

12-6-2006

Banner News

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Julianne Hamil

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Authors

Becky Lauritzen, Tim Larson, Moses Powell Eckstein, Julianne Hamil, Erick Ude, Kal Schuller, Jesse Blackwell, Andrew Penner, and Eden Hinrichs

Indonesian student finds opportunity

Becky Lauritzen
Contributing Writer

America is revered by many as the “land of opportunity.” So when Cynthia Sari decided to advance her current situation, America was just the place. Indonesia affords great opportunities for those who study overseas in America. Cynthia appeared excited when she remarked, “I came to America to study!” In Sari’s case, coming to America meant becoming more independent and brave, able to advance her opportunities in life.

Cynthia, with her dark brunette hair and a bubbly personality comes from a small city called Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Her family lived on the second floor of the two story building that housed their small auto parts store. In Indonesia, working in a restaurant or other service industry, shows a lack of motivation for education and personal advancement. Sari’s family insisted she get a good education.

Living in America Sari has noticed the difference between driving here and driving in Indonesia. “Back home in Indonesia, people don’t use traffic rules,” said Sari. The majority of the people in her city don’t use cars to get around. Becak, chauffeured bicycles, are her favorite. Sari said, “Traffic is more busy back home.” Sari thinks this is because there are no traffic laws to help the flow of traffic.

Cynthia misses her family and friends, though she still tries to stay in contact with them. While being away is at times lonely, living in Ames provides a laid-back atmosphere and a chance for her to escape the busy Indonesian city life. Sari plans to transfer to Iowa State University to complete the college



Cynthia Sari

Photo: Eden Hinrichs

experience she has been longing for.

The longer Sari has been in America, the more she has developed a comfortable sense of home. Since first arriving at the beginning of the semester, Sari has

separated from her parents and shaped herself into a more independent person. She has enjoyed the laid-back Midwestern lifestyle, as opposed to the fast-paced Indonesian culture she once endured.

How commerce saved Christmas

Tim Larson
Editor in Chief

Each year around this time the debate over how Christmas became so blatantly commercial and how to restore its religious foundation re-emerges. Evangelical leaders like, Pat Robertson, criticized Wal-Mart last year for using “Happy Holidays” instead of “Merry Christmas” on their signs. Preachers around the country encouraged their congregants to remember that “Jesus is the reason for the season.” Through all of this, the factual and historical origins of Christmas seem to have been ignored.

The Christmas traditions we recognize now have been taken from times and places throughout history. The Christmas tree, for example, came to America from old Northern European Germanic traditions. The traditional Christmas Goose has its roots in ancient Egyptian religious practices. The goose, seen as a symbol of sacrifice, was killed and eaten in observance of winter solstice.

Hanging mistletoe comes from Norse mythology. The story goes that Baldur, the most loved of the Norse gods, had a premonition of his death. His mother, Frigga, on hearing of this, persuaded everything on Earth not to harm her son. She neglected to speak to mistletoe; Loki discovered this and killed Baldur with an arrow of mistletoe. The arrow of mistletoe was given to Frigga to deal with as she saw fit. She hung the mistletoe from an arch and ordained that everyone who passed under it receive a kiss as a sign of love and forgiveness, contrasting the hatred and jealousy of Loki.

The celebration of the birth of Christ on Dec. 25 was originally intended to supplant the celebration of the birth of Sol Invictus, the chief god of the Roman Empire. When the Roman Empire was Christianized it seemed only natural to replace the celebration of their former chief protector’s birth with the celebration of their new chief protector’s birth. The

Continued on Page 7

Winter music program features students from Boone Campus

Students will perform this Friday, Dec. 8, 7 p.m. in the DMACC Theater. The program is presented by Marilee Crawley-Mertins and will feature performances by DMACC students Jeremy Britton, Ah-Jung Gong, David Hefner, Ryan Logan (right), Tessa Schaeffer, and Nicole Smith.



Photo: Eden Hinrichs

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Dec. 6, Tree Lighting Ceremony, noon, Courter Center
- Dec. 6, Pool Tournament, 7:30 p.m., Courter Center
- Dec. 7, Pearl Harbor 65th anniversary
- Dec. 8, Winter Concert, 7 p.m., auditorium
- Dec. 8, Deadline for creative writing contest, 5 p.m.
- Dec. 16, End of fall semester
- Jan. 8, Beginning of spring semester

