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Issue 2



THE DIAMOND

Dordt professor to run for U.S. Congress

Juliana Martinez — Staff Writer

Last January, State Senator and Dordt professor Randy Feenstra announced his candidacy for the U.S. House of Representatives. Feenstra, a Republican who has represented the 2nd district of Iowa since 2009, will be facing the 17-year incumbent Steve King in the GOP caucus next summer.

For Feenstra, the commitment to run for Congress was not a solo decision. A poll of voters in northwest Iowa showed that Feenstra's soon-to-be opponent was at an all-time low of 39%. But this race is not just about the numbers; it is also about the timing and the calling to run for public office.

During Thanksgiving of last year, Feenstra's family had an honest discussion at the dinner table about where national politics are headed and about the importance of being involved.

"If we truly believe our faith, and that God has called us, [then]...we have to do something," Feenstra said.

Feenstra's family has remained supportive and encouraging throughout the whole campaign process. Erika, Feenstra's daughter and student at Dordt University, noted that although her dad



Photo taken from feenstraforcongress.com

has traveled a lot during the summer months of campaigning, he still finds time to spend with family.

"He would wake up early in the morning and still shoot [basketball] with me," said Erika. "He did not push responsibilities as a dad aside."

In general, the community has also been heartily supportive of Feenstra's decision to

run against Representative King. A large group of business and AG leaders also impacted his decision to officially get involved with national politics. Constituents from across the 39 counties in the fourth district have encouraged Feenstra to run for congress since 2018.

"We need a leader; we have a current leader that is just not listening to us, who is not active

in our area," Feenstra said.

"Obviously, he's a fantastic [professor] and we love having him around," said Dale Zevenbergen, a fellow Dordt business professor. "We don't like the idea of losing him, but what a great thing to lose him to Congress... we're proud of him, frankly."

Most recently, Feenstra's campaign rolled out the "Students for Feenstra" initiative which was supported by 220 students from across the state and was also endorsed by Dordt's chapter of College Republicans.

Senators, representatives, and council members from across Iowa such as Senator Anette Sweeney, Councilmen Dane Nelson, and Senator Tim Kraayenbrink have also shown their support for Feenstra. National conservative radio host Ben Shapiro and China Ambassador Terry Branstad (the former Governor of Iowa) are also in support and have contributed significantly to Feenstra's campaign.

In the meantime, the Feenstra campaign will continue to raise awareness, support, and funds until the caucuses next year.

"The Lord leads, and we don't know how it all plays out," said Feenstra. "It just feels like the doors are definitely opening."

Dordt students begin to Live Loved

Lindsay Kuiper — Staff Writer

A question from a stranger about the "I Am Second" bracelet Dordt junior Kade Krosschell wore started a conversation about Christianity that left him amazed. Before he left this would-be stranger, he asked if she would write down some words of encouragement in his journal so he could remember this interaction. A couple days later, he read the note, which parted with the words, "live loved," a statement which God had placed on Krosschell's heart prior to this trip. These words would eventually blossom into the new movement "We Are Living Loved," or WALL.

Krosschell's purpose in creating this movement is to inspire others to share their stories. "We are called as Christians to not only be bold, but to

boast in our weakness," he said, "because when we do, it brings people to Christ." He wants to make it clear that Christians have struggles and no one is alone in their trials.

With that goal in mind, Krosschell assembled a team that could share messages to different groups of people. It transformed into a way for this team to share a recorded testimony with the public twice a week. Over 25 people have filmed their stories and are ready to share their walk with Christ publicly in the upcoming year.

A buzz was tangible around the Sioux Center community when the first video was released on September 18. Krosschell's video appeared to hundreds of people as he shared his sobering, yet inspiring testimony.

"I've already seen people finding more and more courage to admit their struggles and to admit that, as Christians, we're not perfect," Krosschell said following his testimony's release. "The whole reason we acknowledge we're Christians is because we acknowledge we need help and that we couldn't do it on our own."

Since the first video, WALL has also published Megan Timmer's testimony.

"My deepest hope in releasing my testimony is that the Lord works through that action," Timmer said. "I hope this video plants seeds into hearts so that the Lord is able to grow."

The group held its first event in a chapel at Western Christian High School.

"For me, the experience was overwhelming," Timmer said, "I had faith the Lord was going to move and work, but how much he worked in that place was unexpected."

WALL is currently scheduled for numerous events throughout this year. The number of people scheduling them continues to increase on a weekly basis.



Photo from Living Loved Facebook

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The midnight man

Sam Landstra — Staff Writer

Night falls on Dordt University. The now dark campus dwindles in activity as scattered students, finished with their daily activities, journey back to their dorms.

While most individuals near the end of their day, Larry Van Gelder is just beginning his. The 61 year old Custodial Evening Supervisor pulls up to the Science and Technology Center at 10:00 pm riding his black Honda NM4 motorcycle—the "Bat-bike," he calls it.

His motorcycle helmet conceals unkempt, wispy white hair and thin wire frame bifocals. Van Gelder wears a "Dordt University Facilities" t-shirt and a hefty set of keys hang from denim shorts.

Inside, Van Gelder checks emails in his small, cluttered office hidden on the second floor of the Science and Technology Center. In previous years, the space operated as a maintenance closet. Croutons, a can of pringles, and an empty coffee cup cover papers on his desk.

Before joining the Dordt University Maintenance Department in 2003, the Orange City native worked the night shift at a local wholesale meat plant and held stints as a part-time janitor in British Columbia and a life insurance salesman.

"I love meeting people but didn't like the job," says Van Gelder, recalling his life insurance days. "So, I go 'ehh' I didn't like wearing a suit all the time."

Finishing up his office work, Van Gelder begins to make his rounds throughout the Science and Technology Center. A cart crammed with chemicals, cloths, a cordless vacuum, and other supplies accompany the 17-year Dordt employee on his route. The more materials on the cart, the more efficiently Van Gelder can clean. Tonight, he begins in the nursing lab, covering for another janitor on medical leave.

"These are creepy looking, aren't they?"

Van Gelder says, motioning at the several open-mouthed medical simulation mannequins lying eerily in beds. "I wanted to get a selfie but..."

Grabbing a cloth and spray bottle from the cart, Van Gelder scrubs at spills of fake blood dried onto tabletops. Whiteboards are cleaned, chairs are pushed back, and trash cans are emptied. Van Gelder never leaves a room imperfect.

"I would never admit to this, but some people think I am... particular," Van Gelder says. "I don't care how long it takes you. I want it to look good when you're done."

After checking adjunct rooms and closets, Van Gelder completes the nursing wing and heads back to his typical route in the building. A motion-triggered path of light precedes him in the otherwise dark facility. The jingle of keys and rattle of the cart break the quiet whirl of air conditioning units.

Van Gelder passes a group of engineering students doing homework in a second floor cubby while sweeping up a mess. Late-night

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Photo by Emma Stoltzfus

Engaged, again

Evangelina Colarossi — Staff Writer

Dordt began Fall 2019 with a new name—University—and a familiar ranking. For the fourth consecutive year, Dordt was ranked #1 in student engagement by the Wall Street Journal.

The marketing department hosted a pop-up booth to convey the news. Before students even read the press release, they sported t-shirts, stickers, cookies, and foam fingers proudly declaring the win all around campus.

The marketing and communication office typically focus on promoting Dordt to high school students, alumni, and donors, but they seized the opportunity to celebrate with the student body.

“This pop-up booth was a fun way for us to switch gears a bit and have an on-campus celebration with Dordt students, faculty, and staff,” said Sarah Moss, director of Marketing and Communication. “We certainly strive to take student and faculty feedback into account.”

The Wall Street journal uses four key areas ranking schools: resources, environment, outputs, and engagement. These areas are examined with questions that ask if students are engaged in critical thinking and learning, and if their classes challenge them, prepare them for life after graduation, and help students draw connections between in-class learning and outdoor applications.

“We want students not just to learn a subject

matter, but to develop deep relationships with others in the learning community and, most significantly, with the Lord,” said theatre professor Dr. Teresa Ter Haar. “Relationships demand a give and take – and this directly affects the way students engage with each other, faculty, administrators, and their coursework.”

Students that live on campus can testify to Dordt’s level of engagement. Beyond classes and interactive relationships between professors, faculty, and students, there are numerous events planned by various clubs or student activities to keep everyone in community. For students that travel abroad, they still feel this student engagement, even thousands of miles away. Shannon Oostenink is studying in Spain this

fall, and along with another Dordt student, was able to do an Instagram takeover with the Global Education department.

“The community that has been built at Dordt is such an integral part of what makes Dordt so special,” said Shannon Oostenink. “Because of the depth of that community, I have still felt connected to campus even while being abroad.”



Photo from Dordt University Instagram

Fiesta!

Yage Wang — Staff Writer

Dordt University hosted its annual Fiesta on September 20th after the Pops Concert. It’s a late-night, outdoor event for students to socialize, relax, and get free snacks. As in previous years, Fiesta provided a photo booth, fish racing, vibrant Latin music, and many other activities for students. For most people, Fiesta is an enjoyable occasion and, consequently, it attracts people other than Dordt students.

“I heard about this event from word of mouth and I think Fiesta is really great,” Anselmo Kim, a Northwestern College student, said while chewing hot churros. “It will be better if there are more people dancing.”

