

Northwestern College, Iowa

NWCommons

The Beacon, 2020-2021

The Beacon student newspaper

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The Beacon Staff

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Unsung Heroes: Martha Draayer

SHE HAS A "VISION FOR DIVERSITY"

CAMBER HERRIG
PUBLIC RELATIONS

Northwestern's "Vision for Diversity" is rooted in embracing diversity, lamenting human brokenness, reconciling with one another and embodying shalom. This is what intrigued Martha Draayer, NW's Hispanic Community Liaison, about the college.

Draayer, an '09 alum, is the first to fill a position at NW focused on building Hispanic relationships with the college.

"I was drawn to NWC's vision for diversity and vision for the position of Hispanic Community Liaison. The opportunity to help develop a brand-new position on campus was exciting. I'm also an alum and have always considered NWC home."

On campus, Draayer works with students on what hospitality looks like for Latinx students, as well as with different departments on campus with a variety of projects.

Off campus, Draayer works with organizations that wish to partner with NW and the college's vision for diversity.

In a typical week, Draayer meets with students, holds meetings with community partners and develops programs. These programs both educate on and celebrate diverse perspectives, along with working with area pastors to bridge-build with the local Latinx congregation.

One of these efforts is the Latin Cuisine Cooking Classes, a four-week course where students learned how to make their own meals from a local Latina, Lucy Martinez, owner of Trejo's Catering.

"It gave me more insight and a deeper understanding to authentic Latin cuisine," participant Riley Rasmussen said. "Trejo's Catering, along with Martha and Neftali Ramirez, created authentic food, something I haven't experienced at American-Mexican restaurants before. Campus Ministry Team has begun to integrate this authentic food into our meetings."

A recent effort by Draayer is the PIECE 1:1 tutoring program,



PHOTO COURTESY OF NW MARCOMM
Martha Draayer (middle) laughs with Neftali Ramirez (left) and Isaac Munoz (right) in Ramaker.

an opportunity for volunteers Language Learner, a way for the NW amidst the Latinx community. to teach English to an English population to further build bridges

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Vital Worship Grant awarded

TRANSLATING JESUS' PARABLES

RACHEL SMART
ENGLISH TEACHING

Northwestern College is filled with incredibly talented faculty who continue to write and publish academic work every year.

This year, dean of arts and humanities and associate professor of biblical studies, Dr. John Vonder Bruegge, has been awarded the Vital Worship Grant of \$12,000 by the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. He will be using the grant to continue his work on a book of original translations of Jesus' parables. Vonder Bruegge will also be partnering with retired theater and worship arts professor Jeff Barker. Senior religion major Benjamin De Boer will be working as the research assistant of the project for Vonder Bruegge.

In order to receive the grant, Vonder Bruegge had to go through an extensive application and approval process which includes answering twenty short essay

questions on the project ranging from "what is the purpose of this project" to "how do you plan to disseminate your research?"

"It's cliché to say that it's not really about the money, but for scholars, that's actually true," Vonder Bruegge said. "The most thrilling part is that you put an idea out there—a new and creative idea—and someone sees that it's an idea worth pursuing and supporting."

The project began over a year ago when Barker approached Vonder Bruegge with the idea of creating a fresh translation of the parables of Christ. Barker's specialty has been focusing on the performance of Scripture.

"Not all translations are written for speaking aloud," Barker soon learned after attempting to memorize Jesus' parables.

Therefore, the goal of this new book is to create a translation of Jesus' parables that is more conducive to being read aloud.

"Jesus did not write [the parables] down, distribute them as pamphlets, and say, 'hey look



PHOTO BY JADEYN VELTKAMP
Dr. John Vonder Bruegge helps Ben De Boer with a research assignment in the Learning Commons.

these over and let me know if you have any questions," Vonder Bruegge said. "Yet that's how they come to us today—as written to the parables, since that's how they started." interesting to bring orality back

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Wallen's skill conquers many styles

MUSIC REVIEW

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

PAIGE GINGER
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Morgan Wallen is a country singer that recently released the album entitled "Dangerous: The Double Album." He is a native of Tennessee, who first started to gain popularity in 2017 and has since had over 3 billion streams. He is thought to be the next hottest country singer as he won the award for New Artist of the Year and Best New Country Artist at the 2020 CMAs along with several other awards since 2017.

The album contains a variety of songs that all range about three minutes in length with the total number of songs on the album is being 30. The songs all have a fairly upbeat vibe and compared to other country artists, he has entertaining lyrics for his songs.

Like many musicians that

have come before him, there are always critics out there that can ultimately make or break a career. Many critics were positive in their reviews of the album with AllMusic's opinion that "he sounds as comfortable sliding into a wall of digital sound as he does singing with just an acoustic guitar or two".

Rolling Stone, though, was not as impressed. Aside from the fact they think the album is "17 songs too long", they said "Wallen does not always seem up to the heavy task of pumping fresh life into well-worn topics."

For lovers of the country genre, this new album needs a listen. There is a song for people who like the different styles of country on the album. The songs "Somebody's Problem" and "7 Summers" are the soft, acoustic guitar style on the album, whereas "Beer Don't" has southern rock vibes.

The genre of country also has its share of haters, but Wallen's songs are decent

and could pull listeners from other genres. For new listeners, in order to get a full opinion about the album, one needs to listen to a couple of the songs before making a final decision on whether or not to like Wallen because of his variety of songs.

A couple of the highlights from the album were "Sand in My Boots" and "Neon Eyes" but all of the songs had good qualities to them. The descriptions in the song "Sand in my Boots" are great and tell a story of meeting a girl at a beach and having a good time but only leaving with sand in his boots. While the song is good at painting a scene, it also leaves a lot up for interpretation. This scope for personal experience to seep in is what allows for the song to be so relatable and easy to connect with.

