It was a not-so-typical Saturday night on campus. February 6, as more than half of the student population of Dordt gathered in the B. J. Haan auditorium to attend this year’s Talent Extravaganza (TX).

"I’d say there were close to a thousand people there," said freshman Tech Services member Elayne Apol. "The Signers team of freshman Stephanie Rebbein and Jalyn Vander Wal won third for their sign-language performance of NF and Jeremiah Carlson’s “I’ll Keep On.” Ho5, the five-member dance group of freshman Hakyung Kim, sophomore Sion Yang and Sun Yang Lee, junior Grace Lee and senior Juan Pablo Benitez Gonzales, placed second. The Juggling Club composed of junior Eric Rowe and sophomores Erica Liddle and Ryan Pavese took the coveted first place prize with their blue glow-in-the-dark juggling routine.

Emcees Ariel and Michel Gomes kicked off the night dressed in traditional African garb and proceeded to keep the audience entertained for the hour and a half with video skits poking fun at Dordt life and a more than a few Africa jokes. Nine of the fifteen auditioning acts were showcased onstage with performances by: The Signers, Harmonyz, Ho5, The Juggling Club, @muranaua7, Jinnu Flutestra, Dateless, KBallad. Two Pianos, Nineteen Fingers.

“I thought all the acts were really good,” said sophomore, emcee Ariel Gomes. “There was a variety of different types of acts as well, which made the show altogether more engaging.” They varied from a group of men singing about being unwillingly single, to flute and ukulele solos, sign language, and a vocal solo in Korean.

Freshman emcee Michel Gomes had a different take away from the night. “I just enjoyed the games. In the first game, people were pumped, but by the time we had the second game—well, they weren’t as brave,” Gomes said. “Watching them suffer was delightful—I felt empowered, kind of like a war chief from back home.”

Students always enjoy being a part of an event that showcases their individual talents and a good way to step out of their comfort zone. “I thought it would be a fun experience,” said sophomore, Ho5 member Sun Yong Lee. “The acts were great and the emcees did a great job, and it seemed pretty professional.”

Fan-favorite moments included a few well-placed subtitle jokes about Michel’s heavy, crafted African accent and the impromptu stories told by the Gomes brothers. Any show like this takes hours of work and preparation for everyone involved.

“Was running on two hours of sleep for [the Extravaganza],” said Ariel Gomes. “Which altogether made it easier to not be nervous, but also removed the filter I have between my brain and my mouth—we did all the planning this week, but it came together nicely in the end.”

Snowfall marks first late start in Dordt history

Eric Rowe – Staff Writer

Whether you saw the blizzard as two extra hours of sleep, two extra hours of Black Ops or two extra hours of homework, the delayed start of classes until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 3, impacted all of campus.

“Part of the late start ever as far as anyone can remember,” said chief administrative officer Howard Wilson, who consulted Wayne Kobes and Charles Veenstra, the two longest tenured professors.

Dordt has only cancelled classes twice in the last 60 years, and, until last Wednesday, the college had never utilized a late start.

“We’ve cancelled about once every 20 years,” Wilson said.

The snow that began to fall early on Tuesday morning qualified for blizzard conditions due to the high winds and low visibility. The snow continued throughout the day and left around 13 inches according to the National Weather Services as reported by the Sioux City Journal.

“It’s like the end of the world, except with snow,” said junior Matt Augustine. “Some of the doors don’t open, they are too icy.”

Junior Kyle Fosse observed one student having trouble closing a door into the old science building due to ice up hinges and snow accumulation. Even a few shovels with his shoulder could not close the last few inches.

Fosse noted similar difficulty with opening the west door into Southview and had to push through piled up snow before he could get out of the building.

After a full day of classes, junior Nick Payton thought that the next day’s classes should definitely be cancelled.

“When the snow is up to my knees, it’s not good,” Payton said.

On Tuesday afternoon, an optional early closing was instituted for students and staff who felt they needed to return home before it got dark. On Tuesday evening at 10, Wilson and provost Eric Forseth met and called in President Hoekstra, who was in Washington D.C. at the time, to make the decision to start late the following morning.

Freshman Janelle Cammenga heard about the delay while talking to friends at 55th Avenue.

“Score!” Cammenga said. “I haven’t done my eight o’clock homework yet.”

Though the delay until 10 on Wednesday morning brought much joy to those struggling with deadlines, Wilson said that the faculty would be working with students to make up for the lost time.

Such a significant snow storm is rare enough that Dordt does not have a hard and fast policy on when to cancel school. The Dordt administrators consulted weather forecasters and the city, county and state officials to make their decision. The largest factor that goes into delaying classes is the residential factor. About 90 percent of students live on campus and most professors live in Sioux Center.

Though there was no further snowfall on Wednesday, Wilson listed two challenges that impacted the late start decision. When the city cleans the streets, it leaves a berm of snow that blocks driveways. Also, empty sidewalks and parking lots are much easier for Dordt’s snow team to navigate.