With atmospheric yellow lights hanging in the trees and a warm fall breeze, countless students gathered together at the Fiesta. Abby Barrientos, a sophomore student from Costa Rica, taught dancing moves to some girls with delightful music. Steve Marques, an East Hall RA, wore a huge taco costume with his friends. Fiesta is a time to hang out with friends and form new relationships through free food and fish racing.

While the event is fun and well-attended, students do have some suggestions.

“Fiesta is good, but also really repetitive,” Erika Uribe, a junior student raised in a Latino-

culture family, said. “I already know what’s happening over there, and there are many activities in the Fiesta that I wouldn’t say are from my culture.”

“It is a generous effort that Dordt has tried to make itself more diverse and be more aware of the Spanish-speaking students,” senior Sarah Siglin said. “But it also showed that the American stereotype impression about the Spanish culture.”

Dordt’s annual Fiesta is a student social activity that has benign and fun-loving intentions. The event’s name is literally “party.” However, there’s always room to grow and improve.



Photo by Yage Wang

Dordt Wi-Fi

Yee Lim Shin — Staff Writer

Every Dordt student and faculty has received an email from Student Services on “Being a Good Wi-Fi Citizen.” The email includes images showing the “Do’s and Don’ts” of connecting to the Dordt Wi-Fi and the different signals that could potentially interfere with Dordt’s signal. What exactly does that mean, and why do we need to become a good Wi-Fi citizen?

It’s because Dordt’s Wi-Fi system is all connected.

“It’s all one big huge system,” said Doug Tinklenberg, Dordt’s Systems Administrator. “There’s over 300 access points all over campus.”

Each dorm building has an access point at the end of the halls. This makes it “notoriously difficult” to get good wireless signals in the middle of the building due to blocking from concrete walls.

Apartments like Southview or Kuyper on

the other hand have access points inside each apartment, making it easier to get on the Wi-Fi.

Any type of interference could lead to Dordt’s Wi-Fi to either slow down or cut off altogether for the students in their dorms or apartments. Signals from microwaves, Google Home devices, Smart TVs, and devices that broadcast wireless signals can break up the connection.

“There’s different Wi-Fi devices going on that block the official Wi-Fi,” said sophomore Johannes Dijkstra. Dijkstra said that he has seen at least 12 different Wi-Fi signals operating at once while at his dorm in North Hall.

By connecting those devices to the separate device network with a network key, students can lessen the interference with Dordt’s main Wi-Fi.

To find out more information on connecting devices to the device wireless network, go to: <https://u.dordt.edu/dordt/computer-services/help-guides/connecting-to-device>

Sleep struggles

Katie Ribbens — Staff Writer

The room lights up. The sky grumbles. The students awake. While Midwest storms are legendary, their effects on sleepers are not.

It’s the start of the semester and college students are starting to feel the effects of sleep deprivation. Rachel Werkhoven, a freshman at Dordt, is no stranger to late nights with little sleep. As a firefighter, she is used to waking up at a moment’s notice to leap into action. She’s not fighting fires at Dordt, but she is fighting to finish heaps of homework and feeling the burn of tests.

“I haven’t gone to bed before three o’clock,” Werkhoven said. “And then there was Friday night where I decided to stay up all night. We ended up going to bed at eight in the morning.”

Werkhoven isn’t the only student having a hard time getting to bed at a desirable time. Freshman Alex Vaughn said he will, “eventually go to bed at 1:30 in the morning, just to wake back up at 5.”

While college is a wonderful experience, it can feel like there’s too much and too little time.

“Last year, I didn’t sleep because I had a huge fear of missing out,” sophomore student Anika Jatho said as advice to freshman students. “I felt like I needed to be there or else I wasn’t going to enjoy the full college experience. That kind of thinking is absolutely a lie. The relationships that you have are going to last if you don’t show up for a movie.”

Since so many events occur at night, students often use the time gaps throughout the day to catch up on sleep.

Psychology Professor Luralyn Helming

disagrees with that sleep schedule. “You’d be better off at night getting your eight hours rather than trying to make up for it with naps., she said.

If a nap is absolutely needed, Professor Helming has some tips. A short, 20-30-minute power nap prevents students from falling into a deep sleep and waking up feeling too groggy. If there is time, a 90-minute nap will allow the brain to complete a full sleep cycle, which is more beneficial when trying to catch up on sleep.

Students describe their experiences with sleep deprivation in a myriad of ways. Some, like Werkhoven, experience hallucinations after staying up for more than 48 hours. Others acknowledge they become short-tempered and feel they don’t contribute as much as they’d wish to class or their friends. In the spirit of both adopting the fullest college experience and avoiding sleep deprivation, students should develop a healthy balance of studying, social activities, and sleep.



Photo by Katie Ribbens

Severe weather across South Dakota

Lexi Schnaser — Staff Writer

Late in the evening of September 10th, a tornado touched ground in Sioux Falls, SD. This tornado was the first twister in South Dakota’s largest city since 1989. Classified as an EF-2 tornado, its top winds measured at 125 mph. No one suffered severe injuries; however, quite a few businesses in southern Sioux Falls were damaged by the tornado, including Pizza Ranch, the Plaza 41 shopping center, Advanced Auto Parts, and Best Buy.

Many of the tornado sirens in Sioux Falls did not go off, leaving residents to rely on the radio, smartphone, or TV for weather updates.

This bout of severe weather was not limited to Sioux Falls. In the few days following the Sioux Falls tornado, towns such as Mitchell and Salem received nearly seven inches of rain, causing severe flooding.

Due to the flooding, many county roads, as well as parts of I-80 were closed because they had washed out from the river. Vanessa Hofer, a freshman at Dordt University, lives near Salem, and her home suffered devastating flooding.

“It was heart-breaking to see the destruction. We could only plant on a third of our land this spring, and to lose some more of our crops from

the flooding is devastating,” says Hofer.

She says there were so many roads that were closed due to flooding the county ran out of “Road Closed” signs. In the Mitchell area, there are many bridges that are closed and must be entirely rebuilt before they can be used again. There are still some local roads that are closed for the time being.

Hofer travelled home this weekend and witnessed the damage herself. “It was worse than I thought it would be. I could see why the local schools had to be closed. It was too dangerous to get around anywhere.”

Dordt University takes precautions against severe weather by posting tornado shelter signs around campus, as well as notifying students and faculty to take shelter by defense siren, radio, TV, or administration personnel.



Photo by Lexi Schnaser

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Oil price rise — affecting students?

Haemi Kim — Staff Writer

On September 14, one of the largest oil facilities in Saudi Arabia was attacked by drones. Up to 17 structures in the facility were destroyed, and the production of 5.7 million barrels per day was lost.

This was recorded as one of the worst disruptions to the world oil supply, followed by the 1978 Iranian revolution with 5.6 million barrels lost, and the 1990 Invasion of Kuwait with 4.3 million barrels lost.

According to *CNN News*, Patrick DeHaan, head of petroleum analysis for GasBuddy, said that oil prices would most likely detrimentally impact airlines and huge buyers of jet fuel, but not other usual consumers for car gas.

According to CBS News, one fuel price expert said that the oil price will go up about 10 to 25 cents per gallon which would be, “annoying but not likely to change consumer behavior.”

Because of Dordt’s rural location, gas prices likely won’t affect students as much.

“I don’t drive enough to see the difference,” senior Amanda Davies said. “But I am going home for Tristate, which is in Indiana, and that is a long drive, so it would probably suck then, but I don’t really think the price affects me that much.”

Though senior Sarah Siglin doesn’t drive much except for her thirty-minute commute for leading youth group on Wednesdays, she took issue with the price hike.

“It is going to be more expensive and I am a college student,” said Siglin. “I also drive a SUV and that takes up more gas than other vehicles.”

The longer the reconstruction of the oil facility in Saudi Arabia takes, the higher the gas price may rise. However, as of now, Midwesterners—Dordt students can hope to not see much of a difference.

The cloud around vaping: new cases of lung disease stimulate discussion

Sydney Brummel — Staff Writer

For the past several weeks, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration have been investigating the increasing number of lung illness cases linked to the use of e-cigarette products. The CDC has reported at least 530 illnesses and seven deaths throughout the United States.

In recent years, vaping and various types of e-cigarettes have become popular and are widely used, especially among teenagers. In 2018, the CDC reported that 3.6 million U.S. youths use e-cigarettes.

“That’s when the CDC declared a health emergency, because they saw so many pick it up from age twelve and higher,” Director of Student Health and Counseling Beth Baas said.

“Vaping initially started as a way for cigarette-smokers to give up smoking cigarettes,” said Baas. However, research has shown that very few people use e-cigarettes to stop smoking but simply become smokers of both products.

The overall history of vaping is questionable, even before the recent outbreak of lung disease. The e-cigarette company that has been receiving some of the highest media attention, JUUL, formerly advertised that their products did not contain nicotine, the chemical that causes a smoker’s addiction. However, the CDC reported that just a single JUUL pod contains the equivalent of the nicotine found in a whole pack of cigarettes.

It was not until May of 2019 that the FDA required e-cigarette producers to list all their ingredients. In November, companies will have to list their potentially harmful contents.

By advertising familiar flavors, such as grape or cherry, vaping companies have successfully attracted many underage customers. As of the last couple of weeks, Florida and Michigan have banned such flavored vapes. The states’ goal in doing so is to remove the temptation for minors to buy e-cigarettes in the first place.