His music can be found on many different outlets for purchase and digital streaming. Some of those sites include YouTube, Spotify and Morgan Wallen's

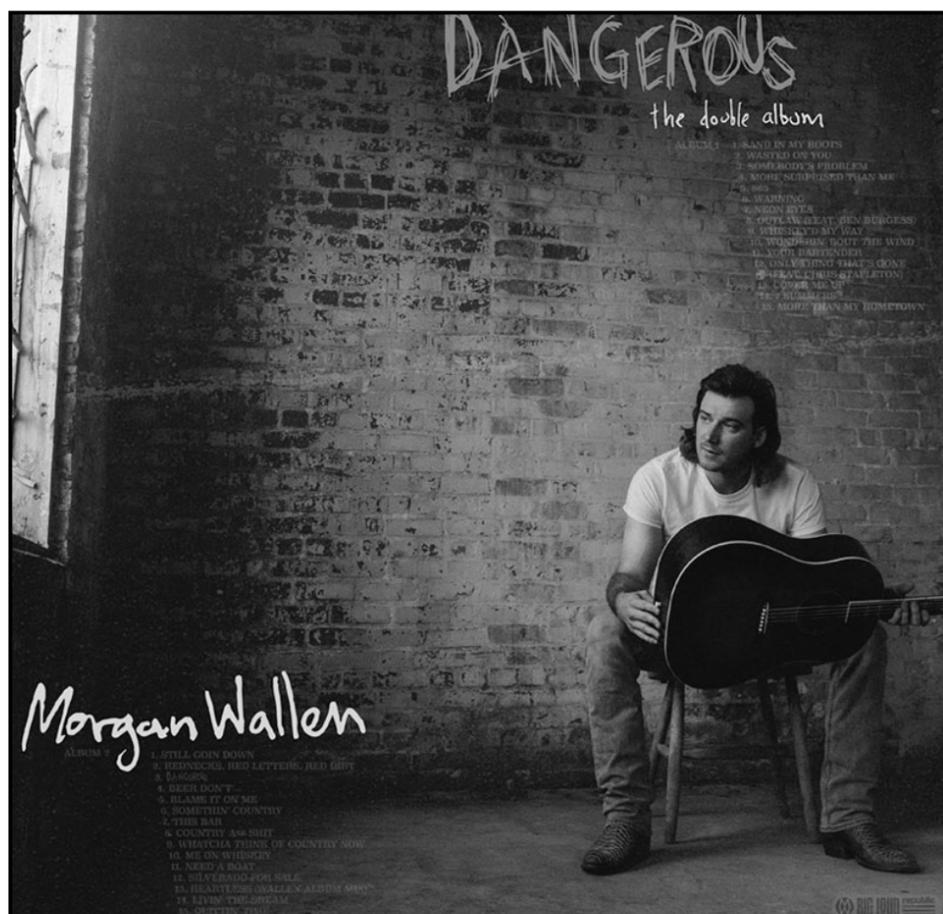


PHOTO COURTESY OF MORGANWALLEN.COM

own website. His website lists four other albums of his available to stream and listen to, along with an album by HARDY that features Wallen.

The music is not bad, but as it is country not everyone will appreciate it, despite the variety in style. If bored with your current music and looking for

something new to listen to or if you are a big country fan, this album is a great place to turn to.

DC Universe legend returns to the screen

MOVIE REVIEW

EXCEPTIONAL CINEMA

NAOMI LIEF
ART

WW84, a Warner Bros Studios film, was released on streaming services on Christmas Day of 2020. DC Universe takes our hero, Wonder Woman, on a journey from the tragedies of World War I to the flashing lights and buzz of life in the 1980s, a time where the concept of greed was accompanied by the growing phenomenon of a self-focused society in America. One of the very first scenes takes place in a shopping mall, where hundreds of people were milling around buying things and adhering to advertisements that are almost blinding.

The main theme of this movie ties into the American mindset of "always wanting more." The movie begins with young Diana, or Wonder Woman, in Themyscira, her homeland, and her discovery that she won't prosper if she cheats her way through life.

These themes are prominent throughout the entirety of the movie as she embarks on a journey to save humanity from itself.

During her job as an archeologist, Dianna, encounters the "Dreamstone," a crystal created by the god of Treachery and Mischief, that grants any one wish to whoever asks. However, the stone takes one's most prized possession in return. It was known to collapse many societies in its past, and when it falls into the wrong hands, Wonder Woman has to decide whether it's worth it to "cheat" the game of life, or save the world from the hands of greed.

The soundtrack of this film is absolutely marvelous. Composed by Rupert Gregson-Williams, it captures the spirit and sends shivers down the spine as one watches each scene take place. It increased the drama and the excitement of the movie, and gave me several rushes of adrenaline.

The cinematography and graphics of this film were exceptional, but they portrayed a somewhat glorified version

of the 1980s. The character development and the way that many characters were perceived was not very well done, but the production and quality of this film is superb.

Like many DC, Marvel and other superhero lore, WW84 becomes slightly manifested in the concept of time. Though it has nothing to do with time travel in general, it definitely tests the waters. When films play too much with rearranging time and space, they have a tendency to become "unbelievable," even for a fantasy production. They produce plot holes, as well as solutions that seem thrown together much faster than how the problem originally occurred. This is something that critics easily pick apart and a concept that can weaken the plot of this movie. The end of this movie was elongated, and it could have quite easily wrapped up much more quickly due to extended, dramatic, and even cheesy dialogue.

Though the first Wonder Woman came out in 2017, it was much more enjoyable

than WW84.

Many people don't watch superhero movies correctly. Some are quick to judge them for their overuse of CGI, their over-the-top scenes and character dynamics or in this case, their sequels and redone criteria. In order to fully appreciate movies such as WW84, one has to think of the story as a myth, and not something that could actually happen in our daily lives. Their goal isn't to be as realistic as possible. When critics cease to view these movies in this way, they are deemed lower in quality and in story compared to other genres of film. A battle with a cheetah-human hybrid, as seen in the trailer of WW84, is hardly given a second thought on its own. However, when a film such as this is seen in the light of mythology, then, and only then can we see the true beauty and wonder of WW84.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MOVIE DATABASE

Heritage Singers put on medieval masque

FOOD, MUSIC
AND FUN

RACHEL SMART
THEATRE

The tradition of Madrigal dinners extends far beyond Northwestern. For many decades, across the United States, high school and college ensembles put together this delightful evening, and Northwestern produces the event every four years.

