teri Nikkel

"Cindy, check out this Esprit shirt. Isn't it awesome? I told Luke I wanted it for Christmas. If he doesn't get it for me, I'll kill him!"

Garfield, posing as Santa, decorates a pair of boxer shorts. Above the sarcastic feline are the words, "It's not the giving; it's the getting."

"Mark, you sit on Santa's lap or he won't be bringing you that Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle this Christmas."

One of those precious, heart-touching Hallmark cards for any occasion says, "You don't have to get me anything fancy or expensive this Christmas... but if you don't, I'll make your life a living hell!"

Ah, the true spirit of Christmas once again graces the halls and shops of the classic crowed-laden shopping mall.

As I trod the paths of the typical Christmas shopper, endless list in hand, I was struck by the attitude radiated by the entire scene. About this time every year, I have this little fantasy that all shoppers should glow with a smile as they hum songs of Christ's birth which echo throughout the building. Rather, the atmosphere seems to support the perceptions of Garfield. "It's not the giving; it's the getting."

What is really sad is that society has not only taken on this selfish sentiment at Christmas time, but has adopted it as a year-round theme. I'd like to think that students at Dordt College, as members of a Christian institution, are living examples of those who take an opposite stand, are more giving, and are better people because of it. However, I've been disappointed.

Take a look at some of the clubs on campus. There are groups, such as PLIA, Community Outreach, and the Defenders of Life, that truly have wonderful goals and activities. I don't want to put a damper on their successes in any way. But I have to admit that I get a kick out of listening to certain members discuss their motivations. Group leaders are forced into advertising and exploiting these characteristics of the organization to encourage students to join. Too many people join PLIA just because of the chance to go on a trip over spring break. The popularity of the Defenders of Life sky-rocketed last week, or was it the popularity of a thirty-dollar trip to Washington D.C., and an excuse to skip classes that lured people in? Even the Community Outreach Program inspires with the promise that the donated hours put into the program will look great on a resume. Part of the reason all of this bothers me is because I have found myself almost having to bribe students to join the Diamond staff. And, more on an individual basis, how often don't we ask ourselves, "What classes can I take so I can do the least amount of work and still pull a decent grade?" How little can I study for finals and get the mark I want for the class? How much can I get without giving? I propose that all of us at Dordt College turn our attitudes around. Whether we're Christmas shopping, joining a help group, registering for classes, or studying for finals, let's be sure we're taking the right approach. I remember learning in Sunday school to use the word JOY to get our priorities in line--Jesus, Others, Yourself. We should remember this fundamental schema as we approach Christmas Day. It's not the getting; it's the giving.

"How often don't we ask ourselves, 'How little can I study for finals and still get the grade I want for the class?'

Students say...

by Dan Mennega and Jeff De Boer

"Do you think that too much emphasis is placed on final exams?"

by Dan Mennega and Jeff De Boer

"Do you think that too much emphasis is placed on final exams?"

Sonya De Jager
Junior
"Yes, I really don't think we should have to get so stressed out about them. Stress is not a good motivator."

Barb De Jong
Junior
"Yes! It's so hard to study at the end of the year. I can't deal with the pressure--I'm anxious to go home! And when am I going to pack?"

Kevin Vander Hoek
Senior
"No. It's a reality. Jobs have big projects, too. It's good preparation for the real world. I came from a school where the grade was 50% exam."
An alternative approach

by Professor Paulo Ribeiro

The internal liberation brought about by the biblical and reformed message tells us that good Christians (including Christian Reformed) may be bad scientists, poor exeges, and silly people. It is one of the human weaknesses, certainly not unimportant by the Bible, to crave for quasi-infalible authorities besides God, and thus take up the unnecessary burden of defending these authorities as if the kingdom of God was at stake.

Few people are ready to bear the full responsibility of freedom; they either become liberals and relativists or accept some authority besides God. The obstacle to attaining real freedom is that we are not content with God alone, but want other gods besides Him.

The Christian religion bears a character totally different from natural religion. It is a 'faith,' a trust in the reality of historical facts. Man is not the measure, but the humble recipient of truth in science as well as in religion.

Creation is not taking place now, so far as can be observed. If evolution is taking place today, it operates too slowly to be measured, and therefore is outside the realm of experimental science. Origins transcend science. An alternative approach is necessary-a cosmological (integral) view.