Baas stated that the greatest concern regarding these products is that the brains of adolescents and young adults “are more susceptible to [nicotine] addiction...They don’t know what all the effects of [vaping] are over the lifespan. So those people that vape in this generation

are going to be the ‘experiment’ of the long-term effects of it.” The public remains unaware of what potentially harmful substances that e-cigarette products may contain and cases of lung disease are the first visible side effects of vaping.

Major superstores and vendors are just beginning to respond to the vaping crisis. On September 20, Wal-Mart announced that it will no longer sell any vaping products.

Regardless of what students may believe concerning vaping, Dordt’s policy concerning the activity remains firm.

“We don’t allow it on campus at all, just like smoking,” said Robert Taylor, Dean of Students. Despite the unpopularity of the policy, Dordt adopted the ban on vaping for student wellness.

“It looked like a high-risk activity,” said Taylor. “We want our students to be healthy, and so anytime we are aware of something that’s potentially harmful or definitely harmful, we want to talk about it.”

While Dordt does not allow vaping on campus, students have varying opinions on the matter.

“Although I don’t vape, I have many friends who do,” said sophomore Lauren Hoekstra. “I think that people should be allowed to make their own choices, and the government should have more of a hands-off approach.”

Sophomore Jake Thorsteinson has a different take. “I think that Dordt’s policy is good. Nicotine in young people is not what we need more of nowadays.”

For more information about vaping, its effects, and the steps to quitting, consult the Student Health and Counseling Center’s Wellness Resources on the DUC webpage.

“Awareness is always a good thing,” said Baas, “It’s important to remember that our bodies are God’s temple, and vaping is potentially harmful. Let’s not jump into it without doing due diligence.”



Contributed Photo

Commons’ new grounds

Lindsay Kuiper and Lauren Hoekstra — Staff Writers

Change has come to the Commons.

Instead of stir-fry year-round, the Commons has implemented a weekly cycle of new food, including za’atar, rice bowls, taqueria burrito bowls, dashi noodle bowls, and, of course, stir fry—all in an effort to draw students back to the Commons.

“The hope is the migration [to the Grille] won’t be as strong,” Jake Jensen, manager at the Commons, said. Lunch-hour traffic to the Grille required the hiring of new staff and managers this year, which has resulted in the absence of rice bowls as new staff are trained. But Jensen and Nick Lawrence, also a manager, aren’t done.

Jensen is excited to try a new concept in the near future: “Chef’s Table,” a smaller, fancier, invite-only plated dinner. It would include some recognizable faces on Dordt’s campus, like President Hoekstra or Robert Taylor, and would most likely be available for around 15 people per session. Other new ideas include cooking lessons in the Commons to teach students practical recipes and cooking skills for

apartment living.

Another significant change is the new brand of coffee that has been added to the Commons. According to Adam DeKleine, student manager, the company that caters to the Commons called Creative Dining has decided to implement tea and coffee from Thrive Market. Creative Dining was impressed with Thrive Market’s mission and core values: they provide healthy and organic products to consumers while also giving back to struggling families.

Juliana Tien, self-described coffee enthusiast, drank about 1 cup of Commons coffee for every 32 cups of coffee from somewhere else. This year, she’s enjoying the coffee a lot more.

“I am already experiencing a difference,” Tien said, “I’ve been drinking it a lot more, and even the decaf is good so I’ll have it at night for supper too.”

Changes at the Grille include a new staff and managers and the absence of rice bowls, which have been pushed to the side temporarily as new staff are trained. Lawrence and Jensen hope the changes at the Commons will attract more traffic.

“The hope is the migration [to the Grille] won’t be as strong,” Jensen said.

Diversity in thought

Lauren Hoekstra — Staff Writer

Over the past ten years, enrollment trends of students coming to Dordt from a non-Reformed background have increased. Most of the students with a non-Reformed background come from Baptist, Catholic, Evangelical Free, Lutheran, Presbyterian, or unspecified denominations.

The percentage of students from Reformed backgrounds has dropped, especially regarding those from a Christian Reformed Church (CRC) background. In 2007, 61% of students were CRC, compared to only 39% in 2017.

As of fall of 2017, about 40% of the campus entered with a religious background that was not Reformed, an increase from 2007 where only 24% of students were not Reformed.

“People usually react poorly [to my beliefs],” said Mykaela Ptacek, a senior from Mount Ridge, KS, who grew up Catholic. “A classmate once tried to start a fight almost with me before class. He said, ‘You worship Mary, don’t you?’ And it was right before a test too. If you don’t know what it [Catholicism] is, try going once. You can’t quite capture the differences in words. Go with an open mind. Don’t think that ‘Oh, they are so crazy, so staunch.’ Just go!”

Many students from non-Reformed backgrounds come to Dordt concerned not about denominations but about its status as a Christian university.

“Throughout CORE-100, I was just trying to

understand what was going on and how it was different from what I grew up with,” Ptacek said. “We all worship the same God, so that’s what matters.”

Growing up in an Assemblies of God, Non-Denominational, and now an Evangelical Free church, Emi Stewart, a senior from Ames, IA, struggled with accepting Reformed thought.

“God knows everything,” she said, concerning free will. “Surely within that He knows who is going to be in Heaven versus in Hell.”

According to Stewart, Evangelical Free churches are “reformed, but not hell-bent on it.”

“We believe TULIP and Calvinism is there, but we just have a looser grasp on it,” Stewart said.

Jazmin Arami Mendieta Gauto grew up in the Pentecostal and Assemblies of God churches in Paraguay. According to Mendieta Gauto, in Pentecostal churches you can lose your salvation if you “mess up.”

“The covenant does not apply to the whole family,” Mendieta Gauto said. “If you have a child who is an atheist, he can go to Hell.”

Pentecostal and Assemblies of God churches believe that the Spirit moves free and tangibly. Religion is primarily composed of having a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit, and Jesus is the gate to the Holy Spirit. According to Mendieta Gauto, Pentecostals tend to separate spiritual and non-spiritual aspects of life.

“For example, my work as an LCA is just

work. It does not combine with God using me to bless others,” Mendieta Gauto said. “Reformed sees everything as worship. Pentecostal, which is Arminian, separates the two.”

Adam Jones, who wished to have their name changed for privacy reasons, feels a little behind in discussions about religion.

“I will try to participate in conversations about religion,” Jones said. “I will just be limited in what I can talk about.”

Jones grew up going to Methodist, Lutheran, and Reformed churches and attended public school.

“Dordt as a whole has made the transition from public school to private Christian school very easy,” he said. “[The professors] have been very accommodating in all the classes to me.”

But some students don’t identify as Christians at all. Leslie Smith, a senior who wished to have her name changed because she feels she would get in trouble with Dordt leadership, defined herself as spiritual, but not religious.

Smith grew up non-denominational, but during her freshman year at Dordt, she cut church out of her life and stopped identifying as Christian.

“Christianity felt like an exclusive club,” she said. “The CRC is very much about liturgy and rules. I call them ‘sit down, stand up’ churches.”

During her freshman year, Smith found a religion that worked for her. The religion of Bahá’í teaches in the multiple incarnations of

divine Educators, including Abraham, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammed, and the most recent named Bahá’u’lláh. The Bahá’í belief holds that an individual who believes in any of these incarnations of God is saved.

“My parents told me that I was part of a Muslim cult,” Smith said. “That turned me off from religion. I can’t even try anymore.” She is no longer part of the Bahá’í community.

“Dordt as an institution does present itself as very closed-minded to outsiders,” said Smith. “However, the people at Dordt are incredible and diverse. I wish that Dordt would present itself and the student population better so that we can continue to have diversity in thought. The kindness and love that you can find here [at Dordt] is in individuals, not denominations.”



Contributed Photo

Dordt football gets back on track

Connor Van Hulzen and Luke Drooger — Staff Writers

A week after a disappointing but unsurprising loss to perennial NAIA powerhouse Morningside, the football team endured the long journey to Jamestown, ND to get back in the win column—and break a school record—against the University of Jamestown Jimmies.

The 5 ½ hour drive to Jamestown also included a stop in Brookings, SD at South Dakota State University to get in a light walk-through—in which players go over what plays they’ll run—and a stop at a Fargo, ND hotel for the night before the game.

Despite these less-than-optimal circumstances, the football team rolled into Jamestown ready to play. Senior wide receiver Levi Niesen and sophomore quarterback Tyler Reynolds scored on two four-yard rushing touchdowns on both of their first two drives, giving the Defenders an early 14-3 lead at the end of the first quarter.



Photo from Dordt Football Twitter @dordtfb

A somewhat slow second quarter saw only one score by either team, with sophomore tight end Lucas Warner catching a 6-yard touchdown pass from freshman quarterback Kaleb Maresh to put Dordt up 21-3 heading into halftime.

Coming out of halftime, the Defenders turned to the run game to grind away time on the clock. A nearly six-minute-long drive resulted in a 3-yard rushing touchdown for senior running back Levi Schoonhoven. One successful Jamestown drive later, the Defenders held a 28-10 lead heading into the fourth quarter.

The fourth and final quarter saw Dordt seal the game emphatically. Another Tyler Reynolds rushing touchdown expanded the lead to 35-10. On the Defenders’ next offensive drive, a fumble returned for a touchdown meant that Jamestown brought it just a little closer, to 35-16, though it would prove to be too little too late.