EXAM Schedule, p. 2

Textbook Buyback, p. 2

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All-American, p. 6



FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE

<p>Tuesday, December 12 <u>Class Time</u> 8:05 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. 11:15 a.m. – 12:40 p.m. 2:25 p.m. – 3:50 p.m. 4:00 p.m. -- 5:25 p.m.</p> <p>Wednesday, December 13 <u>Class Time</u> 8:00 a.m. – 8:55 a.m. 10:10 a.m. – 11:05 a.m. 12:20 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. 2:30 p.m. – 3:25 p.m.</p> <p>Thursday, December 14 <u>Class Time</u> 6:30 a.m. – 7:55 a.m. 9:40 a.m. – 11:05 a.m. 12:50 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.</p> <p>Friday, December 15 <u>Class Time</u> 6:55 a.m. – 7:50 a.m. 9:05 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. 11:15 a.m. – 12:10 p.m. 1:25 p.m. – 2:20 p.m. 3:35 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.</p> <p>Make-Up Day Monday, December 18, 2005 If the College would close due to inclement weather on any of the four days listed above, final exams for that day will be rescheduled for Monday, December 19, at the times they would have been scheduled.</p> <p>Evening/Saturday Exams Evening courses will have their finals at the day and time of the final regular class meeting.</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>Last Monday night classes (Final Exam)</td><td>December 11</td></tr> <tr><td>Last Tuesday night classes (Final Exam)</td><td>December 5</td></tr> <tr><td>Last Wednesday night classes (Final Exam)</td><td>December 13</td></tr> <tr><td>Last Thursday night classes (Final Exam)</td><td>December 14</td></tr> <tr><td>Last Friday night classes (Final Exam)</td><td>December 15</td></tr> <tr><td>Last Monday/Wednesday night classes (Final Exam)</td><td>December 13</td></tr> <tr><td>Last Tuesday/Thursday night classes (Final Exam)</td><td>December 12</td></tr> <tr><td>Last Saturday classes (Final Exam)</td><td>December 9</td></tr> </table> <p>Grades Due-----December 18 CLASSES RESUME-----January 8</p>	Last Monday night classes (Final Exam)	December 11	Last Tuesday night classes (Final Exam)	December 5	Last Wednesday night classes (Final Exam)	December 13	Last Thursday night classes (Final Exam)	December 14	Last Friday night classes (Final Exam)	December 15	Last Monday/Wednesday night classes (Final Exam)	December 13	Last Tuesday/Thursday night classes (Final Exam)	December 12	Last Saturday classes (Final Exam)	December 9	<p>Tuesday/Thursday courses <u>Exam Time</u> 8:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. 10:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. 1:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. 3:30 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.</p> <p>Mon/Wed/Friday courses <u>Exam Time</u> 8:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. 10:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. 1:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. 3:30 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.</p> <p>Tuesday/Thursday <u>Exam Time</u> 6:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. 9:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. 11:30 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.</p> <p>Mon/Wed/Friday courses <u>Exam Time</u> 7:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. 9:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. 12:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. 2:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. 3:30 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.</p>
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Students unhappy with book buyback policy

Moses Powell Eckstein
Banner Staff Writer

As the deadline approaches for textbook buyback, Boone students reflect on the best ways to get the most for their money.

Buyback week begins Monday, Dec. 11. It continues until Friday, Dec. 15, from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. on Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m.-noon on Friday.

Not every student is planning to sell back their textbooks to the bookstore. Sophomore Kylla Olsen said she didn't like the bookstore's buyback policy because she spent \$500 on her textbooks once and only got \$70 back.

Even though several large posters, pinned to the walls around campus, display the book buyback dates in large, bold letters, five out of five students polled did not know when to sell their textbooks. But, every student polled said that they were planning to re-sell their textbooks.

Freshman Lukas Schroeder said that he wanted to sell his books to make money.

Sophomore Shannon Sommers said she sells her textbooks, "to get rid of the books and to get some money back."

One reason the students gave for not selling back their textbooks to the bookstore was that it was not worth it. Sophomore Emily Driscoll said, "We spend a lot of money on books and get hardly anything back."

Other students think that they can make more money selling their textbooks to other students. Sophomore Jared Staudenmayer said he never got around to selling back his books. He said that he "probably could make more money selling them to other students."

Other options to selling one's textbooks to the bookstore include selling them online at www.half.com or putting them in the Africa box.



