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# THE DIAMOND

## Dordt student selected as national FFA representative

Spencer Short — Staff Writer

In Indianapolis, IN people from all around the country gathered at the Bankers Life Fieldhouse Convention Center to hear speakers, attend seminars, and even attend a few concerts, all hosted by the Future Farmers of America. This conference, the FFA Convention and Expo, is in its 92nd consecutive year. Although the location, size, and schedules have all changed since the conference’s inception, its goal has stayed the same: to help teach America about the importance and necessity of agriculture.

Behind the scenes, Dordt freshman Agricultural Animal Sciences major Gretchen Lee decides the future of this institution. Lee, as a representative on the National Nominating Committee, is part of the voting body that will decide who the next National Officers will be and which position they will hold. The offices up for grabs are four Vice President positions, a Secretary position, and the National President position.

The Nominating Committee, or “NomCom” as Lee puts it, has nine members. Two members represent each of the four national regions—Central, Southern, Western, and Eastern—and one chairperson serves as the head of the committee. Although each state has a different



Photo from Gretchen Lee

way of selecting the members who they wish to have serve on this committee, Lee was picked by the past National Team out of over 50 candidates.

The Nominating Committee will be working for a week straight to decide who will get to move on to Phase 2 of the process. This decision will be made through rounds of media interviews, personal 1-on-1 interviews, meetings with shareholders, and many more.

“On [October 24th and 25th] we’ll be locked

in a room for twelve hours for training,” Lee said, “being taught what to look for in a good officer.”

This year, the pool was cut down from 44 members to 25, rather than to the normal 22, due to some tied scores. Then, after even more interviews, and six hours of deliberation, they emerged at 2:30 A.M. with the final six members chosen. The final split was three boys and three girls, with Kolesen McCoy of Ohio being elected National President, Kourtney Lehman

of Oregon as National Secretary, Yomar Roman of Puerto Rico as the Southern Vice-President, Mamie Hertel of Montana as the Central Vice-President, Tess Seibel of Virginia as the Eastern Vice-President, and Lyle Logemann of New Mexico as the Western Vice-President.

“It’s exhausting work, but it’s necessary. It’s a really good opportunity to learn about internal process, and I’m really excited to represent my state,” Lee said.

Once Lee got back, over a week later, she felt that conference went great. This year, the conference broke another attendance record, with over 70,000 people attending, indicating Lee was not alone in feeling invigorated. This conference is bittersweet, however, as this will be Lee’s last act as an active FFA member. Since FFA is only open to high-schoolers and college students, Lee felt this would be a good time to leave.

“I feel the conference went great, I voted in a really strong group of individuals and I’m looking forward to seeing what they do in the coming year and how they end up interacting and working together between themselves and others. They paid for our coffee, food, flights; but it wasn’t about the things. It’s really an experience to get emotional fulfillment out of.”

## Entomology class inspects and identifies insects

Haemi Kim — Staff Writer

“Ahh! There is a bug in our room!”  
“Where?”  
“Up there!”  
“I got it.”  
“Why are you putting that in the freezer?!”

Inside the freezer, some students keep not only frozen vegetables and icepacks but also insects.

Every other year, Dordt offers an Entomology course. One of the biggest projects for the class is collecting a minimum of sixty insects, identifying them, and writing two papers about these insects and their effect on the environment.

This was the third time Dr. Jeremy Hummel has given out the project.

Students in the class were assigned the project in the summer so that students could start searching for different insects during their summer breaks, when the insects are most active.

“Since I started mine over the summer, my family got into all of it, so they had a competition to see who can get me the biggest bug,” said senior Raelyn Lessen. “It was really fun to see what they could bring me.”

Because students are spread out during summer break, they had some different kinds of insects from each other as well. Senior Joe Schares managed to catch a dragonfly.



Photo by Haemi Kim

“It was really satisfying to catch a dragonfly because they intend to be really fast,” said Schares. “In my case, I found one floating upside-down in the water, it was really convenient. As it was warming up in my hands and, obviously out of the water, it started to revive, so I had to throw it in the freezer.”

Once the fall semester started, the class continued their search for insects.

Because insects are active, living things, the class got to go out to different locations like the Dordt’s Prairie and Oak Grove to search for more kinds of insects.

“Collecting insects has to be done, basically, at the start of October into the middle of October because once the hard freeze hits for a couple days, all insects either hibernate or die,” Aguilar said.

The class also learns how to ‘kill’ these insects.

Although there are multiple ways of killing these insects, most students liked to use the ‘putting in the freezer’ method. This is where they will catch the insects, put it in a container of some sort, and put it in the freezer for a couple of days until it’s dead.

“Dr. Hummel said it’s one of the easiest ways and it’s pretty humane because it doesn’t suffer a whole lot,” Lessen said.

After catching and killing the insects, students then pinned them in a box to identify them. They identified them through the time, date, and location that they have found these insects and ordered them in by family. At this point of the process, many students felt a little intimidated because there was such a wide variety of characteristics among the insects and insect families.

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## Students dedicate senior design project to Haitian orphanage

Sawyer Strelnieks — Staff Writer

Access to reliable electricity in rural areas of Haiti has been a growing problem in recent years. To help with the shortages, seniors Ty White, Matt Benardis, and Jake Dodge dedicated their senior design project to helping an orphanage in Haiti that is in desperate need of an updated power grid.

The *Children of the Promise* (COTP), an orphanage in Haiti, currently has a large and noisy diesel generator to power their electrical grid. Fuel is very expensive and maintaining the generator to power the electrical grid is difficult.

Dordt’s group of seniors took on the challenge of designing and managing the project of repowering this orphanage in Haiti. They partnered with the COTP organization to make this challenge more attainable.

“The talents and skills that have been gained at Dordt University are great, but without application, they become useless,” said White, a senior majoring in Electrical Engineering. “We want to use our gifts and abilities to help people who truly need it.”

Working with Power Systems Engineering Inc. (PSE), these seniors are designing a solar power grid. There’s only one problem: the initial cost to get the system up and running is expensive. Haiti currently doesn’t have the resources to manufacture the equipment needed to build this renewable energy system. Shipping these supplies is also very expensive, so logistics present a serious challenge for this senior design group.

“The legal work and fees are our biggest

antagonist,” said White. “The next problem we face is energy storage.”

Since solar energy only generates power during the daytime, the team’s other struggle is designing a system that can store large amounts of electricity during evenings or cloudy days. This is a very expensive process and this small orphanage in Haiti is unable to afford the system that they need to power their facilities.

The design team is currently working on a solution to these challenges and is continuing to move forward and prepare the system for installation as soon as possible.

These seniors have contributed many hours and have been working ahead of the other design groups in order to implement their new design quickly to help the orphanage avoid extra spending on diesel fuel.

“We are most looking forward to seeing the genuine thankfulness in the orphanage user’s eyes when they know they are being care for,” said White. “They are children of God, just like we are and there is no better calling for a Christian than helping your neighbor when they are in need.”



Contributed Photo



# California wildfires run rampant again

Caleb Pollema — Staff Writer

Another year means another series of wildfires in California. The state is coming off the most destructive wildfire season on record in 2018. Wildfires burned nearly 1,893,913 acres of land in 8,527 fires leaving an unprecedented amount of cleanup across the state. The deadliest fire in the state’s history was the 2018 Camp Fire in Butte County, destroying 18,804 structures across 153,336 acres of land and taking the lives of 85 people. While the 2018 fire season was historically bad for the state, 2019 has also brought its challenges with wildfires. The Kincade Fire has burned nearly 80,000 acres in Sonoma County within the last two weeks and has not been fully contained. President Trump said that the federal government will pull federal aid from the state if it doesn’t do a better job of forestry management. This comes in response to other smaller fires that have put historical landmarks in danger throughout the state. The Getty Fire came eerily

close to burning parts of the Getty Museum in Southern California while the Easy Fire in Simi Valley forced the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library to evacuate. These fires have impacted many Dordt students that call the Golden State home, especially those from the Ripon area who have felt the harmful effects even when their homes are over an hour away. “The air quality is very poor and it’s like an orange fog that doesn’t go away,” said Ripon native and Dordt student, Jadon Vander Molen. “Last year the schools had to have indoor recess and no sports for a week.” Vander Molen’s brother had school canceled down at Westmont University back when the Thomas Fire, California’s second-largest wildfire in history, ravaged the Santa Barbara area in 2017. Dordt students from California are not the only ones who have been affected by this year’s wildfire season in California. Dordt Theology professor, Dr. Justin Bailey, was previously on staff at a church in Pasadena and has seen the effects of these fires firsthand.