One rushing touchdown later by sophomore Reece Schnell, the Defenders had the game all wrapped up with a new record to boot. Schoonhoven rushed the ball thirty-five times for a Dordt record of 298 yards.

“I wasn’t getting touched until I was five or six yards past the line of scrimmage on every play,” Schoonhoven said. “I could tell their game plan was to stop our option game because we weren’t really able to get outside and to the sideline.”

After the game, running backs and tight ends coach Devin Eekhoff said, “The offensive line had an amazing focus up front and were able to be very physical and dominate. [Levi] Schoonhoven ran tough and really helped us secure this win.”

This week, the Defenders move on to play Dakota Wesleyan at home at 1:00 pm.

Pep band makes big strides on campus

Spencer Short — Staff Writer

Anyone who has attended a Dordt home football game recently may have noticed a lot brassier sound coming from the home side of the field. Although the pep band club has been at Dordt for years now, there has been a push this year by President Hoekstra and other administrators for the band to become a more solidified part of the Dordt athletic experience.

Pep band, headed by music education majors Nate Van Holland and Holly Tanis, has received blessings from both the administration and Dr. Onsby Rose, a new professor of music. Rose, although taking more of an oversight position in the pep band, has years of experience in conducting and performing with athletic bands during his 26 years of teaching at various universities, such as the Ohio State University and the University of South Carolina.

“We plan on playing around seven or eight events a semester... It’s mostly going to be football, but we will also be playing at some basketball and even volleyball games,” said Rose. “It’s an exciting opportunity and I believe it is a very valuable part of [the] university.”

So with all this hype built and administrative support behind them, where do Nate and Holly see themselves taking the pep band in the future?

“We’re trying to get a bigger game presence,” said Tanis. “We’re really trying to organize better and get more people to sign up. Even though we have the administration behind us, it’s more of a support push.”

“We’ve gotten a lot of interest from Onsby, he’s more present than the directors in the past,” said Van Holland. “He wants to try and get some sousaphones for us... along with maybe

offering scholarships to play with the pep band at some point.”

Along with these broader, entire band focused visions, Rose has also showed a desire to take Nate, Holly, and other members of the band to some form of training or just sit in on a pep band practice for a larger university. Not only would this be helpful for a student’s musical education, it would also be a time to see what it’s like in the ‘big leagues’ and how one might transfer over those skills to a smaller group.

Currently, there are a little over 30 current members in pep band, and they are always open to having more people join in on the excitement. Practices are every Wednesday at 8:15 P.M. in the band room. Whether you’re part of Campus-Community Band, Concert Band, or just want to see if you can still play your high school instrument again after all these years, the pep band is open to you.

“Pep band is just a good time,” said Van Holland. “You can come, hang out with your friends, laugh, and play some awesome music while having fun at the same time. It’s just fun.”



Photo by Spencer Short

Dordt cross country competes and heals

Mike Martinez — Staff Writer

The Dordt University Cross Country team opened with a great start. Both the men’s and women’s team placed first out of seven in their opening meet, the Herb Blakely Invite. Though Dordt hosted the event in Sioux Center, it was originally planned to be held in South Dakota, at the Dakota State Invite. Due to severe flooding near Dakota State University, it needed to be moved.

“We really appreciated the work that the maintenance did here at Dordt,” Coach Nate Wolf said. “With it being a short turn-around, the meet itself went well for all the athletes.”

Dordt returns a talented squad on both the men’s and women’s side, including many all-

conference performers.

Junior Anthony Ghorso sees a lot of potential for the success they can have this year.

“For the guy’s team, we ran well, but not what we’re capable of,” Ghorso said. “It was a good first meet, but there is a lot of improvement to be made.”

Joe Anderson, a freshman for the men’s team, is excited to see what’s in store for Defender nation this season.

“It was an encouraging first race for not knowing what to expect,” said Anderson. “Just seeing how we performed was cool to see.”

“The girls’ team is healthy right now, so it’s good to get everyone out racing,” sophomore Mary Kate Postma said. “We were able to get off to a good start, and we have a lot of good

potential for the season.”

Although the Cross Country team is looking forward to another great season, for them, it’s a lot bigger than just racing. They keep David Temte in mind, a teammate who tragically lost his life over the summer.

“We’ve tried to do little things to remind us of David in a healthy way,” Wolf said. “We have team shirts for a commemoration of him, just to remind ourselves what running is all about. When you put any sport against the loss of a teammate, winning and losing is secondary to what those personal relationships are.”

Not only do they have t-shirts to honor him, but both the men’s and women’s team have taken another approach as a sign of tribute.

“A general theme of what a lot of people are

saying is that we’re running for something bigger this year,” Ghorso said. “Us guys wrote ‘Do it for David’ on the back of our calves to give us a burst of energy when running gets hard. We wish he was here with us, but we continue to run for him in God’s glory.”

As the men’s team remember David on their calves, the women’s team made wristbands.

“It’s not just the running aspect of it, but David lived very freely,” Postma said. “That’s something we all took away from it. We can live freely and run freely, even when we don’t feel like racing.”

Both teams will travel to Doane University on September 28th for the Dean White Invite.

New head coach to lead Defender baseball

Caleb Pollema — Staff Writer

Coaches often find their passion to coach their teams out of gratitude to the coaches that have influenced and developed them in the past.

This can most definitely be said for new Dordt baseball coach, Nathan Bacon.

“I think for any of us sitting in an office and doing this and working with guys and giving up the hours, it’s because someone did that for you and made a lasting impact in your life,” Bacon said. “God put it on my heart to be on college campuses and He used men that impacted my life to make it clear the direction I should go.”

Before Bacon arrived in Northwest Iowa, he played collegiate baseball and completed his undergrad in History at Avila University in Kansas City. He also served as the head assistant coach and recruiting coordinator for the University of the Ozarks in Arkansas.

Coach Bacon brings a new energy to the Dordt baseball program, which finished 8-28 last season. For Bacon, he challenges his players to be intense not only on the field, but in every aspect of their life.

“I think our guys have probably figured this out in the first week: I’m intense,” Bacon said. “If you aren’t intense about your marriage, your intent is not going to be there. The same goes for your workplace. The same for everything in your life. That is the biggest thing that I want our guys to know is that they have to be intense and intentional about everything. We are about developing a whole person.”

This fire has most definitely renewed the team after coming off of a tough season. The coaching staff has implemented program standards of making the GPAC Conference tournament every year and maintaining a team GPA of 3.25.

These standards have led to an increased amount of organization and accountability throughout the program. Both of these principles are found in the newly formed team small groups.

The small groups get weekly points for attending chapel, going to class, and eating meals together which are counted by each group leader.

“By creating smaller organizational groups, the leaders develop a closer relationship with

the players in their group,” said sophomore catcher and group leader Cameron Pfafman. “They are able to hold them accountable to not only positively benefit the team but also the group in the weekly competitions.”

With fall practice well under way, the team is excited for the upcoming season and all that it will bring.

“Coach has challenged us in more ways than just baseball,” said sophomore pitcher and group leader Kevin Fokkema. “The guys have really taken these challenges and run with them, and it has really show in the way we practice and interact with each other as a collective group trying to become better in every aspect of our lives.”

Bacon is looking forward to the upcoming semester and his first season as head coach of the Defenders, but there is one thing about Dordt that he wished were different.

“I think probably the biggest thing I would change right now is having a ceiling in my office,” Bacon said, jokingly. “I mean everyone can hear what I say so it keeps me accountable, but also when I have to get at some guys,

everybody kind of knows.”

Bacon’s intensity, energy, and sense of humor have all been injected into his team that enters its fourth week of fall practice in preparation for the spring ahead.

While there has been much excitement around the addition of Coach Bacon, that doesn’t mean that the transition has been easy for his family as his wife and daughter prepare to move to Sioux Center.

“The family part has been difficult,” Bacon said. “Not only are you apart, you spend twice as much money and eight times as much time on facetime and on the phone.”

Despite the difficulty of the transition, it has been worth it for Coach Bacon and his family especially for what they are gaining by coming to Dordt.

“My wife and I both wanted to be at a Christian institution,” Bacon said. “We felt like Dordt had the value base and the sense of community that we wanted and were looking for.”

Bacon is excited for the future of Defender baseball and his players are anxious to get on the field to open the 2020 season.

Downton delivers ... to its fans

Gretchen Lee — Staff Writer

Since the *Downton Abbey* TV show first graced our screens in 2010, it has captured the hearts of a very loyal and loving fanbase across the globe.

The timeless story of the Crawley family takes place during the decline of the British aristocracy in the late 1910s and early 1920s. The residents and staff of *Downton Abbey* experience a range of challenges, mistakes, and emotions as they navigate the new world they are entering. From Dame Maggie Smith's fiery portrayal of Lady Violet to Michelle Dockery's Lady Mary Crawley, the actors brought drama and entertainment to all six seasons of the series.

After the show came to an end in 2015, fans asked for a movie follow-up—and their wish

has come true nearly four years later.

The *Downton Abbey* movie starts a few years after the show's end. The Crawley family has just received word that the king and queen of England will be staying for a night at Downton Abbey as they tour the English countryside. The household flies into a fury as they prepare to host the royal family. They face several complications along the way including, but not limited to: aggravating chefs and butlers from the royal household, Lady Violet's aggressive scheming to advance her son's status, a broken boiler, inconvenient rain, an assassination plot, and a series of missing valuables.

