



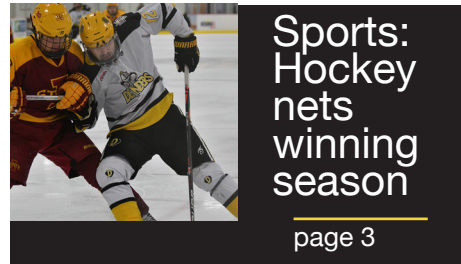
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THE DIAMOND

The show won't go on: Prairie Grass Film Challenge concludes after 15 years

Elaina Ammons—Staff Writer

The annual Prairie Grass Film Challenge (PGFC) has been an icon of the Dordt University digital media production program for 15 years. What began as an idea in the imagination of Mark Volkers and grew into a global short film competition ended on Friday, Feb. 18. As streamers fell in the B.J. Haan Auditorium following the Awards Ceremony, the festival was finished forever.

Each year of the PGFC, contestants spend 48 hours planning, shooting, and editing short films in hopes of hauling home a cash prize or the “coveted Dordty award.” And, every year, participants are required to incorporate predetermined characters, props, and lines of dialogue into their films.

This year, lines such as “Everything changed at the last curtain call,” “My world changed at the spotlight,” and “I didn’t see that coming” were given to contestants. Also, characters such as a time-traveler and Elroy and a washed-up soap opera actor were required. In addition, teams were awarded an extra point by the judges for including the red-winged blackbird (a part of PGFC’s logo) in their film.

The nominees for Best of High School were headlined by Eagle Productions and Sticky Tack Productions. The former, competing for the first time, won with their film, *Spared*.



Photo Credit: Daniel Ketchelos

For Best of College, the Dordt-based team of Take Two Productions took home a \$250 check for their film, *BrainStorming*, a meta-commentary on the film challenge itself.

“It was a big chance,” Jonah Hofmeyer, the film’s producer, said.

In a mock interrogation scene filmed in the

basement of Kuyper Apartments, Hofmeyer, a junior, played a hard-nosed detective: “Where is the neurotoxin?” He shouted.

When *BrainStorming* won, Hofmeyer was “shocked” and thankful: “I watched it come together through a group that was really strong.”

Following the high school and college categories, Volkers announced Kalta Studios as the winner of the post-college division. Their film, *Barista’s Choice*, marked the team’s third, award-winning short film in the competition. In 2018 and 2019, the team, originally based out of South Dakota State University, won Best of College.

Josh Gross, a member of Kalta Studios for four years and a recently hired assistant adjunct for the Dordt engineering department, wrote original music for *Barista’s Choice*.

“It was so great to end this journey on a high note,” Gross said. “I’ve discovered a passion for filmmaking that I didn’t know I had.”

Gross composes a score by creating a “world of sound” that relates to the film’s themes and the director’s vision. For *Barista’s Choice*, a story about a time-traveling barista, he created a “unique, ethereal sound” with synth pads and major seventh chords.

“We made this one really sad, almost comically sad,” Gross said.

Lastly, the highest honor of the festival, the “coveted Dordty award,” was presented to Monte Ne Productions for their original musical, *Stuck*. Also, Thick of It Productions won Winner’s Circle Award for their film, *Boomerang*.

Through the PGFC, Volkers wanted to...

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Mosaic Club pieces together diverse communities

Joya Breems—Staff Writer



Photo Credit: Joya Breems

“If your parents are divorced or separated, stand up and high-five another member,” Carter King said at the first Mosaic Club meeting. He read from a sheet of ice breaker prompts. At his word, around half a dozen people stood up and made their way to the middle of the Eckhart Lounge, high-fiving each other.

“I already know most of you!” said one girl. “My goal for this one is for all of you to be standing,” King said, “If you are the oldest child, kneel on the floor.”

A third of the attendees knelt. “Middle children, I want you to squat,” King said.

Another third of the group joined the oldest children on the floor.

“Youngest children, stand up and wave your hand—we know you’re the forgotten ones,” King said.

The theme for the first Mosaic Club meeting, held on Tuesday, Feb. 15, was identity. Participants were guided through three, identity-focused workshops. They shared pizza and fellowship, too. Mosaic is an acronym standing for Multicultural Opportunities for Students Actively Involved in Community.

Alex Vasquez, student success coach, started the club in partnership with the Multicultural Leadership Program (MLP). He wants to share with the student body what the MLP students are learning in class. Susan Wang, one of Vasquez’s MLP students, helped plan the first meeting.

Vasquez started the club to fill a gap he felt was missing in his college experience: “I...

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International students share culture at fair

Glory Reitz – Staff Writer

When Judith Flier took her guitar onstage at the Students Without Borders club’s annual Cultural Fair, she was nervous, the capo was placed wrong, and her music sheets were in the wrong order. When she said she would sing of the Netherlands, the crowd was quiet. This is Sioux Center, isn’t everyone already steeped in Dutch culture?

But Flier doesn’t just have Dutch ancestry and blonde hair, she is an exchange student from the Netherlands. She leapt into the Cultural Fair with the goal of sharing Dutch culture straight from home.

The morning of the fair, Feb. 19, Flier was in the Grille area, setting up her booth with Dutch pancakes, boterkoek, and stroopwafels, and a Sjoelen (Dutch shuffleboard) game beside her.

About ten international students swarmed around the Grille that morning, hanging flags and putting up display tables. That evening, they were back, and ten minutes after five, around 200 people from Dordt, Northwestern College, and the surrounding community filled the area.

From five until six, students running the booths greeted endless streams of visitors. They served food from their home countries, ranging from a bowl of rice, pork, and chicken at the Nicaragua booth, to bubble tea from China and South Korean Lattes, to Kenyan samosas.

Enock Rop, a freshman from Kenya, said he and his friends started preparing the samosas at nine o’clock the night before the fair. They



Photo Credit: Glory Reitz

finished at two in the morning, with 150 samosas.

Before him, Rop said Dordt had one Kenyan student who ran the booth for years. He graduated last year, so the task fell to Rop and two others from Kenya. They got a late start setting up, and were disappointed at their bland spread: two trifolds and a Kenyan flag.

But the day before the fair, a friend’s flight from Florida landed: “Auntie Deb,” as the Kenyan students call her, had lived in Kenya for 25 years and collected a houseful of “artifacts.” She packed the trunk of her car with enough to cover two tables and a mannequin. When...

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New design studio creates prioritized space for graphic design students

Daniel Ketchelos — Staff Writer

The Dordt University Art Department recently opened a new design studio for graphic design students to build their digital skills with state-of-the-art Mac computers.

The space, located in CL 1223, contains 23 2021 M1 iMacs available for use throughout the week. All graphic design, web design, and motion graphics courses will be held in the new studio, which also features multifunctional desks where the iMacs sink into the desks when more space is needed for physical design work.

"I'm very excited to bring the graphic design students into the art department," Vaughn Donahue, instructor of graphic design, said. "For the longest time graphic design students have been in the digital media lab, and outside of the physical walls of the art department. I've realized that a senior who has a fine art emphasis and a senior who has a graphic design emphasis don't necessarily know each other, and I think that's a problem. So, this [design studio] allows us to all be in the same place and to take better ownership of the space we have."

The design studio is a transformation of the drawing studio for the Art Department and features large whiteboards along each wall for students to sketch out ideas and mount work for other students to review. The room will eventually feature a lounge area in the back of the studio with couches for students to sit and discuss current projects and brainstorm design



Photo Credit: Daniel Ketchelos

elements with each other.

"I think they've updated the classroom well," Emma McGaughey, a sophomore graphic design student, said. "It's a nice way to separate digital media and graphic design and have a special space for both groups."

Previously, all graphic design students worked in the Digital Media Lab, which is prioritized for students working in video

production. While graphic design work can still be completed on Windows PCs in the Digital Media Lab, the Design Studio offers a place for graphic design students to work on Macs, the industry standard in graphic design.

"Any graphic design student that will be going into the field of graphic design needs to know how to operate a Mac operating system," Donahue said. "The chances of them being given a Mac at their first job is very likely."

