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Bethany Schuttinga speaks:

The firecracker incident, club funding and communication with students

**Bridget Smith
Hannah Gallo
Staff Writers**

How does your job manifest itself in your daily tasks?

A lot of administrator work [and] a lot of meetings to talk about new initiatives, or current initiatives that we have going on. Management... meeting with directors of the different areas.

Every day is different. I meet with students about situations that they encounter, needs they might have: judicial hearings... students who want to get perspectives on different things. Sometimes I invite students to come and talk with me and say, "Hey, what do you think about this housing situation...this is what we're thinking of doing what are your thoughts on that." [Basically I am] trying to make a variety of contacts throughout the day. I'd say, in any given week if you take it that way, if you look at my calendar you'd see

meetings with faculty, meetings with other administrators, meetings with students, meetings with my staff.

What led you to your current position at Dordt College?

That's an interesting story. I wasn't really looking for a different position. When the position came open at Dordt, I initially had not been interested and my husband said, "Bethany, we haven't really prayed about this."

I had always said I would never come back – not because I was fed up with this area, but I always saw myself working in higher education in a public institution and was really enjoying my position [at Iowa State].

So we weren't really looking to move, and we began to pray about [it], "Okay, God are you leading in a different way?" We had thought we'd be in Ames for a long time. And our hearts began to change a bit, and as I made the visit to campus,

we committed to going through the first interview process, and really felt our hearts changing as I had the opportunity to interact with students and staff and faculty, and see what was going on at Dordt.

And felt very compelled to say, "Ok God, have you been equipping me for a position like this and should we consider that? Is our time done here in Ames? And should we move on to something else?"

Our hearts changed, and we've had so much joy in being here.

How are you dealing with the incident at B.J. Haan [Sunday] night? What are the consequences for someone doing that? What steps are you taking to find out who did it?

The incident at the B.J. Haan was very concerning and there's currently an investigation underway.

Dordt staff and law enforcement has been involved as well. And I



Bethany Schuttinga addresses questions about her job and issues on campus this semester. Photo from Dordt archives.

don't want to be elusive about the question but it would be inappropriate for me to talk about the outcome because I don't know the context yet. It's important that people know it was a serious act and a lot of students were frustrated by it.

I don't come to campus too often for incidents. I was here [Sunday] night, the fire chief was here, the provost was here, and the director of facilities was here, Stan Oordt, several res. life staff. So it was a large concern

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Symposium opens its doors on April 13

**Sarah Groneck
Guest Writer**

Student Symposium elections are on the horizon, and Symposium representatives are trying to spread the word.

On April 13 from 9:00-10:00 p.m., Student Symposium will hold an open house in the Eckhardt Lounge.

At the open house, all current Symposium members will talk about the responsibilities of their respective positions. Students will also

be able to pick up petition forms and information about running for the 2009-2010 officer positions.

"It's a great time to learn more about Symposium and for students to figure out if they're interested in being part of it next year," said representative Jessica Veenstra.

Criteria for applying for Symposium remain the same as last semester. Students interested in applying for officer positions must gather 30 student signatures and

two faculty signatures in the form of a petition in order to be considered for Symposium. Petitions are due at Student Services by noon on April 20.

This year, students may also apply for the council member position. This consists of three non-voting students compensated as work studies in order to oversee Symposium as a whole. They meet several times a week in order to "do the legwork so that the representatives can focus on their

responsibilities," as the Symposium Constitution states.

At the regular April 14 Symposium meeting at 10:00 p.m., representatives will deliberate on several \$5,000 donation proposals, selecting the top three ideas. Dordt students may then vote on which idea they believe to be the best choice for the \$5,000.

Voting for Symposium officer candidates will take place on April 20 to the 23 by the Defender Grille. Dordt students will be given the chance

to vote for Symposium council members through an online site that will be posted in the future as well.

Those running for council member positions will be given a chance to speak about the impact they would like to make on the Dordt community by being part of Symposium.

For more information about Symposium, please stop by the Symposium open house on April 13 or email Symposium at symposium@dordt.edu.

news.



April Fool's! Students awoke to find some unmentionables blowin' in the wind on Wednesday morning between East Hall and the Commons. Photo by Bree Brouwer.

Iowa tuition grant likely to see reduction due to economic downturn

Jurgen Boerema
Staff Writer

The national economic downturn could have special significance for Dordt College students in the coming weeks.

The Iowa Tuition Grant Program could likely see a cut in funding from the Iowa State legislature for the 2010 fiscal year. The legislature is facing a 270 million dollar drop in revenue and is having make budget cuts to compensate.

Any Iowa resident attending or planning to attend a certified Iowa

private college is eligible for the Iowa Tuition Grant.

Students are given awards based on need after completion of the Free Application for the Federal Financial Student Aid.

For the 33 years that the program has been available, over 350,000 students have benefited from the grant.

In 2003, Iowa provided more than 46 million in state grants to about 15,000 students. The grant maxes at 4,000 dollars per student and could see a reduction to 3,650 dollars per student.