This movie was undoubtedly written for the fans. From the classic witticisms by Lady Violet to the bumbling footman to the general grandeur of the set, everything was perfectly

in *Downton* style. That being said, this movie focused a great deal more on creating a sense of familiarity for fans than writing a solid, discernable plotline. There are numerous plotlines throughout this story, but only a few of them gain any sense of conclusion at the end of the film. This makes sense as it was derived from a drawn-out television series.

What the movie lacked in structure, however, it made up for in fantastic costume and set design, fanservice, humor, and dialogue. Every scene was a delight to the eyes and ears. This was also a very satisfying ending for the characters.

One of my concerns going into this movie was that it would disrupt the way the TV show ended, which was an ending I, and many other fans, felt very satisfied about. The movie succeeded



Contributed Photo

in providing just enough additional content to the characters lives to make it interesting, while also leaving each of them in a great place.

If you have seen the *Downton Abbey* TV series, the movie makes a wonderful addition to the show. For those who are unfamiliar with the series and are simply looking for an enjoyable movie to watch, the background knowledge provided by the show is a necessary prerequisite to understanding the characters and context.

It is a great continuation of a beloved show, but not a very well-developed movie on its own.

Ad Astra review

Zachary Dirksen — Staff Writer

Space travel is a stressful job, even in the future. It's a battle for survival against the forces of nature. One wrong move could kill you. Keeping a level head is key. That's why Major Roy McBride is the best at what he does.

Those seeing trailers for *Ad Astra* will undoubtedly see the film as some kind of hard-sci-fi space epic, like *Interstellar* or *The Martian*. It isn't. It isn't even a drama or survival movie set in or around outer space, like



Contributed Photo

Gravity or *First Man*. *Ad Astra* is a character study of Roy McBride.

McBride is the epitome of stoic. He's a legend among his superiors for having an impressively low resting heart rate, even in the worst conditions. Roy is the ideal astronaut: mission-driven, calm, and competent. But, when dangerous power surges begin to wreak havoc on earth, Roy is thrust into completely unfamiliar territory.

Supposedly, the surges originate from an old project base in Neptune's orbit. Project Lima, led by Roy's genius father, Clifford, was thought to be missing. It has been sixteen years since communication between Lima and Space Command mysteriously ceased. Space Command is sure that Roy's father is alive and causing trouble. They want Roy to travel to Mars to try to re-establish contact. Roy immediately agrees. To him, it's just another mission.

McBride has internalized his emotions. They have no place in his job and, thus, no place in his life. His marriage is on the rocks, and he looks down on his more outgoing, vulnerable

co-workers. Roy has no time for distractions.

Roy's only clear emotional attachment is to his father. Roy admires his father and aspires to reach the same explorative and scientific heights. But, as Roy's journey continues, his father's darker side is revealed. As Clifford's sins become more evident, Roy's emotions do as well, resulting in a climax that isn't so much exciting or intense as it is cathartic. Viewers hoping to see a dramatic showdown or tense escape will find neither here, and that's bound to be disappointing for some.

Director James Gray crafts an aesthetically beautiful universe for the film, giving us some of the most impressive and realistic looking space travel footage in cinema, period. Nothing looks computer generated, and nothing looks miniature. Shot on 35mm film, the visuals have a gritty, tangible feel to them that helps to sell the near realism of the film. Hoyte Van Hoytema's cinematography shines as well. Each new planet Roy visits has its own color scheme that fills the frame. The moon is a silvery white, while Mars is a dusty orange.

Neptune is blue, but it's also black—connoting both the dark events at the Lima base and Roy's ever-darkening image of his father.

Brad Pitt as Roy McBride is fantastic. Pitt has been on a roll this year, following up a career-defining performance in this summer's *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood* with yet another one. Pitt's stone-faced stoicism slowly melts throughout the film. Pitt's squinted eyes and clenched jaw are constantly at war with his inner self. Roy McBride's face dominates most of the screen in *Ad Astra*, and Pitt is aware of that, emoting (or not emoting) to a pitch perfect tee.

As stated before, some might be disappointed with this film. Those buying a ticket for a space adventure with buggy chases on the moon and a stone-cold hero will be disappointed. This movie isn't for everyone. Some might find it boring, while others might find its perspective pretentious. While these opinions are valid, when the credits rolled and the lights came up, I found *Ad Astra* to be a moving, beautiful film.

Mega album review: *III*, The Lumineers; *A Modern Tragedy Vol. 3*, grandson; *All My Heroes Are Cornballs*, JPEGMAFIA

Caleb Schreurs — Staff Writer

Friday the 13th saw the release of multiple notable albums from all across the musical spectrum. Like all artforms, they are reflections on the culture in which they were created. This album review seeks to examine three albums in three distinctly different genres as products of and reactions to our frenzied and chaotic culture.

III, The Lumineers.

Three years after their release of their second highly-praised studio album *Cleopatra*, The Lumineers' sound has become more stripped down, but their storytelling is more stellar than ever. *III* tells the story of three generations of the Sparks family, each stricken with issues ranging from alcoholism ("Gloria"), to gambling, and substance abuse ("Leader of The Landslide," "My Cell").

In the delightfully tight storytelling, we hear Junior Sparks, the son of Gloria and Jimmy, caught in the middle of his parents' issues. The

slow build in "Leader of the Landslide" follows Junior's realization that he is the product of his parents' failures and must control his own destiny. With a layered crescendo though the piano, guitar, and scratchy vocals, we follow Junior as he throws off the mantle of addiction and failure and chases his own future. *III*, while haunting and somewhat disheartening, marks a shift in the Lumineers' sound, from VSCO girl anthems to a reflection of real issues surrounding us daily.

For some, however, this album may be an example of "whataboutism," where we overlook our own issues and vices and examine those of someone else. "We can't be that bad, look at the family in this story," one might say. In this way, *III* is a result of our current cultural climate.

A Modern Tragedy, Vol. 3; grandson

Canadian electro-punk rocker "grandson" has never been quiet. While some say to keep politics out of music, grandson (A.K.A. Jordan Benjamin) writes nearly exclusively political works, focusing on issues such as climate change ("BLOOD // WATER"), capitalism ("Bills"), and school shootings ("thoughts & prayers").

His third studio EP, the conclusion of the *Modern Tragedy* trilogy, focuses more on the self-loathing that these conditions have brought him. Grandson begins with "Rock Bottom", a full-throttle rock anthem reflecting on how society found itself in this mess, and questioning where we could possibly go from here. The album digresses into ballads of self-loathing, following the singer's attempt to destroy himself with drugs and alcohol.

The final installment in the *Modern Tragedy* series touches less on societal issues, and more on the desperate people living within the

destruction of civilization. Despite sounding nihilistic, the EP ends with the line "I know if I die young, the truth is forever." This album takes an escapist reaction to issues around us, with substances and self-loathing, as a response to the troubles plaguing our culture today, which grandson covered in the first two entries in the *Modern Tragedy* trilogy.

All My Heroes are Cornballs; JPEGMAFIA

While the aforementioned mentioned artists in this list border on mainstream, JPEGMAFIA is more underground, occupying a rising spot in the genre of experimental hip hop. Previous projects have focused around social justice issues, the artist's heroes and inspiration, and commentary on the music industry. The lead single of *All My Heroes are Cornballs*, "Jesus Forgive Me, I Am A Thot," is a dynamic piece, jumping from gritty samples to soaring auto-tune vocals, paralleling the artist's lifestyle to religious images.

Each song in the album is an exercise for the ears, as it jumps from aggressive electric guitar samples to vaporwave-esque piano lines. Despite touching on some social issues, such as gun violence and police brutality, there is seemingly no central theme. Though not a tight concept album like *III*, the work pushes musical boundaries, even within an already experimental genre.

JPEGMAFIA redefines himself as an artist, and has no problem making his listeners ask questions about the content they are ingesting. With the other two albums giving listeners a more concrete response to our modern culture, JPEGMAFIA airs toward the abstract as an absurdist reaction towards the climate in which it was created. It attempts to focus on social issues, but that attention is quickly taken away

by throaty synths and sonic chaos, keeping a listener on their toes, and never in the same spot for more than a moment.

SONG BREAKDOWN:
WILL LISTEN TO AGAIN:

"Gloria" - The Lumineers
"Life In The City" - Lumineers
"Jimmy Sparks" - The Lumineers
"Rock Bottom" - grandson
"Jesus Forgive Me, I Am A Thot" - JPEGMAFIA
"Post Verified Lifestyle" - JPEGMAFIA

DELIGHTFULLY MEH:

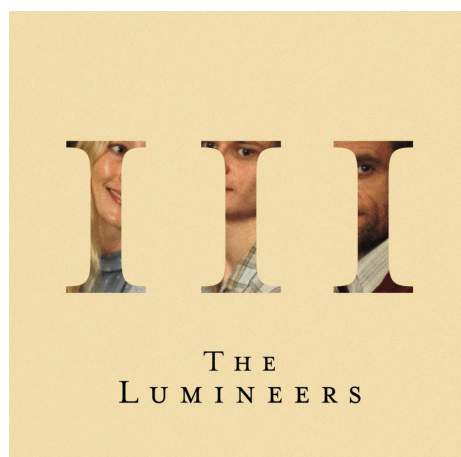
"Donna" - The Lumineers
"It Wasn't Easy To Be Happy For You" - The Lumineers
"Salt And The Sea" - The Lumineers
"Oh No!!!" - grandson
"Die Young" - grandson
"Grimy Waifu" - JPEGMAFIA
"PTSD" - JPEGMAFIA

BURN IT DOWN:

"JPEGMAFIA TYPE BEAT" - JPEGMAFIA

DARK HORSE(S):

"My Cell" - The Lumineers
"BasicBitchTearGas" - JPEGMAFIA



Contributed Photos

Shakespeare in the elements

Allison Wordes — Staff Writer

Saturday, September 21: Walking up the path to the Hill Theater is like ascending to another, quieter world—a realm of story, of Shakespeare’s midsummer land. The small group of Dordt English majors are heralded by the sound of trumpet music as they shuffle upwards through misty air. Led by Professor Bob De Smith and his wife, Rebecca, the group had driven seven hours east for two things: camping and Shakespeare.