Photo: Eden Hinrichs

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BUYBACK LIST

TITLE	AUTHOR	BUYBACK PRICE
Business Writer's Companion	Alred	\$15.00
Convergences	Atwan	\$29.25
Introduction to Literature	Barnet	\$37.00
Elem Statistics Package/w Math Zone	Bluman	\$64.25
Biology w/CD	Campbell	\$72.25
Natural Resource Cons.: Management...	Chiras & Reganold	\$56.50
Philosophy	Christian	\$36.25
Brief Penguin Handbook	Faigley	\$27.25
Prebles' Artforms	Frank	\$48.50
Physics of Everyday Phenomena	Griffith	\$65.00
Understanding Human Sexuality	Hyde	\$57.25
American Government	Jillson	\$28.00
Human Biology	Johnson	\$51.75
Choices in Relationships	Knox	\$52.00
Psychology: An Intro w/CD/Powerweb	Lahey	\$49.00
Supervision-Concepts & Practices of Man...	Leonard	\$63.25
Finite Math	Lial	\$60.50
Society: The Basics w/CD	Macionis	\$38.75
Successful Coaching	Martens	\$20.75
History Western Society Vol I	McKay	\$43.50
History Western Society Vol II	McKay	\$40.50
Business Law Today w/Online	Miller	\$78.50
Understanding Social Problems	Mooney	\$44.75
Human Development w. Lifemap & Pow...	Papalia	\$59.00
Human Communication	Pearson	\$39.75
Lit for Children	Russell	\$29.25
Physics for SCI & ENG w/CD	Serway	\$79.25
Trig for Coll Students	Smith	\$61.00
Chemistry, An Intro	Timberlake	\$64.50
Microbiology w/CD	Tortora	\$75.00
Physics	Walker	\$77.00
Thomas Calculus Early Transcendentals	Weir	\$76.00
Accounting Principles with Pepsicoannual	Weygandt	\$73.25

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Adviser wins cruise



Photo: Contributed

Rita Davenport (back right) and Tricsha McWilson (back left) in the Bahamas.

Julianne Hamil
Banner Staff Writer

After one week of deleting messages from John Sanders, founder of Premier Christian Cruise line and member of the band "Brothers Keepers," academic adviser Rita Davenport finally accepted her all inclusive cruise for two to the Bahamas.

"I just kept deleting the messages because I thought they were trying to sell me something," said Davenport. "It wasn't until John said he was with the 'Brothers Keepers' that I figured it out."

Davenport regularly used the Christian ticket service, I-tickets. Last May she received an e-mail with a contest entry form for a free trip for two to the Bahamas. Less than five minutes later,

after entering the appropriate information, that was it. She never thought about it again and never did it again. This was the first contest Rita has entered, and she won.

On Nov. 9 Rita and her best friend, DMACC student Tricsha McWilson, set sail for a first ever, five day chartered cruise for Christian women. The boat came fully staffed with free room service 24/7. The ship's bartenders and blackjack dealers honed their crossword puzzle skills during the trip. Not one woman felt the need to drink or gamble with all the events the Premier Christian Cruise line had in store for the ladies.

"It was the best time I have ever had! I was surrounded by people who were there for God," said Davenport. "Not themselves." Davenport plans to take a cruise next year with her husband.

SUDOKU

			8					
1				9	7		3	
	3	4		5		6	8	7
	2					1	6	
			9		2			
	5	7					4	
7	1	3		2		9	5	
	6		5	7				8
					6			

Courtesy of www.sudoku-puzzles.net

To play Sudoku, enter the digits 1-9 in each cell of the 9x9 grid until every region (3x3 grid), row, and column contains only one appearance of each digit.

ANSWERS
this week's puzzle

2	7	6	8	3	4	5	9	1
1	8	5	6	9	7	4	5	1
9	3	4	2	5	1	6	8	7
8	2	9	7	4	5	1	6	3
3	4	1	9	6	2	8	7	5
6	5	7	1	8	3	2	4	9
7	1	3	4	2	8	9	5	6
4	6	2	5	7	9	3	1	8
5	9	8	3	1	6	7	2	4