"The Iowa Tuition Grant is very important to our Iowa students. We hope the state's budget woes are dealt with so the Iowa Tuition Grant goes back to the \$4,000 the law allows," said Michael Epema, the director of financial aid at Dordt College.

72 percent of Dordt students from Iowa qualify for the Iowa Tuition Grant. Students across the state are lobbying for the grant to be restored to its original amount.

For more information on how to get involved, contact jrgnbrm@dordt.edu.

Schuttinga discusses highlights and lowlights of job

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and disappointing that it would happen.

Do you know where they found the firecrackers?

I actually found them when I came. The organ room door was locked, but it was right in front of the door so the sound actually echoed [in the auditorium].

What is your perspective on the new club funding?

I think student symposium has done a good job of addressing the topic, but I think there are some kinks that still need to be worked out in the process.

But it's better than it was before. I think just because it's been shook up a little bit, we're going to learn and have some aches and pains along the way.

What are some of the most difficult experiences you have had so far at Dordt?

Anytime you have a student situation in which students are strug-

gling with their experience here, or they feel like they're not finding a fit, feeling uncertain about whether or not they should be here, when a student is hurting in their experience – that's hard to see students go through that and want to fix that situation. But I can't. You can walk beside them, and hopefully equip them with the right resources to help them.

[It's] always painful, when we're in situations where we have to dismiss students. That's the worst part about a job like this. But that's part of what we as an institution need to do too. And it's not always a bad thing for individuals who are dismissed - sometimes that's a learning opportunity too.

What are some of the best experiences you've had at Dordt?

At the time [I was thinking of coming to Dordt], I didn't see a burning bush in my front yard saying "you should go to

Dordt." But students have so many great stories of how God is working in their life whether or not they realize it. And it's when you start to uncover those, and hear about those, there's a lot of joy in that.

And...seeing [students] grow and develop. Stu-

Students have so many great stories of how God is working in their life whether or not they realize it.

— *Bethany Schuttinga*

dents come in as adults, and I firmly believe that, as they develop their skills they leave [Dordt] a different person. It's fun to watch that.

How can communication with students be improved? What do you do since it's a constant process?

[Part of the] constant process is when students have concerns, [we don't want to] let it get to be a frustration. [We want to] talk through it.

After the housing meet-

ing, I think I finally left at about 12:15 [a.m.] and the meeting started at 9 [p.m.], but I stayed because I really wanted to talk to students and hear what the issues were. I got several e-mails between midnight and 6 a.m. from students [saying] a mixture of things,

were heard by that group and not sent to the rest of the community.

There's also disengagement that has happened with our students about not caring about issues, and [we want to] invigorate a sense of, "I want to be engaged in these issues, I want to hear about

student leaders on this campus. [We want to] affirm those roles.

It sounds like you get a lot of face time with students. How does that happen?

I really try to seek it out. I think if I didn't, I would be prone to be stuck in meetings a lot. One of the favorite parts of what I do is being here in the evenings and having the opportunity to mingle with students a little bit. But through Student Symposium I try to attend a lot of student activities and just standing and talking with students, and hearing their stories, and engaging students on those days. I'd say the best opportunity I have is eating at the commons and sitting with the students I don't know very well. Then I know their story, and when I see them on campus I'm able to say "hey," and know something about them and they know something about me. It's making that personal connection.

opinion.

Every careless word: Christians are not anonymous on the Internet

Joel Veldkamp
Staff Writer

At age four or five, little blonde Cole is already a mini-celebrity. He is the star of a YouTube video with hundreds of thousands of views. In this video, Cole, apparently unaware that he is being recorded, sings along and dances flamboyantly to Britney Spears' classic hit "Baby, One More Time." At the end of the video, Cole's mom bursts in on him. Cole screams, goes rigid and falls over. His mom collapses in laughter.

I laugh, too. But as I scroll down the page to the comments section, my gut clenches, because I already know what's coming: "Wow, b**** mom.", "omg that kid is gay.", "lmfao! haha! that'll teach that kid to be a f**."

Comments like that

continue, ad infinitum.

Now, presumably, the percentage of Internet users who will, in real life, walk up to a four-year-old boy and call him a "f**" — regardless of whether he's dancing to a song by a female pop singer — is fairly low. Yet for some reason, once people sign into their YouTube profiles, or Facebook accounts, or any other online persona, all the standard rules of civility go out the window.

In theory, the Internet has the potential to be one of the most democratic, liberating inventions in human history: anyone with a computer can make themselves heard, and talk to other people around the world who also want to be heard. In practice, almost every realm of discussion on the Internet — whether the topic is politics, religion, movies, technology,

child-rearing or puppy dogs — is flooded with bile. Grievous insults fly back and forth like bullets. Racial, political and religious stereotypes and slurs dominate. Ad hominem attacks are so prevalent that one wonders about the state of public education. And almost none of this happens with even a modicum of correct grammar or spelling.