The purifying light of Christ should penetrate into every department of life, and into every secular activity. Through unconditional surrender to God, freedom of science can be achieved, that is, the liberation from worldly and pious traditions and from the dictatorship of reason. The spirit of the reformation and the spirit of true science have much in common. It is the spirit of liberty through submission to the divine revelation.

Science needs freedom—there is no elaborate system, not even a Christian system, which takes away from us the duty of thinking things out for ourselves. We are called to unfold creation.

Before one engages in technical discussion about the origins, one should be well aware of the philosophical perspective of the problem. When short of data, we should keep our minds open and our mouths shut. Let us teach creation with a cosmological view. Let us respect each other as brothers in Christ, and fight our common enemy. We do not need to worry too much about the scientific community accepting our interpretation of the origins. Whatever the scientific sophistication or biblical orthodoxy of our interpretation, the mainstream scientific community will reject it. Any form of theistic evolution or creation is unacceptable to them. Let us be free to be real investigators and appreciators of the created reality.

We say: 'I am free, I am bound to nobody's word, except those inspired by God; if I oppose these in the least degree, I beseech God to forgive my audacity of judgement, as I have been moved not so much by longing for some opinion of my own as by love for the freedom of science' (Nathanael Carpenter, 1622).

--Many ideas presented were directly borrowed from Professor/Doctor Hooykaas.

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PROXY
REMEDY
SUBPOENA
SUIPERSON
TORT
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Don't worry, be happy
by Julie De Boef

"Don't worry, be happy." This phrase became popular about two years ago with Bobby McFerrin's pop song "Don't Worry, Be Happy." To me, worry seems to be one of the most common emotions. College students, parents, teenagers, and even children worry about one thing or another. When we worry we feel anxious or distressed. With so many things to worry about today, I wonder how much of our worries are actually worth the time and trouble. I have heard that more worrying is usually done than what is necessary. My life is definitely not exempt from worries.

Worries come up and seem to just take hold of our thoughts. They are so hard to let go of, and it takes a lot of effort to put them behind. I tend to worry about what is going to happen tomorrow or about a mistake I made yesterday. It is hard for me to stay in the present when I know that so much needs to be done. As a college student, I can relate to worrying about events and tests which are coming up in the future. I can worry about studying for a test or not being able to study. I can worry my way through papers, and I can worry if there is not time to do all that needs to be done. I can let myself worry right up to the minute when I receive my test. Then, if I am not prepared well enough, I can worry myself all the way through it.

We also worry in our social lives: "My roommate has not said a word to me all morning. Is she mad at me?" "Am I going to have a date Friday night?" Then, once a date is found, "What are we going to do? What am I going to wear? Does he really like me or is he just being nice? Why hasn't he called me?"

Parents also worry about finances, their relationships, and their children. "They worry about things like "How are we ever going to get this bill paid? Why is John late from work? Where is Jenny? She was supposed to be home an hour ago."

These are just some examples of how we, in our society, worry. Entirely too much time is spent worrying about things that will probably never happen. Most of the things we worry about, we have no control over anyway.

When worry takes over, it generally takes over almost every part of our thinking. I can relate my own experience to this. The past week I have worried a lot because I have so much to do before Friday. When I am trying to study, I am not always able to concentrate because I am too busy worrying about other assignments I have to do.

I feel relieved, but also frustrated after the situation I worried about has passed because things are usually never as bad as they seem. After all that time was spent worrying, it was not even worth it.

Why do we worry so much? Why can't we get it through our heads that worrying only takes up time and causes ulcers and other problems such as depression and nervous breakdowns? Because we choose to worry. When we say "I can't" we are usually not even trying. We need to give ourselves self-talk to be able to stop worrying. "I can't" is not self-talk. It is self-defeating. Sometimes, when we worry, a perfectionistic attitude is taken. Many times when I worry, I am afraid that I am not going to do well in school and my grades are going to be less than perfect. If I work on self-acceptance and tell myself that it is okay to make mistakes, then I feel relieved, but also frustrated after the situation I worried about has passed because things are usually never as bad as they seem. After all that time was spent worrying, it was not even worth it.