Continued on page 2

Flint water crisis: water that can kill

Janelle Cammenga – Staff Writer

It is not uncommon to hear Dordt students complain about the water on campus. It tastes weird, smells weird and leaves residue wherever someone tries to wash the dishes.

Sioux Center water is extremely hard, meaning it is packed with calcium and other solutes that make it “hard” to make water with soap. In fact, one of the engineering students’ first labs involves testing the hardness of campus water.

Flint, Michigan is facing an entirely different kind of water problem. Instead of brimming with calcium, their water is filled with lead. This health hazard can cause health and development problems in children.

Recently, President Barack Obama spoke out on the water crisis in Flint. According to the reports of USA Today, he said, “I am very proud of what I’ve done as the president, but the only job that’s more important to me is the job of father. And I know that if I was a parent up there, I would be beside myself if my kid’s health could be at risk.”

Obama declared a state of emergency on January 16 for Flint so the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) could provide support.

These are the only most recent in a long series of events involving Flint’s water supply. Residents have been struggling with the quality of their water for over a year. After an April of 2014, Governor Rick Snyder decided to switch Flint’s water supply from Detroit to the Flint River from the as a cost-saving measure. Soon after the switch, citizens began complaining about the smell, taste and color of the water. Flint authorities assured the people that the water was safe to drink. They stood by this...
Veenstra retires after 40 years of communication

Tori Mann – Staff Writer

After forty years of teaching at Dordt College, communication professor Charles Veenstra has decided it is time for him to retire after this semester.

When Veenstra first entered Dordt College as a student, he believed that communication was his weakest area. He took communication classes and helped coach Debate Club with a professor, but he never thought he would go to get his Master’s degree and “come back to help him.” He followed that advice; he graduated with a history degree, married a woman he met at Dordt, received his Masters and PhD in Communication, taught high school history and speech in Chicago and of course, came back to teach communication at Dordt.

Marlene Veenstra, Professor Veenstra’s wife, said, “He never minded going to work.”

“My husband truly loved his work at Dordt,” she said. “He will miss it.”

Professor Veenstra struggled to nail down a reason why he chose this year to retire, saying that it was a difficult decision for him:

“This is my fortieth year of teaching here and maybe that is enough,” he said. “I have several other things I would like to do with the time God may still give me.”

During an average week, Veenstra arrives at Dordt around seven every morning and leaves for home at four every afternoon. He does school-related work in the mornings and evenings, but from four to seven, he “has to do something.”

Often that something different is woodworking—his specialty is crafting pens, which he sometimes gives to graduates.

Veenstra enjoys working with his fellow colleagues, but it is the students which make up most of his memories at Dordt.

“I especially liked encouraging students who thought they could not do what I wanted for them,” Veenstra said.

“Graduation day is always very difficult for him,” says Mrs. Veenstra. “It’s three times as large as it was 50 years ago. It’s three times as large as it was 25 years ago. It’s three times as large as it was 10 years ago.”

Continued from page 1

Engineers take a break from classes, visit Minneapolis

Eric Rowe – Staff Writer

“Engineering life moves pretty quick. If you don’t stop to take a look once in a while, you might miss it.” This phrase is printed on a club whiteboard in the engineering wing of the science building to advertise the engineering big tour. On Feb. 11 and 12, students will take a break from classes, travel to Minneapolis and visit engineering companies.

The big tour is hosted by the various engineering clubs on campus. There are three itineraries based off of the largest emphasis that Dordt offers: mechanical engineering, civil engineering and electrical engineering. Companies will include UTC Aerospace, Starkey, ASE Holdings and 3M. The engineering department contributes to lower the tour cost to $30 per student.

Sophomore Micah Tjerdoma toured in the Kansas City area last year and visited six different engineering companies over two days.

“It further expands your horizons of what you see yourself doing,” Tjerdoma said.

One of the most memorable parts of the experience for Tjerdoma was the evening activities after the companies closed for the day. A group of engineering majors went out to get food and see some Kansas City sights.

“I didn’t think that we’d end up in the Lego store at the mall,” Tjerdoma said.

Junior Mark Brauning, who took part in the tour to the Iowa City area in 2014, was part of a group that went out to eat at Buffalo Wild Wings after touring all day. Eating spicy wings with upperclassmen is immediately memorable to Brauning, though he also enjoyed seeing the automated trucking system at John Deere.

“It gave me the opportunity to act outside of a class-oriented environment,” Brauning said.

“It’s a nice vacation in the middle of the semester.”

The tours are geared to engineering students, not tourists, and often are established through a personal connection to the college. Because the clubs tour companies, they need to come in a typical weekday when manufacturers, testers and designers are in normal working hours.

Traditionally, the engineering big tour takes place over the Thursday to Friday block before Valentine’s Day. This usually corresponds with an officially sanctioned reading day. The tour-goers in the past have only needed to skip their Thursday classes.