Why does it have to be like this? Helen Popkin, a writer for msnbc.com, can't figure it out. In a recent column entitled "Watch out. The Internet will cut you," she writes, "The Internet makes people crazy...I have yet to read or hear a credible explanation as to why people with jobs, families and social ties utilize the Internet as an outlet for typing words so hateful, and with such enthusiasm. I can't muster

that kind of enthusiasm for... anything. Even free cupcakes."

Unfortunately, Christians are not immune to Internet Inhumanity Syndrome (IIS). As anyone who has followed a religious debate on Facebook can tell you, the Christian combatants can be just as vicious, condescending and, yes, idiotic as their atheist counterparts. I once walked into a friend's dorm room to find him playing the game Counterstrike on Xbox Live. As his team of randomly assembled Xbox players went down in ignominious defeat, he shouted into his headset at his anonymous teammates, "You guys are f***** retarded."

Helen Popkin may be mystified by the phenomenon of Internet brutality, but in one sense, it's not mystifying at all.

On the Internet, I have a blank slate. No one there knows me or will ever knowingly meet me in real life. I'm effectively anonymous. I can do and say pretty much anything I want, without social consequence. Blank check, baby. If I think you're "f***** retarded," I'll say so. For the same reasons, many of us will make an obscene gesture to a bad driver on the road, something we would never consider doing to a person we met on foot on the street.

Christians, however, should not use the anonymity of the Internet as an excuse to traffic in insult and hatred. As Professor Charles Veenstra never fails to point out to students who take his communications classes, no communication is neutral. Everything we say, write or post either helps move a person

closer to God, or pushes them farther away.

Think about it this way: you are unlikely to ever encounter the "retard" who just screwed up your Counterstrike game, or the "moron" questioning God's existence in a Facebook group, in real life. Odds are this is the only time you will ever interact with him, your one chance to communicate with him. Your paths will probably never cross again. Your relationship with this person begins, and ends, on the Internet, in a moment.

Is this a reason to be flippant? I think it's an extremely humbling thought. We would do well to remember the words of our Lord: "I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken" (Matthew 12:36).

Complacent chaos

Alyssa Hoogendoorn
Staff Writer

Wrought iron bars covered windows and enclosed porches. Trash filled the sides of the inner-city streets. Welcome to Camden, N.J.—one of the poorest, most dangerous cities in America.

Blonde-haired and blue-eyed, I grew up looking as Dutch as can be in Northwest Iowa. Crime and corruption never crossed my mind. I was sheltered. I was safe.

But over spring break, I had the opportunity to leave my small-town life and go to Camden.

When I was there, I was taken to the cemetery. One burial site will remain forever engraved in my mind.

Small grave markers covered the plot of land, making the crack babies of the 1970s a reality right before my eyes. The ground had been turned over one too many times, leaving it in turmoil.

Throughout the cemetery, the plots were scattered and seemed to have no rhyme or reason. Just like the city. Life and death go on in disarray.

Chaos and darkness run deep. Digging six feet under doesn't begin to scratch the surface of it all.

Children are born into Camden. They don't choose it. But it's all they know, so they look for and latch on to whatever hope they can find because they're stuck there for now.

I'm far from stuck. I have hope. But when darkness comes, I forget.

In those times, I hope I can remember Camden—not to look down on its people and feel better about myself but to look

movable forces.

The rural community carries certain expectations, ones that are rather unrealistic and unknown to the rest of the world.

Wrought iron bars constrict the hearts and minds of many people. And those people put on their clothes and put on their smiles. But it's a lie.

They are so concerned with what other people might think that they hardly allow themselves to live, to make mistakes, to throw out the trash for fear of what their neighbors might say.

So they go about their

The rural community carries certain expectations... that are rather unrealistic and unknown to the rest of the world.

at how they find hope in hopelessness. A light in darkness.

Back at home, I see a different kind of darkness, a different deadness.

After being so far removed from the place I've called home for 19 years, I realized I can't live here. I'm tired of being pushed up against a wall of im-

days without really living. It seems like every day is exactly the same, seeing the same people at the same time in the same place.

And then there are places like Camden—where chaos and darkness run deep.

To live in complacency seems wrong.

Politics, future go hand-in-hand

Ryan Campbell
Staff Writer

One of the statements that really shows the level of ignorance of the youngest generation of Americans is "I'm not interested in politics."

This simply amazes me. Do you really understand what you're saying?

How can you not be interested in politics if you are concerned with your family's well-being, your friend's well-being and your own future?

Look at what the average American goes through on a daily basis. We are planning for the future, working, job searching, educating children, making house payments, taking vacations and paying our debt.

All of these issues tie into politics. And no matter what you do from tying your shoes to tying the knot politics is there, making things

better or worse.

One of the ways that politics finds its way into our homes and pocket books is through taxes. When discussing taxes you must include Federal income, Social Security, Medicare, state income, automobile license fees, property taxes, school taxes and sales taxes.

When you total all of these taxes you might be surprised to find out that if you are married the individual who makes the less out of the two is probably working to pay for the tax burden.