“Most of what I’ve seen on the wildfires is from my friends’ social media posts,” Bailey said. “Pictures of driving on the highway with the fires in the background, complaints about air quality, [and] worries for safety of friends and relatives.” Bailey touched on the importance of the church’s impact in these times of natural disasters throughout the state. “People need a theological framework in place, as well as a plan for how we will take care of each other and the community if a natural disaster were to strike,” Bailey said. This theological framework should push church communities to be active in aiding those in need during these times of tragedy. “Churches that are already involved in the community and have developed a reputation of working for the common good are important spaces for mobilizing local relief and support efforts,” Bailey explained. “If a church is already actively working in the community, their natural response when tragedy strikes will be to continue and intensify that work.” Not only did Professor Bailey explain the need

for the church in these times, but he described the growing sense of pride and defensiveness of the state that has occurred during this wildfire season. Growing sentiment across the nation suggests that California is deteriorating with more people leaving the state than moving in. The theories for this occurrence are innumerable. As these prerogatives increase across the nation, Dordt’s California residents are quick to defend their beloved Golden State with its pristine coastlines, mountain-top views, abundant tourist attractions, unique cuisine, and diverse history. “We have a mix of all the different landscapes,” said Modesto-native and Dordt Junior, Justin Bond. “We have the desert and the beach. Plus, the weather is warm all year around which is great.” For many across the nation, California is turning into a barren wasteland, but for California natives at Dordt, it is truly a place they will love and always call home.

# Cheating and academic dishonesty at Dordt

Lauren Hoekstra — Staff Writer

Cheating has been around almost as long as schools have existed. Although not quite as common in the university setting as in high school, it still happens. According to Stanford University, in the 1940s, about 20% of college students admitted that they cheated in high school. Today, between 75 and 98% of college students report cheating in high school. The International Center for Academic Integrity conducted a study in 2015 in which over 71,000 university students were asked about cheating. About 68 percent of them admitted to doing so at least once during their college career. Despite common student habits across the nation, the Dordt University Student Handbook is quite clear on Dordt’s take on academic integrity, which includes stealing/plagiarizing, cheating, lying/fabricating, and facilitating academic dishonesty. According to the handbook, “Dordt University is committed to developing a community of Christian scholars where all members accept the responsibility of practicing personal and academic integrity in obedience to biblical teaching. For students, this means not lying, cheating, or stealing others’ work to gain academic advantage; it also means opposing

academic dishonesty.” According to Mark McCarthy, professor of history in his eighth year of teaching at Dordt, cheating, specifically plagiarism, has become “very easy” with the use of technology. “When we were in college, we would have to take like 3 hours to find the appropriate articles,” McCarthy said. “...In my day and age, you would have to go to the library, spend time finding sources, manually transcribing the information onto the page. Now it’s just cut and paste.” Over time, McCarthy has gotten better at spotting “authorial voice.” “When you notice all of a sudden a major change, it’s, ‘Wait a second, there’s something going on here’ and you start getting curious,” he said. Robert Taylor, dean of students in his twenty-first year at Dordt, has found that the biggest problem among students is “inadvertent plagiarism,” where students don’t know how to cite properly. Taylor believes that students only intentionally plagiarize when they find themselves “in a hole, struggling to get something done.” If students put off their work for a long time and do not prioritize properly, they can get to the night before an assignment is due and start panicking. “They may think, ‘I’m going to fail this paper if I don’t turn [it] in, but also fail it if I

get caught cheating,” Taylor said. “However, if the students confess to their professor and say, ‘Hey, I put this off. Is there any way that I can turn this in late?’ Lots of professors are willing to work with the students.” If students are caught plagiarizing once, only the professor of the class and Erin Olson, professor of Social Work and chair of the Student Life Committee, are made aware. “The Student Life Committee kind of has a ‘three strikes’ rule,” Taylor said. “The first strike is a warning, the second is a really really firm warning, and the third you have to go home. For a semester probably. There have only been three cases of the third strike that I can remember in all my years.” At their second strike, Robert Taylor gets involved with the student more personally. “We have a conversation [with the student] to try to make sure that it wasn’t inadvertent and, if it was, we help them avoid it in the future. Our whole goal is: how do we keep this from happening again?” he said. “Shame is not a part of it. We understand that mistakes happen and when people aren’t at their best, they make poor choices.” Despite everything that he catches students doing, McCarthy holds an “optimistic sense” of who students are. They are not inherently bad students, but if a simpler way comes up, they will take it.

“Not many kids plan to cheat, but something that lands in front of them and they haven’t thought through everything makes it so much easier for them,” McCarthy said. Taylor believes strongly in the services that Dordt has to offer and encourages students to be honest about their faults. “The biggest thing is always being in communication with faculty. If you wonder if something is okay, just ask. Everyone wants to help you avoid a mistake,” he said. “If you utilize the Academic Enrichment Center, they will help with citing, the library will help with citing. Proofreaders can catch potential errors of plagiarism. We have all those services. And just be honest. If you didn’t get it done, don’t panic and do something foolish. Be honest with your professor.” “Everybody who works here is for you, not against you,” Taylor said. “We want to help you do your best.”



Contributed Photo

# Humans vs Zombies returns to Dordt

Connor Van Hulzen — Staff Writer

Everybody’s favorite activity involving green headbands, balled-up socks, and a large game of tag returned to campus this year. A competition amongst all North and East Hall residents who voluntarily signed up, Humans vs Zombies adds a new dimension to the dull task of walking to class every day. Beginning on last week Wednesday with nearly 140 participants between the two halls, the game involves ‘humans’ who wear green strips of cloth and ‘zombies’ who wear them as headbands. While zombies aimed to tag humans and turn them into zombies, humans had extra incentives to leave their dorms and other designated safe areas. The change of pace in the sometimes monotonous methods of getting around campus were welcomed by players. Freshman Lafe Wessel said, “The experience as a whole was fun. There were definitely times when I was on edge was on edge walking around campus. I had to run away from zombies a couple times. The worst time was definitely running away from somebody on rollerblades through the

dark. That for sure was stressful.” Throughout the week, emails were sent to humans throughout the week, alerting them of places where Dordt LCA Coordinator and organizer of the event, Sam Roskamp, was stationed with pieces of paper which we used to gain points. The human who survived the week with the most points was declared the human winner. The zombies would also have a winner – whoever tagged the most humans. The end of the week saw the humans’ numbers trimmed to only 12 survivors by the end of the week, around 8% of the original number. The winner on the humans’ side was determined to be sophomore Kendall Van Zanten, while the zombie winner was junior Joe Wanninger. East Hall RA Chase Pheifer, who had an impressive 11 points as a zombie said, “I enjoyed the game a lot. It was maybe a little frustrating that people who became zombies stopped playing the game, but it was super fun to have something go on for days that could involve a lot of people. I think the camaraderie and friendships that this built are really cool to see.”

# Kielstra Research and Scholarship Center

Evangeline Colarossi — Staff Writer

Announced on October 16, 2019, Dordt’s new Kielstra Center—a “research hub”—was made possible by a donation from the Kielstra family. The Kielstras have been involved with Dordt in the past and wanted to see Dordt’s mission furthered for the whole community. The additional funding will allow for larger grants to be handed out and more grants to be accepted for various needs from professors. “When faculty are doing new projects, this is another area of passion for a lot of our faculty,” said Dr. Nathan Tintle, Professor of Statistics. “This is a piece of who most of our faculty want to be, who God is calling them to be. Another thing is that this can be a direct way in the classroom to impact students.” Though the funding is specifically for professors’ projects, the outcome will also impact students. Through projects, teaching loads, and conferences, professors can bring new insight to the classroom and their students. If a professor intends to do research over the summer, it could provide summer research opportunities for undergraduate students as well.

“Faculty have a lot of good ideas, and the amount of funding hasn’t allowed us to support as many good ideas as we would like to in the past,” said Tintle. “This also encourages faculty to think bigger about their projects. Think big, dream big.” Hopefully this will catalyze a number of projects. The number of grant applications varies greatly each year. Over the last five to ten years, the number of applications has increased, but so has funding. According to Tintle, additional funding will “allow us to say yes (to a project) more often.” The new funding is in effect immediately. Applications are encouraged at three different times each year, though they can be submitted at any time. Once faculty apply, it may take six to eight weeks if they are applying for something like conference funds. If a professor is applying for something more long term, such as a project that would require a reduced teaching load, the process can take several months. To learn more about the Kielstra Center, visit the link [dordt.edu/about-dordt/affiliated-academic-centers/kielstra-center-research-and-scholarship](http://dordt.edu/about-dordt/affiliated-academic-centers/kielstra-center-research-and-scholarship).



# (cont.) entomology class inspects and identifies insects

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“Insect taxonomy keeps changing so the classifications are constantly changing. A lot of books get outdated really quickly,” Schares said.

Lessen also mentioned how because of the change of characteristics, they would have to search for more updated resources and also because of the detail differences does make a big difference. The size of the bugs also makes it difficult to identify the bugs because they have to use a microscope to identify them.

“The problem with insects is that there is so many, there are lots of technical terms and to try to address all that in one semester [can be] too much.” Hummel said. “My deepest goal

for the project students gaining awareness and more in appreciation for how big the world is, even in a little town where they happen to be in. It’s actually a pretty amazing place with lots of different things, but you don’t always see it unless you are looking carefully enough.”