The design studio was first conceptualized three years ago during a review of the current Digital Media Lab, asking what students need to learn properly today. This discussion led to the idea of splitting the current space into

two—a dedicated studio with Macs for graphic design students and the current Digital Media Lab for digital media students.

"This was a bit of a dream that seemed like it was quite a way in the future because it is a pretty expensive thing to do," Donahue said. "The computers aren't cheap, the desks aren't cheap, and the changes to the room aren't cheap. Something of this size usually needs to be worked into longer-term plans and scheduled, but we happened upon a donor, a Dordt graduate who understood our need for a new lab, and we were able to work with him and a few other donors to get the funding that we needed years ahead of what we thought was possible."

While the Design Studio is almost fully functional, there have been challenges in the formation of the space.

"The launch of the design studio has been a little rocky," Donahue said. "All the necessary parts came at the end of the fall semester, and it takes a lot of work to get it up and running properly. We are making it work by being flexible in our courses as we get the computers to a place where they need to be to serve the students well."

The Design Studio will be tailored toward the needs of graphic design students and what works best for their learning style. Many of the elements yet to be incorporated into the space will be open for students to input ideas.

"I'll be relying on students to help me design other aspects of the room including where we're putting different tools, how to organize the supply closet, and the brainstorming area in the back of the room," Donahue said. "So this first generation of students that are using this lab will have some ownership of how we put it together."

Defender Grille serves up some competition

Georgia Lodewyk — Staff Writer

Lettuce, tomato, gouda, bacon, turkey, and the sacred Defender Sauce: the tangy simplicity of the Defender sandwich is one that students have come to love, perhaps too much.

Defender Grille manager Roman Galles said he makes about 300 Defenders a day. Even though there are seven other sandwiches on The Grille's meal exchange menu, the Defender is by far the most popular with students and faculty. Galles said some even have a Defender for lunch every single day of the week, always opting for that familiar favorite with crispy bacon and iconic Dutch gouda cheese.

But as much as Galles and the staff at The Grille enjoy making Defender subs, a little variety wouldn't hurt anybody.

Galles' idea to add more diversity to the palates of Dordt students took after The Commons' Burger Contest last semester, and just like that, The Grille Sub Sandwich Competition was born. Galles hopes to build off the success of the burger competition and create something students and staff can look forward to.

"I saw the opportunity for some change," Galles said. "And I wanted to make it fun for all students and full-time employees who work in creative dining."

Students and faculty submitted their favorite sandwich recipes, and seven were chosen for The Grille menu, each for three days. Galles based each sandwich's success on its sales. Students are now encouraged to write reviews to Dordt Dining Services' Instagram page. The winning sub will find its place permanently on the hot sandwich menu.

So far, one of the most popular sandwiches according to Galles has been the Golden Pita: served on pita bread, it's a trifecta of meats including ham, turkey, and bacon, complete with layered mayonnaise, provolone cheese, pickles, tomato, shredded lettuce, and a vinegar and oil mix to top it off. Dordt Dining Services shared a few positive reviews of their sandwich on their Instagram page: "If this sandwich DOESN'T get to stay, I'm gonna be sad because that pita will be gone, and you cannot do that to me. The cheese and meat go really nicely with that lettuce and pickle, and DANG! That was a good one."

Another sub sandwich came from Dordt



Photo Credit: Georgia Lodewyk

sophomore and Commons employee Boris Le, who got the idea for his "Banh Mi Thit Sub" from a banh mi restaurant near his hometown of Melbourne, Australia. Made-up of roasted pork loin with barbecue sauce, and a slaw with shredded carrots, sliced radishes, cucumbers, red onion, lettuce, and tomato all served on toasted French bread, Galles bought 16 pounds of pork loin for the sandwich's three-day trial run and went through it all in two days.

"It would probably be cool if I won," Le said. "This is a cool competition to give variety at The Grille."

Galles said he has enjoyed the competition, and his favorite sub is still yet to come on the menu for its three-day rotation.

"I love doing special things," Galles said. "I just want to hear more from students so I can do more of those kinds of things."

The sandwich competition will continue at The Grille until spring break. Students can use Defender Dollars or meal exchange to try the sandwiches and support the one they would like added to permanently to the menu.

Mosaic Club pieces together diverse communities cont.

cont. from pg. 1

...didn't have a space, a place where I could meet other people and figure out what makes them unique," Vasquez said. "Everyone is doing the same thing. We're all just trying to figure it out."

Vasquez can pinpoint times in his own life where his sense of identity was weak. He wants to help other students who might be feeling the same way.

When Vasquez attended Dordt, he wore his grandpa's Colombian sombrero to the campus-wide fiesta: "I never wore it, but I brought it to college and stored it in my closet," Vasquez said, "[But for the Fiesta], I went to my closet, put on my sombrero, and I was super happy."

At the party, one of his friends commented, "What are you wearing? That's not you." At that moment, Vasquez realized: "I don't even know who I am."

Vasquez started the Mosaic Club for people like him who were lost in college. In his experience with YoungLife, he attended a Mosaic-inspired event.

"For the first time in my life, I was in a room with people that I felt like I didn't have to explain myself to. I saw people all different colors, shapes, and upbringings and we were all together" Vasquez said. "I want to make a mission to bring that environment to Dordt."

Another goal of the Mosaic Club is to tackle difficult issues, like racial reconciliation. Vasquez recognizes these topics may be difficult.

"In a time where a lot of things are politicized, it's hard to even hear the word diversity. People get uneasy when they hear that." Vasquez thinks the reformed tradition speaks to the topic. "Part of being reformed is renewing all aspects of life. It's understanding the things that God meant for good that we take for granted."

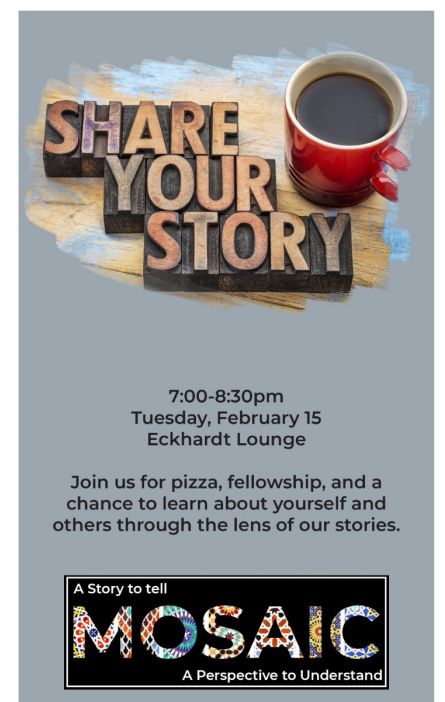
He hopes the club will help Dordt students "learn to appreciate one another while still not

agreeing."

In the future, Vasquez hopes that ideas from the Mosaic Club can be integrated into the CORE program. Mosaic helps Dordt students "understand who they are and how their story fits within God's story," a key theme of CORE-100. Vasquez wonders how Dordt graduates would reflect on the following questions: "Did I just get a degree? Did I make meaningful relationships? Did I grow as a person overall?" Mosaic, Vasquez says, can help.

For Wang, the first meeting was successful. In her first semester of the MLP, Wang read the book Emotionally Healthy Leaders.

"Once you have a healthy relationship with yourself you are able to reach out to others," Wang said.



Contributed Photo

Men's and women's basketball stumble at Northwestern

Isabel Pheifer—Staff Writer

The Dordt University men's and women's basketball teams traveled to Orange City on Feb. 16 to take on their crosstown rival, the Northwestern Red Raiders. The Bultman Center packed full on a Wednesday night and saw a split between its attendant who sported Defender black and gold and Raider red.

"The atmosphere at Northwestern was outstanding. We enjoyed playing in front of a big crowd," said Brian Van Haaften, head coach for the Dordt men's team.