This weekend, the Heritage Singers are hosting a Madrigal Dinner, one of these exciting events, is being hosted by the Heritage Singers on Jan. 22 and 23 in the Black Box at 7:30pm.

The goal of a typical Madrigal Dinner is to imitate a medieval palace banquet in the court of a castle with a meal and Renaissance entertainment. This year, the Heritage Singers will perform a traditional English masque titled, "The Sorry Tellers or Once Upon a Whine," which was directed by Karen Barker. Following the play, the choir will perform several madrigal pieces. During the dinner and desert, guests will be entertained by a magic show and small-ensemble

performances by members of the choir. Barker asserts that the evening will be "genuine fun" which she considers "no small thing" in the larger context of this year.

Barker retired from the theatre department after a long and successful career at Northwestern, but this year Holm asked her to return to direct the madrigal's masque which the choir ensemble has been rehearsing since last semester.

In the beginnings of the process, the ensemble rehearsed for an hour twice a week, but now that the performance is almost here, the ensemble has been working long hours to get everything just right or "build to excellence" as Holm says. While the focus of the Madrigal Dinner is different than the theater Barker produced in her time at NW, she has truly enjoyed the process.

"It's been great to have something creative to work on," Barker said.

This year's masque revolves around a jester (split into two parts for NW's production) who must prove their talent in a

story telling contest held by the King's court. Junior Elizabeth Ven Huizen, who plays one half of the Jester, explains that the script is very "goofy and fast-paced" which she loves. Ven Huizen also explains that the show will contain COVID-19 friendly interactions with the audience, which they should be looking forward to.

One of the ensemble's favorite parts of the production process, however, has been working with Barker.

"[Karen] has been the most caring, patient, and all-around lovely person to work with," said freshman Jessica Nibbelink who plays the guard and royal ranker in the masque. "Her excitement and energy often mirrors ours during practice, and she has been so encouraging to have as a director."

Ven Huizen concurs stating, "Karen is a gem. I love her and her spirit and expertise."

In turn, Barker commends her cast with sincerity, "My greatest joy in the process has been getting to know the students. They've been so committed and so energetic



PHOTO BY AMELIA HOLT
Heritage Singers rehearsing in the Black Box Theater.

about it."

Audiences should be incredibly entertained by the variety of the night.

Holm said to "Be prepared for great food, a lot of humor,

fun costumes, a very nice atmosphere in the Black Box and some wonderful music."

Tickets for the evening went on sale in December and have now sold out, but students can

support the Heritage Singers by attending their other events this semester like their upcoming concert with the Sioux County Oratorio Chorus in April.

"Jabberwocky" recognized for excellence

THEATRE AND
IMAGINATION

VANESSA STOKES
WRITING AND RHETORIC

"Twas brillig and the slithy toves / Did gyre and gimble in the wabe: / All mimsy were the borogoves, / And the mome raths outgrabe."

Though these poetic lines may sound a bit garbled in their sense, they were written by the clever and well-known author, Lewis Carroll, as a part of his nonsense poem "Jabberwocky." He is best known for his novel *Alice in Wonderland* which features the aforementioned creature, the Jabberwock.

Carroll's poem is 28 lines and seven stanzas depicting imaginary creatures similar to the Jabberwock like bandersnatches, borogoves and mome raths in a story about a boy

who goes hunting for a fierce dragon and slays it. This narrative poem was selected by theatre professor, Ethan Koerner, who adapted and directed the poem for this year's children's play.

"It is a wonderfully strange poem with a lot of potential for imagination," said Koerner. "I had been reading it to my daughter as a bedtime story for a few years, and really wanted to take a try at figuring out what all the strange little creatures might look like."

After its showcase in November 2020, *Jabberwocky* was selected to be one of twelve plays to take part in the Region Five Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) held Jan. 16 to 24. With its selection, it is also among the plays being considered for the national KCACTF in April.

KCACTF features undergraduate

and graduate theater programs from six Midwestern states totalling over 600 colleges and universities that are involved in the selection pool. KCACTF is dedicated to the improvement of collegiate theater in the United States.

Normally, the festival would be held in person with workshops, showcases and individual critiques for students with entered pieces or projects. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, KCACTF will be held virtually with free admission for anyone who would like to attend. The shows that were selected will still be featured through the online platform and students with individual projects will be able to ZOOM one-on-one with theater professionals.

Jabberwocky is distinctive in its presentation. The original production was not held in one staged zone; but rather, the entire theater building was

the stage.

"This play was able to use the theatre building in a way that we never thought about before," said Angela Wintering, one of the nine cast actors.

The original idea had the play set in the Allen Blackbox Theatre. It was adapted for safety regulations and state guidelines for the pandemic. The result used various nooks and crannies in the building to hide, surprise or hold the audience while they went on a walking tour of stations set up to imitate how a bedtime story might be told.

Furthermore, the play's characters consisted entirely of puppets mostly made from pizza boxes and craft wire. It featured shaw puppetry, tabletop puppetry and even motion tracking. Some of the puppets were able to be recorded beforehand and projected at their station while others

were performed live by the cast.

"One thing I learned from this show is how challenging but rewarding it is to be flexible," said Rebekah Stoscher, cast member. Sometimes just a small adjustment to a shadow puppet or the mechanisms controlling it made it better and easier to use."

To showcase the production at the online KCACTF, *Jabberwocky* was filmed during its opening weekend. Two films were created: one that incorporates all the interactive technology created and the other following a group of children experiencing the play. Both will be available for festival attendees to view.

"It was an amazing experience and an incredibly collaborative process," said Koerner. "Our whole department really had a hand in making the show what it became."



PHOTO SUBMITTED
"Jabberwocky" was filmed as children interacted with the play.

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The Beacon faces large staff transition

YOUNGER STAFF COMES TO PAPER

ALLISON WHEELER
GRAPHIC DESIGN

The staff of *The Beacon* looks a little different this semester with some new staff members. Many of the former editors are studying off campus this semester or have graduated. Hiring new editors allowed for Northwestern's newspaper to bring in some younger students as editors, allowing for future security and structure of *The Beacon's* staff. The new staff members, mainly freshmen and sophomores, will have the opportunity to gain experience as editors for a few years before they graduate NW.

