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The Beacon, 2020-2021

The Beacon student newspaper

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1-29-2021

**The Beacon, January 29, 2021**

The Beacon Staff

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## DeYounge launches tough topic in chapel

**PORNIFIED RELATIONSHIPS**

**VANESSA STOKES**  
WRITING AND RHETORIC

“Both statistically and anecdotally, there might not be anything more undermining to the freedom that Christ longs for us to walk in than the isolating shame of sexual brokenness,” Northwestern chaplain Mark DeYounge said.

Each semester, chapel chooses a focus theme. Some themes in the past have been politics, unity and justice. This spring’s chapel theme of pornography and sexual violence is a tough, conversation. It has also been a conversation on DeYounge’s heart for over a decade.

The pornography industry, which has been steadily growing since the beginning of the internet, not only affects every person with access to the internet but also the sex-trafficking industry that is fueled by the pornography industry.

As of 2017, the pornography industry has an annual revenue of over \$97 billion.

DeYounge felt a strong conviction to dive into preaching a series on the topic of pornography that invites small group accountability that could lead to the freedom of individuals from their addictions. To prepare, he prayed, studied statistics, read quite a few books, focused on scriptural context and invited guest speakers to help support his preaching.

One of the speakers that has spoken so far is Dr. John D. Foubert. Foubert is the president of One in Four, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the prevention of sexual violence. He is the first of many educated speakers to come.

“Dr. John Foubert did a great job highlighting the seriousness of this issue. I appreciated his ability to handle such a difficult topic,” Isaiah Lee, Campus Ministry Team member, said.

By bringing in intelligent and informed speakers, DeYounge hopes



PHOTO BY AMELIA HOLT  
Mark DeYounge poses with members of Covenant Eyes, an organization that provides screen sensoring.

to encourage students toward the exalting, authentic conversations the gospel in the most vulnerable place truth of Christ: “to shame-free, Christ- where we believe God wants to write of our brokenness.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

## Unsung Heroes: Rahn Franklin

**FOCUSED ON DIVERSITY**

**ALAYNA BAKKE**  
PUBLIC RELATIONS

Dignifying difference and building belonging. This is the anthem of Rahn Franklin’s career. Franklin serves as the director of multicultural student development, and provides leadership for student diversity initiatives toward achievement of Northwestern’s Vision for Diversity.

“Diversity should have life in all aspects of campus,” Franklin said.

Franklin leads the Bridge Scholars program to develop student leaders from diverse backgrounds by providing support, guidance and advocacy. He also collaborates to develop curricular and co-curricular programs for students, faculty and staff that develop cultural intelligence for intercultural learning and living.

Diversity has been a major part of Franklin’s life from his childhood.

He grew up going to school and church with people from all over the world. This was one of the ways that his faith and work collided. His faith pours into his relationships, making connections with NW students from all over the world.

Junior Neftali Ramirez, a public relations and Spanish translating and interpreting major, met Franklin her second year at NW. She believes their connection that year was a godsend. She is now a Bridge Scholar and fills leadership roles in the Intercultural department and La Mosaic.

“He is a much-needed light in our community.” Ramirez said. He has been an unwavering pillar of support for me and other students of color. Rahn makes us feel heard, empowered, loved, and capable.”

Before NW, Franklin was a resident director and graduate student at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa. He was finishing up his bachelor’s degree in of professional school counseling






PHOTO BY ALYSSA GLANZ  
Rahn Franklin leads the Bridge Scholars Program and works with intercultural students.

when a position opened up. of the position or NW. When he telling him it was the perfect job, he However, Franklin knew nothing received a phone call from a friend decided to look into it.

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## Zayn Malik's new album falls short

MUSIC REVIEW

### MONOTONE AND MUMBLING

ALLISON WHEELER  
GRAPHIC DESIGN

Zayn Malik may have been the first member of One Direction to leave the boy band and pursue a solo career, but where his solo career has taken him is not impressive. Hearing him sing was more enjoyable when he was a part of One Direction.

Malik released his new album titled *Nobody* is Listening on Jan. 15, and I have to admit that I will not be listening to it again.

There are 11 songs featured on the album and, for the most part, they all sound the same. I don't think Malik challenged himself enough musically when creating these songs. The overall themes focus on Malik expressing his sadness about being misunderstood as well as talking about sex.

However, Malik was able to showcase his vocal range throughout the album which I appreciated hearing. I tend to like listening to

him when he sings in a higher octave because ever since being in One Direction he has been known for hitting higher notes well. When he sings in a lower octave, it is more difficult to understand the lyrics and what he is saying because he has a tendency to mumble. Malik also tends to sound monotone when singing in a lower octave which causes me to stop paying attention to the song.