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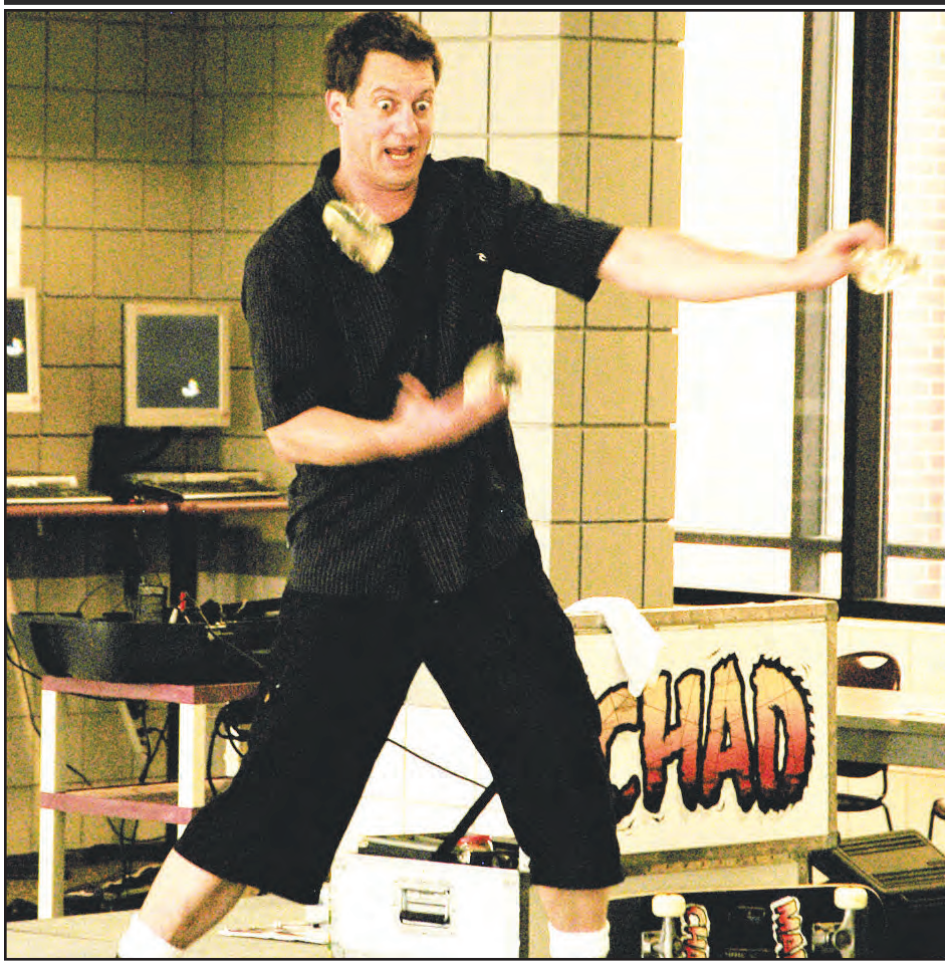


Photo: Erick Ude

Mad Chad juggles three silicone breast implants during his extreme comedy performance on Nov. 18.

Mad Chad juggles and jokes

Erick Ude
Banner Staff Writer

Mad Chad Taylor performed his extreme comedy and juggling act on Nov. 18 in the Courter Center of the Boone Campus.

Taylor, a resident of Santa Monica, Calif., has made many television appearances throughout the years on shows like "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno," "Roseanne," and "The World's Most Dangerous Acts." He has also acted in movies and appeared in many commercials for beer and other products.

Taylor started out by asking the audience what they were excited to see, and most of the audience replied with Taylor's famous chainsaw juggling act. Taylor informed the audience that FedEx had lost his chainsaws and a couple of his other props. Throughout the performance Taylor apologized for FedEx's mistake and added that he would try some different things to make up for his renowned juggling act.

Taylor performed "L.A. Juggling," which was the juggling of three silicone breast implants, accompanied by a few dirty jokes and met with few laughs. Taylor joked that an ex-girlfriend convinced him to pay for her breast enhancement and then left him high and dry. By using the implants in his act, Taylor joked that he can write them off on his taxes.

Taylor asked students from the audience of 30-40 to throw bats onto the stage from where they were sitting while he continued to juggle. He also asked students to pick an object in the Courter Center that they wanted him to juggle with an egg and a fake shot-put. They chose a 20 pound chair, which Taylor managed to juggle for about a minute.

Throughout the show Taylor made it known that he was not only a fantastic juggler but also a pretty decent comedian. "By the way I'm not showing off up here," Taylor told the audience, "I'm just doing things you can't."

For more information about Taylor and his act, visit www.madchadtaylor.com.



Photo: Erick Ude

Mad Chad received some audience participation from students.

Farewell Banner Staff Members



Photo: Eden Hinrichs

Moses Eckstein

Moses Eckstein, 21, will graduate from DMACC Dec. 13 and move on to major in biology at ISU in January.

Eckstein is from Nevada, Iowa and has been a member of the Banner staff since fall 2003. He is also a specialist in the Iowa Army National Guard stationed in Boone.



Photo: Eden Hinrichs

Erick Ude

Erick Ude, 22, is transferring to Iowa State and will begin classes there in January. Ude has attended DMACC only one semester, he is a zoology major but joined the Banner staff in the fall of 2006 and enjoyed the course.

"I like doing the layout and seeing the final product," Ude said about being on the Banner staff.

"Lost" is currently his favorite television program and "The Fifth Element" is his favorite movie.



Photo: Kal Schuller

Jesse Blackwell

Jesse Blackwell, 20, began his DMACC career in the fall of 2006 as a student as well as a forward on the men's basketball team.

Blackwell is majoring in criminal justice and has one semester remaining at DMACC.

Of the five courses Blackwell took this semester—psychology, juvenile delinquency, newspaper production, marriage family, and health—he said the newspaper was his favorite.