Junior Austin Ver Meer and Adam Howeryzel said that missing two days of classes was a major factor in deciding against attending the big tour this year.

Sophomore Laura Baridon will be attending the big tour for the first time this week. Her scheduling worked out nicely this year and she will only have to miss two classes and band, despite the lack of a reading day. She is looking forward to seeing the different opportunities to observe engineering work.

“JM will be cool to visit,” Baridon said. “They have Post-it and a lot of different brunds.”

Braudin is glad that she will not be the only student attending the big tour this year. Last year all of the Dordt students who attended were male.

As well as touring companies and bonding with fellow students, the big tour-goers will have the opportunity to interact with Dordt engineering alumni in the Minneapolis area. Brauning is looking forward to talking with people who have been in his shoes as a student.

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Flint water crisis: water that can kill (cont.)

Erica Brinkman – Staff Writer

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Jim Baridon, who has been involved with the tour since they started the tradition. The engineering big tour continues to be a popular and successful, giving engineering students a break while showing them the practical application of their skills.

Continued from page 1

Snowfall marks first late start in Dordt history (cont.)

Erica Brinkman – Staff Writer

The snow team started clearing at 5 a.m. on Wednesday and did not finish clearing the pavement that day.

Sioux Center’s growth over the past half century has made it easier to cleared courses for safety reasons.

It’s three times as large as it was 50 years ago. People can live two miles away from campus and still be in Sioux Center,” Wilson said. “I do think we are getting softer; circumstances change.”

It takes a lot to make Dordt close its doors – don’t stop to take a look once in a while, you might miss it.” This phrase is printed on a club whiteboard in the engineering wing of the science building to advertise the engineering big tour. On Feb. 11 and 12, students will take a break from classes, travel to Minneapolis and visit engineering companies.

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Flint water crisis: water that can kill (cont.)

Continued from page 1

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Flint reconnected to Detroit’s water in October, but the effects of the earlier switch
**News**

Nifty Needles: new knitting club shares passion for crafting

Aliyana Gerhardt – Staff Writer

Dordt College added a new club to its long list, The Nifty Needles. No, it has nothing to do with nursing. The group is a knitting club dedicated to getting away from the stress of homework and just spend time with fellow members and learning a new skill or improving on an existing one.

The Nifty Needles meet every Saturday from 9:30 to 11 a.m., where around a dozen people meet to knit or crochet, while others simply come to enjoy the company.

“[We] share our passion of crafting with the wider Dordt community,” said junior Juden Vander Berg a co-founder along with Sophomores Emily Hummel and Laura Humrichouse.

Some children were taught how to knit or crochet from mothers or grandmothers, but others didn’t have that experience. “I’ve been knitting since I was little,” Hummel said. “I am really thankful that we could start a club on campus that encourages everyone to explore new ways of crafting and try out something that they might not otherwise do.”

However, the club is hoping to do more than just teach and create for themselves.

“We live in an ever fluctuating part of the country and people don’t always have the means to supply themselves or their families with the proper winter wear,” Vander Berg said. “If we can help them ease that burden and supply schools, churches or other organizations with the necessary warm weather accessories then I believe that we are called to help them in that way.”

Chatting over coffee, tea and muffins, the group’s hands are always moving. Some work on blankets or scarves, while others show off finished projects.

“I love the chill Saturday morning atmosphere,” said Vanessa Blankspoor, a junior. “We all work on our own thing and the conversation is always entertaining.”

The Nifty Needles discussed how they hoped to make hats for premature babies at local hospitals and warm winter scarfs and hats for families in need.

“We want to help use our gifts that God has given us to help these less fortunate,” said senior, Annie Pinkerton.

If you’re looking to tackle a new skill or find a listening ear, be sure to drop in on our crafting club on Saturday mornings. You will be met with a warm and friendly smile willing to help.

“Sometimes the solution to life’s largest problems is to crochet with friends and have a cup of joe in the morning,” Humrichouse said.

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The Centre Mall boasts more than just pizza

Meagan DeGrave – Staff Writer

It has 100,000 square feet of area and thirteen attractions—including two restaurants, a movie theatre, a salon and a few stores. The Centre Mall in town is more than just Pizza Ranch.

The Midwestern chain restaurant is a popular place for Dordt students because of the buffet style pizza and relatively inexpensive price, but most students don’t move too much farther than the rustic food and drinks.

The other option for food within the mall—Casey’s, a bakery, a pride of the Dutch Sioux Center community, also has a deli inside the mall. It is located right next to the bakery and directly adjacent to a large seating area inside the mall.

The food does not come with high price tags, but Casey’s offers more options than a regular fast-food joint. There are burgers and fries as well as salads, sandwiches and soups. And on Thursday nights in the winter, Casey’s has a buffet called Chili Bash, where anyone can get a buffet of chili, cinnamon rolls and more for just seven dollars.