One of the songs that stood out to me while listening to the album was "Calamity." The song stood out because most of it is done in spoken word which is a unique concept, and it caught my attention right away. Later on in the song, there is a cool effect where the voices have been layered on top of each other as they are speaking. The name of the album came from the lyrics featured in the chorus of this song, which is catchy and has some nice runs as well as falsetto moments.

The song titled "Connexion," featured a cool and refreshing guitar part throughout the instrumentation. There

is also a unique sound in the instrumentation that sounds like a trumpet and this adds a level of interest. Malik's vocals were strong in this song and at some points I caught myself thinking I was listening to John Legend or Bruno Mars.

Most of Malik's songs on the album have a laidback and relaxed vibe to them even though the lyrics tend to contradict that vibe. However, to be honest, I found it hard to pay attention to the lyrics because of Malik's mumbling or because they made me feel uncomfortable.

While there are a few aspects of Malik's overall musicality that I like, I did not enjoy listening to this album. The instrumentation became somewhat stale, I did not like the messages from the lyrics and I do not think Malik showcased his full potential as a singer.

I would not recommend that people listen to this album because it doesn't have anything really worth listening to. The only song I would possibly recommend would be "Calamity" because of



PHOTO COURTESY OF ZAYNMALIKSTORE.COM

how unique it is, and I would only recommend it to a very specific group of people who I feel would possibly enjoy it.

However, the art for the cover of the album is

nicely done in a graffiti style and features a large variety of colors. The figures seem to all have white eyes and blank stares. This album

cover is definitely a unique piece of art and the blank stares seem fitting because that was basically my reaction to this album when listening to the songs. ★

## Hanks delivers a powerful performance

MOVIE REVIEW

### THROWBACK DONE RIGHT

MISAEAL BRUZZONE  
ECONOMICS

*News of the World* is directed by Paul Greengrass (better known for the *Bourne* movies and *Captain Phillips*) and stars Tom Hanks as the lead and introducing 12-year-old German actress Helena Zengel as his co-star. The film is a true Western in all respects. Hanks plays a Civil War veteran tasked with delivering a young German immigrant back to what remains of her family after she was taken by the Kiowa people years ago.

As one should expect, Hanks delivers a powerful performance. The character of Captain Kidd excels and endears audiences through Hanks' veteran acting prowess. Captain Kidd convinces the audiences that violence, although he is well versed in it, is not his preferred method of dealing with the world around him. Nevertheless in the wild West, he is pushed to resort to violence more than once. This comes out as refreshing, as our

hero is not a careless, suave gunslinger, but someone who has seen the horrors of war and would do anything to avoid more bloodshed.

Zengel's character of Johanna more than stands her own against an industry giant like Hanks. She is the true treasure within the movie. Complicated and troubled, she represents a mixture of different cultures present at the time. Although she would be considered part of the immigrant people at the time, she was mostly raised by the Kiowa people. Because of this, her character demonstrates the struggles of the cultural differences and the power of being a bridge between those cultures and the ruling American way of life.

Her character is stubborn and strong, yet kind and caring. Her complicated past and above average wit elevate her character beyond a simple plot point to a well fleshed-out character. She aids and (more than once) saves our main character while also providing Captain Kidd material to reflect on his own past and untangle his current conflicts.

Through these characters and the different landscapes and communities they visit, the film has a chance to explore the hardships of the time. Both a commentary on American history and perhaps the climate of today's world, *News of the World* explores themes of tribalism caused by ideologies, violence, the importance of communication and information, war and family. It dares to tackle many subjects and succeeds in making the audience reflect on the past and present.

The soundtrack created by James Newton Howard, who previously worked on franchises like *The Dark Knight* and *Hunger Games*, is fitting for this throwback to Western movies of the past. It perfectly encapsulates the scores we know and associate with the once dominant genre of Westerns. It proves a worthy companion for the road trip adventure that is this movie.

Cinematographer Dariusz Wolski delivers a powerful vision of the wild West. Wolski previously worked with director Ridley Scott in movies like *The*

*Martian* and the *Alien* sequels, and also was also responsible for cinematography in the *Pirates of the Caribbean* movies. The cinematography for *News of the World* transmits the grueling and merciless landscapes of the Texas desert effectively to audiences. The minimalism of some compositions manages to convey a lot more than the emptiness of the environments they depict. Action is filmed expertly, adding tension and banking on conflict, without needing to exaggerate action scenes. Overall, the look and feel of this film do exactly what they intended to.