You might also be surprised to find out that before 1950 the overall tax burden on the American family came to around 5 percent of that family's income.

Today the tax burden comes to around 40 percent. This means that a family from 1955 would work until February to pay off their taxes. Today a family works until May and

maybe early June to pay off their tax burden.

Imagine the possibilities of how far these taxes could reach if our generation continues to "not care."

The government can continue to make us pay more for this bailout, they can make us pay for new safety features in cars and more requirements to pass building codes. The government will nickel and dime you and squeeze you until you find yourself in the red.

The statement of "I'm not interested in politics" is simply saying "I don't care what happens to my hard-earned money."

Maybe someday a Dordt student will take public office and see to it that an American family's hard-earned money goes to the necessary betterment of our government instead of vehicle safety features that tell us how much air is in our tires.

features.

TV writer visits campus



NBC writer and producer Luke Schelhaas talks to the screenwriting class about his career in Hollywood. Photo by Bree Brouwer.

Lance Kooiman
Staff Writer

While taking a break from his busy career in Hollywood, NBC writer/producer and 1996 Dordt College graduate Luke Schelhaas returned to Dordt on March 31 to talk to Jim Schaap's screenwriting class and review the scripts his students had been working on.

Schelhaas currently works for the show *Law*

and *Order* and has previously worked on *Smallville* and *Touched by an Angel*.

Schelhaas said that his favorite part about his work was simply sitting down and writing.

"I love writing. It is actually my least favorite part at times because it can be so draining, but the end result is totally worth it," said Schelhaas. "It is interesting to see my work come to life."

Schelhaas also com-

mented on the skills that he acquired at Dordt that help him in his career.

"I was an English major and learned the methods of story-telling and character development," said Schelhaas. "The art of story-telling really stuck with me."

"Dordt has prepared me to be a Christian no matter where I am in the world," said Schelhaas in regards to Dordt's impact on his faith. "It actually isn't that hard for me to show my faith in my work. The people that I work with know that I am a Christian and seem to be fine with it. It is my job to raise the right questions in the content of my work, but not to preach at the audience."

Schelhaas added, "As a Christian, it is my job to witness in my work and let the Holy Spirit take care of the rest. I try to get my characters to talk about certain moral issues and display some Christian virtues."

Schelhaas said the toughest part of his job is to find a compromise between the subject matter he would like to write about and the material that he is assigned to write about and often disagrees with.

"It is hard to write about a subject that I

disagree with both personally and morally," said Schelhaas. "I have to take the challenge, though. I can't shy away from certain subjects every time they come up. If I did, I would never have any work."

"I don't think that God has put me in this position just to turn down every story pitch that comes my way," Schelhaas said. "I simply have to use the abilities God has given me to try and tame certain subjects down."

As for Dordt students interested in this career, Schelhaas said, "It is an exciting career and if you feel called to this line of work, go for it. Hollywood is a great place to live. I would suggest studying film in L.A. for a semester... It is a great way to meet writers and producers and see how they do their job. You can get to the right people and learn from them."

"Overall, I would suggest writing a lot and honing your craft so that you have some experience by the time you decide to make it a career," Schelhaas said.

Schelhaas also spoke to more students and the general public about his career at the BJ Haan Auditorium on April 1.

Dordt raises \$1,800 for building wells

Kristina De Graaf
Staff Writer

An estimated 1,800 people will have access to clean water for the first time due to money raised for CRWRC International Relief this past month.

Senior Gabe Licht encouraged the campus community to skip just one snack to raise money to pay for the construction of several wells in impoverished areas of the world.

So far, over \$1,800 has been raised, and some money is still trickling in. The fundraising goal for the college campus was \$1,250.

"Student participation could have been higher," Licht said, "but at the same time, I'm very happy we exceeded our goal."

CRWRC has many similar projects as part of their International Relief program. The money goes to specific countries, purchases materials locally and employs local workers. The program specifically looks for areas where its help will produce long-lasting benefits.

Licht emphasized that he really wanted people to start thinking about current global problems.

"Even if students didn't give, we at least helped make them more aware of opportunities like this one," he said. "It's real – we just are kind of oblivious here sometimes. It's good to raise awareness and attention to real-world issues."

Parking tickets for some of March will be donated to the well initiative and Justice Matters has also pledged a donation.

Students still interested in giving may do so directly to CRWRC or a myriad of other such organizations.

If you're interested in helping...

- Checks are tax-deductible
- More information can be found at:
<http://crwrc.org/>

More than talk: Creation Care makes things happen

Vanessa Theel
Guest Writer

Dordt's Creation Care Club sent eight of its members to Des Moines to attend the Iowa Earth Summit on Saturday, March 29. The Summit was the first state-wide, college and university conference on the environmental future of the state of Iowa.

Students met at Drake University to reflect and collaborate on taking better care of the environment.

They attended sessions, heard a variety of speakers, and talked about environmental groups

at their own colleges. Most importantly, they were surrounded by people brimming with a similar passion for taking responsibility for the world in which we live.