Not many Dordt students take advantage of the close proximity however. The major contributors to the success of Casey’s are of the older generation, even though Dordt students make up a large part of Sioux Center’s community.

Other than Pizza Ranch, the Centre Mall sees the most support from Dordt students at the movie theatre. The Fridley Cinema 5 features five screens that play some of the most popular movies for only $8.00 per ticket. Still, several Dordt students ignore the theatre because of their small amount of screens and poor selection of showings.

“I’ve only gone to the mall a few times,” Becca Nelson, a sophomore, said. “I mostly just go for the movie theatre, but I’ve gone to the jewelry store too.”

The jewelry store, Pat’s Jewellery Centre, is a small store but it offers a lot of selections for its size— one worker encourages Dordt students to consider the store for Valentine’s Day gift options.

For more athletic students, Centre Sports has a large selection for the relatively small mall. It does not have as many options as large chain stores might have, but the store still sells athletic apparel, shoes and sports equipment. Athletes do not have to give up their new apparel because there’s a selection in the mall.

Women used to living in a larger city with lots of stores around them do not have to stop shopping either—there is a Maurice’s inside Centre Mall with much the same inventory seen country-wide in the chain’s stores.

Students often forget about the mall, even if they sit across the road from it all the time. The Centre Mall is located directly across from the Fruitland Plain.

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Serenegetee: making a difference, one pocket tee at a time

Jaden Vander Berg – Staff Writer

For many Dordt students, it is often difficult to feel like they make a difference. Some find jobs right after graduation, but one student, senior theater arts major Taylor Leach, found another way to help those in need: a club on campus that encourages everyone to explore new ways of crafting and help out something that they might not otherwise do.

Founded in 2012 by two college students, Serenegetee is different in that they do not donate clothes to those regions, but support local artists and businesses. It is less of a handout and more of a hand up.

They have been rapidly growing since their founding in 2012 and have representatives on college and high school campuses nationwide. These reps do a variety of things, but most often their role is spreading the word.

“Whether that be word of mouth or on our social media, we are just supporting Serenegetee and their products,” Leach said. “We wear the shirts and get the conversations started about the company and how they have grown.”

Leach expressed that she believes Serenegetee could grow at Dordt.

“Our hope is that it is something that the Dordt students consider looking into,” Leach said. “We have a relatively fashionable group and with what I have seen with our different interactions with different world improvement organizations, we always seem to have a positive response with that. I hope we would consider looking at Serenegetee and supporting a clothing company that is actually doing something, rather than just making more money.”

For those interested, Leach is available. Just look for her bright pocket tee.

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The Dordt opinion: Valentine’s Day on trial

Lauren Bird – Staff Writer

At a college with a reputation for producing a large number of married couples, you’d think that Valentine’s Day would be more celebrated. However, that does’t seem to be the case.

“Among the population of single students at Dordt, Valentine’s Day tends to be called “overrated.” These students may exchange the typical heart-strewn cards and partake in sugar binges, but the day doesn’t hold as much significance as for those who have snuggled that significant other. Senior Chris Geels is among those who celebrate Valentine’s Day on a more superficial level.

“My opinion is that if you really love someone, you shouldn’t be focused on showing that love for one day of the year. I think that Valentine’s Day is a severely commercialized holiday,” Geels said.

While there are many who share Geels’ sentiments, there are some who enjoy Valentine’s Day, even if they are single. Sophomore Erica Liddle is thankful for time spent with her friends on Valentine’s Day.

“One of my professors has a cookie decorating party every Valentine’s Day, and honestly, last year I had a really great time. It’s a good reminder for us to tell others that we love them, and it’s another chance for us to express the love and appreciation we have for our friends and family,” Liddle said.

Liddle is not the only one who expresses appreciation for V-Day. Those with significant others tend to have a positive view of the holiday. Freshman Dorian Ogas is among those who think fondly of the time spent with loved ones.

“If I was in Texas, I would spend Valentine’s Day with my girlfriend. I don’t think that it’s an overrated holiday, as long as you don’t overreact yourself and set the day too far apart from other days,” Ogas said.

People like Ogas and Geels have decidedly chosen a side for this Valentine’s Day debate. But others are not sure what to think. Junior Eric Rowe has mixed feelings about the holiday.

“I’m a little torn about Valentine’s Day. Part of me says that it is valid, because it provides an opportunity for us to reflect on the people that matter to us. On the other hand, a holiday is typically a time for people to do something that they don’t usually do. Showing our love for others is something that should be done every day,” Rowe said.

Though the issue of Valentine’s Day has been put on trial, no firm sentence has been placed on this holiday of love, even at a school where love is possibly the most talked about subject among its students.
Dordt College believes that learning should be put into practice, and that is applied to Christian service in projects like Putting Love Into Action (PLIA). Every year, several teams of students travel to different locations in an effort to serve others in need. About 60% of Dordt students volunteer in some way, but only approximately 120 students participate in PLIA each year. Considering how many options there are for PLIA service projects, very few students take advantage of the opportunity.