The American Players Theater, a world-class classical theater, put on two plays—*The Book of Will* and *Twelfth Night*—in their outdoor theatre at Spring Green, WI. Because of its remote location, the company can create a unique atmosphere, reliving historical theater.

“Oftentimes theater is in a formal setting and people spend a lot of money to see it,” said De Smith. “For theater to be readily accessible to the public is crucial—this art form should never be an exclusive event for only the elite, or those who can afford pricey tickets. It is for everyone to enjoy.”

This was an opportunity for students to understand what a play in Shakespeare’s day

would have been like—in rain or shine.

“The best part about Shakespeare is the festivity,” said De Smith. “It’s a good adventure.”

Attendees used black trash bags to protect themselves from the drizzle. The theater looks like a sea of blue, yellow, and black shimmering plastic. Wet as it may be, the stage is set, and the show must go on.

“I think the weather and the wind would be the most challenging, because there are elements that you have to work through to get to the audience,” said sophomore Abby Mulder, who is majoring in Elementary Education.

Plays in the day of the Globe Theatre would have been held on an outdoor stage. That stage would not install a roof until years later.

Thespians built the thrust stage with painted wood and sparse decorations. The rest is left to the actors and the audience’s imaginations.

De Smith referred to the word “transferability” to describe why Shakespeare has remained so popular even to this day.

“He’s not a modern,” said De Smith, “but it’s easy to translate his world to this one.”

This transferability is helped by the fact that Shakespeare’s plays are not placed in a

particular setting, except his historical plays. Leaving the plays in an ambiguous setting allows for overlap between culture, keeping it alive to this day.

“The coastal and more contemporary setting made this play unique,” said junior Secondary English Education major, Zac Vanderley. “I think one major similarity [to Shakespeare’s day] is the audience participation. Shakespeare’s plays always acknowledge the fourth wall.”

De Smith tries to arrange the trip every time the Shakespeare class is taught, on an every-other-year basis. However, it has been over four years since the last venture, so it was time to go again.

“Part of it is tradition,” said De Smith, describing why the trip is offered. “The fact Shakespeare has continued to stay around, and we can be a part of it.”

He said it’s a good experience for the Shakespeare class and other English majors to go and see live theatre rather than just reading about it.

“I’m always astonished at the timelessness of Shakespeare’s stories,” said Vanderley. “They can be adapted into different settings, but the themes and ideas inside each story challenge

even the most ignorant and stubborn of people. I would claim that Shakespeare has the greatest influence on literature and those that read and study literature.”

De Smith wanted his students to see how theatre fits into a community. There is a core set of players, pared down after about 40 years of productions that take the main roles. The actors come from a variety of places, including Milwaukee, Madison, and Minneapolis.

“I think the show surprised me in the aspect that all the actors were there by choice and how much passion they had for the plays was clearly seen,” Mulder said.

“I was challenged to be more creative in my personal acting, while also challenged to read more Shakespeare,” said Vanderley.



Photo by Erika Buiter

Meet Dr. Derek Chitwood

Sawyer Strelnieks — Staff Writer

Dr. Derek Chitwood is one of the many new faculty on Dordt’s campus this semester. After 18 years serving communities all over the world, Chitwood and his wife Amy have moved back to the United States. Chitwood is looking to help teach Dordt engineering students with a Christian worldview from his own experiences.

Chitwood has had the dream of becoming an astronaut since childhood. In high school he had the chance to meet an astronaut and was told that if he wanted to pursue this profession, he first had to study aerospace engineering at a good school and get into the air force. Chitwood completed his undergrads in aerospace engineering at the University of Southern California but couldn’t continue with the air force due to an injury. He

then continued at USC and received a masters and PHD in Environmental Engineering.

McDonnell Douglas, an aerospace manufacturing company, offered him a job. Chitwood turned down this offer and instead pursued his call from God to serve.

Chitwood began his teaching career overseas teaching English at the American University of Armenia. He then worked with small communities by designing water systems and engineered a ceramic flowerpot water filter to help with poor water quality.

After serving around the globe, Chitwood felt called to come back to the United States and teach at a Christian university.

“I resonated with the mission of the university [Dordt University] and the way they want to communicate a Christian worldview,”

Chitwood said, “I like the idea that we are called to help our students really develop a Christian worldview.”

Out of all the other colleges Chitwood applied to, Dordt University felt like it fit best and related to his mission to teach with a Christian worldview.

Chitwood’s big picture look at his job is to inspire some engineers to apply what they’ve learned in a holistic way by serving communities like he felt called to do.

“Everybody I have met in this department [engineering] has been very missional,” said Chitwood. “They care for the students so that they will grow deep in the kingdom of God. This doesn’t feel like a job, it feels like a ministry.”

Chitwood has noticed the teamwork and willingness to help between the professors in

the engineering department. Chitwood noticed a lot of competition between professors in his experiences at other colleges, but here at Dordt the staff has helped him settle in by getting him up to speed on what students have already learned and what still needs to be completed in their education.

One of the challenges during his first couple weeks at Dordt has been teaching Fluid Mechanics. Chitwood said he is starting to get into a good rhythm and the courses he is teaching are heading in the right direction.

Chitwood said he really enjoyed his first few weeks at Dordt University and hopes to see this place as a long-term investment to serve and teach engineering with a holistic worldview.

Faculty fishbowl - Chem 305

Evangeline Colarossi — Staff Writer

Every Tuesday evening, a handful of seniors circle around tables and learn about the philosophy of science. The course is similar to Core 200, but amped up and turned into a three-hour night class. However, last Tuesday the students got a small break from the mental work of deciphering philosophers like Kant and Kuhn. Instead of the regular class, several professors from various departments at Dordt came together in a “Faculty Fishbowl” to do what philosophers do best: argue.

Professors Josh Matthews (English), Tom Clark (Mathematics), Carl Fictorie, and Channon Visscher (Chemistry), and recently retired professor of physics John Zwart munched on cookies and donuts as they discussed the aspects of baseball, science, and truth.

During fall semester convocation, President Hoekstra shared an article by Walter Anderson including the following joke.

“Three umpires are sitting around over a beer, and one says, ‘There’s balls and there’s strikes, and I call ‘em the way they are.’ Another says, ‘There’s balls and there’s strikes and I call ‘em the way that I see ‘em.’ The third says, ‘There’s balls and there’s strikes and they ain’t nothin’ until I call ‘em.’”

The professors read through these viewpoints



Photo by Carl Fictorie

and launched into a hearty discussion of which they most closely related to, and how they think these views relate to science – or life – as a whole. Throughout the meeting, hot topics like capital-T Truth, moral relativism, and even losing sleep over Planet Nine rose up. Perhaps the lightest topic of the night was that of morality. They discussed this not only in a scientific manner, but also in a human way.

“Are morals just something that fits within a culture as well?” asked senior Michael Buma. “They shift around the world. Is it just something we decide that is okay?”

In response to their questions, many of the students received questions in return. The evening focused on the idea that many things can be relative to one’s understanding. Professors chose to bring up more questions to the students and to each other, rather than state things as if they were facts.

“Things come down to morality,” Clark said. “Why can’t you do something? Is it just because of social constructs and pressure? If you do something that is disagreed with, you’d have to feel the humiliation of it.”

Many shared their viewpoints. “In science, you’re trying to line up these experiences to find something that is shared even from different perspectives,” Clark said.

To top it off, the students need to think through their own gleanings from past readings in order to decide which umpire they side with the most.

The evening ended with spinning heads and more questions than the night began with. As it turns out, three hours of philosophy is more than even a snack break can fix. But, for these students, it was a time of hearing what their mentors had to say concerning the philosophy of science.

Disengaged: students who leave

Emi Stewart — Staff Writer

Despite being ranked #1 in student engagement for the fourth year running, Dordt is not immune to students leaving.

Nationally, only 72% of college students choose to continue their college education after freshman year. According to 2017 data collected by the National Center for Education Sciences, Dordt is above the nationwide average at a retention rate of 81%. For earning a bachelor’s degree over the span of six years, the national graduation rate is 60%, while Dordt’s is 73%.

Dordt does seem to be in a good place when compared with national averages of retention and graduation rates, but there are still students who opt to transfer to different schools, or simply drop out.

Primary motives for leaving campus include financial issues and academic incompatibility, but there are additional reasons.

“One of the biggest reasons I left is Dordt doesn’t offer the bachelor’s degree that I want,” said Mary, who requested that her name be changed for privacy. She felt that going to a Christian college was an expectation placed on her by her family because her two older brothers went to Dordt. “No school is perfect, and sometimes it takes a few tries before you find a place that you can really feel at home and that best suits your needs.”