"It's a great opportunity for younger students to get experience with *The Beacon*," said Kaitlyn Van Peurse, former features editor and current interim advisor for the NW's newspaper.

The new co-editor-in-chief and copy editor for *The Beacon* is sophomore Aaron Eckmann, who will work alongside with senior Jocelyn McCormick, after previous co-editor-in-chief Bree Hodnefield graduated. Eckmann was formerly the news

editor, but freshman Emily Berggren has now taken over that position. Sophomore Madelynn Harre was chosen to be the new arts and culture editor due to senior Hannah Ross spending the semester in Chicago, and sophomore Camber Herrig filled the position for the features editor after Kaitlyn Van Peurse graduated. Serving as the new photography editor and social media manager is sophomore Jadeyn Veltkamp.

Junior Caleb Arnett stayed on as the editor of the opinions section, and sophomore Katie Jacob as the sports editor. Riley Rasmussen also stayed on as the advertisements and design manager.

As interim advisor, Van Peurse is in charge of overseeing the Monday night meetings of *The Beacon's* staff. She is there to assist with any problems, answer any questions the editors may have and help them choose which articles should be featured in the newspaper each week. Van Peurse also assists with the copy editing on Thursday layout nights by looking over the articles for grammatical errors.

"It's a little strange thinking I'm in charge of people I previously worked with," said Van



(Left to right) Madelynn Harre, Jadeyn Veltkamp, Aaron Eckmann, Emily Berggren, and Camber Herrig. PHOTO BY ALLISON HAVERDINK

Peurse. While she wants them to respect her as one of their advisors, she also wants the staff members to feel like they can come to her with any needs they may have.

In his transition from news editor to co-editor-in-chief, Eckmann reflected on his favorite part about being the news editor. He enjoyed keeping up with the news and talking with and getting to know a lot of interesting people.

However, now Eckmann has more of a

leadership role within the newspaper's staff.

"The job position was really sprung on me which was quite interesting," Eckmann said. "After seeing the whole process and taking some public relations classes, journalism seemed like an interesting field, and this gave me the opportunity to explore it further which is why I was excited to accept the offer."

Madelynn Harre became the new editor for the arts and culture

section after being recommended. Harre has never worked for a newspaper before, but she has gained writing and editing experience through English classes and writing for *The Beacon*. As the new arts and culture editor, Harre hopes to highlight more of NW's artists and performers through the articles in her section.

"I am most excited about getting to know the writers, artists and performers more through my section," said Harre.

"I like meeting new people and working where part of the job is getting to know people is a wonderful blessing and makes that that much more fun."

Eckmann looks forward to the semester's changes.

"I am super excited to see all the new faces on *The Beacon* staff!" said Eckmann. "While we will undoubtedly miss those who graduated, the new editors will bring their own journalistic style to the table."

Unsung Heroes: Martha Draayer

FROM PAGE 1

"PIECE was inspired by seeing a need in the local community for adult ELL learners to have English classes that were tailored to their individual rate of acquisition," Draayer said. "The PIECE team trains any individual in the community willing to donate their time to tutor an adult EL student while building authentic and reciprocal relationships."

Recently, Draayer has begun an intentional conversation about barriers and division. Students who wish to participate will read "The God Who Sees", a book that will discuss immigration from a Biblical perspective. Draayer's role on campus helps draw

students into these difficult but necessary conversations as a way to build bridges between cultures.

Outside of NW, Draayer continues her work of establishing relationships with the Latinx population.

One non-profit she is working with is CASA, the Center for Assistance, Service and Advocacy. This non-profit's goal is to promote healthy and diverse communities through empowerment, education and advocacy. Draayer has been a part of multiple programs through CASA: National Night Out, Orange City's Festival Latino, the Juntos program and monthly gatherings with local law enforcement who are working on getting to

know Latinx residents.

"The Juntos program seeks to support high school Latinx students and their parents to plan for what comes after high school," Draayer said.

For freshman Linsy Gonzalez Marcelo, Draayer has become a role model.

"I met Martha at an immigration conference here at NW my junior or senior year of high school," Linsy said. "I have worked alongside Martha in helping to advocate and create more ways for our Hispanic community and students to be involved. Having a Hispanic Liaison is important because representation is important. NW values diversity and having Martha as our

Hispanic Liaison supports that."

For Draayer, she has a vision for what she'd like NW to achieve.

"The rate of growth within the Latinx population is huge and is changing our community demographics. I envision Northwestern as a place where cultural and linguistic differences are seen as beautiful and something to praise God for instead of something odd, othered or different," Draayer said. "My hope is that everyone feels equally welcome on campus, as worthy individuals made in the image of God, with God-given gifts and talents that are worth celebrating."



PHOTO COURTESY OF NW MARCOMM
Draayer focuses on building bridges within the NW campus.

SSPs plan to embark across America

DOMESTIC MISSION
WORK AMIDST COVID

SCHUYLER STERK
ENGLISH TEACHING

Despite the challenges brought by the pandemic, many Northwestern students will still have the opportunity to participate in Spring Service Partnerships and travel around the country to work with a variety of ministries.

This year, approximately 125 students will be traveling to nine different domestic ministry sites. These student teams will be led by 19 different student leaders and accompanied by staff and faculty advisors.

The team of leaders for these SSPs have spent many hours training not only to lead their team effectively, but to tackle any challenges that arise when serving during a pandemic.

"I think COVID will be an obvious challenge," Hannah Allen said, who will lead the Waco, Texas trip. "However, I think if we go into it with a mindset of being respectful of the people we are serving, we will not only be safely serving others but showing God's love as well."

Having such dedicated site partners willing to host the SSPs also made the planning process

easier. These sites include places like Opelousas, Louisiana; Denver, Colorado; Mescalero, New Mexico; and more. At these sites, students will be working with a variety of ministries, each with a different focus such as hurricane relief, aid for populations in poverty, American Indian reservations and low-income schools.