PLIA is a service project that runs over spring break. There are several locations that vary each year, so there are multiple places for students to serve. Students who participate in PLIA are able to use their own gifts of cleaning, construction or childcare to help the community in which they are serving. The trip also focuses on building personal faith through devotional settings and friendships through social activities.

Students are encouraged to raise $350 to cover the costs of the trip, but dean of chapel Aaron Baart says that students often end up paying only $100 for the experience. For a small price, students are able to experience a new part of the country in a serving atmosphere.

This year, there are over ten locations to choose from in which students can serve. In previous years, locations have included Denver, CO; Chicago, IL; Atlanta, GA; Noon, KY; and Shiprock, NM, among others.

Students who are interested in attending PLIA this year should contact Aaron Baart at Aaron.Baart@dordt.edu or stop by the Andreaus Center for more information. The deadline for signing up is in only a few days, so applicants are encouraged to get involved soon!

De Groot said, “I got chocked up thinking about the legacy of faithfulness that I’d been given. And I thought about how blessed I was to be able to lead them in worship. We all left the day incredibly refreshed and encouraged in the Lord.”

“The people are trading a free Saturday to be inspired, encouraged, and equipped for ministry,” Huisman said. “They are a blessing to so many churches and communities, and this is our way to give back to them and say ‘thank you.’”

Lydia Marcus – Staff Writer
Carrying through with an athletic career in college reaps great benefits

Cauden Tinklenberg – Staff Writer
Evangelical conservatives are the greatest threat to religious liberty in the United States. As counterintuitive as this may sound, the connection is straightforward. Christians want to see the gains they’ve made over other religions; we desire preferred status and legislated morality. This approach isn’t the way to secure God’s kingdom. Liberty and Christians must back off this holy charge if we want to secure and preserve religious liberty and legislated morality. This approach isn’t the way to make it through an entire season without getting any injuries. We must support and encourage our athletes, I think the coaches are a strong team that’s been breathing life into our athletes. I think they’re the one that’s going to make it through an entire season without getting any injuries. They’re the ones that are going to keep the team in shape. They’re the ones that are going to keep the team in shape. They’re the ones that are going to keep the team in shape. They’re the ones that are going to keep the team in shape.

In order for Christianity to become truly relevant in American politics, Christians have to be more active. Christians have to make the effort to “show up.” We have to be more active in politics. “Show up.” This was around the time when Minnesota was going to vote on the legalization of the same-sex marriage law. According to a 2012 ABC news poll, 65% of Republicans, 60% of Independent party members, and 29% of Democrats were against same-sex marriage laws. When looking at these figures, it seems as if there should have been enough voters to stop the legalization of it. However, those in support of the legalization of same-sex marriage had much larger numbers than those opposing it. In order for Christianity to become truly relevant in American politics, Christians have to be more active. Christians have to make the effort to “show up.” We have to be more active in politics.

For whoever wishes to save his right will lose it

Cauden Tinklenberg – Staff Writer

Greetings from the nation’s capital! Though currently buried under piles of snow, as the temperature continues to rise I am convinced that I will be navigating the National Mall via gondola by the time this article graces your pages.

The terribly cliché term “new beginnings” may best describe my upcoming semester. I am juggling the pressures of classes and papers, hours halting from Pennsylvania and Boston surrounding me, and I’m rooming with an Alaskan and a Nigerian. Needless to say, a most diverse life experience awaits me. And, for what it’s worth, I have no access to a car, and the water here can taste nearly as bad as the water of the Mississippi River.

New beginnings indeed, and the necessary challenges as well. But don’t pity me, friends. I know that word is the farthest thing from my mind.

This city, these communities, are living and breathing with new opportunities beg for a taker around every corner, and I believe God led me to D.C. for a variety of reasons. Let no stone go unturned. I want to tell myself. I intend to discover His will for my life throughout my short time here.

The streets walked these brick streets for only three weeks, one fact is evident—this city is broken. As is accustomed in metropolitan areas throughout the nation, power and poverty clash daily. These opposing forces vie for superiority as those in need to be heard among the masses while many of those in power feed themselves with false contentment as they toss a couple bucks into the hands of the homeless. My professors at the American Studies have challenged me, a temporary citizen of this community, to reevaluate my mental growth toward

Ashley Bloomhof – Staff Writer

The immersion of the (semi-) ignorant

View of the Capital Building from the roof of the American Scholar’s Program building.

wealth and an ordered society. I have learned to find peace in protestive justice, in the realization that no one person or group can bring renewal to every corner of the world. Instead, God allows the stories of individuals to overlap, blessing each other and bringing shalom to the restless, as is the work of the church and it should remain so.

As former editor of the Diamond, I look forward to contributing various personal insights to the semester’s publication. Moral politics, street sense and comical reflections on life—whether that be the support of same-sex marriage, etc.