Photo: Eden Hinrichs

Kal Schuller

Kal Schuller, 19, has been at DMACC for three semesters and will be back for his fourth starting next January. He is a liberal arts major.

Schuller said his favorite part of being on the Banner staff was "access to an empty computer lab all day."

In his free time Schuller likes to play Xbox and watch or play sports.



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3. Just for fun - contribute your work for use in the Banner (contributions may be sent to tslarson@dmacc.edu)

Newspaper Production involves writing for the Banner News, designing and implementing page layout, reporting on campus activities and events.

Newspaper Production MWF 11:15 a.m. - 12:10 p.m.
CRN: 20543 Credits: 3
Course # JOU125 Instructor: Jan LaVille





Photo: Moses Eckstein

Members of PBL who decorated the Christmas tree in the Courter Center are (from left) sophomore Adam Conzemius, sophomore Vickie Spears, sophomore Katy Farlow, freshman Sara Gliem and freshman George Cyr.



Photo: Eden Hinrichs



Photo: Eden Hinrichs

The Christmas tree located in the Courter Center was set up and decorated by members of Phi Beta Lambda. Students were also encouraged to help decorate. Those who helped decorate were rewarded with cookies and other treats.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

FROM THE BANNER STAFF

What do you want for Christmas?



Aly Trotter, 18
Boone Student

"I'm asking for money because I don't like getting gifts I don't like. I need money, so I can move out. Other than that, I'll probably get a case for my new laptop."



Aaron Irving, 19 3/4
Boone Student

"Give me love. I want a house, from the ground up, four stories and a basement."



Kellie Bradley, 18
Boone Student

"I haven't really thought about what I want at all—maybe clothes from Pac Sun. I'm the youngest of seven, so we do kind of a drawing."



Becky Lauritzen, 18
Boone Student

"I want big headphones for music purposes—ones with really good sound quality. I asked for a comforter set, and I saw it in the mail, so I know I am getting it."



Royce Phillips, 19
Boone Student

"What I really want is a PS3, but I know I'm not going to get it. I'll settle for an Xbox 360. My family has one, but I want my own."



Photo: Eden Hinrichs

Freshman Brent Jackman breaks down the Morningside defense.

Men's basketball team defeats Morningside 73-52

Kal Schuller
Banner Staff Writer

The Bears men's basketball team, keeping their winning streak alive, defeated the Morningside Mustangs 73-52 in the Den on Dec. 3.

Morningside brought the full court press early and started off with a 6-0 lead. The Bears' offense got going with help from John Holmes who had seven of his 15 points early on.

Morningside kept the game close by hitting three pointers and playing the full court press. DMACC's Rico Gillespie came off the bench to help break the press

and made six points. The Bears began to pull away and led at halftime 34-23.

In the second half the Bears took the Mustangs hope away by dominating the offensive rebounds and making big plays. J'Sean Gaddy energized the crowd with two powerful dunks and led the Bears in scoring with 17 points. Ashton Sauls made a couple of three pointers and 14 points overall. Morningside stayed in the contest by hitting three pointers but could never get within 10.

Big plays for the Bears, like John Holmes' alley-oop dunk, courtesy of Grant Burns, lit up the crowd. The Bears are undefeated at home and 12-1 overall.

Batting Cage open to public

Jesse Blackwell
Banner Staff Writer

With a new coach comes a new attitude and new experiences.

DMACC's head baseball coach Travis Wyckoff opened the baseball team's indoor hitting facility to the public for instructional hitting and pitching events.

Wyckoff said, "The players need somewhere to practice in the winter time, and this way we can get the community involved also. It's a win-win for everyone."

Wyckoff has extensive baseball experience that includes three years in the Florida Marlins organization and All American honors as an outfielder and pitcher.

The indoor hitting and pitching facility will offer individual hitting and

pitching instruction, as well as make team use available. There will be hitting and pitching leagues, so one can test personal skills and challenge others in the area.

Camps will run for one day and will be organized into age groups. On Dec. 28 ages nine to 13 can attend a pitching camp from 9 a.m.-noon, followed by the hitting camp from 1-4 p.m. Children Ages five to eight can participate in a hitting camp, which will start at 9 a.m., Dec. 29.

High school students will have an opportunity on Dec. 27 to attend a three hour pitching camp, and on Dec. 28, they can attend the hitting camp from 2-5 p.m.

Coach Wyckoff said, "Whoever comes to us, will learn a ton of stuff, and the most important is improving their game. That's what the facility is for."

For more information, contact Dan Fitzgerald at (515) 433-5032.

Bayer named first team All-American



Jesse Blackwell
Banner Staff Writer

Sophomore volleyball player Ashley Bayer was named First Team All-American. Bayer helped lead the Bears to a 10th place finish in the National Volleyball tournament.