Typically, NW sends a higher number of students to more ministry sites, however some sites had to cancel their SSP because of the pandemic. For instance, Shonna Ritz, leader of the Orange County, TX SSP was originally slated to be the leader of the Compton, California SSP. Despite some changes like this, the SSP student leaders are still eager to serve at the sites available.

Perhaps the biggest challenge faced when planning this year's SSPs has been all the unknowns that COVID-19 brings. Though we're no stranger to uncertainties and adaptations, planning spring break trips and coordinating with ministries has proved more difficult for SSP coordinators Ben Henker and Nate Tjernagel.

"We were preparing to send students in nearer states like Iowa, Minnesota, Illinois, and South Dakota, so they were closer to campus," Henker said, "but many



PHOTO BY AMELIA HOLT
Ben Henker and Nathaniel Tjernagel serve as campus' SSP coordinators.

of the sites we have had in the past were excited that we were still doing SSPs this year."

Opelousas leader Colin Kaemingk said, "I think we all have expectations, but COVID can easily throw hitches into our plans, so flexibility will have to be a must."

Other potential challenges teams may face this year include quarantined members, ministry partners unknowingly sending the virus back to campus and even cancelled trips. Because of these

challenges, there are a few changes to procedure, including wearing masks in the vans, getting tested three days before departure, isolating during the trip if symptoms develop and being conscious of others' level of comfort with safety precaution.

Another key aspect of the SSPs affected by the pandemic is the socialization and relationship aspects of the trips.

"I think it will be difficult to refrain from the typical social aspects of the SSP for COVID

safety reasons," Ritz said, "but I look forward to developing stronger relationships with each of the people going on the team."

Both Allen and Kaemingk share this excitement for team bonding: "I'm really excited to get to know my team!"

No matter the challenges the SSP participants or leaders face this spring break, they will still be able to serve people across the country and share the love of Christ wherever they go.

VB wins grant for book

FROM PAGE 1

To achieve this goal, Vonder Bruegge will be doing extensive research on the original Greek text before creating an initial translation of the passages. From the initial translation, Barker and Vonder Bruegge will work together to "hash it out" and mold the work into a translation that "takes both linguistic and performance issues into account" according to Vonder Bruegge. The book will also contain introductory notes and two commentaries throughout—one by Vonder Bruegge on

translation and another by Barker on performance.

De Boer will also be supporting the process by helping Vonder Bruegge research and translate the original Greek text as well as investigate biblical commentary on the passages selected.

"I'm so excited for the opportunity to be around two extremely faithful men of God this summer," De Boer said. "Their knowledge, experience and passion for Christ and the Bible is contagious, and I cannot wait to work alongside them."

Finishing this work is

not Vonder Bruegge and Barker's end goal, but rather a means to an end.

"Ultimately, we want these parables to be performed in modern worship settings like churches, youth groups and chapel events, and the book is a way to get these new translations into performers' hands," said Vonder Bruegge.

Barker hopes to transform the way that churches interact with Scripture.

He said, "My dream is that Christian worshipers will come to church wondering, 'Which story of Jesus will we hear someone tell today?'"

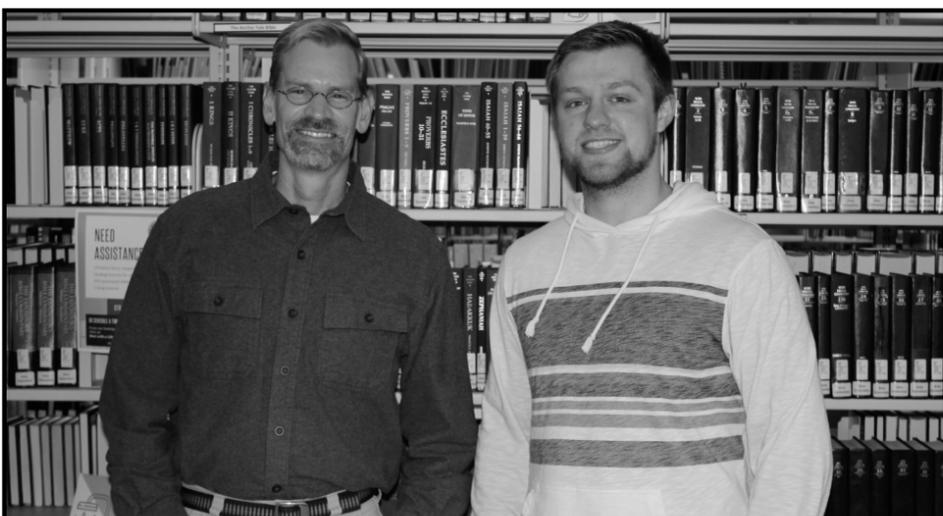


PHOTO BY JADEYN VELTKAMP
Senior Ben De Boer will assist Vonder Bruegge and Dr. Barker for the summer.

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WOULD YOU RATHER?

(As voted on by you, the students)

Would you rather study abroad in the...

Fall

35%

OR

Spring

65%

Would you rather...

Be served

13%

OR

Use self serve

87%

Would you rather take notes in/on a...

Notebook

75%

OR

Laptop

25%

The opinions expressed in these polls represent student preference and is no way intended to indicate superior qualities of one choice over another or endorse certain stereotypes

A case against the death penalty



Colin Kaemingk
History

The news recently has been infatuated with historical events such as the inauguration and the insurrection at the capitol. These are all relevant topics to discuss, but while all of this has been going on, former President Donald Trump approved and allowed his 13th and final execution on Jan. 16, 2021. At that number, Trump has executed more people at the federal level than any other president in 100 years.

I believe within my heart that this is one of the most sickening things about his presidency because the institution of the death penalty is morally wrong and depicts a dark stain upon our society - a stain which is damning. On top of that understanding of morality, the idea of the capital punishment system is incredibly flawed and doesn't accomplish anything

other than needless death.

To begin, one would think that the death penalty would deter people from committing crimes. But according to the American Civil Liberties Union, that just isn't the case. There is no correlation when looking at non-death penalty states and death penalty states. So, if the basis of it is to deter violence, it's not working.