The night started with the women's game, with the Raiders attempting to snap the Defenders' 15-game win streak. The Defenders jumped out to an early 18-5 lead. The hot start was aided by 14 first quarter points from junior forward Ashtyn Veerbeek. The Raiders ended the first quarter on a run that cut the Defender lead to 8.

The second quarter went in favor of the Raiders. A strong defensive effort from Northwestern left the Defenders rattled, who scored 8 second quarter points.

In the middle of the quarter, Northwestern went on a 10-0 run, which put them up 33-29.

With two minutes left in the half, junior forward Karly Gustafson ended Dordt's scoring drought with a bucket. The Raiders then closed the half out with two back-to-back baskets and extended their lead to 37-31.

Starting the second half, both teams came out blazing. They traded baskets before the Raiders pulled away at the midpoint of the quarter to grab a 9-point lead at 50-41. The Defenders refused to cave, responding with three straight baskets of their own, cutting the lead to 3.

Northwestern then put in two more buckets before the end of the third, making it 55-47.

The Defenders were never able to overcome

the deficit in the fourth quarter. Despite a strong effort from Veerbeek, scoring 8 points in the frame, it wasn't enough. The final buzzer showed Northwestern winning 72-62.

Dordt was led by Veerbeek, who was just shy of recording a triple double with 28 points, 10 rebounds, and 8 blocked shots. Junior guard Bailey Beckman added 11 points of her own and freshmen Hayden Heimensen and Janie Schoonhoven each scored 6 points.

For the Raiders, Devyn Kemble dropped a team-high 17 points and Maddie Jones followed with 16.

This was the first loss for the Defender women's team since Dec. 11 and split the series between the two GPAC teams for the season. The Dordt women finish the regular season with the second-best record in the conference.

"Our women have worked extremely hard to put themselves in this position," said Bill Harmsen, head coach for the Dordt women's team.

Following the women, the Dordt men looked to steal a win from the Raiders. The game proved nothing short of exciting. Both teams shot nearly 50 percent from the field in the first half and traded baskets early on.

Eventually, the 3-point shooting made the difference as the Defenders shot a mere 16 percent from deep and the Raiders rained it down for 40 percent.

Late in the half, the Raiders were able to capitalize on the poor shooting by Dordt and build a lead which accumulated to 8 at three different times.

Despite the poor 3-point shooting for the Defenders, freshman guard Luke Rankin scored 10 points in the first half to keep the Defenders



Photo Credit: Dordt University Athletics

within striking distance. Going into halftime, the scoreboard showed the Raiders up 40-32.

The lead for the Raiders extended to 44-34 at the beginning of the second half, but after that, the Defenders caught fire, making five 3-pointers on five straight possessions. Junior forward Cade Bleeker and sophomore guard Bryce Coppock made two of these five, putting Dordt on top for the first time of the game at 51-50.

For the remainder of the game, neither team took a commanding lead. There were nine lead changes and four ties within the final 13 minutes of the game. With four minutes to play, the game was tied at 72.

After a few more traded buckets, the Raiders made a crucial 3-pointer and took the lead at 80-76. Senior guard Caleb Harmsen then got an offensive rebound and made a layup with 21 seconds left in the game to get the Defenders back within two. Northwestern then had a potentially disastrous turnover, but Dordt was not able to capitalize on the mistake and had their game-winning 3-point shot fall short.

"The game did not turn out like we wanted, but we played well and competed very well," Van Haaften said.

Dordt had a very balanced scoring attack. Coppock led Dordt with 17 points and 6 rebounds. Rankin added 14 points and 4 assists. Harmsen and Bleeker each contributed 13 points and Bleeker pulled down 6 boards. Sophomore forward Jacob Vis neared a double-double, scoring 8 points and grabbing 10 rebounds. The loss gave Northwestern the sweep over Dordt for the season.

"When you get to this time of year, a coach's insight is very minimal," said Van Haaften. "We just keep encouraging them and make a few adjustments for each team."

After a pair of wins against Jamestown to close out their season, the women ended with a conference record of 16-6 and the men 12-8.

"We look forward to representing Dordt in the GPAC tournament and hope Defender Nation shows up to support our team," Harmsen said.

Change in leadership for women's volleyball

Corine Beimers—Staff Writer

In Dec. 2021, shortly after the conclusion of the season for the Dordt University Women's Volleyball team, head coach Chad Hanson resigned after eleven years with the team.

During his tenure, Hanson led the team to a number of successful seasons and postseason appearances. His teams held a record of 236-96, with seven NAIA National Tournament appearances. In 2015 and 2018, Hanson was named GPAC Coach of the Year, and in 2017, Hanson was recognized as the NAIA Coach of the Year.

Through Hanson, the Dordt women's volleyball program made itself a name in the NAIA, but it was always about more than that for the longtime coach. He reflected on his time as the women's head coach as unexpected. He never knew what each season would bring:

"There were different ebbs and flows. I had to ask, 'What is success? What am I really after?'"

Throughout the years, he attributed his success to the relationships that were formed within the program. He hoped the trophies, banners, and rankings wouldn't influence relationships, but that those outcomes were a result of them.

"We've really achieved significant success during his tenure, but I think his greatest legacy will be that he really is able to keep Christian athletics in perspective," Ross Douma, director of athletics, said. "Those who have played for him really understand the authentic person he is."

The road wasn't always a smooth one. In Hanson's first season with the Defenders in 2011, they posted a losing record.

"I definitely came away from that season thinking, 'We have a lot to figure out,'" Hanson said. "I just kept studying where these athletes were coming from and started to get a better pulse for what it takes, and in 2013 we made our first national tournament."

After a trip to the national tournament this past fall and making it to the national semifinal the year prior, Hanson's resignation came a surprise to some the NAIA volleyball community. However, Hanson had been putting

in double the amount of work compared to other head coaches in similar positions,

Seven years ago, Dordt added a men's volleyball team. As the program started up, Hanson stepped into the role of head coach for the men's team while he balanced his responsibilities with the women's team at the same time. However, as the men's program improved over the years, the demands intensified.

"Stepping away from a successful women's program has been hard and it wasn't a flippant decision," Hanson said. "It was months and months of pondering and discussions."

After years of transitioning from the women's winter season to the men's spring season, Hanson's sole focus on the men's program enabled him to be more present with the men's team. The men's program is currently in the middle of their season. They are 4-4 with a 4-1 record in conference play.

Following Hanson's resignation in December, the search for a new coach started immediately. On Feb. 11, Darci Wassenaar was announced as Dordt's next women's volleyball coach.

Wassenaar graduated from Dordt College in 2002 and has since been teaching and coaching at Sioux Falls Christian High School. Throughout her 20 seasons of coaching, she has led the Chargers to a record of 579-109 and brought the team to several state championships.

She has received a long list of coaching awards, including the AVCA Regional Coach of the Year in 2018 and the NCSAA Volleyball Co-National Coach of the Year for the 2010-2011 season.

"What really brought coach Wassenaar to the forefront was the fact that her teams have been extremely successful on the court, but also the young people who have played for her speak volumes about the manner in which they matured as people under her direction," Douma said. "We really look forward to Coach Wassenaar taking the baton from Coach Hanson and really putting her own thumbprint on this program and watching it flourish under her leadership."

Dordt Hockey triumphs

Connor Van Hulzen – Staff Writer

The Dordt University Hockey team finished their season on Feb. 5 with a 7-1 loss to Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. However, their final game of the year won't be the lasting legacy of the team. Instead, the memories of one of Dordt Hockey's greatest seasons in history will live on.

Dordt Hockey's webpage dates back to the 2011-2012 season. Of those seasons listed, no team finished with a record over .500. The 2021-2022 edition of Dordt Defenders Hockey is the first team to exceed the .500 mark in ten years with a final record of 13-9.

The Defenders' roster this season featured a strong veteran presence as well as significant youth. Of the 22 players, the roster listed eight seniors and seven freshmen.

Balancing fresh talent with the battle-tested experience of tenured players allowed Dordt to finish the season ranked 21st in the American Collegiate Hockey Association's rankings of Division 3 teams.