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Ye olde chalk talk

I frequently hear people ask, "What's wrong with America's education?" Good question. American education is always being compared to that of other countries. Japan is winning the race for top education, people claim. And when someone mentions high school in Europe, images of sprawling brick academy prep school and uniformed boys playing polo on a foggy estate spring to mind.

Compare that with the images you get when you mention a public school in the Bronx, or even the high school you went to. Kind of different, isn't it?

American high schools have an image of rebellion and disorder. They have become an institution of day care for North America's synthetic age group, teenagers. Just one big social scene, complete with rowdy hallways, vicious cliques, drugs, truancy, and teacher abuse.

Okay, okay, enough criticism, already. Now that the negative stuff is taken care of, I'll be positive. Besides, the majority of Dordt students can't refer to the above anyway, and have been privileged with an outstanding education. Consider yourself the exception.

Yet, in the face of all the criticism, America as a whole can appreciate the progress education has gained in the last 350 years.

I'm not an education major, but due to boredom during one of my classes, I started flipping through someone's textbook entitled Those Who Can, Teach, and looked for Peanuts comics. While I amused myself with Schulz's cartoons, I started reading part of the text by accident. What a mistake. It turned out to be kind of interesting.

Sure, Japan can boast. And European countries can look down their noses at educational systems here. After all, those countries have had centuries more than America to develop school systems. According to the textbook, it wasn't until 1642 that New Englanders passed a law requiring parents to educate their children.

And then there are teachers. In just the past sixty years, the occupation of teaching has improved dramatically. Consider the limited rights and expected behavior of a teacher in the 1920's compared to the laws teachers are protected with today. The 1920's teacher had to sign a contract which stated she could not see people of the opposite sex unless it was "necessary to stimulate Sunday school work." In fact, female teachers weren't even allowed to fall in love, or become "secretly married."

Dordt's education classes would shake their heads about ninety-three percent if such a contract were to be required today. Nowadays, even the teacher's sexual preference is protected by law. To some that's good, to others, not so good. The point is, teachers' rights have improved, and in that respect, education as well.

Today, the American student has opportunities that were not even dreamed of half a century ago. At that time, if your town was fortunate enough to be on a teacher's circuit, you would attend school for a couple days, but then not again for another month.

Don't worry, this isn't turning into a story of how your grandfather had to walk eight miles to school twice a day and do his homework on the back of a snow shovel. Whether or not you appreciate your education is up to you.

But it is nice to know that even if the American education system gets bad-mouthed now and then, we still have ample reason to be proud. Proud that every person has the right to an education. Proud that education has improved so much in so little time. And for Dordt's education majors, proud that you can carry on and improve the tradition.

d. mennega

The Free Press was originally founded by two Dordt students in 1965. One of them, now Dr. James C. Schaefer, is an English professor at Dordt College. Dick Schouwen and Dan Mennega revived The Free Press in 1989, to continue giving students the opportunity to openly express their views on various topics which affect students and faculty alike. The coordinators, Schouwen and Mennega, are leaving the column open for any student or faculty to contribute to its success. Please send your opinions, suggestions, and reactions to The Free Press.
To Grandmother's house we go

by Julie Van Donckelaar

Every Christmas season all of the family members on my father's side of the family gather at my grandparents' house for a family reunion. Every year without exception, we go through the same process with the same traditional activities.

Around noon on the appointed day, all of the family members gather at my grandparents' house. They place presents underneath the brightly lit Christmas tree decorated with ornaments Grandma has crocheted. Grandma welcomes everyone in, and the children run to the basement and play until dinner is ready.

After everyone has arrived, Grandma sits us into the living room. She offers up a prayer to God as everyone, even the usually boisterous children, stand or sit silently.

After the "amen" the kids jump up and race to the counter. The smaller children go first, then the older ones, with the men following. The women help the children and serve the food. My grandma cooks a turkey and helps the children and serve the food.

Grandma serves her traditional hot chocolate. The adults claim their separate way. Their stomachs are full of turkey, their arms are full of love, and their minds are full of pleasant memories of an afternoon spent at Grandma's and Grandpa's.

The children trek down the stairs into the basement to eat. They sit on folding chairs which surround card tables. While eating, the older kids talk about their vacation activities while the young ones babble on and spread corn all over their faces. The cousins all talk and laugh together while they argue over who's mom is the best cook.