It's also true that there have been multiple occasions where an innocent man has been convicted and executed. Who's to be held accountable in that case? When innocent people die because we didn't have all the right evidence, how can we feel good at night?

I understand that an argument here might be that the figure is incredibly small, but when it comes to innocent human life, the only acceptable rate is 0. They were killed by the very government that promised them "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness".

And not only is it true that convictions have been wrong on occasions, it's also true that the death penalty is inherently racist. Between 1930 and 1996, according to ACLU, 53% of the over 4000 people that were executed were black. To put that in perspective, 13% of America's population is African American. Black offenders who kill white citizens are more likely to be charged with the death penalty, the University of Maryland discovered in a study.

Lastly, the death penalty is barbaric, for lack of a better term. There's no denying the idea that methods over the years have been cruel and brutal. Hangings, electrocution, firing squad's lethal injection - all of these incredibly brutal. Not to mention that these types of executions can be botched, even the lethal injection. Botched needle placements can elongate the process and cause incredible pain to the person.

I know that the inherent thought is that these people deserve what's coming to them because of what they did. But at the end of the day, this isn't good justice. It's cruel.

Justice was best displayed by Christ. Christ never promoted the idea of killing someone even if they killed your family; Christ told his followers to turn the other cheek if someone wronged them. Christ's idea of justice is completely opposite of that of our modern-day capital punishment.

Capital punishment puts blood on our hands. We are fighting violence with more violence, and somehow believing that that will solve all our problems. But instead, by normalizing the idea that death should be repaid with death, we are setting a dangerous narrative.

As Trump secures his legacy with another murder at the hands of the government, let us not forget that Christ himself was killed by the state.

How to meet new people



Mark Cooley
History

One of the most difficult things about being a college student is the ability to meet new people. God added a few extra drops of extrovert when he made me, and I thrive around other people. I am a person who loves to be a part of social events, and I genuinely enjoy meeting new people. Through this piece, I would love to share with you the methods that have worked best for me to meet new friends at Northwestern.

Number one: never say never.

Although this is the topic of an extremely antiquated Justin Bieber song, it helps when trying to meet new people. Whenever someone from your hall or dorm building asks you to go to La Juanitas or an event on campus, always say yes. Chances are you will either meet someone new or get to know someone better than you knew them before.

You cannot meet new people if you

are cooped up studying in your room all day or playing NBA2K with the boys. In every Las Juas trip that I have taken, I have always met at least one person. This is a principle that has helped me to get to know a lot of people on campus.

Number two: sit next to the people who you do not know.

My biggest piece of advice is at least one of your classes sit next to a group of people you do not know. I know that starting a conversation may be difficult, but it is always easy to talk about the class and upcoming assignments. Afterward, ask about their NW experience and get to know them as a person. This does not only apply to classes, but it can also help when studying in the library or when interacting with your hallmates. I have personally met many people who I consider to be very close friends throughmy classes

Number three: sign up for events that fit within your schedule.

NW provides a plethora of activities to sign up for. These include activities such as Spring Service Partnerships, Adventure Club activities, trivia nights, directing Class One Acts, and many more. These are primal events to meet new friends, enjoy your NW experience and help you stand out as a Red Raider.

Number four: always be yourself!

This is probably a very cliché saying which you have heard many times before. However, it holds meaning. Throughout my experience as a NW student, I meet the best people when I act myself. The worst outcome of social interaction is showing a fake side of yourself. The biggest problem is the feeling that the people around you will judge the real you. This means that you have not found the right group of people. However, do not worry because you will find people that will accept the real you.

Number five: always be accessible.

In your dorm halls, never close your door unless you absolutely need to. This is especially applicable to the first week of college. Leaving your door open allows others to know that they can feel welcome in your room. However, you also have to be the one making rounds and approaching other open rooms! The lack of rounds is a problem that I have personally seen in my dorm hall. By practicing this, I have found many friends that I enjoy talking and interacting with on a daily basis.

Hopefully these tips can help you find your own method of making friends on campus. If I have not personally been able to meet you, then I would love the opportunity to! I always love new people to stop by Colenbrander 145 and say hi.

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Men's basketball finds their rhythm

NW RAIDERS WITH A GREAT WIN

TREY HARMS
SPANISH

A hot second half helped the Raiders knock off 11th-ranked Dakota Wesleyan at home last Wednesday, Jan. 13, and a weekend battle at Doane University came down to the wire where the Raiders prevailed, tying their longest win streak, three, of the season.

At home versus Dakota Wesleyan, steady scorers Trent Hilbrands and Alex Van Kalsbeek led the team with 19 points apiece; Craig Sterk contributed 17 points in his second straight double-double outing. Looking to avenge their earlier loss in Mitchell, the Raiders jumped out to a double-digit lead midway through the first half

thanks to a 12-0 run and held a slight advantage heading into halftime (45-43). While first half shooting was good, there was certainly no lid on the hoop in the second half as NW missed only 7 shots in the period, chalking up a mark of 70% from the field while holding the Tigers to just 30 second half points. The 86-73 win for NW was the second straight GPAC loss for DWU, who were previously undefeated in conference play.

NW traveled to Doane on Saturday and picked up immediately where they left off, with Sterk and Van Kalsbeek scoring the first 13 points of the game and the lead ballooning to 22-4 only seven minutes in. NW's big men continued to dominate, and Hilbrands hopped on the scoring train as well with all three scoring over 20

and accounting for 69 of the team's 79 total points.

"Playing with bigs that can score is huge and when you have two of them, that makes the game so much easier," Hilbrands said. "Alex and Craig do a great job of relieving pressure off of the guards and it is nice that they can score. They are great and deserve all the credit that they get and more. Our team would not be the same without them."

The big men continued to play their big roles down the stretch, none bigger than Van Kalsbeek's game-winning three-point play with just over two seconds remaining, as the Raiders escaped with a 79-77 victory.

It was a gritty win by a Raiders team that has looked different without senior Keegan Van Egdom



PHOTO COURTESY OF NW ATHLETICS
Raiders continue to find their way through the season.

in the lineup for the past month. Hilbrands noted the loss of his fellow sharpshooter has been tough for the team, crediting Van Egdom's admirable work ethic and

extreme consistency.