"I put in a lot of work this year, in season and out of season, and it's an honor to make All-American," Ashley said. "I'd like to thank all the fans who helped make this year one to remember."

Bayer is unsure of her plans for next year. "I want to find a good place to play before I pick my next move," Bayer said.

Liz Shrek received Honorable Mention in the All-American selection.

Former DMACC star scores game winner against ISU



Al Stewart

Former DMACC Bears standout Al Stewart scored the game winner with only 4.4 seconds left in Drake's 80-78 victory over Iowa State. Orv Salmon, Stewarts coach at DMACC said, "Al's a great kid; we're really happy for him."

Women's basketball stomp Briar Cliff

Andrew Penner
Banner Sports Writer

For some students Thanksgiving Break meant not having to show their faces on campus, but it was different for the women's basketball team as they hosted the Briar Cliff Chargers from Sioux City. The Bears took the lead early and never looked back as they mauled the Chargers 93-46.

Alisa Brinkman got the ball rolling for the Bears as she scored six of the first eight points. Minutes later Heather Holler hit a three-pointer, and Jocelyn Anderson came through for the Bears with a block. Again Holler attempted a three-pointer but wedged the ball between the rim and the backboard.

The Bears made two defensive stops as Anderson made another block. They forced a Charger turnover with a shot clock violation. After a missed shot by the Chargers, Monica Hernandez got the rebound and made an easy two points.

Holler wasn't the only one getting them to fall from behind the arc. Emily Duffy made two, and Kayla Richter made one as well. The Bears were all over the Chargers in the first half with a score of 50-21.

In the second half the Bears were on fire. Almost half of the Bears' points in the half came from behind the arc. First it was Brinkman; then Duffy hit another. Ali Mackie and Allison Long joined the party with two three-pointers from each.

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Understanding Life

Poem by Eden Hinrichs

It was the light that got me from the start,
The over hovering pressure. The soundless void,
Saying too much yet nothing at all.
Fishing line fantasies playing a comedy to the light.
Images of friends and family some coming, some going,
Their secrets and their lives are slowly becoming a part of me,
I understand, Years and many lives past,
Now I understand.
To lust,
To love,
To feel and to fear!

But these new feelings, of total and utter completion are above me
My hands! Alas these hands they are tools!
To do my bidding all the power in the universe all at the tips of my fingers, the ever
lasting feeling of the ocean running through me,
Absolute freedom.
What a gift this is!

The pleasure! Washing over me! The satisfaction! Oh the beauty of humans! A million
sensations!

The world over, people running through my mind,
Numerous faces slowly blending together! Their lives! Their pain!
Oh what harsh pain!

Their wounds gushing blood! Their bile encasing me! Pain! Sorrow! Woe!
Heartbreak? Had we not been friends?
Why oh must your force be greater now then ever before?
The power inside of me growing fiercer with each scream!
Each growl, No! No! NO! My sprit raged! NOT THIS!
Then silence. The light came again and then I understood.
The powers I felt, the flow of both love and hate... this was a gift.
And was to be treated as such.

EDITORIAL

Hate is a difficult word to define because every person has his or her own meaning for it. Only one thing is certain; we are all guilty of hate.

Accusations of racism, as a form of hate, are far too common in this society. That charge can terminate a person's career, as will be the case of Michael Richards who played Kramer in the sitcom Seinfeld. Richards voiced a racist tirade against two African Americans at a comedy club in November. Unlike Richards, most Americans have a substantial and furtive fear of speaking their minds. Wetback, nigger, kike, raghead, chink, gyp, and cracker are all words that belong to a category of society that many Americans would like to see buried at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean. Nevertheless, the reality is different than the pipe dream. Racism is real.

However, the basis of racism is the belief in the concept of Race. Perpetrators of racial prejudice are those who are ignorant of or belligerent to reality. We are all members of the human race. Like racial intolerance, religious intolerance and fanaticism are common features of history and current events.

Religion is not the savior of the human race. Actually it may be humanity's downfall. This goes for fanatical Muslims, Christians, and Jews, and any of the countless other religious organizations who preach hate. A radical Christian who partakes in violence against others or the oppression of others is in the same boat, headed down the river Styx, as the terrorists who intentionally murdered thousands of innocent citizens in 9/11. History is replete with religious fanaticism. The Catholic Church is responsible for such tragedies as the Crusades, the European witch hunts, and the Spanish Inquisition. This is common knowledge, but still some choose to believe that religious fanaticism is a novel movement or that it is solely the action of Muslims.