Although the story told in *News of the World* is not a new one, it is a welcome one. Engaging and wholesome, the film succeeds in delivering powerful emotions and admirable struggles. Hanks once again demonstrates his power as a lead, and Zengel shines in her first major breakthrough for American audiences, as she is the real standout of this movie. *News of the World* is well-made throwback to an old Hollywood, with all the right things of today's movie industry.



★★★★

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MOVIE DATABASE

## Great harmony found in human biology

DNA MERGED WITH ART

GIDEON FYNAARDT  
BIO HEALTH PROFESSIONS

“Art expresses the human being. Art makes the human being human.”

Such is the wisdom of Abbas Almosawi, lauded Bahraini abstract painter. These are words that conjure hopeful images of every diverse form by which art has manifested in humanity, in history.

Hailing from the same nation as Almosawi is another artist whose wisdom and willingness to share it knows few bounds; Ali Almail, senior art and genetic biology double major here at Northwestern College. His senior art project, Genetic Composition of Christ, was permanently installed in the DeWitt Science Center on Jan. 18 of this year. It is an image of Christ, based on El Greco’s depiction, made out of the known nitrogenous base sequences of a few genetic predispositions to certain illnesses like cancer and Huntington’s disease common to the Middle

East, Jesus’ place of origin, printed on metal. It calls into question the nature of our Savior on the most fundamental level; as a fully human man, was Jesus too predisposed to disease? Did Jesus relate to mankind on a genetic basis? In its description, Almail admits that his art cannot provide those answers, but the questions themselves are full of power and the possibility for humble investigation into the nature of God.

Almail was born in Bahrain to a Bahraini father and Canadian mother and spent much of his childhood bouncing between his domicile in Bahrain and frequent trips to Canada. The school at which his mother worked was associated with the Reformed Church in America, and several faculty and staff were alumni of NW. When none of the schools he visited piqued his interest, he decided on a whim to adhere to his teachers’ advice and enroll at Northwestern College.

Since his youth, Almail has been passionate about art and deeply fascinated by math and hard science. He found a place where the

two combined in architecture, and when college began, he realized how they found even greater harmony in human biology, and such a field also gave him a more direct outlet for his love of helping people, hence it became his major. Art remained a passion of his, and he declared it a minor and later a second major. The decision was born out of his realization that in his postgraduate and career future, he would have little dedicated time to honing and receiving professional education in his art. He decided to put in the extra work now as to benefit most from his college experience.

However, after reflecting, Almail had no regrets in his extra workload and didn’t feel like it took time away from other activities. The reason he gave for this was his circle of friends, those he chooses to spend his time with and the people he finds the most gratification in being with are similarly passionate and dedicated people. We emulate the characters of the people we spend our time with.

Elaborating, he said “If you surround yourself with partiers, you’re going to feel like you’re



PHOTO SUBMITTED  
Ali Almail stands next to his “Genetic Composition of Christ”

missing out on a lot more.”

Almail and his friends find quality time to spend with one another, while also

understanding each others’ workloads, maybe even combining the two activities by working together.

After graduation, Almail plans to attend medical school and pursue both an M.D. and a Ph.D.

## Losses remembered as family is strengthened

FAMILY IS FOUND IN CHOIR

ANGELA WINTERING  
THEATRE

It’s a new semester and the start of a new page for the Northwestern campus. For Northwestern’s A capella Choir, this means some interesting changes.

At the beginning of the academic year, tryouts occur for the many music ensembles on campus. This year, the A capella Choir prepared for the mass number of students departing at the end of the fall semester, to student teaching, study abroads or graduation. Because of this, the amount of students involved in Northwestern’s music program this semester is more than normal to prepare for the losses.

“I know I was super sad to be graduating and leaving so many people I loved,” said Bree Hodnefield, who graduated in December 2020. “I can confidently say we were a close choir.”

Katie Struck, sophomore, comments concerning the loss of choir members, “When someone leaves it’s like we lose a part of our choir family.”

Since many of the members who left were seniors, there is a noticeable gap in student leadership figures in the choir. However, students are finding motivation to still create beautiful sound.

“There were some strong voices and leaders who left,” Junior DJ Nibbelink said “we will just need to work at improving ourselves and step up to the challenge.”

The emphasis on family brought up by Struck has been increasingly felt since NW shut down in-person classes in March 2020. Students within the artistic departments of campus feel a strong connection toward each other, and the music department holds several smaller families within the many ensembles. However, like the rest of campus, students worked to the best of their abilities to make the best of the bad situation.