"It has been an adjustment without him out there, but we have had guys step up in the meantime" Trent said, praising teammates Matt

Onken, Noah Slagter, and Grant Demeulenaere for stepping into larger roles as the Raiders find their rhythm heading into the final month of the regular season.

NW Raiders take on home quad meet

WRESTLING SHOWS GREAT STRENGTH

REID SEELHAMMER
BUSINESS ADMIN/GENERAL

The Red Raider wrestling team held a dual tournament this past Saturday, Jan. 16, and finished 3-0 on the day. The Raiders defeated Concordia 28-12 in the opener, earning their first win over the Bulldogs in 8 seasons. Northwestern followed with a dominant 53-6 victory against Waldorf and then closed with an impressive showing against Dickinson State, defeating the Blue Hawks 38-4.

Coach Dahl spoke highly about the Raider's standout day.

"I was proud of the way our guys battled today. Every team there was shorthanded, but that is the nature

of our sport. In times like that it is important for young men to see the opportunity and rise up. Our guys did that in a big way," said coach Dahl. "We have been close to beating CUNE several times, but they always seem to do just a little better at the little things. Today was different. It was a blessing for the guys to see what happens when they wrestle with confidence.

In addition, it was the first time we have beaten DSU since I have been here. They are a strong program with a rich wrestling history, so to beat them in the manner that we did was a feat."

John Seth stood out during this meet. The young man earned his first college wins and won a key matchup against CUNE. Seth and Hendrickson's match at 174 were keys for NW to pull out the win.

Trey Schuck is another participant who really stood out. Trey went 4-0 if you count the exhibition at the end of the day including a fall over the #20 collegiate NAIA wrestler in the country against DSU.

As a team, the Raiders did the little things well, which allowed the team to nail the important ones when the opportunity arose. For the day, they were 23-4 with nine falls, one tech fall and four major decisions (that is a 61% bonus rate). In addition, they outscored the competition 146-77 in match points, 38-18 in takedowns and 12-3 in National Federations.

"We keep telling these guys they have the talent and gifts to wrestle at a high level, Coach Dahl said, "We hope a day like this will help get them to a place where they begin to really push into that truth! Overall, it was a great day to be a Raider."



PHOTO COURTESY OF NW ATHLETICS
New wrestlers show much potential for season.

Women's basketball on a winning streak

A FLOW OF WINS

KATIE JACOB
PUBLIC RELATIONS

With relentlessness and determination for the second half, Raider defense led the women's basketball team to a home win of 66-46 versus Dakota Wesleyan on Jan. 13. Giving Northwestern a solid Great Plains Athletic Conference win. On Saturday, Jan. 16, NW women's basketball traveled to Crete, Nebraska for another conference game against the Doane Tigers, where they blew out the competition 73-

39. Devyn Kemble, a junior guard, matched her career high with 26 points and tailed three steals as well. Freshman Molly Schany, with an incredible game, accounted for her second double-double of the season with 10 points and 11 rebounds. After Saturday's game, the Raiders are now 9-5 in GPAC and 9-8 overall, they continue to strive for more wins as they have a four-game winning streak under their belts.

Jan. 13, at home against DWU, NW was trailing by four (35-31) in the early third quarter of the match, but seized control of the game with

a 16-0 run, holding DWU scoreless for nearly seven minutes, taking the lead of 47-35. As the score kept going up the Raiders forced DWU into six turnovers and seven consecutive missed shots.

To kick off the final quarter, sophomore Emilee Danner scored a three-pointer to set the tone on the NW first possession, which put them in front with double digits, while a pair of free throws by junior Jada Cunningham finished their run of 14-3, which gave NW a 20-point lead at 61-41. With the team's hard work and perseverance, they did not stop there.

With only six minutes left of the game, the Raiders continued to play spectacular defense to hold DWU to only two field goals during the final quarter.

With a great win, Danner led the NW offense with 12-points, followed by Schany with 11 points and four rebounds. Cunningham and Kemble added nine and eight points while Taylor VanderVelde contributed six points and six assists. As the season progresses the Raider women are showing much talent, Schany has scored double figures in 11 games, being second on the team for points.



PHOTO COURTESY OF NW ATHLETICS
NW basketball begins to improve with a great winning streak.

Danner has scored in double figures in five games this season, Maddi Jones, who currently leads the

GPAC in assist/turnover ratio, has missed just two free throws all season giving her a 93-shooting percentage.

The raiders look forward to thier game at Hastings Saturday, Jan. 23 at 2 p.m.

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New year brings changes to campus

STUDENTS SEE DIFFERENCES FROM BREAK

GIDEON FYNAARDT
BIO-HEALTH PROFESSIONS

It was not long into 2020 that many shed their conceptions of such a year being one for change and progress. Most can admit to the absurdity or tragedy, and all were swift to dismiss the hope granted by such a satiosof the year.

It's fair to say, then, that this new year, is foggy and ought to be treaded carefully. However, such uncertainty is also a warning for all colors of promise and fresh starts.

As Raiders fill dorms and sidewalks, Hospers highway is paved anew and classrooms are alight with fresh and familiar faces, the low hum of novelty breathes beneath them. In their aching anticipation for the return of their students, Northwestern College drew up new plans and practices to better students' experience here for this spring semester.

To begin, there are obvious visual changes to campus, most notably the addition of 'bistro lights' to the Fern-Smith Hall canopy leading to the caf. According to vice president for student life Julie Elliot, this change was brought about by the cooperation of the Student Life department and the new 'campus improvement team' lead by Lucas Heiberger.

Administration won't stop at simply making students' days 'brighter', as plans are being made for further campus improvements later in the semester. Elliot mentioned plans for a new 'hammock village' of poles from which students can hammock closer to their friends and fellow hammockers, though such will only be installed once the ground thaws.

Other changes for Student Life include the combination of the Cultural Fair and the Arts & Music Festival into a single, cooperative event, and a Compass Center-sponsored series of lessons on navigating life beyond college called "Adulting 101."