Some of the sessions focused on how to be successful as a club, how to keep creation care clubs alive, and how to talk effectively with politicians about important issues—that is, how to make things happen. Sectionals were dedicated to finding ways to get other students excited about environmental issues, as well as learning to plan important events to make

sure those events turn out better than expected.

The students discussed how to draw in the wider campus, as well as the community, and how to make connections to accomplish lasting efforts.

Since the Iowa Earth Summit was a state-wide conference and not limited to Christian schools, the members of the Creation Care club also had the opportunity to show how environmental awareness ties into faith, or what some Christians mean by *Creation Care*.

After the activities of the Conference, those attending met in

small groups to discuss immediate and long-term plans of how to get people involved and how to get things done for the betterment of our environment. Conference attendees started brainstorming and making arrangements to determine how they can make this gathering into a lasting coalition.

Those who attended will continue to collaborate by sharing information about what each of their colleges is doing so that individual clubs can coordinate their actions, hold each other accountable, and unify the cause.



University of Iowa student Mike Loots and Dordt senior Katiegrace Youngsma talk in front of Dordt's Creation Care Club booth at the information fair. Photo by Vanessa Theel.

The conference created an opportunity for student environmental groups from around the state to make a broader impact. The conference helped Dordt students go beyond good ideas in theory, and instead to make things happen, one step at a time, for this world—God's world.

features.

Stop procrastinating, seniors

Bridget Smith
Staff Writer

Seniors need to set priorities, give up some social activities and stop procrastinating on applying for jobs, said Ellen Mouw, Placement Assistant in Career Services.

Mouw works to help students prepare for life after college by job hunting, writing and revising resumes, and preparing for interviews.

Her most persistent advice is for students to pursue assistance with their job hunts and to make sacrifices in order to allow time for job applications. Mouw says she understands it is difficult for students to focus on resumes when they are concerned with exams, term papers, GPA and social opportunities.

But, she said, students must make conscious decisions to pass up a pizza night or other social time to work on resumes and job applications.

Students must work

especially hard to find a job because of the toll the economy is taking on the availability of positions, she said.

“It will simply take more work this year than in the past to find a job. It’s [basically] a full-time job to find a full-time job,” Mouw said.

In a graduating class of over 300, less than half of those students have signed up to receive assistance from Dordt’s Career Services, she said. In addition, though Career Services has offered a number of workshops, Mouw said, they have been very poorly attended.

“There is only so much we can do. The duty is solely on the initiative of the students to take the bull by the horns and go after it. We are just here to help them achieve that goal. We won’t turn away

anybody who wants help. The sign-up sheets [outside my door] are pretty bare – they should be full,” Mouw said.

Mouw said students are encouraged not to rely solely on Internet resources, family members or acquaintances to

offer a company. Writing a resume is not a quick, one-minute task, Mouw said.

“You can’t use the same one you used to get a summer job three years ago – that’s not going to wash,” she explained. “Expect to write at least

er letter should not simply repeat the contents of the person’s resume, Mouw said.

Networking is also a very important tool and asset in the job application process, Mouw said. Students should be aware that even though certain companies may not have any current positions to offer within their own company, they may be able to refer applicants to other companies and contacts.

“Everyone knows someone, who knows someone, who knows someone,” she said. “And the more feelers you put out there – the better odds you have of at least having contacts.”

Mouw encouraged students to write letters of inquiry for positions that may be available in the future. Students should also attend job

fairs (Dordt provides transportation to many of these fairs) and use Dordt’s own resources – workshops, one-on-one meetings and Internet resources.

Freshmen, sophomores and juniors should also take advantage of the tools that Dordt’s Career Services can provide, Mouw said.

Internships are an integral part of obtaining a job in the future – though they may not pay as much as a summer job, those internships will pay more down the road, Mouw explained.

“There is a misperception among a lot of students that think Career Services is just for certain departments or majors. We would love to see more traffic from different groups than we’ve had in the past,” she said.

“It is a lot of work to find a job and those who wait are going to miss out,” she explained.

“It will simply take more work this year than in the past to find a job. It’s [basically] a full-time job to find a full-time job.”

— Ellen Mouw

evaluate their resumes and cover letters. Career Services stays up-to-date on changes in the business community, which is one reason it is important to take advantage of the resources Dordt has available.

One of the first steps students need to take is to write a resume that highlights their strengths and the skills they can

three or four drafts.”

Students must also write an effective cover letter. The letter must show that the applicant knows the company and has done his/her research.

In addition, it should present the applicant’s qualifications in a nutshell, and explain the reasons he/she is interested in the job. The cov-

Changes planned for Southview living next year

Joel Veldkamp
Staff Writer

Upperclassmen seeking to live in Dordt’s Southview apartments next year will have the option of signing up for apartments in groups of seven, Student Services announced at an informational meeting on March 5. Upperclassmen who choose this option will receive a housing discount and have preference in housing over smaller groups.