Prejudice to those of differing sexual orientations is just as foul as hate led by religious intolerance. Words like faggot, homo, dike, and queer are terms that are not only inaccurate, but they indicate that someone is defined entirely by his or her sexual classification. Homosexuals, heterosexuals, and every one in between merit the same respect in American society. No one person is inherently superior to any other. Actually scientists are now beginning to realize that all humans are somewhere on a continuum between fully heterosexual and fully homosexual. Instead of placing value on those few who meet all of society's desirable classifications, it is time Americans place it on deserving individuals.

Human history is a recorder of hate in all of its hideous forms. One truth is certain. Life is not heaven, nor is it Hell. It is only what we make of it.

Dear Ms. White

Ms. White,

I have an adviser that keeps trying to get me to take a class that I don't want to take. Should I take the class and do what my adviser wants? Or should I take a class that I'm interested in?

Signed,

Wary about taking classes I don't want

Well, Wary, believe it or not this is a very common problem. Fortunately for you there are many ways around this problem. First, you can select your own courses by registering online. You could even take the courses online. For those of you who don't have time to be on campus, this allows students to be more flexible in their class times. Need the credit but don't have enough time to do the online gig? Try CLEP tests (College Level Examination Program) which are course examinations that allow you to cut the middle man and get the credit, by taking one test, rather than an entire course. The tests cost approximately \$60 and can be taken right here on campus. You can use The CLEP Official Study Guide, as a study guide to put you on your way to academic success! CLEP tests can save time and money.

Wary, either way it's your money and your time. If you can't take the course, you have options!

X-Mas continued from page 1

actual date for the birth of Christ is a matter of some contention. Scholars and theologians throughout history have variously placed the day from Nov. 18 to May 20.

When the Quakers and Puritans arrived in America the celebration of Christmas was universally frowned upon, if not banned outright, in the colonies. In 1789 the first United States congress, under the newly ratified Constitution, remained in session on Christmas.

Despite the sentiments of the upper class and religious leaders, the lower classes continued to engage in ever more indulgent revelry. Reverend Cotton Mather, in 1712, lamented the situation, saying, "The feast of Christ's Nativity is spent in reveling, dicing, carding, masking and in all licentious liberty...by mad mirth, by long eating, by long drinking, by lewd gaming, by rude reveling."

The celebration looked more like Mardi Gras than our modern Christmas celebrations. Mumming, the practice of men and women switching cloths and then going out for a night of reveling, was as common in 19th century America as caroling is today.

The tradition of caroling itself is a version of its more rambunctious ancestor, Wassailing. The lower class of society would go to the houses of the more wealthy and sing songs in exchange for food and ale. If those in the house declined to provide food and ale to the wassailers, their homes would likely be looted by the already intoxicated mob.

These practices were troublesome to New York elites like Washington Irving, Clement Clarke Moore and John Pintard. In his book "Knickerbockers History of New York," Irving sets St. Nick up as a cultural hero. Moore's poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas," which is better known as "T'was the Night Before Christmas" written in 1823, was a work of pure fiction. Moore was not describing a nostalgic scene from his youth; rather he was inventing a new nostalgic narrative of the season. Pintard, a wealthy merchant and philanthropist, was a great purveyor of Moore and Irving's tales.

Where the Church had failed to co-opt or curtail the revelrous celebrations of the season, Pintard, Moore and Irving hoped commercialism could succeed.

Santa Claus became the central character of the Christmas season. While the character of St. Nick was originally Dutch, he became uniquely American. In the Netherlands Criss Kindlein, or Christ Child, flew over the cities by night, dropping presents into the people's homes. Irving's Santa Claus did much the same but without religious implications.

Christmas had always been a time when the lower and middle class abandoned their sensibilities and gave over to indulgence. This indulgence, which formerly took the form of drinking and carousing in the streets, would, with the help of Pintard and company, become private and consumerist. What was once a time for the rich to give to the poor became a time for the parents to give to their children.

This transition was made all the easier by the cooperation of merchants and newspaper editors. The merchants wanted the people out of the streets so that those wishing to shop could easily and safely pass from their homes to the stores. The editors wanted the merchants who supported their papers to be happy. Formerly the riotous celebrations had been referred to in the papers as "Christmas celebrations." The editors began running what we would easily recognize as Christmas stories under the headlines of "Christmas celebrations" and reported on the riotous activity as criminal.

By 1834, hardly 20 years after Moore first published his poem, American society had so fully adopted what we now recognize as Christmas that there was concern that the children were being spoiled by the celebration and giving of gifts.

The blatant and intentional commercialization of Christmas transformed a societal problem into a cherished American holiday. Christmas is now, as always, celebrated in many different ways. The modern American incarnation of Christmas, however, is historically and fundamentally, commercial.