Hodnefield said, “[Being sent home] allowed us to become close and connected.”

Since returning to campus, the music department has intentionally followed guidelines as well as they can in order to continue making music together. Instead of practicing in the choir room, the members practice together in the band room to allow for better spacing. They also wear their masks while practicing and only take them off to sing when performing.

“The precautions are not ideal,” Struck says. “But if they allow us to make music together, then that makes it worth it in the end.”

Not only are choir members intentionally following the safety guidelines, but they are also being more intentional about exercising kindness towards each other.

Hodnefield comments on the new demeanor of her now past fellows, “Whether [it’s shown by] showing up 20 minutes before choir to hangout and chat, or inviting people to play COVID-19 friendly games, striking up a conversation when passing through the Learning Commons and most importantly checking in on each other,”

Because of precautions being followed, students are still on campus, resulting in the choir being able to plan their participation in a few exciting opportunities. One of those is the American Choral Directors National Convention this March. Because of COVID-19, the convention has decided to go virtual.

Northwestern’s A capella Choir will join the professional group, Formosa Singers of Taiwan, for a lecture demonstration and several choral performances. Ten of these works will be performed by Formosa Singers, and one will be performed by NW’s A Capella choir. The song that will be performed by NW is called “Se Gai,” which explains the story of a woman yearning for memories long past of time with her beloved, whom she misses very much.

“In Mid-March, it will go live to a potential membership audience of 4,000-5,000,” said Dr. Thomas Holm, director of NW’s A capella Choir. “We are really honored and delighted to be a part of this event this year.”



PHOTO BY ANA DEKRUUYER  
A capella Choir rehearses with masks on and at a safe distance.

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## The dating culture across NW campus

ASSUMPTIONS ON RELATIONSHIPS

ALLISON WHEELER  
GRAPHIC DESIGN

Rushed, ill-advised, isolating, heightened, extreme, serious, exposed and pressured. These are words that three Northwestern students used to describe the college's dating culture. Of course, these words show only the opinion of a small fraction of the student body, but there is still a statement being made, considering all three of the students have different relationship statuses.

Junior Cameron Esch is single, senior Joshua Fischer is currently dating a fellow NW student whom he met here at the college and junior Karisa Meier is in a long-distance relationship with someone from high school. However, all three students have seen similar trends happening here on campus.

The dating culture has been a debated topic for years, with popular student slogan "ring by spring" being a widely said phrase across campus.

For students who are dating at NW, a noticeable trend on campus is the pressure pot on romantic relationships, potential couples or even just friends who are seen hanging out together. Marlon Haverdink, dean of residence life, has observed from a staff member's perspective the pressure that students

are under when it comes to relationships.

"I do think it's unfortunate that if you begin spending time with someone, there are assumptions," Haverdink said.

As a student, Esch believes friendships with the opposite sex are good to have, and these types of friendships are common here on campus. However, he has also seen how these types of friendships can be twisted by outside observers and how assumptions are made after people go on one date.

"If you go on a date with someone, all of a sudden you two are a 'thing' and it's this huge deal," Esch said. People should be able to go on dates freely with anybody that they are interested in getting to know better."

When comparing platonic and romantic relationships, Meier thinks the prioritization between the two types of relationships depends on each individual person. However, Meier sees a lot of value in forming strong friendships while in college.

"I don't think romantic relationships are viewed as more meaningful on campus as a whole. Friendships are considered extremely important at NW," Meier said. "Building a healthy support system of friends who will encourage you, keep you accountable and love you well is something that will last you longer than a romantic



PHOTO BY ANA DEKRUYTER  
As springtime approaches, the phrase "ring by spring" will be heard around campus.

relationship might."

However, Fischer is hesitant to use "toxic" to describe the culture.

"Toxic is a strong word, but I definitely think there is some unhealthiness to NW's dating culture. There is a lot of pressure to end up married to the person that anyone is currently dating," Fischer said. "It seems that a successful relationship is defined as one that ends in

death. We don't allow people to date and break up and to still call a success. There is a lot that people can learn from relationships that do not end in marriage."

There are many relationships at NW that do end in marriage, though. According to NW's Institutional Research Office, since 2015, 127 individuals have gotten married while attending college.

However, marriage during college is somewhat inevitable due to the proximity of such a large group of young adults, all who are in the same season of life. Having students who get married is not a unique circumstance to NW, and Haverdink has seen it happen at other colleges as well.

While it seems like a never-ending cycle of marriage on campus, NW students find it important to focus

on self-worth outside of relationships, too.