I quickly found that Ben Carson and Carly Fiorina are actually influential Christian representatives for America, but where is their media attention? Why is Donald Trump at the center of everything to do with politics these days? In response, I scrawled through Trump’s top 30 political and found few reasons why people support him. He calls out anyone who has a single negative thing to say about him, and his plane of criticism and any accomplishments they’ve ever had. Now, I’m not saying Trump isn’t Christian, but I’ll leave it up to him to prove it to us!

The Christian candidates are often well respected, but are they also capable of running a country? The older conservative voters generally choose the strongest Christian, but they never enough supply enough voters to land the candidate in that position. According to a 2014 Pew Research Center report, 54% of those who claim to be born-again Christians have voted for the republican candidate for the last three elections above 77% of the time. This statistic tells us one thing: there must not be a large number of born-again Christians who vote, because that percentage should have a larger influence on results.

As our country has slowly progressed away from God’s word, its influence has also diminished. The majority of Americans have clearly pushed for action that is not God-honoring, whether that be the support of same-sex marriage, etc.

Donny Moers – Staff Writer
Is Christianity worth anything anymore?

As this was the first Presidential election that I could vote in, I had a stronger desire than usual to be more active in politics this election season. Both growing up in a Christian home and also attending a Christian college greatly influenced my decision to seek out a candidate with strong conservative views who is able to speak his or her mind.

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I fully understand and respect every individual’s freedom to pursue his or her own passions and live a lifestyle that works best for him or her. However, I’d like to make the case that carrying through with an athletic career at Dordt College will enhance any athlete’s life physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually. As former editor of the Diamond, I look forward to contributing various personal insights to the semester’s publication. Moral politics, street sense and comical reflections on life—whether that be the support of same-sex marriage, etc.

After almost three years of training and competing, I have experienced the ups and downs of almost every athlete’s experiences. It has been well worth every aching muscle, early morning practice and summer workouts.

Carry on through with an athletic career in college reaps great benefits.

Alli Young – Staff Writer

As a junior in high school, I told my parents there was no way I was going to college. I wanted to run track or cross country in college. Little did I know that collegiate athletics was the key to one of the most rewarding and satisfying experiences of my college years.

I was commissioned when a fellow Dordt athlete decided not to continue playing their sport of choice. I had the opportunity of anyone quitting the team because they’re “not good enough” or they’re tired of sitting the bench. The most frequent reason I hear is that they would prefer to use their time to prioritize other activities, such as working, studying or socializing.

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Carry on through with an athletic career in college reaps great benefits.
Men's volleyball strives for daily growth

Starting a varsity program makes long-term goals and expectations difficult to predict. Instead of looking too far forward, Dordt College men's volleyball strives for daily growth in the midst of unpredictability. Being a first-year varsity program, Dordt will face numerous obstacles and on and off the court. One of those major obstacles any team faces: the opponent.

"With volleyball being a varsity sport this year, we'll be facing some pretty good teams, playing against guys that have played competitively for a long time," said senior outside hitter Kyle Vander Zee.

The competition is tough. During a four-match tournament in Parkville, Missouri, Dordt competed against four teams ranked in the top-10 of the NAIA men's volleyball polls. The Founders took one set during the four matches while losing four sets by double digits.

"I think in our first season, if we become too heavy on that side [wins and losses] of the attention, that can be overwhelming and frustrating," said Chad Hanson, the Dordt College men's volleyball head coach. "Looking back to this last weekend [Jan. 29-30], the daily growth focus has paid off, and we've seen success in the way our guys understand the game and communicate."

Understandable. Success is another sizeable change between last season's club status and this year's varsity status. Schematically, the change is significant.

"Our biggest hump to get over right now is trusting the system that our coaches have us in, "Vander Zee said. "We're going to play in club we played 5-1, and this year we're a 6-2, so we have a few guys playing different roles on the team."

To put it simply, the 5-1 system offensively has one setter and five hitters on the court. This way, the setter sets in every rotation, whether in the back or front row. A 6-2 system offensively has two setters on the court and allows a team to have three offensive players up front at all times.

The current schematic system, 6-2, isn't necessarily set in stone for Dordt.

"We're still working through our lineup and the expectations of our system—the offensive and defensive schemes we run," Hanson said. "Not only is the system schematically different, but the opposition is also running some new schemes players aren't accustomed to.

"With men's volleyball, what I've seen is the more elite teams have four hitters," Hanson said. "That's a new volleyball dynamic for Dordt College and specifically for our men's programs. That's another layer in taking three blockers and trying to defend against four hitters."

It's obstacles and struggles like these that bring Dordt to its overarching goal for the programs daily growth. With 10 upperclassmen on a roster of 16 players, the leadership is in place to set the correct tone.

"As seniors, we collectively discussed the fact that we have an incredible opportunity to set the tone for this program," said senior Austin Lindemulder. "We want to be leaders to this team, pushing others to grow athletically and be prepared for the upcoming years."