The Southview apartments normally house six students at a time. Dordt’s Director of Residence Life, Robert Taylor, told the Diamond that the change was due to a “tightening up” of available housing. According to Taylor, Dordt is antici-

pating bigger classes at both the upperclassmen and underclassmen levels, meaning that space will be tight, not only in the apartments but in the dorms. “Our goal,” Taylor said, “is to have as many upperclassmen in the apartments as possible.”

Under the change, students will receive a \$175 discount on housing for every semester they live in an apartment with seven people. Groups of seven will also have preference for housing in the apartments over groups of six or less, although Taylor stressed that senior status will remain the most important factor; juniors will not get in ahead of groups consisting of six seniors. “We’re not displacing

any seniors,” he said.

Taylor said he saw the change as the best choice from several solutions to the housing crunch. “We could have said ‘Only groups of seven get into Southview,’ but nobody would have felt good about that. At the same time, we didn’t just want to ask for volunteers.” So the decision was made to give rewards to students who choose to live in groups of seven. Taylor added that Dordt has used this policy before, in the 1990s, and it worked well at the time.

According to Taylor, the new policy will not be permanent, since Dordt will soon be “sticking shovels in the ground” for a new student apartment building between Covenant Hall and the

Southview Apartments. The new building, he said, “should sustain us for quite a while.” He added that Dordt is considering a “complete renovation” of the East Campus apartments, although their fate has not yet been decided for certain.

Commenting on the student body’s reaction to the decision, Taylor said there was “lots of concern,” but that many students were grateful for the March 5 informational meeting. Taylor said that Student Services had invited student leaders into the discussion over the housing changes. He credited Student Symposium members with creating the “Housing Want Ad” board outside

Student Services to help students find additional roommates. Taylor said that he is available to answer any questions about housing from students.

“We really want students to have a good residence life experience, and we’re doing everything we can to help that.”



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sports.

Ochsner down but not out



Senior Laurel Ochsner speeds down the track in the 55m hurdles at the Dordt Invite on Feb. 14. Ochsner qualified for Nationals in the event, but an injury in practice ended her season. Photo courtesy of Archives.

Ashlee Stallinga
Staff Writer

The Defenders are back on the track, but one member of the team is noticeably absent. Senior Laurel Ochsner, who participates in hurdles, long jump and sprints,

tore her ACL in practice before spring break. The injury came right before she was scheduled to run and jump at the Indoor National Championship meet, and it ended her season.

"I'm disappointed that I didn't get to finish my

senior year, but I had a good season up to that point. I'm just glad I got to qualify for Nationals."

The injury occurred at hurdle practice one day, when Ochsner was running down the indoor track in the Rec Center and a child ran across her path.

"I tried to stop, but I couldn't—at least, I didn't stop right—and I tore my ACL."

She had surgery on Saturday, March 28, and spent the following days recovering at home.

"If I sound groggy, it's just because of my drugs," she said during an interview.

The surgery went well—"It was uneventful," Ochsner said, "which, in surgery, is a good thing."

Ochsner will be missed this semester, as the team takes to the outdoor track.

According to track coach Craig Heynen, Ochsner broke the school record this year in the in-

door long jump, and currently holds the school record in the outdoor 100 hurdles. She also is tied for second on the outdoor long jump list, only a few inches behind the record, and has been a very solid member of the 4x100.

"The injury was a huge blow to Laurel and to our team," Heynen said. "At the time of her injury, her [55m hurdle] time was in the top ten in the NAIA."

More than her speed and strength will be missed. In regards to Christian attitude and leadership, "Laurel exemplifies what we would like a track and field athlete at Dordt college to be," Heynen said.

But Ochsner will still be with the team, helping at practice and attending as many meets as possible.

After graduation, Ochsner plans to attend the University of Nebraska medical center in Omaha, participating in their physical therapy program.

By the Numbers

Dordt sport scores & stats

Compiled by Ashlee Stallinga

9: homeruns hit by the baseball team thus far this year.

33: percent of those home runs that belong to Travis Feekes.

2: jumpers that took first place in the first outdoor track meet of the year: Crystal VanderZee (triple jump) and Laurissa Veldhuizen (long jump).

7: inning in which Amanda Nikkel crossed the plate for the Defender softball team, scoring the winning run against Doane on Saturday, March 28.

6-0: score of both games in the tennis match that Sam Hart won, returning to the team after recovering from a fractured foot.

4: place that the men's 4x800 finished at the Indoor Track National Championship meet, running a 7:46.88 in their All-American performance.

And then there were four

Ashlee Stallinga
Staff Writer

Everyone's talking March Madness: students, faculty, even the landscapers outside the Commons on Friday afternoon.

Studying brackets has taken over studying for class. Some predictions worked out well; some people picked the wrong upsets. Some still lament that they chose Wake Forest to do something spectacular.

Regardless, the finale of the NCAA tournament is drawing near. Four teams are left to battle for the title of national champion: Michigan State, Connecticut, Villanova and North Carolina compete in Detroit this weekend.