Photo by Haemi Kim

# Planning for PLIA

Sydney Brummel — Staff Writer

While most students continue in their studies and look forward to Thanksgiving break in less than three weeks, one group of students is working hard in preparation for another, more distant break.

Putting Love Into Action (PLIA) is an annual service trip in which students travel in groups to fourteen or more sites across the United States during spring break. On this trip, students have an opportunity to serve for a week, whether it be in the form of yard work, caring for children, or sharing the gospel.

Junior Janaya Hirsch summed up the trip by saying, “This is not on our own strength; it is on [God’s]. Putting Love Into Action is putting Christ’s love into action.”

Hirsch is the junior co-chair of the PLIA committee. She, her fellow co-chairs, and the rest of the committee have been spending a great amount of time making plans for this year’s PLIA trips.

“We have a meeting every month where we plan things for the next month and things that we need to get done,” Sarah Holmberg, sophomore co-chair, said. “We already have to plan a lot of stuff...making a theme, doing devotions, and making the T-shirt ideas.”

The PLIA committee has also been considering matters such as funding and the locations of the sites.

“For over five years, we’ve been going to some of these sites,” Hirsch said, “so we’re building that relationship and keeping that

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# Opinion: the prodigal son returns: Kanye West and Jesus Is King

Sam Landstra — Staff Writer

I’ve been hearing a lot of reactions to Kanye West and his *Jesus Is King* album. Some are positive, but many, and a vocal many at that, are negative. People doubt the authenticity of his Christianity, and a select few take his gospel hip hop project as a slight to their own faith. To them, Kanye is a wolf in sheep’s clothing, a merchant selling spices in the temple.

I don’t blame them for their skepticism. Kanye has made a reputation for himself as an egomaniac driven by fame, money and success. His lyrics are provocative, and he often defies himself as a Christ-like figure. Just listen to “I Am a God” from *Yeezus*, and you’ll know what I’m talking about.

It’s not just Kanye either. The conversion of almost every Hollywood figure is met with faithlessness by Christians. When Justin Bieber led worship at Hillsong Church last summer,

members of my congregation laughed at the thought.

Laughed.

Kanye and Justin may have a secular background in every sense of the word, but our doubt in their salvation stands as an affront to the boundless grace of God.

Who are we to deny the transformative and saving power of Jesus Christ? Have we not also fallen short of the glory of our Redeemer? Before we cast our stones and judge the speck in another man’s eye, let’s ask for help to dig the planks out of our own.

The backlash and dismissal of *Jesus Is King* by Christians falls into the stereotype of evangelical elitism and hypocrisy the world is all too accustomed to. And Kanye knew it was coming.

During “Hands On,” he anticipates the Christian hate when he says, “They’ll be the first ones to judge me/Make it feel like nobody

love me.”

My fellow believers, he saw it coming. He called our bluff of counterfeit acceptance and love before even dealing us the cards.

Kanye is not a perfect Christian, but who is? The entire gospel message hinges on our brokenness being made whole through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The woman at the well, the tax collector, the man on the cross- and Kanye- Jesus lived and died for the least of these.

As a new believer, Kanye may sometimes fall into preaching misguided theology or follow incomplete doctrine, but justification comes before sanctification.

When we start to view *Jesus Is King* as the first step in an ongoing process of salvation, the album takes on so much power. When we link arms with a global megastar who declares the lordship of God into the depths of Hollywood, instead of crossing them in defiance, a cultural

revival can begin.

Our job is not to question the validity of Kanye’s salvation. Such matters are between him and the Lord. Our role, then, is to nurture Kanye in the faith and give him what he stands in need of: “Lay your hands on me/Please, pray for me/Somebody pray for me.”

Join me in prayer.



Contributed Photo

# Practice pays off: music department recital

Evangeline Colarossi — Staff Writer

Music filling the B.J. Haan is a common occurrence, whether for practice or performance. On the first Friday of November, students performed both vocal and instrumental pieces for their peers and the attending public. Some pieces were solos, and others consisted of one or more students accompanying each other.

Preparation time for this program varied for each performer. Some students started practicing their pieces at the beginning of the semester with the assistance of professors and music instructors. Others have invested even more time into this recital.

Senior Allison Wordes began learning her

pipe organ piece by Dieterich Buxtehude in the spring semester of 2019. Over the past months, she has worked with several instructors, starting with Matthew Geerlings from Sioux City and continuing through the semester with Professor Carrie Groenewold and specialist Peter Westerbrink.

“Since [Westerbrink] is an expert on Northern Germanic music, he gave me helpful insight into seeing beyond just lines and dots on the page, to making the piece more stylistic and accurate to that period,” said Wordes. “That was a couple weeks ago, and after the workshop I knew I was ready to perform for a recital.”

Junior Brianna Schueller started the fall semester with five different pieces of music.

She has been practicing all of them during the last few months and found the song “*Ah, Mai Non Cessate*” to be her strongest.

“Since this was one of the first opportunities to perform for the semester, I picked a more simple one that I’ve felt confident on for a while,” said Schueller. “At later recitals I’ll get to perform some music that is tougher and a little more rewarding, which will be fun too.”

Schueller enjoyed listening to sophomore Sydney Brummel’s piece, because she could tell – from a musician’s perspective – the level of skill that it took to perform it.

“I don’t know if the average person listening could tell, but that song has so many runs and jumps and is just all over the place,” said

Schueller. “It must have been so difficult for her to put together, and to have that ready and at the place she had it this early in the semester is admirable and shows how much work Sydney dedicates to her voice performance.”

Though each student has specific instruments that they focus on, they have fun listening to the music made by others as well. Both Brummel and sophomore Brittany Bloemhof are sopranos, but particularly enjoyed listening to the flute pieces performed by sophomore Nicole Wichhart.

“Hearing my peers and how much heart they’ve put into their music so far makes me motivated to keep pushing to make my music the best it possibly can be,” said Schueller.

# “The Price Is Fright” on Saturday Night

Lindsay Kuiper — Staff Writer

Flashing lights illuminate the walls of the campus center. Cowboys, grandmothers, a helicopter and tourists find their seats. A giant, numbered wheel is situated in the center of stage and a sea of chatter rises up as excitement increases. The recognizable Price Is Right theme song fills the air and the game begins.

“The Price Is Fright” is an annual event put on by Dordt Student Activities (DSA). The event is based on the popular game show The Price Is Right with a Halloween twist.

“The planning process for this show is pretty involved,” said DSA member Ally Visser. “I probably spent at least 20 hours planning this event after meetings, organizing, updating prices and shopping.”

The efforts of the DSA planners did not go unnoticed.

“The decorations look pretty neat. Bob Barker would approve,” said Isaiah deRegt, an attendee

dressed as a cow.

Zach Dirksen, the host for the evening, pulled names from a bucket to determine the contestants for each round. These players each tried to identify the prices of various items, and whoever was the closest to the correct price moved on to the next round.

Nick Hembrough, Mikayla Balt, Austin Brown and Katie Bartels each won their respective rounds. Each played a mini game for a chance to win prizes such as a Dordt blanket or a cooking set.

“I was excited and nervous at the same time,” Balt said.

Balt was surprised she was called on stage and didn’t know what to expect from the event.

“I got all of the prices wrong, but it was a fun experience,” Balt said.

After the rounds were over, the four winners came back onstage to spin the giant wheel. Lime green lights cast shadows on the players’ faces as they spun a wheel and hoped to land

on a high number. Hembrough won the game show and received a pack of prizes valued at around \$150.

After the game ended, the audience cleared their chairs to make room on the dance floor. The dance began and costume-clad partygoers flooded in, a conga line appeared for a brief moment before it disappeared into the crowd.

A costume contest was held after everyone had tired themselves out. Everyone split to the two sides of the dancefloor to create a pseudo-catwalk for the competitors to showcase their costumes.

“There were so many fun costumes! People really go all-out sometimes,” Visser said.

Austin Brown won the hearts of audience members with his “Fat Thor” ensemble based on the movie *Avengers: Endgame*.

“I found a really easy way to make a homemade version of the character,” said Brown. “It was only around \$50.”

For the group costume competition, a group

of guys dressed as VSCO girls won. Kendra Nydam won the Judge’s Choice Award with a detailed recreation of Captain Jack Sparrow from *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

Because Visser is a senior, another member of DSA will plan for The Price Is Fright next year.

“I really hope that whoever takes over for me will add their spin to it,” she said. “I think it would be cool to do some other classic Price Is Right games and make the show even bigger!”



Photo by Emi Stewart



# ◆ Feature ◆

## Kill the conversation? Chapel series on sexuality creates controversy

Hannah Van Otterloo — Staff Writer

“I think with any hard topic, it’s much easier to stand on the sidelines and cast stones than it is to come stand in the fray and get what I would call ministry mess on you,” said Aaron Baart, Dordt University’s Dean of Chapel. Baart’s chapel series on sexuality and faith may lead to this “ministry mess” that he refers to, if it hasn’t already. The series, which started on October 16 and concludes on November 13, has had a variety of responses from students, the community at large, as well as others from abroad.