Lindemulder and his teammates must puzzle through the program's first year will dictate how successful this inaugural season will be.

"We need to keep in mind that this is an experimental year for Dordt men's volleyball," said senior middle blocker/opposite hitter Mark Velgersdyk. "We want to lead this team, pushing others to grow athletically and be prepared for the upcoming years."

"The season was lots of fun, and I'm happy with what we accomplished," said starting goalkeeper Ross Van Glauden. "I'd say we played our best hockey in the month leading up to Christmas Break and never fully recovered our pre-Christmas form this season. Despite that, we improved a lot this year in more ways than one, and we have a lot to be proud of. It will be exciting to see if we can push ourselves further next year."

The Blades will return seven juniors. With such a strong senior class next season, the question is what will be the lineup for the Blades. Dordt will begin the offseason looking to where they left off this season.

The game gives reason to fill the void everyone experiences between the holidays and spring season. a reason to get together with friends and eat as much food as possible.

"Some friends and I went to Dr. Forseth's house, had a great home cooked meal and watched the game with a group of pretty good football players."

Lastly, there are those who watch the Super Bowl for the game. This includes the football players who often watch the game with some friends.

"I was really cheering on Peyton [Manning] to win since it was his last Super Bowl and all, but I do like Carson Newton and his dophobia.

The game may not have been as dramatic as people wanted it to be, but it did give us a reason to get together with friends and enjoy their fellowship. Plus, now campus gets to hear all about the Broncos victory for the next month.

Some things in life will never change the Blades, including Schyler Kane, who watched the game with some friends.

"I was really cheering on Peyton [Manning] to win since it was his last Super Bowl and all, but I do like Carson Newton and his dophobia.

Three more qualify for track & field Nationals

Aaron Lastdji - Staff Writer

In a season filled with overtime wins and losses and ups and downs, a light emerged. The Dordt Blades did not go .500 or win every game this year, but they finished with their best record in five seasons: 10-14-1. The team finished with 11 losses after the semester break.

Owning a four-game winning streak going into the final weekend of the season (Feb. 5-6), Dordt was neck and neck with a difficult opponent, 0-15th ranked Missouri State halted Dordt's win streak with an 8-0 victory the first night of the weekend series.

Friday night's game did not go the Blades way for the majority of the night. Every bounce seemed to favor Missouri State as they were scored on twice on the power play. The following night was a different story with the Blades losing 6-5. The game came down to the final seconds.

The Dordt Blades may have not gone on to the playoffs, but this season was a stepping stone. This year was a success for the Dordt Blades, Mundorf said. "It was the first time the team got to 10 wins since the ’09-10 season. That’s a huge success for this group of young men who are dedicated. Mix in some of the many recruits who have committed to the team next year and this organization is going to keep getting better."

Bringing a team together that had only six wins the year before, this year’s team seemed to be continuously improving. Facing eight out of the top-15 ranked teams in their region, Dordt defeated one and played the others tightly, showing everyone Dordt is a squad that will always battle.

Men's long jump compete at a 300-meter indoor track at South Dakota State University.

There are many themes to the Super Bowl, but also about the party as well. It’s obstacles and struggles like these that bring Dordt to its overarching goal for the programs daily growth. With 10 upperclassmen on a roster of 16 players, the leadership is in place to set the correct tone.

"The season was lots of fun, and I’m happy with what we accomplished," said starting goalkeeper Ross Van Glauden. "I’d say we played our best hockey in the month leading up to Christmas Break and never fully recovered our pre-Christmas form this season. Despite that, we improved a lot this year in more ways than one, and we have a lot to be proud of. It will be exciting to see if we can push ourselves further next year."

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Dordt juniors showcase their artistic endeavors

Lauren Bird – Staff Writer

Have you seen the most recent addition to the art gallery? The work of eight Dordt juniors will be displayed in the Campus Center until Feb. 21. Each of these students are art majors in some form, each with different emphases. On Feb. 6, these students had a chance to talk about their works in a time of discussion and fellowship during the Junior Art showing.

Emily Visser, a graphic design major, was the first to talk about the language through her pieces. Visser was presented with the opportunity to create an infographic based on what Dordt students do after graduation. She was given the necessary information and then told to create something with it.

“It was very good experience to work with a client,” Visser said. “I realize that this was a much different scenario than what I expect to be presented with in a real job situation, as my bosses were very graceful and understanding, but it was still a good experience.”

Jennifer Allen, a fine arts studio major, chose to show a number of her paintings and multimedia works. Many of Allen’s pieces are the result of experimentation in the studio. For example, one piece showcased a series of six paintings of Allen’s eyebrows. To create the work, she applied paint to her brows and stamped them onto the paper six times, each one yielding a different look.

Another piece by Allen was created using playing cards and candle wax—among other things.

“When I originally had this piece displayed, I had set it up in a way that was almost shrine-like,” Allen said. “I think of it as a representation of how we can pick one piece of ourselves and almost worship it: we can make it into what defines us, when there really are many pieces of ourselves that define us and make us who we are.”