The championship will be shown on the big screen in the Grille area on Monday, April 6. Popcorn, cotton candy, and beverages will be provided, courtesy of SAC. The game starts at 8:21 p.m.

I say, go UNC.

ACHA honors Blade players, coach

Ashlee Stallinga
Staff Writer

While most Dordt students jumped at the chance to head somewhere warm for spring break, the hockey team was reluctant to get away from the ice.

The Blades finished their national tournament with a win against Northern Arizona on March 7, taking home fifth place in the ACHA Division III; six players and Coach Nate Van Niejenhuis earned honors in the process.

"I don't know if we could be any happier with the way the season turned out," Van Niejenhuis said.

Van Niejenhuis was named ACHA Division III National Coach of the Year, but he is reluctant to take any credit for the title.

Six of his players were also honored. "They're



Jake Esselink was one of six Blades to be honored along with Coach Nate Van Niejenhuis. Photo courtesy of Dordt Archives.

probably why I got the coaching award," Van Niejenhuis said. "We've got a lot of talented hockey players."

Jared Rempel was named to the ACHA Division III First-Team, claiming All-American honors for the second year in a row. Rempel,

Todd Bakker, and Ted Gibbons were named All-Region First-Team for their regular-season play.

Three players were also given All-Pacific honors. Nate Woudstra and Jake Esselink were named second-team, and Kevin Prins third-

team. "Those honors were well-deserved," Van Niejenhuis said. "At that tournament, we were playing with—hands down—the smallest roster. Four games in four days: those guys were so beat up. They played on fumes and adrenaline."

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Spring training starts for football team

Ashlee Stallinga
Staff Writer

Most students thinking sports are focused on the finish of the NCAA tournament or the start of the MLB season. But for approximately 40 men on campus, another sport is on

their mind: football.

The football team has started their spring training season, and 40 of the 50 team members—those who are not in a spring sport—have resumed practice.

“The spring season is exactly like the fall, minus the games,” said

Coach John Heavner. “We’re practicing every day, improving the things we need to work on.”

Most of the guys on the team have also been weight training all winter, waking up at 6:00 a.m. four days a week to work out.

Daniel Finley is one of the guys working hard this spring to see improvement in the fall. “We do weight lifting, conditioning, practice, have meetings, watch films, and implement new plays,” Finley said.

“We give them a sum-

mer workout, too,” Heavner said. In his opinion, the year-round, hard work has been paying off.

Finley agrees. “We’re really getting to know people more and more, which is helping team chemistry. We’re improving on things we

can control, and we hope to be ready for our first game in the fall,” he said.

“We’re doing great in the offseason,” Heavner said. “I couldn’t be more happy with the guys on campus.”

Dordt Sport Report: Dave Bykerk



Photo by Kelly Cooke

Ashlee Stallinga
Staff Writer

Name:
Dave Bykerk

Year:
Senior

Sport:
Lacrosse

Position:
Crease--it’s a defensive position

What is your favorite part of lacrosse?
Road trips, hanging out with the guys.

When did you start playing lacrosse and why?
Freshman year; One of my teachers had told me about it, but I’d never tried it before. But I wanted to keep from getting fat in college, so I thought I’d try a sport.

What’s your best lacrosse memory?
Last year’s playoffs. We made the championship game. We lost, but that’s still the farthest we’ve ever made it.

Do you have any team traditions?
Yeah. Every time a guy scores his first goal, he strips down to his jock strap and rides his pole around the field. It’s crude, I know.

Why should people go to lacrosse games?
To enjoy the freezing Iowa weather! No, it’s a fun thing—a different sport, that not too many people get to watch.

What is your favorite sport? (Besides lacrosse, of course.)
Well, my favorite professional team is the Chicago Cubs. But I

like watching college basketball the best.

How did your bracket turn out?
Well, UNC is still in it, and I’ve got them winning. But other than that, not so good.

If you could be an animal, which would you be and why?
Well, I was just at the zoo in Chicago...I think I’d be a monkey. They swing everywhere; they’re so fast. I just want to be faster.

What’s your preference: Mac or PC?
PC. My dad gets a discount on Dells. And I’m too lazy to learn a Mac.

What is your favorite time of day?
Dinner—it’s the best meal.

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John Calvin, Superstar! premieres at Dordt

Grace Venhuizen
Staff Writer

“John Calvin, Superstar!” has nothing to do with its counterpart “Jesus Christ, Superstar!” other than having similar titles, explains director and author Mark Bylenga. But it has everything to do with life at a Reformed college and satire.

The two-act student production is a full-length musical that will be staged in Dordt’s New World Theatre April 23-25. Junior students Bylenga and Joel Schiebout wrote the dialogue and lyrics for the production, while junior Jason Kornelis wrote the musical accompaniment.

“John Calvin, Superstar!” is a completely

student-led workshop production. “‘Workshop’ means we are constantly making changes to it through the course of rehearsal and production,” said Bylenga. “So if you see it on two

the school. Ethan rebels against the ideas of the college in his struggle to comprehend Reformed theology.