The chapel series is based on Dr. Preston Sprinkle’s books *Grace and Truth: Five Conversations Every Thoughtful Christian Should Have About Faith, Sexuality and Gender*. Sprinkle runs the Center for Faith, Sexuality, and Gender in Boise, Idaho, has published two Grace and Truth books, and is currently working on his third. Baart’s inspiration and idea for this series came after attending a multi-day workshop with Sprinkle last year on sexuality and faith.

“Sometimes these things come up and Christians use truth like a weapon and grace like an excuse, and he (Sprinkle) doesn’t do either and... holds them [both] up, and I really appreciate that,” Baart said.

While Baart’s main source of inspiration may have come from Sprinkle, the final driver that led him to pursue this topic is the prevalence of pornography in our society.

“I’m just really heartbroken right now for a generation that is experiencing their sexuality backwards. They’re experiencing [sexuality]

through their avatar, through their online personalities... At very young ages [they have] exposure to hardcore sex, but they haven’t had their first kiss yet... Most of them have seen gang sex scenes in pornographic video before they’ve held somebody’s hand on a date ... to me that sets the human mind up for all sorts of disaster,” Baart said.

Another specific driver is the Dordt community he serves.

“I feel like based on all the conversations I’ve had in 10 years with students... if you’re going through four years of college and we’re not having a significant conversation about sexuality during that time window... we will have failed our students,” said Baart. “You will walk into a world fraught with temptation, all kinds of brokenness, and sexual brokenness runs deep for a lot of people.”

By delivering messages on this brokenness, Baart hopes to bring the topic of sexuality back into conversation, especially in relation to faith and image bearing. He hopes walls will come down and people will confront their own stories and their own sexual struggles in a healthy way. This confrontation, this conversation that combines the talk of Christianity and sexuality, will hopefully help avoid hurt and heal wounds.

Yet some people do not view the chapel series in a positive light. One site speaking out is [pulpitandpen.org](http://pulpitandpen.org), that describes itself as “a ministry of *Polemics Ministries United (PMU)* located in Sidney, Montana, and is a media outreach of the Fellowship Baptist Church.” On November 1, Pulpit & Pen published an article titled, “Dordt (Christian) University Now Teaching Gender is Determined by Clothing

Choice,” writing, “There was once a time when universities were expected to teach science, and Christian universities were expected to teach both science and a Biblical worldview. Dordt University in Sioux Center, Iowa, is doing neither.” This verdict included a 90-second video clip of the chapel from October 30.

Some comments on the piece show people jumping on this analysis. One reader, Paul Hahn, wrote, “This upsets me like you can’t believe. I spent thousands of dollars to send two of my kids there and now regret every dime.”

Others, however, are more skeptical of this death sentence for Dordt University. Gena Koning Bloemendaal wrote, “I think this article is very misleading... I would be very interested in further research and accurate reporting. Did you speak to the university president or any of the faculty? Doesn’t appear so. Get the straight story before dragging the institution’s name through the mud.”

But on-campus, students have their own opinions on the chapels.

“It’s good that Dordt is talking about these things because we do live in a pocket of Northwest Iowa, and where I come from in Colorado, these topics are a really big issue. For [us to be] effective kingdom workers, Dordt is equipping its students to approach the tough topics in our society. If you go anywhere else outside of Northwest Iowa, you are going to be presented with these issues and knowing what the Bible says about it and learning how to properly address it are all tools we should have in our belt as Christians,” said Zachary Sanford, a Junior Engineering major at Dordt.

Bethany Ten Haken, a Freshman, agreed.

“These are really good conversations to have, and I enjoy that they do it in a way where it doesn’t feel like they are preaching at us, but they’re having a conversation with us, and that’s really cool.”

Not everyone may not share these attitudes about the series, and Baart recognizes this. “I understand there are some people who are going to have divergent views on this, but that’s not a reason to stop talking. We’ve had theological disagreements within the church between people for millennia, like the disciples fought with each other and parted ways in Acts... Everybody has to argue and fight about stuff. The question is... Can you do it well, and can you do it [in an] honoring [way]? There will be people who arrive at different conclusions than Dordt does, than I do, on issues pertaining to sexuality, but that doesn’t mean we stop breaking bread together, and that doesn’t mean we break fellowship with one another. I think if we do that, then only evil wins.”



Photo from Dordt.edu

## Dordt professor selected for NASA research

Tess Hemmila — Staff Writer

Dr. Channon Visscher, an Associate Professor of Chemistry and Planetary Sciences, has been selected to fulfill a research proposal for NASA. Visscher’s research will focus on the seasonal changes that occur within Saturn’s atmosphere. To complete his proposal, Visscher will partner with Dr. Julie Moses, a Senior Research Scientist at the Space Science Institute (SSI) in Boulder, CO. This research proposal will receive \$349,000 in NASA funding to conduct research over the next three years.

Visscher and Moses will use computer models and images taken by various NASA spacecraft to determine the chemistry behind the seasonal changes to Saturn’s atmosphere. Specifically, the researchers will be examining the sunlight-driven photochemistry that they observe in Saturn’s troposphere and stratosphere. Visscher will be focusing on the troposphere while Moses looks at the stratosphere and how the two regions interact. Since the researchers are working in different states, they will each run models in their locations and then compare their findings.

“What’s appealing from NASA’s perspective is we have all this data from spacecrafts...this project will tie together all those observations.”

There are some unique challenges to understanding seasons on Saturn. One is that the Saturn’s rings cast a shadow on the winter hemisphere of the planet, which can impact the



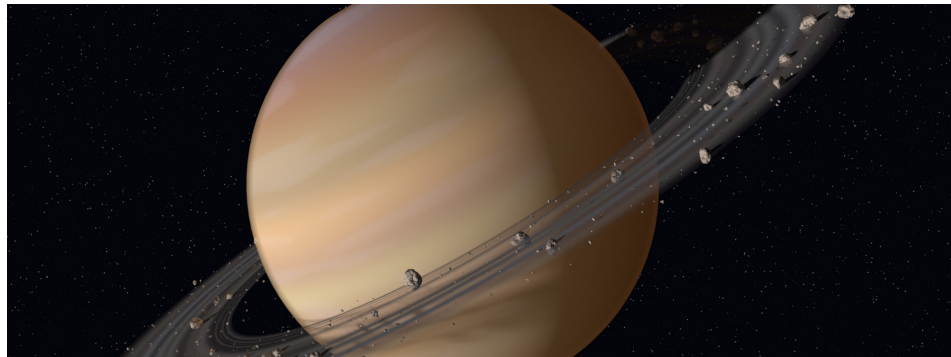
seasonal changes for areas in the ring’s shadow.

Another difficulty to understanding the seasons on Saturn is that one year on Saturn is the same as 29 to 30 earth years. To put in perspective, it is roughly July on Saturn, but the summer season could still last for several more years.

“I think what is compelling about this type of research is that it gets at one of the fundamental driving questions in planetary science: ‘Why does the creation around me—in this case, Saturn—look the way it does?’” said Visscher.

Visscher’s interest in Saturn began early in his academic career. During graduate school, Visscher researched Saturn’s atmosphere and got his research published. Since then, he has conducted post-doctoral research on the atmospheres of Saturn and other planets.

“It stretches the imagination a little more,” said Visscher. “What we consider normal is stretched a bit when we look at these other worlds.”



Contributed Photos

## Midwest miseries to a-maize-ing memories: the Kernel Journal

Hannah Van Otterloo — Staff Writer

Dordt has to be located in possibly one of the most boring and dulldest locations in America. At least, that’s what many students complain about. Situated in the thriving metropolis of Sioux Center, Iowa students struggle to survive boredom, especially when they are restricted to the college student budget.

The origin of this claim is understandable, but what about the validity of this claim? Is there really nothing to do at or around Dordt?

That’s something to be debated, especially when looking at the newly formed Instagram page, The Kernel Journal. This page was started by a group of Junior girls at Dordt after their semi-spontaneous road trip to Wisconsin one weekend in September.

“We went four wheeling and went mudding and went zip lining into a lake, and it was just a blast and a half. And [we thought] this is what going to college in the middle of nowhere in the Midwest can be, and people should really experience this,” said Brianna Schueller, one of the cofounders and runners of the Kernel Journal Instagram page.

Jacquelyn Geels, the other cofounder of the Kernel Journal Instagram page, agreed. “We decided that people should do things like this more often. It wasn’t that bad of a drive, and all we really had to pay for was gas!”

Started on the drive home from Wisconsin, The Kernel Journal aims to be a source of inspiration for Dordt students looking for fun activities in the Midwest.

“Sometimes our ideas are like “hey we should do this” as a joke and then the other people are like, “yeah! Let’s do it!!” And the next thing you know you’re smashing rotten apples with a baseball bat or you’re driving up to a nearby state park to have a campfire cookout. We have some pretty crazy ideas because when we all get together, the gears just start turning, and you have no idea what someone will say.