Hope Kramer, a fine arts and graphics major, also displayed art created by using many different mediums. Like Allen, Kramer is interested in experimentation in the studio, which was evident particularly in one piece: an oversized, stuffed piece of cake that Kramer had sewn.

Kramer, who is also on the volleyball team, said that, for her, there is often overlap between art and sport.

“Volleyball involves a lot of geometry and coordination, and that applies to my art making as well,” Kramer said. “Sculpture requires a lot of energy, and I feel that I put a lot of that same energy into my art work.”

Vanessa Blankespoor, a graphic design major, offered her graphic design work for the showing, including a redesigned logo for Ikea. She stated that the goal for that assignment was to redesign the logo for the largest consumer pool of the company. A member of the audience brought up the fact that Blankespoor edits the layout for the Diamond, which then led her to talk about the challenges of designing something that has to look somewhat uniform each time.

Brittany Ryks, a K-12 art education major, displayed a piece that was a series of three different drawings. Ryks mentioned that since her piece centers on the theme of anxiety and depression, it has acted as a conversation starter and has even become a piece that many connect to on an emotional level. This led Ryks to talk about how she imagines her art classroom will someday be.

“I have a deep love for kids and for creating things together,” said Ryks. “I hope that my classroom will be a safe place for my students to try things, but I also hope that it will be a place where students are challenged to think deeper and have meaningful conversations.”

The works of two other students, Rachel Du Mez and Jordyn Vischer, are also displayed in the gallery, but the two were not able to attend the discussion.

The Campus Center art gallery is open every day from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., and this particular show will be displayed until Feb. 21.

The Academy Awards: they matter, but why?

Kyle Fosse – Staff Writer

The Academy Awards season is once again upon us, and with it come the inevitable racial and gender-based debates which follow just about any event taking place in America nowadays. But I would rather talk about the nature of the event itself.

It would be presumptuous to say that the famed golden Oscar statuette adds any value to the film to which it is awarded. The movie to which it is awarded won’t change whether it wins any awards or not. And the famed golden Oscar statuette adds any value to the film to which it is awarded. The movie to which it is awarded.

The movie to which it is awarded, of course.

But I would rather talk about the nature of the event itself.

Whether or not you decide to watch the Academy Awards: they matter, but why?

Janelle Cumnongo – Staff Writer

Artistry, romance, tragedy and humor characterized Jon Janssen and Anna Krygsheld’s voice recital last Friday night. While the BJ Haan was not bustling, the recital was well-attended by a crowd of faculty, family and friends.

Janssen is an English Literature major from Hopers, Iowa, and Krygsheld is a theater major from Lansing, Illinois. Despite their differences in background and interests, the two meshed well together to perform a skilled and entertaining concert.

Janssen shared that his personal favorite piece was “Bring Him Home” from the musical Les Miserables.

“When you’ve got something good to work with,” he said. “It’s easy to bring all you can into it.”

Krygsheld’s favorite song was “Good Morning, Mr. Bluebird,” a humorous piece about a singer competing with the bluebird that wakes her up every morning. Accompanied by flautist Sion Yang and pianist Lauren Vermeer, the crowd enjoyed the song as much as she did.

Another crowd favorite was Janssen’s “Agnes.” People roared with laughter when it became apparent that Janssen’s love interest in the song was actually his beloved mule. “It catches the audience off guard every time,” Janssen shared, smiling.

Humor was not limited to the performance itself.

“When you haven’t practiced for a practice enough and you know it, it’s a combination of humor and dread,” Janssen said.

“We were working on ‘Anything You Can Do!’ and we just had to add the acting elements,” Krygsheld said. “Jon couldn’t remember which phrases came first, so we created these little gimmicks.”

In order to remember that the line, “Anything you can buy, I can buy cheaper,” comes before “Anything you can sing, I can sing softer.” Krygsheld and Janssen figured that “if you have any cents, you’ll speak softly.”

Even though the process was a lot of hard work and practice, Krygsheld shared, “Jon and I work really well together and we had a really good time.”

The crowd enjoyed the performance as much as Janssen and Krygsheld. Some students were even inspired. Freshman Bethany Van Fossen said, “It actually makes me want to go and practice my voice lessons at nine at night!”

Overall, Janssen found it to be a good learning experience. “I’m kind of a perfectionist, so I’m not used to failure. This was something I kept failing at and got pushed to do better. When you struggle with something and it comes out better, the results feel more real.”
Humans of Dordt College

Q: What are the biggest culture differences between here, in the United States, and South Korea?

A: Manner of eating. When American people eat, their mothers tell them not to slurp. But in South Korea, that’s a compliment.

Q: Do you still do that when you’re here?

A: Yes. When I first went to the commons, I slurped and all of the Americans looked at me.

Yeseul Park

Cartoon by Jonathan Fictorie
Typography by Christina Chahyadinata

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