The score of the show includes catchy tunes about common Dordt

*So don't even let it.
It'll be a feat,
With all the people
you meet.
You can do what you
Put your mind to.
So don't date before
Tri-State,*

dents face – both theologically and socially. “We’re not really questioning an emphasis on the Reformed faith,” explained Schiebout. This show brings to light that some “Reformed”

The cast and crew of the production include an equal number of students from each school. Bylenga and Schiebout made this decision because they saw “two phenomenal theatre departments they could bring together,” said Schiebout. The writers also believe the material of the show is applicable to both schools.

Bylenga and Schiebout are not only excited about the production they authored, directed, and produced, they are also passionate about the show’s message. “If you go to Dordt, you should go to this production,” they claim, “because you will find it very applicable and very, very funny.”

JOHN CALVIN, SUPERSTAR!

nights, it may look a bit different each time.”

The plot of the show centers around a college freshman, Ethan, as he attends a small, private Reformed college. Ethan comes from a nondenominational background and soon becomes frustrated with the increasing emphasis on doctrine throughout

phrases and ideas, such as the lyrics of “Don’t Date Before Tri-State!” suggest:

*Don't date before Tri-State!
It's part of the trendy
Thing they call
"Freshman Frenzy!"
Don't date before Tri-State!
It'll fail if you get it*

*If you know what's
best for you.*

“I had the idea when I saw lots of kids at Dordt in the same situation [as Ethan],” explains author and producer Schiebout. He and Bylenga attempt to use satire and humor throughout the show as a way to address modern issues college stu-

words and phrases are used so often that they begin to lose their meaning. “We’re not trying to take a stance,” said Schiebout. “We just want to get discussion going [with our production].”

The show will be a joint production between Dordt and Northwestern theater students.

Who watches the Watchmen? *Film caters to specific audience*

Adrian Hielema
Staff Writer

Based on the most critically acclaimed graphic novel of all time, *Watchmen* features costumed heroes, or “Masks,” that live in an alternate 1985. Richard Nixon has just been elected to his third term in office, a government act has forced most Masks to retire, and the U.S. is on the brink of nuclear war with the U.S.S.R.

The movie plays out very much like a murder mystery: the Comedian, one of the members of a disbanded, costumed hero group known as the Watchmen, is brutally murdered in his apartment. Another member of the Watchmen, Rorschach, happens upon the crime scene and comes to believe that the Comedian’s murder was part of a larger plot to kill off all the Masks. Rorschach then sets off to enlist the help of the other retired Watchmen: Nite Owl, Silk Spectre, Ozymandias and Dr. Manhattan.



The best part about *Watchmen* is the Watchmen themselves—they’re more like real people than the typical superhero. Photo from <http://www.watchmendvd.com>.

But it is not the plot that makes the *Watchmen* story shine; it is the characters.

These costumed heroes are not your everyday Spider-Man or Iron Man or pick-your-favorite-hyphenated Man. The Watchmen are real people with real flaws and real psychological issues, issues that have come to the surface after years of dressing up in weird outfits and fight-

ing crime.

Rorschach is borderline psychopathic and

a costumed hero. Adrian Veigt, a.k.a. Ozymandias, on a mission to find world peace, runs a massive company that makes almost all its money from over-use of Veigt’s own superhero status.

Sally Jupiter, a.k.a. Silk Spectre, has some massive mommy issues and must deal with her romantic attachment to Dr. Manhattan, the only real “super-hero” in the film.

Able to see past and future simultaneously, make copies of himself and disassemble anything at an atomic level, Dr. Manhattan is the most interesting character of them all. Glowing blue and basically a god, Manhattan also believes that human life, as well as clothes, are vastly overrated, attitudes which create moral dilemmas and lots of glowing nudity.

Despite coming in at just under three hours, something is still missing in the film. The characters that made the graphic novel a masterpiece feel, on the screen, slightly superficial; and for those who haven’t read the graphic novel, the lack of back-story leads to some confusion. Director Zach Snyder (*300*) seems to have rushed through the complex and challenging moral dilemmas in order to make room for his favorite slow-mo scenes.

Keep in mind the graphic novel was meant for adult—the film’s “R” rating is definitely deserved.

In the end, your enjoyment of *Watchmen* will depend largely on whether or not you have read the graphic novel. For those of you who haven’t read it, I sincerely recommend it; *Watchmen* was the only graphic novel on *Time* magazine’s list of 100 best novels of all time.

While the film does make a valiant effort to replicate the layers of meaning and moral issues that make up *Watchmen*, it falls just short. If you do end up watching *Watchmen*--and I recommend you do--try to look a little deeper into the questions the movie raises. To what extent does the end justify the means? Is an evil action still evil if it accomplishes something good?

If nothing else, let the movie open your mind a little. As Dr. Manhattan says, “We gaze continually at the world, and it grows dull in our perceptions. Yet seen from another’s vantage point, as if new, it may still take the breath away.”