Meanwhile, the men have gone into the living room to discuss the crops or the church or the latest news while gobbled down their turkey and dressing. The women all sit around the kitchen table with the very youngest children and talk about such things as who has been admitted to the hospital and who just joined our church.

After everyone has finished eating, we come to the moment everyone's been waiting for: the opening of the presents. Grandma asks a couple of the grandchildren to "play Santa Claus" and pass out the gifts. Soon after this, jagged edges of bright wrapping paper cover the carpeting. The children's eyes become bright as they discover a new plaything and the adults exclaim over the presents while they gently remind their offspring to say "thank you."

After the bright shards of paper have been plucked from the carpet and discarded, the adults continue talking while the youngsters return to the basement to play kickball or pool.

When a few hours have passed, one family will decide that it is time to return home. Another family or two will also get up to leave. The adults yell down the stairs for the kids to come upstairs so they can go home.

The children are all bundled up in their fluffy, thick coats while the presents are gathered up and the empty casseroles dishes are picked up.

Goodbyes are uttered as each family gets into their car and goes their separate way. Their stomachs are full of turkey, their arms are full of presents, their hearts are full of joy, love, and peace, and their minds are full of pleasant memories of an afternoon spent at Grandma's and Grandpa's.

Feeling brave, I marched to the curb. At that instant, a car flew past. My heart pounded. But I had to do this. I looked hard to the right, and then turned toward the left. I squinted and saw a car approaching me from the distance. I watched and waited; it seemed forever until the vehicle came past me.

After the "amen" the kids jumped up and slammed the door shut. I ran to her and asked for permission to walk to the office. She looked at me, paused, and then softly said, "Yes." I was so surprised; I had expected her to refuse. Now I had nobody stopping me; I could cross that street.

But that excitement changed into nervousness once I arrived in Sioux Center and saw Dordt College. No longer was I enthusiastic about this town. Reality had hit me; I was scared. I was scared because I would be living with someone I had never met before, and my parents were going to be 700 miles away from me. That first evening, as I walked up the steps to my dorm room, I felt homesick.

When I said goodbye to my parents, my mom had tears in her eyes. She knew it was time to let go. She had nurtured me for eighteen years, bringing me up in the Christian faith. Reality had hit me; I was scared. I was scared because I would be living with someone I had never met before, and my parents were going to be 700 miles away from me. That first evening, as I walked up the steps to my dorm room, I felt homesick.

A few months ago. I was so brave before I left. I let everyone know how eager I was to begin college. I remember shopping for all the necessities—proudly responding yes when the cashiers asked if I was getting ready for college. I recall the excitement of packing boxes and suitcases, and finally having my dad try to fit everything into our small Oldsmobile. I can still sense the excitement of crossing the Mississippi River and entering Iowa—my home for the next four years.

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Is Gorbachev a joke?

by Jeffrey D. Voorhees

As of late, the world has been turned on its ear by the fast-paced reforms in eastern Europe. Hungary has declared itself a democracy, the Parliament of East Germany has abolished the communist monopoly in their nation, and Czechoslovakian Communists have rendered to the voice of the people for reform. Liberal press agencies, as well as the Campus News Today, have reported to the effect that these reformers are in debt (at least partially) to Mikhail Gorbachev. Would somebody please tell me how they are?

Gorbachev has done little if anything to actually cause reform outside the Soviet Union, let alone inside. As a whole, the citizens of the United States are infatuated with Gorbachev. Why? Many people are having what talk show host, Rush Limbaugh, calls "GorbASMS." A "Gorbasm" is the inexpressible, good feeling you receive when you think of what wonderful things President and General Secretary Gorbachev are doing for peace and reform. Or maybe people have been fooled by "glasnost".

Quickly, define the word "glasnost" from Russian to English! (Bzzzz!) Nope, sorry! It's not "openness." But, thanks for playing. "Glasnost" actually means "publicity." Yes, that's right. Publicity. Does that tell you something about Old Gorby's personality?

Let's go to Mr. Roger's "Land of Make Believe", neighbor! Let's find time to take study breaks. Dordt students relax in a multitude of different ways; they play ping pong, pool, go bowling, and crank it with headphones.