"I loved [this season]," senior forward Jacob Petrie said. "It was one of our most successful seasons in recent memory. We had a bunch of new kids on the team, and we were able to mix the young and the old in a way that worked out well. I was very happy to finish the season ranked 21st."

The closest road game of the season boasted a two-hour drive to Omaha. The team also traveled to Colorado, Kansas, and Missouri.

Despite the hectic schedule, the Defenders found themselves outpacing many club teams from much larger schools and experiencing success that has not come around in quite some time.

"It is exciting to be good," senior defenseman Rylan Brue said. "I think this is the first step in terms of the hockey program getting a lot better. We've become comfortable with being a program that isn't always putting up losing seasons."

For seniors like Brue, this season represented the culmination of years of work on the ice together. Having put up with years of losing hockey, the team's recent victories were a welcome change for the seniors who experienced a combined record of 9-34-2 over the course of their first three years of college hockey.

"It's a little weird to think that because I played with some of these guys in high school, we've played together for a total of eight years," Brue said. "Having a really good last season with this group of guys was really cool. We stuck it out for three losing seasons and then to finish with a final winning season in our senior year – it was a good way to end."

As Dordt Hockey says goodbye to their eight seniors who started to turn the tide of history, they hope to navigate to a bright future and continue their winning ways.



Photo Credit: Dordt University Athletics

The Importance of Being Earnest promises laughter

Sydney Brummel—Copy Editor

Throughout this semester, Dordt University's Theatre Arts Department has worked in a variety of ways. From researching and designing to constructing and rehearsing, its students, professors, and staff members have been preparing for the department's upcoming show: *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The show, directed by Laurel Koerner, associate professor of directing and acting, is scheduled to perform from March 23-26.

Originally written by Oscar Wilde and first performed in 1895, *The Importance of Being Earnest* is a comedy set in Victorian England that tells an entertaining and hilarious story of a young man named Jack who goes by the name of Ernest. Along with his friend, Algernon, the two men go to ridiculous lengths to woo the women they love.

"It gets really complicated," Koerner said.

When deciding which play to perform next, the director considered several different factors. Koerner said that working with a smaller cast allows the actors to dig into the content of the play to a much greater degree and focus on improving their skills as performers. Wilde's play offered the perfect size to allow such growth to occur.

Moreover, despite the fact that the department had recently performed a comedy musical in the form of *Peter and the Starcatcher* earlier in the year, Koerner believed that choosing another comedy with *The Importance of Being Earnest* was appropriate and timely.

"I think with the stress of the last couple of years, we didn't mind doing a comedy again," Koerner said, "to offer some levity to the community in the midst of stressful times."

This spring's play will also launch the department's Apprentice Program. The show's Assistant Director, senior English major

Hannah Vanderhooft, has been coordinating the new program.

"I've really loved being able to work closely with Laurel and the rest of the department," Vanderhooft said. "I've learned a lot about theatre and the process of directing."

In the Apprentice Program, understudy roles have been given to "apprentice" actors, who will give a separate, abridged performance of *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The performance will be open for the theatre company and any interested audience members.

"It's just an opportunity for actors to get on stage and perform what they've been working on for the past couple of months," Vanderhooft said.

One of the greatest challenges that all the actors have faced in bringing Wilde's play to life is mastering the integral, comedic element of the play.

"This material is a good exercise in understanding long-form comedy," Koerner said. "We're more accustomed now to consuming comedy in 30-second increments, so to make an eight-minute scene funny, the whole way through, is a real challenge but so satisfying to work on."

Full of laughs for both the characters and audience, the play has become very popular since its original performance. *The Importance of Being Earnest* has been revived on stage countless times and has even been adapted to film. Dordt's own theatre arts department looks forward to performing their rendition in less than a month.

"It feels far away, but this time we have left will go really fast," Koerner said.

The process of planning and designing this show began long before this semester, however. Auditions for *The Importance of Being Earnest*



Photo Credit: Robin Suing

were held at the end of last semester so the cast could know their roles and begin preparing over winter break. Since they began rehearsals, the actors have met early deadlines, mastered challenging material, and made immense progress overall.

"It's really hard to get this play just right, and it has to be just right if it's going to be as funny as it can be," Koerner said. "And they're doing really phenomenal work."

Apart from skilled acting, the audience of the play can expect to carefully planned period costumes, hair, make-up, props, and a collection of immaculately designed sets for the play.

"All of the elements of the show—scenic design, lighting, sound—are coming together to make a great piece," Vanderhooft said.

"It's a lot of moving parts—a lot of personnel involved," Koerner said. "We get to have students come from so many different corners of campus, come together bring their interests and talents to make this one big thing together. Theatre is really special that way."

After returning for spring break, the Dordt community can look forward to a thoroughly designed and rehearsed comedy that has stood the test of time and will feature an impressive showcase of diverse talents.

"It's going to be hilarious," Koerner said. "Everyone should come."

Tall Girl 2 falls short

Hannah Vanderhooft—Staff Writer

Tall Girl is a movie about Jodi—a 6'2" high school girl who wears size 13 Nike's—and how she has been victimized her entire life because of that. I really thought that we were done with this franchise after a 57 percent score from Rotten Tomatoes and an average rating of 1.4 out of 5 stars on Letterboxd, but the Feb. 11 release of *Tall Girl 2* proved me wrong.

The movie begins with a brief recap from the first installment of the franchise: Jodi has always been tall for her age, so she never fit in. She has a whirlwind romance with a Swedish foreign exchange student and neglects her short, guy best friend, Dunkleman, who has been in love with her for her entire life. Spoiler: They get together at the end of the movie. (Thank you, Netflix, for normalizing women being taller in relationships.)

Fast forward to the second film and Jodi and Dunkleman are dating, Jodi has more friends, and for once in her life, everything seems to be going right. Everything is so right, in fact, that she decides to try out for the school musical, *Bye, Bye Birdie*. Jodi beats out the popular girl for the lead role.

Unlike the first movie, this film spends much less time focused on Jodi's height, but instead deals with the idea of self-worth and silencing the voice of doubt inside one's mind. Because Jodi has never been popular and always dealt with people bullying her, the first movie dealt with external doubt. This story shows her dealing with internal doubt and low confidence.

The biggest problem with this movie is how many different directions it tries to take. While Jodi is the main character, it attempts to tell the story of Jodi's sister, her best friend, the Swedish exchange student, and her brief breakup with Dunkleman. Jodi's role in *Bye, Bye Birdie* is easy to forget during all the moving parts. With a 97-minute run time, *Tall Girl 2* felt like a story that a group of college freshmen co-wrote in an introductory creative writing class. The story needed a few more workshops before hitting the big screen.

Tall Girl 2 tried to be a commentary on standing tall (no pun intended) and shutting

down the voice of doubt inside of you. But it did not hit the mark—the exposition remained surface-level and gave cheap answers to the struggles of mental health. The problems the characters faced lacked depth, making it hard to invest in any of the various storylines taking place.

True to form, its subpar acting mirrored most Netflix Original movies. The delivery of lines from Jodi and her cohorts felt like a bad short film, but in their favor, the script wasn't helping at all. It felt like it was written by a group of millennials who think they know how high schoolers act and talk, using abrasive slang and catch phrases that I've only heard people use ironically.

Apart from the poor script, mediocre acting, and terrible pacing of this movie, I have a hard time justifying the idea behind it. As a white woman who is 6'2", I can promise you that tall women are not an oppressed demographic. In my experience, the only bad thing about being tall is finding jeans and being asked if you play volleyball.

If you're looking for a lighthearted movie and something to laugh at with your friends, this is your movie. Don't go into it too excited or with high expectations. They will be crushed.



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Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba takes the stage

Elise Wennberg—Staff Writer

Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba has become one of the most popular anime series of the past few years. Its meteoric rise to stardom may qualify it as one of the best anime series of all time, due to its Shonen formula, art style, character design, and protagonist.

The manga, first released in 2016, ended its second season earlier this year.