Occasionally we go down little rabbit trails and get far from the original plan, but I think that’s where a lot of the fun happens! Other times, it’s like a 15-minute plan and leave sort of thing, you’ve just gotta learn to be more spontaneous sometimes!” Geels said.

Spontaneous outings don’t come without challenges for the people behind The Kernel Journal.

“Getting people to all have the same schedule or finding times that lineup to do stuff together, that can be hard,” Schueller said.

But these issues don’t stop them as they keep adding ideas to their list of things to do. From pizza making and a girls night in to MarioKart tournaments to Turkey bowling around Thanksgiving, they have an arsenal of ideas at the ready.

“It’s so much more about the people that you do it with than what you’re doing,” Schueller said. “There’s a lot of really great people here, and one of the perks of living in the middle of nowhere is that you are kind of forced to actually know your friends and actually know each other. As much as you’re doing stuff and that kind of thing, it’s also about just hanging out and getting to know each other.”



Photo from Kernel Journal Instagram



## The sneaker obsession

Anthony Siegrist — Staff Writer

Ray Badudu, a 2019 Dordt College graduate, arrives at the Fruited Plain coffee shop wearing an outfit that is deceptively simple, but ultimately premediated—like a magician with a hundred tricks up his sleeve—so that his Adidas Stan Smith sneakers match with his Adidas Original shirt by Pharrell Williams. His ripped jeans act as a median between the two—which is why Badudu makes sure to roll them up so that the shoes can be on full display.

“I think one thing I love about sneakers is that it says a lot about you. Like when you look at someone’s outfit, you don’t look at it from the top down,” said Badudu. “It always starts from the shoe.”

Though it’s just a piece of rubber on your feet with three stripes or a swoosh on the side, today the connotations of wearing a rare or coveted sneaker are vast. Sneakers possess the ability to create admiration for the owner, or sometimes disgust—like owning a million-dollar Ferrari. Not all people will respect the decision to purchase a pair of Kanye West’s ultra-popular Yeezy’s, which usually retail for \$220, for over a thousand dollars on the resale market.

For those who are lucky enough to get their hands on a pair of rare or limited release sneakers, those sneakers often go right into storage and don’t come out until they have



Photo by Anthony Siegrist

quadrupled in price— which may take years, or not happen at all. The world has succumbed to the viral craze for sneakers, specifically in the online market. Launches for limited release sneakers or for rare colorways draw crowds desperate to get their hands on a pair. It is estimated that the sneaker resale market could be worth \$6 billion globally by 2025.

For some, the sneaker industry can be a baffling enigma. But it’s not hard to solve the mystery of how this industry got its start listening to Badudu excitedly talk about sneaker culture and the most sought-after releases.

“It’s just being intentional about [what you wear],” said Badudu. “Some people like keeping their shoes pristine—me—and some people like to have the beat-up look. Not only does [the shoe] speak of the character of the person, but the shoe itself has character.”

In only a short period of time, resale marketplaces like StockX or GOAT have taken the sneaker industry by storm. These resellers allow buyers to make an offer on an item, which the seller can then accept or choose to sell to the highest bidder instead. Finally, the seller ships the item to the marketplace so that the shoes can be authenticated and shipped to the buyers—but not before the company takes a hefty sum for its commission.

To buy and sell on StockX’s, one of the industry’s leading online marketplaces, the company requires a 3% processing fee, plus a transaction fee that ranges from 8% to 9.5% for sneakers based on the seller’s activity level on the website. Though founded in 2016, StockX has already reached a valuation of \$1 Billion, with no signs of slowing down.

Some analysts attribute the recent sneaker craze to the increasing evolution of the workplace, as clothes and shoes become more and more casual. And as the trend grew, luxury brands like Gucci or Prada took notice and started to fashion themselves a new breed of out-of-this-world sneakers—with insane prices to match.

Whether it’s chunky “Dad shoes” or the return of 90s fashion into the spotlight, sneaker trends jump sporadically all over the board—but, it comes back full-circle to the individual.

“The truth is I just enjoy [the sneaker culture],” said Badudu. “It’s something I love; that’s it.”

## A fishy roommate

Katie Ribbens — Staff Writer

All college students want a roommate who’s low maintenance, easy to get along with, and one that matches their sleeping habits. No one said they had to be human.

Freshman Faith Wester decided to bring a third roomie into her dorm at Covenant Hall. Her plan started in the summer months before arriving at Dordt, back in Idaho. Wester purchased a fish tank and decorated it with her preferred décor, even using sanitized rocks she collected at the beach. Wester went for a natural look, adding live plants and driftwood.

Over the next eight weeks leading up to move-in, she allowed the aquarium water to cycle until the levels were safe. First, ammonia builds up in the tank, which converts to nitrite and then to nitrate. When the ammonia and nitrite levels hit zero, fish may be added. Wester packed the tank, water, and substrate along with her clothes for the twenty-hour drive to Sioux Center. She



Photo by Katie Ribbens

decided it would be safest to wait until she arrived at Dordt to buy the fish.

“When we got here, we drove down to Sioux City and stopped by PetSmart. They had tons of Betta fish,” Wester said.

When asked how she came to decide on her particular fish, she said, “He was feisty.”

Bettas are also known as the Siamese fighting fish. They commonly spread their colorful fins, so they are often kept in isolation. “We chose a Betta because they are a beginner fish and don’t take a lot of effort,” Wester said.

Wester decided to call her new friend Picasso, after the famous artist. “He looks like an art piece with his pops of color. It seemed like a cute fishy name,” Wester said.

Once she was in Covenant Hall, Wester carried cups upon cups of water from the community bathroom to her dorm a few doors down. As Dordt’s water is not safe for fish, Wester added a product that corrected the water levels. Many Betta fish are kept in bowls, but Wester believed that the fish are much happier and healthier in larger tanks with heaters and filters.

While students may not take their dog, cat, or farm with them to Dordt, the student handbook allows an aquarium of up to ten gallons. Wester supports this policy.

“Dordt shouldn’t allow us to have more pets besides fish, because these are very small rooms—at least in the dorms—and anything more than this is going to take up either too much room or smell bad,” Wester said. A fish seems a good compromise between Dordt and students.

Picasso the fish has a happy ending. “And yeah, he lives with us now,” Wester said.

## Food insecurity: are you hungry?

Yage Wang — Staff Writer

Food insecurity is commonly defined as “the state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.” According to the most recent statistics of *Hunger on Campus*, 50 percent of community college students and 47 percent of four-year college students reported food insecurity. There is a possibility that almost half of the students at Dordt don’t have enough food to sustain them daily.

As Dordt students turn into upperclassmen, their meal plans are compressed from 21 or 15 meals per week to the limited 5 per week. Even with more defender dollars, students seem to have the tendency to save it for the bookstore sale rather than spend it on the food.

“It makes me feel good to see how many defender dollars I can keep at the end of the semester,” said Sarah Selenga, a senior nursing major, “and I can also get something from the bookstore which is usually too expensive for me.”

Combining this tendency and their scarce meal plans, upperclassmen are prevalently spending more money on their food budget.

“I probably spend close to 200 bucks on food per month,” said David Riadi, a junior computer science major. “I cooked more especially after I moved out of East Hall. When I was an underclassman, I couldn’t cook, period.”

However, only the students who have stable incomes from their on-campus work-studies can spend a large amount on food. For some students who are heavily involved in their majors and projects, having sufficient food is more difficult.

“Sometimes if I don’t want to buy food, I will just take a green box [from the Commons] and fill it up. It can last for two meals,” said Yovela Belicia, a junior Resident Assistant in West Hall. Meal plans work differently for Residential Life students. Since they don’t have to pay for housing, they have no defender dollars—only 5



Photo by Yage Wang

meals per week for upperclassmen RAs, or 21 or 15 for underclassmen RAs.

Also, food insecurity has potential risks on students’ health. Less students eat breakfast once they turn into upperclassmen.

“I ate breakfasts as an underclassman. Now I only eat cookies and muffins from the Bunsen Brew,” said Dareen Christabel, a junior psychology major. “I lost 2 kilograms (4.4lbs).”

According to the website *Collegiatevillage*, having a well-balanced breakfast before classes will support students with higher levels of memorization. On the other hand, students who replace breakfast with coffee are more likely to experience crashes later in the day.

In order to deal with food insecurity, many student leaders and student organizations have made an effort to reach out. Michael Buma, one of the CDAs at Kuyper, organized some building events with other Res Life at the beginning of the semester that involved food, and clubs on campus may provide snacks or occasional dinners for students.

## Core 160 art trip provides new perspective on art

Yee Lim Shin — Staff Writer

The Core 160 Art Trip to Minneapolis happens every semester. It gives students chance to experience four different art venues: a music event, the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, the Minneapolis Institute of Art, and the Guthrie Theater.