Action against chemicals

by Jerod Smeenk

Herbicides and pesticides are a part of a farmer's life-line. I realize that without the use of these chemicals, a farmer would be losing up to half of his crop. But if the use of these poisons is continued, farmers will lose a lot more than a part of their crop. They, along with many others, will lose good health and may even life.

The American farmer takes pride in being the top food producer in the world. Yet with all these blessings, the farmer continues to poison neighbors, family, and self. The dangers of herbicides and pesticides are becoming to outweigh their advantages. Farmers are complaining of headaches, muscle pains, and nausea after use of these chemicals. In some cases, contact with certain herbicides and pesticides has caused the debilitation of limbs and even life.

When chemicals were first introduced, their harmful effects were not known. Experts claimed the chemicals that were applied to crops would fulfill their purpose and then become obsolete. They did perform their job; however, they did not decompose as claimed. Instead, the chemicals carried over to the next year, or, if there was enough precipitation, they were carried into underground water supplies, or ran off into local rivers and lakes.

Lasso, Sencor, Dyfonate, Bladex, Dual, Aatrex, and a few other chemicals are of main concern because they have showed up in drinking water. Blue baby's disease has been linked to contaminated ground water. Tests indicate that there are high levels of chemicals in some wells, even enough to exceed the allowable amount that would still be considered safe.

The testing and control of chemicals is under control of the Environmental Protection Agency. They are responsible for the testing of chemicals already on the market. With thousands of new chemicals every year, the EPA is unable to keep up. Therefore, something has to change to protect those who are in danger from this growing menace.

Now is the time we must take action in our own defense. If nothing continues to be done, we are going to reach the point where nothing can be done without devastating effects.
Lady Defenders continue to roll

by Steve Hoogland

The Lady Defenders continued their fine play in the past two weeks, winning two of their past three games. Their season record is now 6-2.

at Dana

Last Thursday evening the Lady Defenders traveled to Blair, Nebraska, to take on Dana, who bowed by thirty points to Dordt in their first meeting. Despite a 38-33 halftime advantage, the Lady Defenders fell to Dana.

Vonda Brands played one of the best games of her career, scoring 24 points with four assists. Jill Bouwema scored 14 points for the Lady Defenders in the 73-69 loss. "It was a similar game to the last one," said Rhoda, "but this time we missed a lot of inside opportunities."

Dordt shot 15 of 18 from the free throw line for 83 percent for the game.

Lisa Wubben led the Lady Defenders with nine rebounds and Suzanne De Vries had 8 boards, but Dordt was out-rebounded 37-32.

The next day the Blades got the early hop on the Jacks and reversed the previous night’s loss with a 7-4 win.

Blades skate against Drake

by Wayne Dykstra

Ardently preparing for exams is not the only thing that has occupied the time of 15 Dordt students. With a record of 3-5 the Dordt Blades have skated in five games.

The Lucknow Blues came to Northwest Iowa to play against former teammate Jeff Burgstima and the Blades in a single encounter. The Blues were the perfect host in all areas except for one: the scoreboard. The Blades mounted their strongest offensive effort to date scoring 15 points. Balanced scoring and strong defensive play gave the team much needed confidence.

The Jacks from SDSU were the Blades' next opponent. The first game started in a sluggish fashion, a recurring Blade problem. The teams played solid two-way hockey the second and third periods. The slow start allowed the Jacks to skate to a 7-5 victory.

The next day the Blades got the early hop on the Jacks and reversed the previous night's loss with a 7-4 win.

This past weekend the Blades journeyed to Des Moines to take on the Drake Bulldogs, the teams second meeting of the season. Drake, a tough team on the road, proved to be equally tough at home. A large ice surface served as a disadvantage and advantage for Dordt. With room to maneuver, Drakes skating game was subdued, but their skating game accelerated. Again Dordt played a lackluster first period. Drake jumped to a 1-1 lead, refusing to allow the Blades back in the game, and won 9-5.

The next night's game was aired on the Drake television station. The Blades played textbook hockey as Trevor Mast and the defense repelled the swarming "dog attacks" while the offense took advantage of careless Drake penalties.

It was a season affair but when the siren sounded, Dordt was on the short end of a 6-5 score. Confident that the game could have gone either way, the Blades contently packed up and headed home.