This second season, the Entertainment District Arc, kickstarted a new adventure for Kamado Tanjiro, the series' protagonist. However, despite how the second season blew me away in comparison to the first season and the movie, I couldn't overlook the plot.

Though you won't find me criticizing the plot on most anime shows, the Entertainment District Arc didn't cut it for me, story speaking. For example, at the end of the season, Nezuko, the secondary main character, develops a sudden, unbelievable ability without explanation.

The length of season two leaves a lot to be desired as well. For season two, *Demon Slayer* was allotted eleven episodes, which comes in

at half the size of season one, which boasted of 26 episodes. Given its shorter length, the plot of season two felt overly rushed and patched up with humor.

While Tanjiro and Zenitsu wearing full faces of makeup offered a funny sight to see, the humor undermined sections of the narrative.

Still, what the show lacked for in plot, it made up with its animation. It's some of the best I've ever seen. The battle scenes are beautifully crafted and the use of light, color, and CGI make the anime brilliant. Ufotable, the Japanese animation studio, paired the design with classic Japanese-style buildings, clothing, and culture to produce another outstanding work. Also, the animation is intensified by the soundtrack that accompanies it, including the opening and ending songs.

Overall, the second season of *Demon Slayer* is worth the watch for the animation alone, as well as the battles and intensifying storyline that possesses the potential to become one of the most watched anime series of all time.



Contributed Photo

Death on the Nile: Three unexciting deaths

Gretchen Lee—Copy Editor

I loved *Murder on the Orient Express*; visually pleasing, cleverly crafted, and an ending packed with an emotional and moral punch that left the audience devastated. Every inch of *Murder* was packed with suspense, clues, and intrigue.

After having seen the newly released sequel, *Death on the Nile*, I have concluded that the writers put every bit of their talent into *Murder on the Orient Express* and saved absolutely none of it for *Death on the Nile*.

In the film, detective Hercule Poirot finds himself a guest to a young heiress's honeymoon on the Nile River. Though the newlyweds seem happy, the young woman tells Hercule in private that she doesn't feel safe among her closest friends. With a jealous ex-lover on the loose and an excess of money waiting to be stolen, our hero lands in the center of several emotionally driven mysteries.

This film had the potential to be clever. Jealousy is a powerful narrative tool that can drive brilliant stories and, with this film's exotic setting and large cast, the filmmakers had everything at their disposal to make a slam-dunk success. Instead, the movie felt empty.

First, the plot moved too slowly, with few moments of discovery or action. This would have been excusable had there been interesting dialogue, but even the script felt rather lacking. So much time was spent leading up to the murder that, by the time it arrived at such a point, the audience was bored, and the death lacked emotional weight.

Once the action picked up, the ending lacked the skill and cleverness of its predecessor; the culprit was somewhat interesting, but the murder itself lacked the brilliance and foreshadowing that made *Murder* incredible.

Technically speaking, this film has charm. The set, costuming, camerawork, and editing made for a visually spectacular way to spend two hours. The characters were framed and displayed in unique ways that, at least, were pleasing to the eye and helped reveal bits of information about their emotional state. The soundtrack was, overall, very good. It enhanced the mood with its jazz and blues undertones in a way that helped maintain the 1920s setting.

I also felt the film was well-cast and well-acted. This, however, was not enough to



Contributed Photo

compensate for a lack of development for many of the characters; the actors did well with the script they were given, but I was not particularly compelled by most of their stories, as I never felt I knew enough about any character.

Even Poirot, whom we have already spent an entire other movie with, seemed distant and aloof; I didn't understand why he was there,

“Cinematically speaking, it was beautiful, but the narrative was so weak and disjointed that I struggled to stay invested.”

-Gretchen Lee

and I felt he did far less sleuthing than in the previous film. In the final act, Poirot did have a well-acted emotional drive, but even then, I didn't understand as much of his psyche as I did at the end of *Murder*.

In summary, *Death on the Nile* was a disappointment. It lacked nearly everything I loved about the last Poirot movie and felt as though it was pieced together. I know that due to COVID-19, its production was disrupted, but after having its release date pushed back so many times, I was hoping for a higher caliber of film.

Cinematically speaking, it was beautiful, but the narrative was so weak and disjointed that I struggled to stay invested.

I still hope for more Poirot in the future, but I'm willing to wait for the filmmakers to put in the time and effort needed to create something that has a more emotional punch and a cleverer resolution.



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Uncharted: One long, unskippable cut scene

Aleasha Hintz—Staff Writer

Uncharted offers unmitigated escapism for want-to-be adventurers. The film, based on the popular PlayStation video game franchise, follows a small band of explorers on a race to find the legendary Ferdinand Magellan's stash of gold before the big bad gets there first. The movie blends tropes from heist movies, adventure films, and pirate stories. The end result is a movie similar to *Red Notice*, *Jumanji*, *National Treasure*, and *The Pirates of the Caribbean*, lending a pleasant touch of familiarity.

The cast list is also quite impressive. Tom Holland and Mark Wahlberg, both A-list actors, are the film's stars. They're joined by Sophia Taylor Ali, Tati Gabrielle, Antonio Banderas, and Rudy Pankow, all of whom deliver stellar renditions.

While I was excited to see Tom Holland step outside of *Spider-Man* and take on a grittier role, I felt as if I was watching an older version of Peter Parker, rather than Nathan Drake, the film's protagonist. In *Uncharted*, Tom Holland seems to have been type-casted once again. While his typical performance does not have a huge effect on the film, it is noticeable.

From the very first scene, the film is an adrenaline-pumping story: Drake is caught by the ankle and hangs thousands of feet in the air behind a large aircraft. What follows is a harrowing, frantic climb back to the belly of the plane, punctuated by well-timed punches and several, terminal plummets.

The movie then whisks back in time to visit a young Drake, showing his origin story, and how he got into thievery and heisting in the first place. Drake's older brother Sam, played by

Rudy Pankow, has tremendous influence on the young boy, for better or for worse. The brothers are orphaned and hurting. All they have is each other, but by the end of the same scene, Sam leaves, unwillingly.

This section of the film feels reminiscent of a video game cut scene. The dialogue feels stilted and unoriginal, even tired. But it's worth watching as it sets up some enticing motivation for Drake and gets a lot of the historical exposition out of the way. It also prevents the plot from tripping up and slowing down on the legend behind the treasure later in the movie.

After this, the plot accelerates, and then thickens, and then accelerates, and then thickens. I was on the edge of my seat. The action scenes were unlike anything I had ever seen in a movie. I was infatuated with them. There was the genre-typical hand-to-hand

combat, but there was also melee and gunfights and free falls and flying pirate ships. They were among the most visually interesting action scenes I've seen in a while.

Despite all these wonderful qualities, the movie wasn't perfect. There are no time or date references, so we can only assume the plot takes place in the modern day. The treasure is linked to real-life history. While there are no superpowers or maniacal villains, the real-life physics get mixed in with movie physics, and that tends to interrupt my suspension of disbelief. It's just hard to believe that a special helicopter would be able to fly an entire ship with the help of just two well-placed chains.

The end of the movie, however, more than makes up for that in my mind. And, excitingly, sets the stage for more *Uncharted* movies, though I'll avoid spoilers this time around.

The show won't go on: Prairie Grass Film Challenge concludes after 15 years cont.

cont. from pg. 1

...impact the community and the challenge's participants. He thought it was necessary to promote the arts in the Midwest, inspire the next generation of filmmakers, and create "content worth consuming" for all audiences.

Though last Friday marked the final year of the challenge, the PGFC leadership team decided to close the curtain on the event five years ago at the tenth PGFC. For the leadership team, fifteen years provided the PGFC with enough time to leave an impact on young filmmakers.

Over the years, participants of the PGFC have enrolled in the Master of Fine Arts and Directing program at Northwestern University and played a role in the production of hit TV



shows such as *You*, *God Friended Me*, and more.

"It's bittersweet," Hofmeyer said. "You don't want it to be the last one."

Next year, Hofmeyer wants to make a short film with his team "in honor" of the PGFC.