“We do a music event on Friday night, do the theater on Saturday, and then do the art visits in between,” said Core 160 film professor Bob De Smith.

The structure of the trip is the same every semester, while the theater productions and music events change. This year, students signed up to watch a film screening concert, where a live orchestra played in the background of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, offering a unique watching experience. They also watched the theater production of *The Glass Menagerie* and stayed for a post-play discussion with the director and actors.

After going on the Minneapolis trip, the



Photo by Yee Lim Shin

students often notice a different perspective of the arts. Sophomore Aubrey Keenan talked about her experience going to the trip after taking the Core 160 Visual Arts subsection.

“When we went to the sculpture park, I got to talk with [Professor Platter] a lot,” Keenan said. “I got to gain a lot more understanding while I was there and when I talked to him because he would tell me about these each sculpture.”

The Minneapolis Institute of Art has a large range of artwork, reaching back as far as Ancient Egyptian art, up till the 20th and 21st century modern and contemporary art. They also showcase a lot of artwork from famous artists throughout the century.

“The biggest takeaway for me was seeing all the old art in the art museum because everything is really new in North America,” said sophomore Gareth Johnston. “I don’t get to see old things, so then it was so surreal to see something from like ancient Egypt that’s like, ‘wow,’ Moses was alive during the time that this was made, that is so cool.”



Contributed Photo



# Dordt football keeps on moving

Luke Drooger — Staff Writer



Photo from Dordt Athletics

After shutting out Doane and Concordia in the last two weeks, the Dordt football team seemed poised for another good outing against the Hastings University Broncos.

The Defender offense got off to a fast start, and after only one quarter, the lead was 21-0 in favor of Dordt, while on the defensive side of the ball, they continued their streak of nine straight shutout quarters against opposing offenses.

Quinton Murphy, a graduate transfer defensive back from the University of Northern Iowa, said, “There’s some sort of natural pressure to not be the guy who gives up the shutout, but we couldn’t play with that in our mind.”

Murphy finished the game with three tackles and a fumble recovery early in the 4th quarter to put the final nail in the Broncos’ coffin. Murphy was not the only player to recover a fumble on a slippery Saturday afternoon in Hastings, however, as both teams lost three fumbles during the matinee.

When the clock hit zero, it ended up being another record setting day for the Defenders. The final score of 70-28 was the most points Dordt has scored in the history of their program. Additionally, 733 total yards gained was the most by an offense in the Defenders’ history. The previous record was set earlier this season against Dakota Wesleyan.

A big part of the offensive prowess came from quarterback Noah Clayberg and wide receiver Levi Jungling. Clayberg rushed for 208 yards, threw for 135 yards, ran for four touchdowns,

and threw one touchdown to fellow Pella, Iowa native, Jungling.

Jungling finished the day receiving 114 of of Clayberg’s 135 passing yards, including the sole touchdown reception on the day. “Hastings focused so much on our running game which made it easier for me to find space down the field in the passing game,” Jungling said.

It was arguably Dordt’s best passing game of the season and it was nice to see the Clayberg-Jungling connection get back on track. Jungling starred in a productive offensive drive that ended with a touchdown at the beginning of the 4th quarter. Sixty-eight of the drive’s yards came from Jungling, including a beautiful back shoulder catch in the corner of the end zone for a touchdown.

“Noah was throwing the ball extremely well and we were able to take advantage of the one-on-one match-ups in the secondary,” Jungling said. “When the offense rushes for nearly 600 yards, it definitely makes it easier to throw the football when [Offensive Coordinator Aaron] Mingo calls for it.”

Dordt’s final two games of the season come against Briar Cliff and Midland, both at Open Space Park in Sioux Center. The Defenders, who are receiving votes in the national poll, hope to sneak their way in to be one of the sixteen teams to make the NAIA football playoffs. In order to have any chance of doing so, they will have to take care of business in their final two games of the season.

# Dordt basketball teams jump into new season

Mike Martinez — Staff Writer

The Dordt University men and women’s basketball teams have just begun their season. In the preseason polls, the men’s team was ranked at 25th in the country and the women’s team came in at 5th. With a lot of returners, both teams are primed for a late tournament run this year.

The men’s team have played a total of three non-conference games already. In those first three games, they came out with a 2-1 record, with wins against Waldorf and Valley City State and a loss to Mayville State.

Junior Garrett Franken, who leads the men’s team in points and minutes thus far, is interested to see how the team will respond after their first loss.

“Mayville was a good team and that was our first loss,” Franken said. “It will be interesting to see how we respond in our next game, but I’m confident that we will continue to develop and challenge ourselves in the right way.”

Senior Josh Van Lingen isn’t too worried about the first loss. He believes that losing a couple key player from season ago threw the team’s rythem off, but that they are now prepared for any obstacles they might face.

“We have really good team chemistry,” Van Lingen said. “We have a lot of returning players that have experience and the young guys are playing well. I’m looking forward to improving every day as a team.”

For the men’s team, an early loss may be a blessing in disguise because it forced the team to refocus.

Van Lingen plans to finish his senior year on a high note. There have been a lot of ups and downs throughout his playing career, but he believes that the best is saved for last.

“Our team goal is to make the national tournament,” Van Lingen said. “With the experience and team cohesion we have already, I can definitely see us making a run.”

The women’s team also have high hopes for this season.

So far, the women have played a total of four non-conference games. They won all four games, and the team has an average win margin of 38 points.

As the 5th ranked team in the country, the women plan to work hard to move up even higher in the rankings this season.



“It’s really cool that we are ranked 5th in the nation because when I first got here, we were probably around 170th,” senior Payton Harmsen said. “It’s an honor, but we haven’t talked about it much since it shouldn’t be our focus. We understand that we have a target on our back, but it’s all about how we react mentally.”

Harmsen is currently one of the top shooters in the conference and is a seasoned leader for the women’s team.

“Throughout my years here, I never played with a ton of upperclassmen,” Harmsen said. “Us four seniors have had to be leaders since sophomore year, which has been good for us.”

An experienced underclassman, sophomore Jordyn Van Maanen, is ready to take on a new roll this season.

“My role had to change because Annie (Rhinesmith) tore her ACL,” Van Maanen said. “It’s always tough losing a player of Annie’s caliber, but I’ve had to adjust in becoming the starting point guard.”

Van Maanen is shooting an impressive 53% from the field and is second on the team in assists with 10 assists so far. The only player with more assists is teammate Payton Harmsen, who leads with 16.

The men and women’s team will resume play on November 8, when they will both play in Orange City, Iowa.



Photos from Dordt Athletics

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# Maleficent 2: transformed by love

Benjamin Boersma — Staff Writer

Fair warning: this review may have some spoilers. What can I say? If you want to make a point about a story, you have to include details from the important scenes.

It’s tempting to read *Maleficent 2* as a commentary on racism and international politics. And while the movie does accomplish that purpose well, I don’t think that’s the point. Neither is the point about true love conquering all or even that people aren’t always what they seem, like the main themes from the first movie of this series. The movie does a good job balancing those ideas, but the bigger picture, I think, is the transformations that take place.

*Maleficent 2* isn’t exactly what you would expect in a fairytale movie, although Disney has a reputation for putting spins on classic stories. Even the title is a bit ironic. The full title is *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil*, yet the main character is hardly a villain. She is simply

misrepresented and therefore, she doesn’t trust too many people.

Much of the tension between the human kingdom and the fairy kingdom stems from the engagement of Prince Phillip of the human kingdom and Princess Aurora of the fairy kingdom. Somewhere between the first movie and the second movie, the two have fallen deeply in love and want to get married. Keep in mind that in the first movie, Phillip’s kiss was not enough to wake Aurora from her enchanted sleep. The first transformation of the sequel, then, goes by almost without notice. Their love has grown from somewhat shallow to a kind that is strong enough to last a lifetime.

Against this backdrop is the string of transformations, literal and figurative, that take place within Maleficent herself. Towards the end of the first movie, she realizes that she has grown fond of Aurora. Ironically, it is Maleficent’s kiss that wakes Aurora. Even more ironic is that Maleficent’s curse is what put

Aurora to sleep in the first place. In any case, the film concludes with Maleficent placing her in charge of the entire fairy kingdom, even though she is a human.

Fast forward to the second movie and Maleficent is faced with the fact that she will have to give her adopted daughter away at the wedding. Her visit with Phillip’s parents, King John and Queen Ingrith, over dinner makes her seem loving if a bit overprotective.

Unfortunately, Maleficent lets her protective instinct get out of control. In response to a curious cat and a barrage of slurs against fairies, she unleashes her magical fury. Wounded in her flight from the castle, she is rescued by a fairy similar to her and nursed back to health among his people, known as the Dark Fae. As she heals, she is faced with another choice: to join the Dark Fae in their crusade against humanity, or to sacrifice everything for the love she’s found with Aurora and Phillip.