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Photo: movies.yahoo.com

Movie Guy Reviews 'Stranger Than Fiction'

Moses Powell Eckstein
Banner Staff Writer

Will Ferrell stars in "Stranger Than Fiction," a romantic comedy directed by Marc Forster.

Harold Cricks (Ferrell), an IRS auditor, drags himself out of bed every morning to brush his teeth exactly 72 times, and then he knots his tie in exactly the same way. Cricks' wristwatch counts away the minutes between his activities.

All of this is fine until one day when Cricks begins to hear a voice inside his head. An invisible lady with a British accent (Emma Thompson) starts to narrate his life.

The mysterious voice, heard only by Cricks, narrates his life as he audits the tax return of the lovely Ana Pascal (Maggie Gyllenhaal from "World Trade Center"). The narrator speaks about Cricks as he gets on the bus, as he flips through his folders, as he chats with his coworkers. One day the narrator proclaims that Cricks

is heading on a path toward his inexorable death.

The situation frightens Cricks, so he calls up Professor Jules Hilbert (Dustin Hoffman) to help him figure out what is going on.

"Stranger Than Fiction" is a neat concept for a movie, and the Kay Eiffel (Thompson) character is excellent as an author tormented with writer's block. Pascal is genuinely sweet and lovable.

However, the film leads up to a less than believable and storybook ending, which really diminishes the plot. Fans of Ferrell's earlier work like 'Old School' may find it odd that he is rarely funny in this film.

"Stranger Than Fiction" is rated PG-13 for some disturbing images, sexuality, brief language and nudity. It runs for 113 minutes and is playing in theaters everywhere.

6 out of 10 laughs

HO HO HOROSCOPES

Sagittarius (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) – Keep your snow pants on. The only side effects of sex in the snow are frostbite, babies and STDs!

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) – Quit looking to Santa Claus for that special something that you have been waiting for and treat yourself.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) – Appeal to your rarely used zany side and build a snowman with someone you love!

Pisces (Feb.19-March 20) – The elves are working over time at your home, but don't forget to take some time for yourself in this busy season.

Aries (March 21-April 19) – Use the motto of candy can instead of candy can't!

Taurus (April 20-May 20) – Quit being a bullheaded scrooge, and make amends this holiday season.

Gemini (May 21-June 21) – One minute you're an angel; the next you're the grinch–be kind!

Cancer (June 22-July 22) – Buy gifts early this year because the procrastination may follow you into the New Year!

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22) – Rejoice with caroling this season, and good things will happen.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) – A kiss under the mistletoe might not be all it seems. Beware!

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) – Be Santa, and give your heart to someone.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 22) – Beware the common cold.



Photo: www.fxnetwork.com

'Nip/Tuck' season four still has something to prove

Erick Ude
Banner Staff Writer

With only the season finale remaining, the fourth season of "Nip/Tuck" has left many fans wanting more.

The season began with McNamara/Troy selling their practice to Burt Landau and his wife Michelle ("Love and Basketball's" Sanaa Lathan). Michelle played a major role this season with her relationship to Christian Troy and her involvement in an organ stealing operation.

Much of the fourth season was about Michelle's debt to James, a woman who steals kidneys on the side. Michelle is indebted to James for paying her way through part of medical school and is paying her back in stolen kidneys. This plot line lacks in comparison to the interesting and genre-breaking plots of previous seasons.

This season has also seen the birth of Sean and Julia's second child, Connor, who has syndactyly, or conjoined fingers. Sean was adamant about correcting Connor's handicap through surgery, while Julia struggled with the decision. The McNamara's vertically-challenged manny, Marlowe, shows Julia that being handicapped doesn't stop a person from living a full life. Later it is revealed

that Sean has a problem with Connor's disability because of his own battle with a cleft lip as a child.

Matt McNamara found direction this season with some help from Christian's ex-fiancé, Kimber Henry, and Scientology. Matt and Kimber marry. Matt's biological father, Christian, and most viewers suspect Kimber marries Matt just to get back at Christian and to make him jealous.

The stand-out episode of the season is a throwback to some loose ends from season one. Christian and Sean set up Escobar, a man who's been blackmailing them by changing his face to resemble a wanted crime lord. This leads to Escobar's arrest. This season it is revealed that Escobar still has some evidence from an incident in which a man was murdered in McNamara/Troy's office and that Sean and Christian have tried to cover it up. In order to keep the evidence under raps, Sean and Christian had to restore Escobar's old face.

The season finale airs next Tuesday, Dec. 12, and, based on the previews, will wrap up the kidney stealing drama and will also deal with Christian's adopted son, Wilbur. The urban legend kidney plot line has left this season feeling flat, but with the return of topics from other seasons, like Wilbur, the season finale could leave fans drooling for more.

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