Photo Credit: Daniel Ketchelos

“It was so great to end this journey on a high note. I’ve discovered a passion for filmmaking that I didn’t know I had.”

-Josh Gross

Going live in three, two, one...

Dayna Wichhart—Staff Writer



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“Ready on camera three? Take camera three,” Derek Koops said as his technical director’s fingers flew over buttons and worked to display the basketball coach’s red cheeks and raised fists on the main monitor. Koops continued to rattle off instructions to the team.

“We need to run the Casey’s Bakery graphic, is it ready?”

“What about the replay of the dunk? Ready for it at the break?”

It’s a cold Saturday in February. While the basketball team runs the floor, a second team runs cords, cameras and microphones through the DeWitt Gymnasium.

Koops, a junior studying Digital Media Production, serves on a 21-member team that makes up the Dordt Media Network (DMN). He started working one semester after the DMN launched in January 2019.

“I was looking for a work study, but I didn’t know what to do. I talked to [Rich] Lodewyk and the Dordt Media Network interested me right away,” Koops said.

In January of 2018, Rich Lodewyk, media network director, was hired to establish a livestreaming system for Dordt events. Before his hiring, the university community expressed an interest in viewing live footage of their family members and friends participating in athletics and concerts.

Since its origination, the DMN has expanded and split into two production teams. Alex Priore and her team cover concerts and chapel while Lodewyk and his team broadcast campus and community athletic events.

In the semester leading up to the launch of the Dordt Media Network, the university invested in a media truck.

The truck serves as a mobile control center for the broadcast. All the cameras and microphones run to the truck, which boasts multiscreen displays that switch between multiple camera angles, instant replays, and advertisements.

In the first year, Lodewyk directed the events because students were inexperienced and not ready to direct and handle the broadcast on their own. This has changed.

“I believe in faculty-led, student-run,” Lodewyk said.

Lodewyk no longer sits in the truck with the students, and sometimes isn’t even at the game.

“My goal is to let the students run the broadcast, and I simply remind them of what makes a good broadcast and be available for troubleshooting,” Lodewyk said.

An hour and a half before the broadcast, Koops walks through the doors of the empty DeWitt and begins unwrapping cords and plugging them in. The DeWitt is permanently cabled, making setup move quickly. For the outdoor events, the cords run for lengths of 300 feet or more.

A half hour before tip-off, Koops puts on the headset and settles in for a couple hours of action. He began as a camera operator but has progressed to director for some games. As a director, Koops calls the shots for the livestream’s display, provides instructions to the camera operators, and ensures that all sponsors receive their proper airtime.

“Every time you work, you do a different job,” Koops said.

Four camera men line the DeWitt and two perch in the balcony, providing the main view of game play. In addition, two lie on the floor, creeping for shots of angry coaches, celebrations, and engaged audience members.

Just outside the gym, the second team resides in the truck. A replay person searches for good shots and edits them together for game breaks.

“We haven’t always been so smooth running. It used to be that if we got a couple replays in a half, we would be happy,” Koops said.

A graphics person catalogs halftime stats, schedules, and ads. The technical director and director communicate to create a production easy for viewing. The director looks at the monitors and chooses which shots look best and instructs the technical director to press the buttons to make it happen.

“Lodewyk wants the broadcast to be high quality, and he expects the most out of us,” Koops said. “He is not one to settle. He always

wants to keep improving.”

Lodewyk plans to continue growing the system. In the future, he hopes to have students create a pregame show, interviewing coaches and players before the game on camera.

Koops’ work with the DMN has given him invaluable career experience, which has given him the chance to take his skills beyond Dordt’s walls. Koops takes a few odd jobs working at the Sioux City Musketeers games. At the semi-pro hockey games, Koops usually helps with replays.

“It’s similar to the Dordt Media Network. It’s just bigger scale,” Koops said.

“I think it’s the best job on campus,” Koops said, “I have a lot of fun working with a lot of different people.”

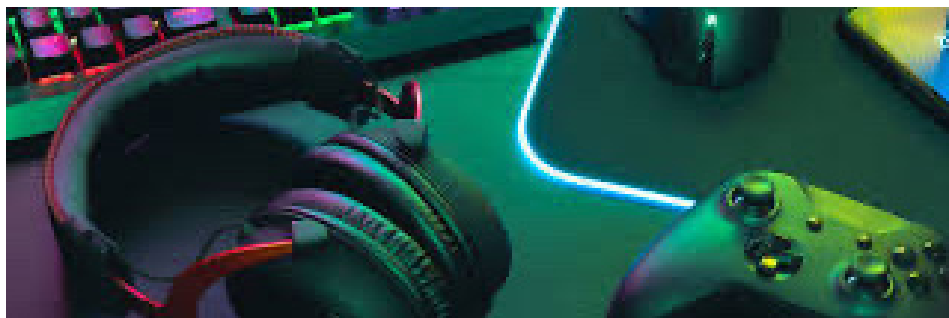
As the final buzzer sounded, teams headed to the locker rooms and students scattered from the gym, but one team remained. Koops and the DMN unplugged and wrapped up cables, packed up cameras, and drove the truck to the garage.



Photo Credit: Dayna Wichhart

Gaming Guild levels up

Emma Bennett—Staff Writer



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Between hosting monthly get-togethers, Super Smash Bros. tournaments, and a recent trivia night, the number of attendees for the six-month-old Dordt University Gaming Guild has remained consistent.

“[Gaming] is something that’s close to my heart,” sophomore and Gaming Guild President Ethan Haeder said. “Being able to see something that I’m passionate about be expanded upon and do good things at a place that I love is really something.”

Despite the guild’s recent formation, plans to expand the club’s operations are already in the works. The first and most imminent change is a transfer to a new space. Up until now, the guild has hosted most of its events in the basement of Covenant Hall. There, space is limited and students are required to relinquish it for events. Now, the guild plans to move to the basement of Kuyper Apartments.

With additional space, the guild can decorate the area to their liking, gathering students’ opinions in the creation process.

“I want this to be a community project,” Theology Professor and Guild Director Brad Hickey said. “So that when someone walks into that space, they realize they contributed to it in some way.”

In addition to a larger, personalized

space for the guild, the club may turn academic as well. Dordt has been considering creating a gaming major or minor, concentrating on using gaming to glorify God and play in a Christ-centered way.

“What we find is students don’t often think through their gaming, because they feel like their gaming is separate from their Christian life,” Hickey said. “[The guild] should help build sensitivities to the Holy Spirit.”

Looking forward, Dordt hopes to have its own gaming camp for middle schoolers during Dordt Discovery Days.

“To be able to have this camp so [middle schoolers] can already begin to understand the language between gaming and faith,” Hickey said. “Especially since games are a place where people get their political and theological views.”

Recently, the Gaming Guild had their student-designed logo, Locked In, accepted. This means Dordt will use the guild as a part of recruitment efforts in the fall.

“When I came [to Dordt] my goal was to say, ‘What is Dordt, what do we value?’” Hickey said. “And how do we produce that in way that can help gamers who want to be professional but also think about their relationship with God?”

Dabbling in dating at Dordt University

Teresa Taylor – Staff Writer

“You know what time it is. It’s Valentine’s Day. I hate Valentine’s Day. But it gives us the rare opportunity to date willy-nilly, and so we shall,” Issac Rohne said.

Rohne, a senior, then invited the “not-takens” on campus to fraternize with their fellow singles. After the success of the speed dating event following Heartland Break, Rohne gave the event a second act on the day of love: Valentine’s Day.

“You have no idea who the hell is dating who,” Rohne said about the prevalence of couples on campus. “But on Valentine’s Day, all the couples are gone.”

At 8:00 p.m., 30 contestants met in the lobby of Kuyper Apartments to try their hand at the dating game. The event consisted of ten, five-minute rounds, where topics such as dinner dates, Valentine’s Day opinions, and reasons for choosing Dordt were discussed. Rohne encouraged pairs to ignore the prompts, though, allowing for free-flowing conversation. After each round, the contestants rated enjoyability of the date on a scale of one to ten.