The Dark Fae are descended from the phoenix,

a mythical bird capable of rising from its own ashes after it’s death. Its power is strongest in Maleficent, but she doesn’t realize how strong she really is until she and Aurora confront Queen Ingrith on the castle wall. Aurora manages to keep Maleficent from killing the queen, but the queen fires an arrow at Aurora. Maleficent steps in front of the arrow, saving Aurora but sacrificing herself in the process. At this point, the final transformation takes place. Out of her own ashes, Maleficent is reborn as the phoenix.

*Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* has a variety of themes, which it somehow manages to juggle fairly well. The reviews are mixed on average, but I think many of the reviewers missed what the actual storyline is. The themes of racism and politics are only a backdrop against which the characters’ transformations take place. There are forces bigger than any of the characters can control, including the force of love, whatever form it takes.

# Fall/Winter 2019 movie preview

Zach Dirksen — Staff Writer

Tired of Marvel Movies? On your seventh rewatch of *Friends* or *The Office*? Want to drive to a bigger movie theatre that’s over an hour away to expand your cinematic horizons?

Judging by the 2019 box office, people are most comfortable watching movies that are familiar. Superheroes and Disney characters are a safer bet for your enjoyment and entertainment than spending money on a movie you haven’t heard of.

That’s where I come in. I like superhero movies and Disney movies, but there are also a handful of movies I’m excited for that are a bit less mainstream. Here’s a list of upcoming non-franchise 2019 movies that I think might be worth checking out.

**PARASITE:** Directed by Bong-Joon Ho.

This South Korean thriller is about a poor family conning their way into a more affluent household to disastrous effects. This movie has been consistently tearing up the Festival and Awards scene since this summer and promises to be a surefire Oscar contender, possibly even in categories outside Best Foreign Film. In select theatres October 11, wider release on October 18.

**THE IRISHMAN:** Directed by Martin Scorsese. Adapted from a possibly-true explanation of the disappearance of Union Leader Jimmy Hoffa, this 3.5-hour gangster epic promises a fun and engaging time, while also being more mature, thoughtful approach to Martin Scorsese’s bread and butter. Scorsese’s a master at making the most vile or inaccessible people into some of the most compelling, sympathetic characters in recent film history,

and the Irishman seems to continue the trend. The best part? It’s a Netflix original, so you can watch it at your own pace. Stars Robert De Niro, Al Pacino, Joe Pesci, and Harvey Keitel. In select theatres November 1, Netflix on November 27.

**A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD:** Directed by Marielle Heller. TOM HANKS IS MR. ROGERS. That is all. In theatres November 27.

**KNIVES OUT:** Directed by Rian Johnson (who, depending on your opinion, either ruined Star Wars or gave it the kick-in-the-pants the franchise needed). In this twist on the classic formula, a classy private detective investigates the murder of a wealthy patriarch of a publishing dynasty. The twist? All the presumed suspects are family members. Stars: Daniel Craig, Chris Evans, Jamie Lee Curtis, and Michael Shannon.

In theaters November 27.

**MARRIAGE STORY:** Directed by Noah Baumbach. Starring Adam Driver and Scarlett Johansson as a couple in the midst of a messy divorce, what could’ve been a depressing, dour film seems to be elevated by Noah Baumbach’s dynamic, funny, and heartwarming script. Once again, this one’s on Netflix. Released on Netflix on December 6.

**LITTLE WOMEN:** Directed by Greta Gerwig. It’s yet another adaptation of the 1868 classic, but this one stands out. Greta Gerwig’s 2017 film *Lady Bird* was fantastic, and she’s brought the same energy and youth to her version of Louisa May Alcott’s timeless story. Plus, the cast is insane. Don’t ask me why I care so much about *Little Women* adaptations; I don’t know either. Starring Saoirse Ronan, Emma

*Continued on page 8*

# A capella group Tonic Sol-fa takes the stage at B.J. Haan

Katie Ribbens — Staff Writer

As the sunny day gave way to crisp, biting night, scattered groups of people gathered in the B.J. Haan Auditorium like bees to honey. The honey? A chance to see the a capella group Tonic Sol-fa as they stopped at Dordt on their tour.

As the lights dimmed and a hush fell over the crowd, anticipation was thick in the air. Children nestled between parents and grandparents. And then, every heart in the crowd dropped as a trickle of elementary children walked through the door. As they jostled for position on stage, the audience shifted restlessly, and murmurs flew through the crowd. *Did they say the children were performing Tonic Sol-fa songs?* More rustling as they checked the pictures on the programs. *No, it definitely says Tonic Sol-fa.* The 6th graders from Sioux Center Arts sang through 3 songs in soft, sweet voices before they exiting the stage and ran to their seats. The crowd didn’t have to wait long before the four members of Tonic Sol-fa took the stage.

Since the release of their first album in 1997, the quartet has released a multitude of songs using only their voices as instruments.

While Tonic Sol-fa—named after notes on a scale—has always consisted of four members, the people filling those 4 roles have fluctuated. Currently, only one founding member still sings with the group: Shaun Johnson, who sings tenor. Greg Bannwarth, Jared Dove, and Theo Brown fill the remaining roles of tenor, bass, and baritone respectively.

Their choice of music knows no bounds as they transform well-known songs into their own covers, varying from Christmas music to country. Tonic Sol-fa has also released several original songs.

Though the crowd was sparse, the group didn’t let that stop them from giving a stellar performance. They opened the night with an original song, “Where Does the Money Come From,” quickly followed by “I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas.”

Each member was different and play off each other well. Johnson engaged the crowd by cracking jokes and asking interactive questions. Bannwarth and Brown held a friendly competition onstage and encouraged the audience to vote with their cheers. Dove kept his sunglasses on throughout the performance and assumed a casual stance on a stool, reflecting a love for jazz. During their performance of “El Paso,” everyone sitting in the pews began to sway. The energy was palpable both onstage and off. The relatively small audience allowed a personal feel with Tonic Sol-fa; perhaps the low attendance worked in their favor, for they won the audience over as friends.

The quartet was far from stationary, adopting new formations for each song and sometimes shifting throughout. Each member was given a time to shine; the lead role appeared to be fluid. From standing, to sitting, to dancing around, the group crafted a performance enjoyable for every age.



Contributed Photo

# 2019 Addams Family resurrects beloved characters (in more ways than one)

Gretchen Lee — Staff Writer

Trends from times gone by are making a comeback lately, like chokers, record players, scrunchies, polaroid cameras, and the Jonas Brothers. Retro styles and items are being pulled from every decade and beloved old bits of literature and television are back in style. Out of all these comebacks, one that certainly stands out is the return of the Addams Family.

From the first appearance of the Addams Family in 1938 as part of a comic panel, the clan of delightful and dreadful characters made numerous appearances in television and movies into the late 90s. This year, they were given another rendition in *The Addams Family*, an animated movie starring Charlize Theron as Morticia, Oscar Isaac as Gomez, Chloe-Grace Moretz as Wednesday, and Finn Wolfhard as Pugsley.

This rendition provides viewers with background on the Addams family’s settlement at their abandoned asylum in the New Jersey bog. After this brief exposition, the movie covers the events surrounding the Addams preparing for the rest of their family members to visit their home for Pugsley’s coming-of-age ceremony. They soon discover the bogs were drained by Margaux Needler who wants their family and house gone.

Wednesday meets Margaux’s daughter, Parker, and forms a friendship with her that leads to disruptions in the Needler and Addams household as the two girls begin to copy the clothing style of the other. In the meantime, Gomez and his brother, Fester, attempt to

prepare Pugsley for the rigorous coming of age swordfight he will need to complete to be considered an Addams.

While this movie is a kids movie style of animation, the humor and storyline make for an enjoyable experience for all ages. The gothic aesthetic, mix of morbid and slapstick humor, and characterization were all incredibly true-to-form for an Addams Family movie. Wednesday, despite her brief teenage rebellion, which involved her buying a pink hairclip and swapping outfits with her friend, was still delightfully dark and dreary. Morticia and Gomez were the ever-caring parents who are enraptured with each other. Pugsley still blew things up, Fester was still a creeper, and the rest of the extended family were still utterly bizarre. Overall, this movie did an outstanding job capturing the feeling of the original Addams family.

The plot, while incredibly simple, was fitting for the movie, even if it has been used before. The coming-of-age moments for both Wednesday and Pugsley were both centered around self-discovery and quite relatable. However, despite Wednesday’s teenage rebellion ending, there does not seem to be an obvious moment where she recognizes her mistakes and realizes how she has hurt her mother. Nevertheless, this film still portrayed its message well, entertained with classic comedy, and retained heartwarming feelings of family.

Overall, this movie is very well done, cute, and hilarious for all ages. It is a modern rendition of a classic film that brings beloved characters back to life... or death.