While many students on campus feel that Dordt has become a second home for them, some believe the community is inadvertently unaccepting.

“I definitely did not grow up Dutch,” said

former student Megan O’Gorman. “And my parents did not go to a four year school, so it was probably the most surprising choice for a college.”

O’Gorman studied digital media production at Dordt for two years, but ultimately made the choice to leave. Although she attributes the main cause of her departure to personal health struggles, there were other factors that affected the decision.

“The first time I was regarded as an outsider was move-in day my freshman year,” said O’Gorman.

That day, an alumni parent had zeroed in on her non-Dutch surname. “O’Gorman? That’s Irish. What are you doing here?”

While she didn’t take it as being more than a lighthearted joke at the time, O’Gorman said as her time at Dordt went on, it became a more prominent issue for her. Increasingly, she began to notice the presence of an inside group and an outside group, both in terms of ancestry and religious affiliation.

“I have talked to Catholics, Lutherans, Baptists, and people of no specific denomination who, like me, had been unknowingly treated like an outsider,” said O’Gorman. “I realize Dordt is founded on Reformed theology, and it should be acknowledged, but times change, and so do people.”

O’Gorman feels that the culture on campus could stand a revision. “I think the best thing Dordt could do is acknowledge different worldviews... and accept the differences of the students, instead of trying to fit them into a mold,” said O’Gorman.

Leading Young Life reaps rewards

Jaclyn Vander Waal — Staff Writer

Dordt students have been offered the opportunity to serve through Young Life International, a parachurch ministry that involves caring adults who work alongside churches to show the love of Christ to high schoolers.

Alex Vasquez, area director of Young Life Sioux County and a 2018 Dordt graduate, is passionate about the youth in his club. His goal is to make the community around him better. He said he strives “to be a leader and a bridge between different sub-communities.”

Vasquez has seen his role in Young Life overcome many barriers among students in the Sioux Center community—barriers of ethnicity, culture, denomination, gender and age.

“Young Life has been the vehicle that Jesus has given me to make a difference in the lives of the people around me, for this community and for myself,” he said.

Five Dordt students—seniors Matt Benardis and Kristin Rundle, and juniors Faith Anderson, Brady Mackey and Grace Lepensky—and two Dordt alumni—Paige Visscher and Marcus De Weerd—have helped Vasquez develop the new club over the past year as Young Life leaders. Northwest College students and alumni are also

involved. Young Life Sioux County is listed in Dordt’s club directory.

Vasquez instructs Young Life leaders to avoid chasing students down with Bibles. Instead, they must earn the right to be heard by participating in students’ daily lives. The leaders seek out students and get involved in what they enjoy.

“Every leader here is making a difference,” Vasquez said.

These trained leaders have found that Young Life is all about building relationships with high school students in the community. Each leader has three to eight students with whom they closely connect. They share meals, talk over coffee or ice cream, go out to a movie, and attend their games and concerts.

Mackey started getting involved in the lives of his Young Life students by coaching the Sioux Center Storm hockey team. Although he only knew the basics of the sport prior to coaching, he found it to be an excellent way to get to know his students. He has seen the effect investing in these students has. They quickly warmed up to him as a leader and were willing to share aspects of their lives with him.

Initially, he said the leaders had to go out of their way to be involved in the lives of the students. Now, it’s a two-way relationship. The students also reach out to them. For example, he

went to one student’s Boyden-Hull High School football game. The next day, the student showed up at his Dordt football game.

“They invite us over to their games and events and desire a relationship with us,” Mackey said.

Anderson has witnessed how high school students crave deep relationships. Students benefit from having a person to go to with their joys and successes but also with their sorrows and frustrations. She found that the most important part of leading is being willing to listen to her students through their highs and lows.

“A lot of high schoolers feel alone,” she said. “It is great to be a person they can go to.”

Not only does Young Life provide students the opportunity to express their feelings, it also allows them to be themselves without fear of judgment. Conversely, Anderson also enjoys being herself and having the freedom to be weird, a welcomed break from the stress of her own life and college.

Simply being involved in a student’s life can have a big impact. A student more reserved about her faith shocked Anderson by stepping up and proclaiming her faith at Young Life’s Castaway Club camp this summer in Detroit Lakes, MN. It encouraged Anderson to see how small actions such as talking with her students

over coffee can lead to great spiritual growth.

“God didn’t intend discipleship to be optional,” she said. “It wasn’t meant to be something that was easy or that would fit in the mold of your life but should shatter that mold and allow God to reshape it into something amazing. I have seen God work in amazing ways in my life and in the lives of all those involved in Young Life, and I am waiting in anticipation for this next year and what God will do.”

Anderson said her experiences with the students of Young Life have blessed her and challenges her fellow Dordt peers to consider leading. She said it is a step of faith that they will never regret because nothing is more rewarding than helping others.

“Kids need leaders. High schoolers need someone to lean on. I’m blessed every day by my involvement with Young Life,” Mackey said. “Our slogan is: ‘You were made for this!’ and that is so true.”



Contributed Photo

Opinion: preaching and teaching aren’t the only job options for Christians

Ben Boersma — Staff Writer

I’m a writer.

But, okay, if you’re reading this article, that sort of goes without saying. After all, I wrote this thing.

But it wasn’t always that way. I started out my college career as an engineering major. After about a semester, I realized that the classes were mostly math, which I did not enjoy, and not much for science or design, which I loved. It got to the point where I saw no purpose for the math I was being taught, unless the computer crashed. Now, if I had to choose a personal trait that I would consider a vice, it’s that I will give most anything a fair try but if I don’t see the point in doing it, I check out.

So I switched to English, much to my relief, and my annoyance. You see, most people who

hear that I’m an English major automatically assume that I’m going into education — as if that’s literally the only thing you can do with an English degree. If they are decent enough to ask me what I plan to do with my degree and I tell them that I’m going into journalism; their responses are usually one of two things: a warning of how hard it is to make a career out of writing, or an appreciation that I’m going into a field that supposedly needs more Christians in it.

Frankly, I find both responses frustrating. Both assume something about my choices and future. The first assumes that writers end up struggling through their work and don’t get paid much for their efforts. The second assumes that I’m going to go into a field ripe for harvest and that I’m going to turn it completely around.

To the first response I say this: I get it.

Stereotypes exist for a reason, but they can’t describe the variety within a group. Many writers, such as Ernest Hemingway and George R.R. Martin, started out in journalism before turning to other styles of writing. If you’re willing to put the effort in, writing can become a rewarding career. However, it takes hard work and discipline to get there. The fact that I’ve committed to a career in my field of study should imply that I’ve also given some thought to the consequences.

To the second response, I say this: there are plenty of Christian writers around. There are also plenty of Christian journalists. As I see it, the problem is that many of them prefer to stay in the market that preaches to the choir rather than finding ways to spread the gospel to those who haven’t heard. We often shy away from issues like disease, war, and broken families,

giving easy answers when the people involved need something deeper that speaks to what they’re going through.

I’m a storyteller at heart, one who also speaks his mind. I prefer to address the hard issues in a way that’s encouraging to both believers and non-believers alike. Writing does that. It puts those issues into perspective—either by showing someone struggling through them just like you and me, or by placing them alongside the good things that are also happening in this world. When people see that, their reaction would be one of hope, which should drive them to search for the only source of hope: Jesus Christ. I don’t have to become a pastor or a teacher in order to effectively spread the gospel. In fact, you could say it’s all the same job, just by a different means. In that sense, preaching and teaching are not the only options for people like me.

Dordt French classes declining

Yage Wang — Staff Writer

As a new semester starts, the French classes are facing a crisis—the number of students enrolled is steeply declining. In the spring semester, there were still 10 students, including 3 campus staff, in the Elementary French class. However, for this fall, the number of students participating in the current Intermediate French class is only three.

One of the main reasons previous students have dropped French classes is busy schedules. It can be difficult for students to find time and energy to fulfill the language study requirements. In addition to students who drop French classes, there are also not many new students interested in joining the classes.

According to Professor Leendert Van Beek, who teaches in Dordt’s Language Studies Department, the root of the problem stems from two things. First, students in Sioux Center are not broadly exposed to many other languages except English and Spanish.

Second, students generally do not think studying French is practical.

“Students usually only look for short term profits but not considering for the future,” said Van Beek. “French is useful for many different majors, not only for Language studies.”

He believes that because students don’t hear

French conversations take place on campus or see any French used in daily life, they tend to assume that they won’t use it in the future either.

However, French is practical in many different fields. According to a study by the University of Virginia, French is the second most useful language for business. Students who are business majors can use French in their future working positions to make connections and interact with people in Canada, Europe, and Africa.

Sarah Selenga, the TA of the Intermediate French class and who is originally from Congo, says that French has significantly affected her life.

“Learning French allows me to acknowledge more literature and documents about my country because they are all written in French,” Selenga said.

Another benefit of studying different languages is that it stimulates the brain to stay more active than people who are monolinguals. According to the New York Times, “Being bilingual, it turns out, makes you smarter. It can have a profound effect on your brain, improving cognitive skills not related to language and even shielding against dementia in old age.”

In addition to French, Dordt also offers Dutch, Latin, Greek, and Spanish language programs.

Opinion: letter to the editor

In the previous issue of the Diamond, you published a review of Taylor Swift’s latest album, *Lover*. While this article was well written, I felt that it missed some important points regarding the album as a creative work, as well as misrepresenting some of the album’s intent.