At the end of the night, Rohne tallied the scores and released the results. The “most datable” guy and gal on campus were senior Luke Bousema and sophomore Emma Vande Voort.

“It was kind of like being in a sitcom but without the laugh track,” Vande Voort said. “It was pretty fun—a good way to meet a bunch of random people.”

“I was absolutely exhausted by the end, but it was enjoyable to meet so many amazing people,” Bousema said. “I think dating is seen as too serious on campus, so I enjoyed being in an environment where dating was so relaxed.”

The speed dating event offered the single students on campus a night out and an outlet to poke fun at the university’s dating culture.

“I believe the dating culture of Dordt can be summed up by a phrase sung by the Canons of Dordt: ‘Can you smell the hogs tonight?’” a participant said.

Another said: “People need to stop making me feel bad about being single. I’m happy.”

Though some students lamented their university’s attitudes toward dating and marriage, Donald Roth, associate professor of criminal justice, said it “worked for me.”

“Being number one in engagement may have both connotations,” Roth said.

Still, Roth thinks that a hyper-fixation on marriage can have harmful effects:

“Sometimes conservative Christian culture can be so marriage-focused all the time that it gets in the way of forming healthy relationships with the opposite sex. We should be resisting oversexualization of culture.”

Rohne said he intended for the speed dating event to provide a night for single students to enjoy themselves, rather than worrying about not having a date.



Photo Credit: Teresa Taylor

Czech out Broadway: Concer Choir fundraises for tour

Katie Ribbens—Staff Writer



Contributed Photo

The lit blue and purple backdrop bathed the Grille in cool tones. Dordt University Concert Choir members dressed in black milled about, chatting and making last-minute adjustments. A divider hid the rest of the choir from view, where they prepared desserts supplied by Dordt Dining. Round tables peppered the room, filled with guests. The choir emerged from the shadows and lined the walls. Eager faces, from an infant's wide eyes to a woman's lined face, turned toward the stage.

Broadway and Desserts took place on Saturday, Feb. 12 to raise funds for the choir's upcoming tour to Austria and the Czech Republic. The choir performed 16 Broadway songs by way of solos, duets, and trios. The entire choir came together at the opening and conclusion of the night. The fundraiser exceeded the amount of money they hoped to raise for the tour.

Choir director Ryan Smit allowed the students to take the lead in organizing the event. He did not hear the songs until the soundcheck an hour before the event. He wanted students to find songs they were passionate about and would not require handholding.

"I trust my singers," Smit said. "There's a lot of talent in that ensemble."

Smit said in the future he may host some brief auditions to help students prepare for the next time they conduct Broadway and Desserts.

Miranda Munson, a sophomore technical theatre major, had a hand in organizing the event in addition to her performance. When Smit asked for volunteers for the Student Leadership Committee, Munson answered the call to serve as chairwoman. She and the five other members of the committee worked to make the event a success.

"It never ends up how you think it will, but it always still ends up better than you thought," Munson said. "I was pleasantly surprised by how everything came together."

Munson performed "I'm Past my Prime" from *Li'l Abner* with sophomore Zach Brenner. They chose the song because they found the lyrics ironic to their friendship. Munson also performed "Matchmaker" from *Fiddler on the Roof* with her two sisters, Isabel and Sonja. The song featured three sisters in the original

musical, so the Munson sisters mirrored the dynamic in their performance.

"We grew up listening to that musical," Munson said. "Of course we had to [perform the song]."

Rylan Brue, a senior, performed "Anything You Can Do" from *Annie Get Your Gun* with senior Rachel Heynen. The song called for a fun banter back and forth, which they delivered to much laughter and applause from the audience. They've had the song in mind for two years—since their last choir tour.

Smit said the upcoming tour will offer opportunities for students to experience music and culture. They will sing at several famous churches where they can share the gospel and appreciate stellar acoustics. St. Nicholas Church, Salzburg Cathedral, Imperial Capuchin Church, and St. Peter's Church are only some of the many they will visit. These European churches often remain empty on Sunday: they are a site for tourism over worship.

"Many choirs just sing this historical Christian music because it's historical," Smit said. "We sing historical Christian music because it's Christian."

Although they may have to take some COVID-19 precautions, the trip is still scheduled

for May 19-28. Students will also be given freedom to explore the area in group tours and on their own. Brue jumped at the opportunity to go on the tour to Europe. He joined the concert choir for the community and the chance to create something together. COVID-19 cut his last choir tour short in New York in March 2020, just hours before they were set to watch *Phantom of the Opera* on Broadway.

"You get to harvest all the fruit from the community built throughout the year and then you just enjoy a lot of time together traveling," Brue said. "I wouldn't pass up the tour for anything."

It will be the second time he visits Europe in a single year. Brue also attended Dordt's Dante and the Italian Renaissance trip over Christmas break. But this time, he will get to sing in the churches instead of just touring through them, something he appreciates as a theology major.

Although the tour is slightly intimidating to Munson, she believes college is the best time to travel and is looking forward to the tour.

"Choir is so important to me," Munson said. "Basically, music is how I run as a person. It's just always been there and always will be."



Contributed Photo

Sioux Center Public Library checks out resources for community

Tabetha DeGroot – Staff Writer

The Sioux Center Public Library bustles with activity on a frozen, February afternoon. Grade-school kids come from their early-outs and occupy the computers in the center of the library. Others sit in the kids section, reading books. A little girl reads to a service dog named Stanley in the corner. Some

senior citizens sit in the back, sipping coffee and flipping through newspapers. In the meeting rooms, Lego Club takes place, where kids build structures from either instructions or their imaginations. This colorful, life-filled setting contrasts the grey world outside, and it's only the first page of the book, so to speak.

The Sioux Center Public library offers numerous programs for children, but the library also has more to offer the students of Dordt University

"We have many e-resources available that Dordt Students can use," Heidi Ouwinga, a librarian, said.

Such resources include a cloud library through which eBooks and audio books can be borrowed, Libby, a platform that offers eBooks and videos, and Hoopla, a platform that provides free streaming of TV shows, movies, and music, and books.

The Research and Database department additionally has accessible academic resources, including the full Encyclopedia Britannica and various newspaper archives, or major-specific resources, such as a vast collection of children's books and self-paced courses for Education majors and web design software for Digital Media majors. Career assistance is also provided for members.

All e-resources are accessible via library card, which Dordt students can acquire with

their ID cards. However, a physical card is also helpful and even necessary in various circumstances. To obtain a full library card, one can ask for one at the front desk of the library, and a staff member will provide a small information card to fill out.

A library card grants access to the many physical books and resources at the library, including the library of "things," in which members can rent games, baking supplies, an instant pot, a Wii, and many more items.

In addition to these countless resources, many activities are held at the Sioux Center Library. Currently, a winter reading program is in session.

"I think after you come off the holidays it's kind of, blah," Youth Services Librarian Emily Van Weerdhuizen said. "So it's a good way to get people excited about something and just continue reading during the year."

The winter program is for 5th graders through adult-aged members. Reading logs are available at the front desk or online through beanstack.com. The prizes are a \$25 Walmart gift card for adults and prize baskets 5th to 12th graders.



Photo Credit: Tabetha DeGroot

International students share culture at fair cont.

cont. from pg. 1

...Rop saw the full display, he felt it did his country justice.

"I'm still like, looking at the pictures," he said the next day. "I'm like, this is amazing. And people back at home, they're really happy about it. Like, 'Oh, you're really representing.'"

An hour into the fair, the lights dimmed and the crowd filled rows of red Grille chairs until there were none left, then stood two or three deep at the back. Smiling students walked the runway, displaying Chinese Qipao and Indonesian Kebaya dresses, Kenyan Maasai robes, Honduran tela lenca shirts, and Canadian athletic clothes. Many completed their outfits with a pair of sneakers.

Judith Flier said she did not bring traditional Dutch clothing to America, but she still wanted to put her culture on the stage. She found her chance in the final portion of the Cultural Fair.