# ◆ The Back Page ◆

## (cont.) planning for PLIA

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connection, praying for them.”  
All this planning promises to make a memorable PLIA experience for many students.  
Senior Micah Kooiman has gone on PLIA two times, first to Mendenhall, MS and second to Panama City, FL. While he described his experiences as completely different, he shared that they were both very positive in their own

ways.  
“The first time we went, it was really cool to build relationships with people in that community,” Kooiman said. “The organization we worked with was really welcoming.”  
On his first trip, Kooiman and his team focused on helping an educational organization with renovating a building and prepping for the upcoming school year. On his second trip

to Panama City, Kooiman and his team served others by providing rides and engaging in conversation with people who were on spring break.  
“It’s basically an opportunity to share Jesus with people every day,” Kooiman said. “We got to see people come to Christ and be able to connect them to a local church as well as other believers in that area.”  
The experiences that Kooiman shared and the work that he engaged in are a sample of what a student might enjoy on their own PLIA trip. Each site has its own story along with its unique needs and goals.  
“It’s a lot of work, but it’s probably one of the most rewarding things, to be able to go on PLIA,” Hirsch said. “Lives are changed when you go on these things.”  
Apart from the promised social and spiritual growth, a PLIA trip is surprisingly inexpensive. Applying by first deadline costs students only \$75 while the final deadline fee is \$95.  
If students are looking for a productive, fulfilling, and affordable way to spend spring break of 2020, they are encouraged by not only the PLIA committee, but also past team members to consider signing up for the trip.

“Since we’re on Dordt’s campus, you spend a lot of time in community with one another, but we don’t necessarily get to serve outside of our own community,” Holmberg said. “It’s another good way to just take a week apart from yourself and serve.”  
“There’s not a lot of ways that you can spend spring break that will be as much fun as PLIA and as great of an opportunity to see God working in a different part of the country,” Kooiman said. “You get to build relationships with people from Dordt...[and] show other people love in a very tangible way. And God moves during that time.”  
Opportunities for students to learn more about PLIA are quickly approaching. Any student interested in leading a team is encouraged to attend the Leaders’ Meeting, which will be held in SB 1606 on November 20 at 9 p.m. Or, if a student is simply interested in going on the trip as a participant, they are welcome to attend the Mass Meeting on December 4, 9 p.m., in SB 1606.  
“Get excited. Pray about it,” Hirsch said. “See what the Lord has in store for you if that is PLIA...We’re expectant, and we’re ready.”



Contributed Photo

## Jesus Is King album review

Caleb Schreurs — Staff Writer

I considered asking the *Diamond* powers that be for anonymity before writing this album review, because if my *Lover* album review inspired backlash, the potential fallout for what I could say in these 800 words is massive. Let it be known, that if I am burned at the stake on the green in the next week, I would like my body donated to the Dordt University science department. Oh, and have Kanye perform at my funeral.  
With that aside out of the way, let us dive in. *Jesus Is King* is the ninth studio project from rapper, producer, songwriter, fashion designer, and public figure Kanye West. The album comes after what one could call “an eventful year” for the artist, or more accurately: a flaming dumpster hurricane of public image troubles.  
After the 2018 album *Ye* wrestled with the nitty-gritty of Kanye’s mental health, the artist took a 180-degree shift in his artistic direction and released a fully gospel-inspired album. The questions that most listeners have been wrestling with is as follows: is this shift genuine? Is Kanye a Christian now?  
While this question is genuine and should be discussed, let’s give Kanye the benefit of the doubt and assume he is a Christian. Good for him. I can’t speak for the entire readership of the *Diamond*, but I do not do a CRC background check before listening to an album; if the artist claims to be a Christian, I will take that at face value.  
Diving right in, track by track. The strongest point in this album are the two opening songs, “Every Hour,” and “Selah.” “Every Hour,” sung by Kanye’s personal gospel choir, is the

most solid opening to an album this year since Tyler, the Creator’s “IGOR’S THEME.” My only gripe with this track is that it is not two hours long. The mixing makes the listener feel as if the choir has been singing for an hour, the sound tech decided to start recording, but then abruptly ends before two full minutes have even run their course. The Sunday Service Choir is horrendously underutilized outside of the opening two tracks - a definite misstep from West.  
“Selah” soars with pipe organ, driving, thick beats, and some strings scattered in tastefully. West’s self-comparison to the biblical figure Noah does cause a listener with a Christian background to jerk their head some, but this is the only lyrical moment that caused a single eyebrow raise from myself. The instrumentals on this track are reminiscent of *The College Dropout* released by West in 2004 in all the best ways.  
“Follow God” comes off as filler, a tactic that should be avoided on a twenty-seven-minute album. No lyrical or instrumental moments to speak of here, except for the fuzzy sample in the back of the track, again reminiscent of early 2000s Kanye.  
If anything is getting me crucified in this review, it will be this next paragraph. “Closed On Sunday,” is my least favorite song on any album I have reviewed this year, beating out even “Hot Shower” by Chance The Rapper. Corny rhymes meet lack-luster instrumentals, and what does “Closed on Sunday, you my Chick-Fil-A” even mean? Where my brain goes is not the most PG interpretation and there seems to be little in the realm of other interpretations. This track is a pseudo-spiritual proverb vomited

over a beat and is nothing more than Instagram quote bait for worship arts majors and essential oils salespeople.  
Kanye has a tendency to group his strongest songs together - and also his weakest. The three tracks following “Closed On Sunday” are equally as weak as the track proceeding them. “On God” suggests Kanye is under attack from the IRS, the media, and his fans. He proceeds to use these attacks to justify charging over \$100 for a t-shirt that looks like it was designed on a pirated version of 2004 MS Paint for the Heaven Gate cult and/or a VBS.  
The only other stand-out song on the project is “God Is,” which brings back the Sunday Service Choir to redeem this track. That being said, the choice of going on another trademarked Kanye rant is questionable at best. Why not utilize the fantastic choir readily available? The mixing is also weaker on this song, making it feel like an unfinished idea.  
*Jesus Is King* feels as if Kanye had one or two finished tracks and said to his producer, “What if we made a whole album out of this?” When viewed in the context of his most recent project *Ye*, this most recent release seems to continue the dialogue of West’s mental health, even if indirectly. The religious theme of the album can come across as contrived, convoluted, and even contradictory at times. Musically, it pulls heavily from earlier projects such as *808s and Heartbreak*, *The College Dropout*, and *Graduation*. Thematically, “Jesus Walks,” off of *The College Dropout* comes across as a more fleshed out incarnation of West’s theology. *Jesus Is King* is a fitting follow-up to *Ye*, finding West in a tumultuous mental state and in varying degrees of public favor.

### SONG BREAKDOWN:

**Will listen again:**  
Every Hour  
Selah

**Delightfully Meh:**  
God Is

**Burn it down:**  
Closed On Sunday  
On God

**Dark Horse:**  
Use This Gospel




Contributed Photos

## Editor’s corner: anticipating the *Zircon*

Once per semester, the Dordt Diamond publishes a satirical publication known as the “*Zircon*.” The *Zircon* will be published following the issue you are currently reading.  
But before the *Zircon* hits the shelves, tables, and stairs around campus, we wanted to clarify exactly what it is.  
The *Zircon* is a work of satire. For us, satire can be defined as the use of humor, irony, or exaggeration to lovingly expose and poke fun at topical issues on Dordt’s campus. We do not write or publish articles out of spite, hate, or malice, and we don’t poke fun at students—we poke fun at ideas and positions of power.  
When you pick up an issue of the *Zircon*, please remember: it is a work of fiction. All of the names of “students” quoted in the articles

will be fake, because the quotes are made up. We do retain the names of people in power, such as the President, Dean of Students, and Professors. This isn’t because we want to attack these people--instead, we are commenting on their positions.  
All good satire contains grains of truth. Past *Zircon* articles have dealt with campus issues like parking, the cold, immigration, and more--but their content is fictional.  
At the end of the day, all the *Zircon* aims to do is make our readers smile, laugh, and maybe even think critically about the campus we all love and enjoy.  
  
The Editors  
Erika Buiter and Emma Stoltzfus

## (cont.) movie preview

*Continued from page 7*  
Watson, Laura Dern, Timothee Chalamet, and Meryl Streep. In theatres December 25.  
**1917:** Directed by Sam Mendes. Set during WWI and shot as if it’s one long take, *1917* follows two young British soldiers as they cross enemy lines to spare the lives of hundreds of troops. Seemingly every remotely recognizable British actor is in this movie: Benedict  


Contributed Photo

Cumberbatch, Colin Firth, Richard Madden, Andrew Scott, and Mark Strong. In Theatres December 25.  
It seems like every new release is either a sequel or a remake, but only because moviegoers continue to buy tickets to see sequels and remakes. If we, as consumers, make a point to spend our money in such a way that discourages this trend, perhaps we might see less corporate products and more bold, risk-taking films hitting theatres near us.  
**TV SPEEDROUND**  
Here are some new 2019 shows also worth checking out: *Watchmen* (HBO), *Chernobyl* (HBO), *His Dark Materials* (HBO), *Doom Patrol* (DC Universe), *When They See Us* (Netflix), *What We Do In The Shadows* (FX), and *Good Omens* (Amazon).