Released in 2017, *Reputation* shocked not only Swift’s hardcore fanbase but also anyone with ears who had been around for her previous five albums.

It was a clear departure from her previous works; however, it was not the first departure from the perceived “norm.”

When Taylor Swift released *Red* back in 2012, the media flew into a frenzy as Swift straddled the line between her country roots and pop music. When *1989* came out, people were once again polarized as she released an album that set her apart from her teen idol roots. *Saturday Night Live* even aired a sketch for the fake medication “Swiftamine,” a prescription drug for adults who suddenly realized they liked Taylor Swift.

Both *Red* and *1989* were reinventions of sorts, allowing Swift to grow in her music and style. Last week’s article made the bold claim that *Lover* was meant to reaffirm Swift’s place in the music industry as “the eternal teenager,” but that is simply not true. Swift has been fighting to be recognized as an adult woman for years, but not just any adult woman. In an industry where in order to succeed, one must put on a

mask, Swift seeks to take that mask off.

Lover is not an album for the masses in the way that the original article claims. Rather, it is a love letter from Swift to herself. It is long because Swift wants it to be, the songs on the album are there because Swift wants them there. Yes, many of the songs feel as if they were plucked from Swift’s diary, but that’s where she writes most of her songs. The songs are placed in a way that makes Swift happy. She takes creative liberty on this album, as she should, seeing as this is her album. The songs on *Lover* are not ones written by a lovesick teenager—they are written by a 29-year-old woman who has been through immense trials in an extremely public spotlight, and who has every right to sing songs about the things she cares about, even if that means singing about love and relationships. To say that this album reaffirms her as an “eternal teenager” is an insult to her natural talent, hard work, and dedication. Taylor Swift deserves respect and recognition for the work she’s done and everything she’s sacrificed in order to get where she is.

This is not an album made for the masses, nor is it intended to “reaffirm her place in the music industry as the eternal teenager” as the original article so boldly claims. This is an album for Taylor Swift, by Taylor Swift, about Taylor Swift. We as listeners are just lucky enough to get to listen.

— Hannah Adams, Sophomore
Secondary Ed: English major

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While recycling in America struggles, Dordt finds more sustainable solutions

Gretchen Lee — Staff Writer

As a Christian university that believes in being good stewards of God's creation, what is Dordt doing to fight the recycling issues America is facing?

According to the World Trade Organization, China issued a statement in 2017 that they would no longer be accepting plastic and paper scraps of any kind. Being the largest importer of U.S. recyclables, China's decision has put the United States in a position where its recycling centers are no longer able to keep up with the amount of recyclable waste produced. As a result, much of the plastics put into recycling bins are dumped into landfills.

While recycling in America has become more difficult, Dordt is working to cut down on waste.

Howard Wilson, Dordt's vice president and chief administrative officer, said the current goal is to reduce the amount of recyclable waste by providing students with more sustainable options around campus. In the Commons, reusable boxes are available for takeout food, water-bottle refilling stations are available in

various places, and the recycling bins in the Grille are made of recycled milk jugs that can be used for years to come.

"We encourage people to be cooperative," Wilson said. "We are happy to cooperate with students on recycling, but we expect them to take initiative themselves."

Some of the students taking initiative on campus are members of the Sustainability Club, which is co-chaired by seniors Ellie Jasper and Anna Vekony.

"[The recycling situation] puts responsibility on us as Americans to find solutions for our own plastic," Jasper said. "We need to harness our creativity."

The Sustainability Club has recently spent time discussing how Dordt can continue its steps towards reducing waste. Some of their ideas include working to eliminate plastic at the Commons and grille, providing bamboo-made cutlery or creating initiatives for students to bring their own reusable silverware, and providing discounts for students who bring their own containers to the Grille. All these ideas are still in development, but they hope to put more

research into them in the near future.

Jasper and Vekony also encourage students to use less glass and repurpose the glass they do use. If students wish to recycle glass, Sioux Center's website advises residents to drop glass items off directly at Brommer Sanitation, which is contracted by the city for garbage and recycling pick-up services.

Dr. Joel Sikkema, the director of the pro-tech program, agrees with the encouragement to use less glass, saying that it creates more environmental damage due to the amount of energy it takes to melt and transport the heavy material to places that process glass.

Sikkema encourages students to look at the waste hierarchy pyramid, which lays out the options of what to do with waste. It lists options (prevention, reuse, repurpose, recycling, recovery, and disposal), in order by which they should be considered. At the top, "prevention" and "reduce" encourages people to cut back on waste creation. Recycling is the fourth of six options.

"Recycling has become our go-to solution," Sikkema said. "In reality, we have several things



Photo by Gretchen Lee

we should be doing before we get to that."

Like the Sustainability Club, Sikkema sees the new recycling challenge as an opportunity to creatively reevaluate how to take responsibility for our waste and cut down on how much we produce.

"Ultimately," Sikkema said, "we need to ask, 'What is best for God's creation?'"

(cont.) Midnight man

Continued from page 1

studiers offer Van Gelder a rare opportunity to interact with other humans while working.

"I think it keeps an older person younger too, being around young people," Van Gelder says. "I don't feel like I've changed much in 17 years."

For the most part, students at Dordt keep the buildings on campus clean and respect the jobs of maintenance workers, according to Van Gelder. Nonetheless, an ill-advised prank or two often gives Van Gelder and his colleagues more work than they bargained for.

"People don't realize it takes us extra time out of our schedule to get stuff like that cleaned up," Van Gelder says.

At 3:00 am, the Science and Technology Center is empty. Work study students left hours ago, and the engineering majors called it quits at 1:00 am, the same time Van Gelder took his break. In the solitude, Van Gelder tunes a radio

KDCR and turns the volume all the way up. Music echoes throughout the building.

Many individuals would find loneliness in this scene, yet Van Gelder embraces the seclusion—and he's not ready to leave anytime soon.

"Seven, eight more years?" Van Gelder says. "I see no reason to quit."

He isn't alone. At 61 years old, Van Gelder is one year removed from the second most populous demographic of male janitorial workers in America (60). An estimated 47,000 men work custodian jobs at the age. However, a sharp decline exists afterwards. Only 28% of these individuals continue into till 69, like Van Gelder hopes to.

Van Gelder checks his email one last time before punching out at 7:00 am. Light illuminates the Dordt campus. In an hour, students heading to class will find a fully cleaned Science and Technology Center.

(cont.) Living Loved

Continued from page 1

The movement's Instagram and Facebook pages post multiple times a week. A man's testimony on Monday, event recaps on Wednesday, and a woman's testimony of Friday. While WALL is not affiliated with Dordt University, many followers of the page are Dordt students.

"Living loved is a daily decision, relationship, and commitment," Krossschell said. "Each of us has been gifted a testimony—whether it's a drastic one or one where you feel like you have no story, because other people feel like that and can relate to it. In 2 Corinthians, Paul says how the basis of a testimony is for the furtherment of the kingdom."

Krossschell hopes that through this movement, revival will take place on an individual level

and, in turn, bring revival to a whole community of believers.

For more information, follow @wearelivingloved on Instagram and Facebook or go to wearelivingloved.org.



Photo by from Living Loved Facebook

Life after Dordt

Anthony Siegrist — Staff Writer

Four years seems like a lifetime to incoming freshmen when they are first beginning. But after they learn to brush off the nerves and dive into college living, the years rush by and...

BAM!
They're a college graduate.

Here's where the tricky part comes in— independent adult living. Instead of worrying about what meal the Dordt Commons is going to serve next Saturday, graduates must concern themselves with job hunts or menial tasks like bills and taxes.

Jalyn Bender, a Dordt Alumni, graduated a theater major. The next day, she got married. Within 48 hours, Jalyn went from being an engaged college student to a married college graduate.

At first glance, the only noticeable thing that has changed about Jalyn is a shorter haircut— fondly self-proclaimed as her "mom cut."

Currently, the Benders are living in Sioux Center. Bender's husband, Aidan, will continue his senior year at Dordt. In the meantime, Bender stays busy with what will be four part-time jobs.

With a taste for variety, Bender currently teaches English online to children in China and teaches tumbling at Studio R, a local dance studio. In the next couple weeks, Bender will also start working as a CNA at Royal Meadows and a barista at The Fruited Plain.

For some, life after college can be hard to get accustomed to, and there is a lot of responsibility involved.

"I'm much more conscious...about our

monetary situation now," Bender said. "I also really want to have kids and we can't...until we make enough to support [them]."

In 2019, student loan debt climbed to a total of \$1.5 trillion dollars spread across a population of 44 million indebted graduates, according to the Pew Research Center. That number is the highest it has ever been.

"In college you're raking up the debt but don't even worry about it," Bender joked. "Now that I'm done, I'm getting emails about paying off my loans. That level of responsibility doesn't just come with marriage, it comes with being done with college and being out of the house."

The Benders are uncertain about life after Aidan's graduation. Bender's dream job is to be a stay-at-home-mom, and it always has been. However, until she and her husband are ready, Bender stays active in the community, which enables her to get to know many people of different generations. This also allows her to stay connected with her friends still at Dordt.

"I do definitely miss [Dordt] already. I especially miss my theater department [because] that was such a big part of my life. I love being involved in shows; that was my favorite part of Dordt," Bender said.



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