Since coronavirus research continues to suggest the transmission of the disease through surfaces is very rare, NW has reimplemented self-service at a few of the dining stations. Such appears to be a welcome return for Raiders familiar

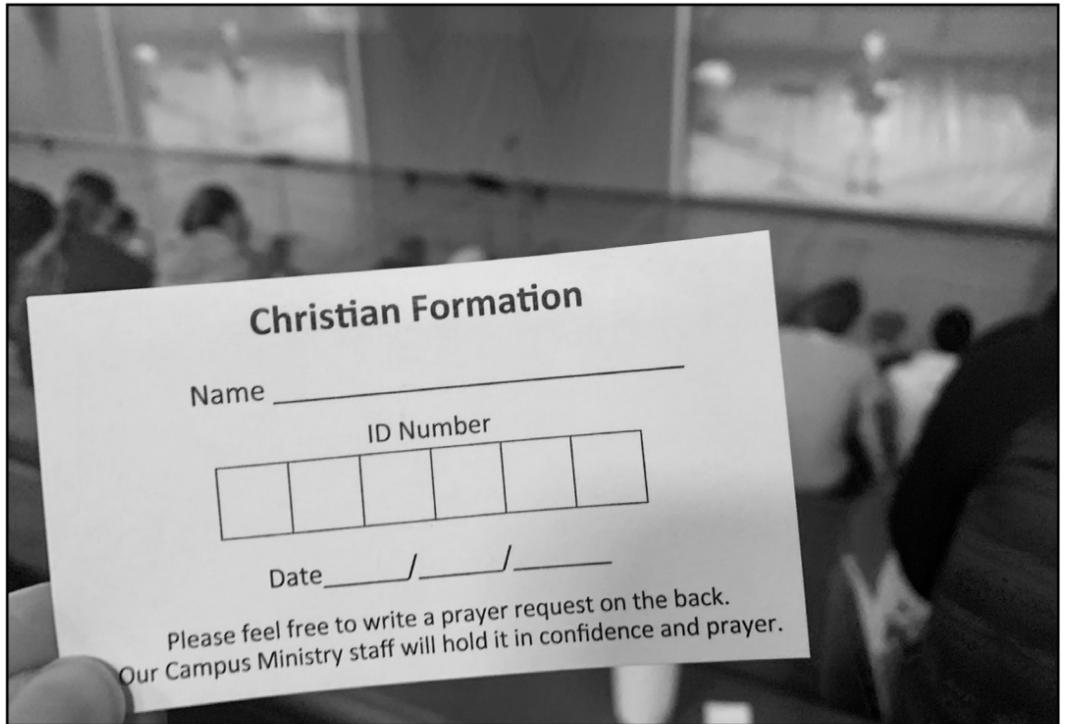


PHOTO BY Alyssa Glanz

Chapel cards will be used once again for recording Christian Formation attendance.

with campus pre-COVID-19, and worried students' fears can be quelled knowing that the serving utensils are regularly sanitized and the most effective method for preventing an outbreak is the continued and honest use of the Raider-Check app, which has not changed since last semester.

Mark DeYoung described a few changes students can expect from the Christian Formation aspect of campus life: For January and February, Chapel, Ngage, and NED talks will have the encompassing theme of 'deeply rooted relationships' including the Ngage theme "Talking Taboos;" and DeYoung's sermon series on "pornified relationships."

Chapel will now be held in both the Bultman Center and Christ Chapel. Students will attend based on predetermined groupings. Chapel cards will also be back in effect for recording attendance versus using the iAttended app.

While lots of things here on campus have changed, the resilient attitude of NW Raiders remains. They continue to adapt to changing circumstances and finding ways to make life on campus more tolerable for one another. Such is the way of Christ's love which puts neighbor before self. This is how they have made it through 2020, and it is how they will bloom in 2021.

Vaccine gives new hope for pandemic

FIRST PHASE OF VACCINE OUT

JILLIAN SIMON
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The COVID-19 pandemic has plagued the world for roughly a year now. It has been at the forefront of everyone's minds and plastered all over society. Everywhere one turns, they see masks, hand sanitizer, new rules and constant chatter.

One of the most recent developments in the news is the finalization of the COVID-19 vaccine. The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine got finalized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Dec. 13, 2020.

According to Very Well Health's article *How Will the COVID-19 Vaccine Be Distributed?*, "The first phase of COVID-19 vaccine distribution will prioritize healthcare workers, residents of assisted living facilities, essential workers, adults ages 65 and older and adults with high-risk medical conditions, in that order."

Northwestern student Reneca Nichols was one of the first in line

to receive the vaccine. Nichols works in healthcare with seniors 65 and older, causing her to pursue getting the vaccine.

Nichols said, "I don't want to get COVID-19 again, and I want to save lives by protecting myself from giving it to an immunocompromised individual or the elderly so we can get herd immunity started."

Nichols got her vaccine at a senior living center but there will be multiple other locations that vaccines will be accessible. Although all states have different plans on vaccine administration some common places vaccines will be seen are hospitals, pharmacies, primary care clinics, urgent care/walk-in clinics and even dentists according to Very Well Health's article *Where Will I Be Able to Get the COVID-19 Vaccine?*

Although a dentist office might seem like a strange place to be distributing vaccines, infectious disease expert Amesh A. Adalja shares that more people are needed with medical training to be administering this vaccine.

They want to get it out to the public as quickly and swiftly as

possible. The CDC is expecting the first phase of vaccinations to be completed in late spring, early summer. After this, the second phase of vaccines will start. This will include members of the general public.

Although there is much controversy surrounding the COVID-19 vaccine, everyone is encouraged to do their own research to learn about the vaccine. Some people are worried about long term side effects because they believe the vaccine was rushed. Others take a different stance, stating that this is not new technology, just a new virus and it went through just as much testing as any other vaccination.

Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has played a major role in the development of the vaccine and their take on the effects of the vaccine are as follows. "COVID-19 is a major public health problem and use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is a reasonable and efficient allocation of resources. For most populations, the desirable effects outweigh the undesirable effects.



PHOTO COURTESY OF Unsplash.com

The first round of vaccines has been distributed around the country.

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