Flier stepped onstage with pigtail braids and a bright orange "Holland" shirt, following an Indonesian trio who raised sweet, clear voices to sing island folk songs, and closed with a ramen noodle jingle.

Flier fixed her capo and papers with a grin and informed the audience she would take them on a tour of the Netherlands through song. She began with Amsterdam, but quickly switched to regional songs, and a one about nostalgia for small towns in general.

When she finished, Melanie Saavedra, from Panama, sang "Un Poco Loco." Enock Rop joined her for the second half of the song, then brought his guitar onstage to sing about Kenya. He was followed by Tommy Shin with a well-known South Korean song called "Arirang," of which every region of his country has a version. He sang a medley of those versions, and the talent show closed with a latina hip hop dance

routine by Melanie Saavedra.

When Enock Rop took the stage in the talent show, he called for a round of applause for Auntie Deb.

"She's a Kenyan," he told the audience. "A Kenyan from Iowa."

Rop said Sioux Center is similar to his rural hometown in Kenya, and he was surprised when he came here to find that Iowans have so much in common with his Kenyan community. He found a warm, rural welcome at Dordt that

"There's something so special about people sharing from their culture, and other people being open to hear it, to taste it, to see it."

-Judith Flier

makes him feel at home.

Flier, too, comes from a small community. She choose to start her medley with Amsterdam because when people hear she is from the Netherlands, they usually link her to the capital city. She wanted to start there, with a familiar name, then pull away and remind people there is more to her country.

"There's something so special," Flier said, "about people sharing from their culture, and other people being open to hear it, to taste it, to see it. It's just so neat to be able to show a bit of where you're from because I know that being Dutch is a part of my identity."

The Back Page

Tired

Lexi Schnaser – Staff Writer

At the start of every semester, I am optimistic about my classes. I love learning about government and criminal justice. Yet, class after class, I realize I am greatly outnumbered by my male peers.

In any of my major-specific classes at Dordt University, I've been one of the few or the only woman in the class. Being the lone woman in a class full of men talking about policies and ideologies that specifically affect you and your body is exhausting.

Maybe I'm picking my battles wisely. Maybe I'm putting my energy into other responsibilities. Maybe I'm just giving up. But I'm tired of being exhausted. I'm tired of working in groups with men who either don't let me pitch in on ideas or expect me to organize our project and do everyone's work for them. I'm tired of always getting picked on to answer questions in class or never getting called on. I'm tired of being looked at like I'm a crazy liberal. I'm tired of explaining to my male friends why it's harmful to make jokes about women being stay-at-home mothers. I'm especially anxious for an upcoming debate about women's reproductive health rights for my constitutional law class—in which I'm the only woman.

I'm tired for my friends in other male-

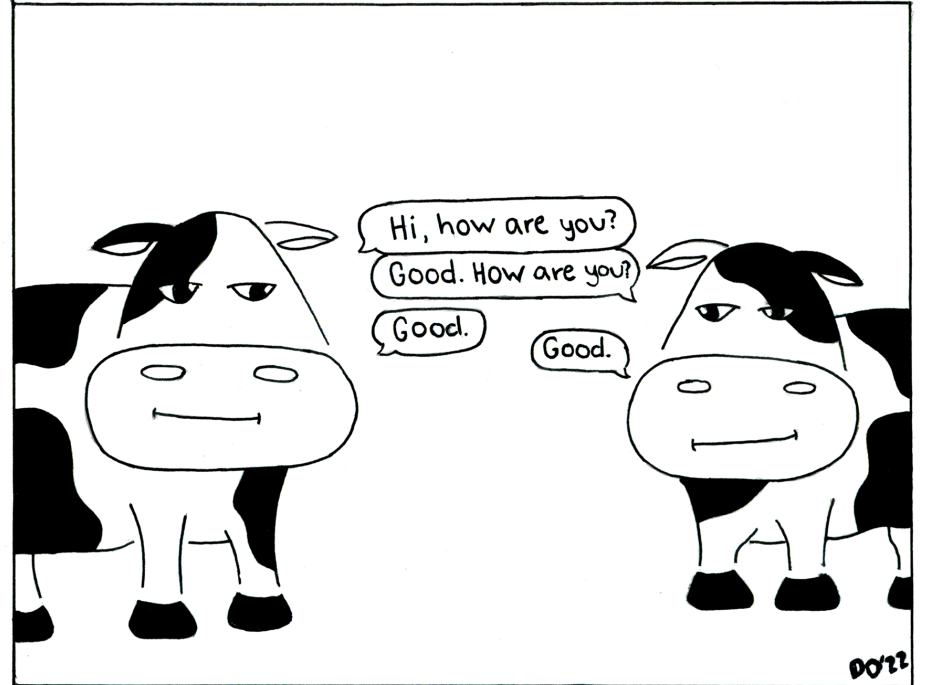
dominated majors. I'm tired for my friend who is one of two theology majors in her a class, where her male counterpart is always called on for his opinion when theological matters come up in class. I'm tired from reading class materials exclusively written by men.

I'm tired of walking into a male professor's office and wondering if they even believe I can accomplish all my professional goals. When I decide I don't think law school is right for me, I shouldn't have to be worried about a professor saying, "I was right. She wasn't strong enough for it."

Still, I have a few male friends in my major for whom I am incredibly grateful. I am thankful for the female social work professors I've had classes with who encourage me to continue. I'm thankful for the conversations I've had where people respond with empathy to my frustrations.

And while I'm thankful, I'm also just ready to be done. Almost halfway through my last semester at Dordt, I'm wondering if I've done enough, and why it seems to be my responsibility to support myself—a woman in political science, criminal justice, and beyond.

Diamond Digs



The Midwestern Hello

Devyn Driesen – Guest Contributor

Dordt Ag club milks success at PAS competition

Zac VanderLey – Staff Writer

Dordt's agriculture club sent 31 students to the Professional Agriculture Students (PAS) competition in Ames, Iowa. All 31 students qualified for nationals. Agriculture clubs from Iowa State University, Dordt University, and other Iowa community colleges competed in individual and team competitions from Feb. 9-11. While these students are used to hands on jobs in the agriculture field, the PAS competition provides an opportunity for agriculture students to showcase their content knowledge and job preparedness.

Emma Zwart, a junior agriculture major, participated in the beef livestock production employment interview. She submitted a resume and cover letter in addition to interviewing for a mock job.

"It's just an excellent way, competitively, to practice our skills for interviewing for internships and jobs in the future in a very forgiving environment," Zwart said.

She received second place in her individual competition in the beef category, scoring 185 out of 200 points possible. One judge scores the resume and cover letter out of 100 points, and another judge scores the interview out of 100 points, creating a total of 200 points for the individual competitions. Last year, Zwart made it to nationals in the swine category.

Katie Bush, a junior agriculture secondary



Contributed Photo

education major, placed second in the employment interview for agriculture education with a score of 182 out of 200, qualifying her for nationals. She reviewed notes from her classes and watched videos of speakers in preparation for her competitions.

"For me, it isn't about the awards or the placements," Bush said. "It's about using the gifts God gave me to help make experiences like nationals something that the members will remember and hold close to their hearts even after we leave Dordt."

participate in her first physical nationals' event, as last year occurred online.

After growing up on a farm in Hull, Iowa where her family raised sheep, goats, hogs, and a head of cattle, Zwart knew she wanted to pursue a career in agriculture.

"It's just being a steward of God's creation," Zwart said. "You are so connected to everything God created."

"Agriculture is the foundation of life, and is one of the most unique ways that we can answer God's calling for humanity."

-Katie Bush

Bush has participated in state and national PAS the past three years, competing in categories such as impromptu speaking, swine production, and nursery landscape.

She grew up on a farm and has been surrounded by agriculture her entire life. At the age of five, Bush had already begun helping her grandpa raise pigs, grow corn, and grow soybeans. Her parents raise poultry while her aunts and uncles also have animal and crops operations.

"Agriculture is the foundation of life," Bush said, "and is one of the most unique ways that we can answer God's calling for humanity."

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