"There is a lot of value in being single," Esch said. "You are able to fully focus on your relationship with God."

Even with dating as a highly discussed topic on campus, dating isn't the purpose of attending college.

"It is not a failure to graduate without being in a relationship," Fischer said.

## Unsung Heroes: Rahn Franklin

FROM PAGE 1

"We first learned about Rahn from an alum and friend of his who was interested in the job herself," Dr. Kevin McMahan, associate dean for intercultural development, said. "As I was describing what the role needed, she said, 'Oh! I know the perfect person! Everybody loves Rahn!'"

The Intercultural department quickly realized just how right she was. Franklin became the Multicultural Student Counselor, then transitioned to his current role as director of multicultural student development.

Many students would identify Franklin as one of the main reasons they

continue at NW.

"Franklin makes us feel heard, empowered, loved and capable," Ramirez said. For students of color at a primarily Anglo institution, it is so important for us to develop a sense of belonging, Rahn does that."

Regardless of where his path had taken him, Franklin feels the work he is doing would be quite the same.

"I'd be doing similar work without the title if I wasn't in this position," Franklin said. "I'd still try to find some way to ensure that inclusive excellence was a staple in any organization or role that I was filling."

McMahan has been working alongside Franklin for the past



PHOTO BY ALYSSA GLANZ  
Franklin talks to a group of students in the lobby of Christ Chapel as he directs a time of service in observation of MLK Day.

decade, and his experience working with Franklin attests to his talents and abilities in diversity.

"Following Christ

in pursuing God's redeeming work in the world' is Rahn's learning and living mantra, and he pursues it courageously

and faithfully every day," McMahan said. "It's been a great privilege to work beside him for the past decade."

With Franklin and the help of the Intercultural department, diversity continues to be advocated for on campus.

## Transfers are loving NW experience

NW WELCOMES MANY NEW TRANSFERS

**JORDAN DESMET**  
PUBLIC RELATIONS

Transitioning to a new college is a big change. Everything is new: the people, the living spaces and the classes. Everything in between is all unfamiliar. All this can feel overwhelming at times to students transferring to colleges around the country. However, transfer students say Northwestern is different. NW has welcomed 39 transfers since the beginning of the fall semester, and many of them have begun to feel right at home.

NW's campus is much smaller compared to other institutions in Iowa such as the state public schools in Cedar Falls, Ames and Iowa City. Because it is common for Iowa residents to grow up in or near a small town, it is not unusual for them to want a fresh start at a bigger university. However, some individuals begin to realize that the culture provided by a larger university is not what suits them best.

"I'd say one of the main reasons students transfer here is to be at a small, private Christian school that is well-known for its sense of

community," Sandy Van Kley said, who works in the registrar. "Some have been to large universities and weren't comfortable with the secular environments there or didn't like being 'just a number.'"

Another advantage of NW's small campus is that class sizes tend to be smaller as well. This makes it easier for professors to cater to their students' needs, and they are more than willing to ensure their students' success.

"The classroom experience has been great," Trevor Reinke said, a biology major and transfer from University of Sioux Falls. "You can tell the teachers care about the well-being of each student. I enjoy how the teachers try and build a relationship with their students. It creates a better learning environment in the classroom and gives you something to look forward to every day."

NW's small, tight-knit atmosphere also creates a friendly community, and multiple transfers noticed and appreciated this almost immediately after arriving on campus.

"People are accepting and nice, and the culture here is different. You can say 'hi' to everyone, and they will say 'hi' back. It is the little things that matter," criminal justice major Jose Sanchez said.



PHOTO BY JADEYN VELTKAMP  
Transfers Delanie Niemyer and Savannah Van Veldhuizen both live in Stegenga Hall.

However, the most important aspect of the NW experience is for students to grow in their Christian faith. Several transfers say they chose NW because it would give them an opportunity to expand their knowledge and trust in God. Thanks to chapel opportunities, faith-centered curriculum and a healthy Christian environment, NW has been able to assist their transfers with strengthening their relationship with God.

"I knew NW was a school geared toward Christ," Daniel Nordquist said, a biology-health professions major and transfer from Iowa Central Community College. "I enjoy how much my faith in Christ has grown over the past semester."

The numerous great qualities of NW and the community offered by the students have helped new transfers feel like they belong. College can be a culture shock. Students do not truly know what

college life is like until they experience it. However, NW puts their uncertainty at ease.

"I enjoy everyone on campus, from my classmates to the professors, as well as the faculty," said Brett Segar, a business administration major and transfer from Hawkeye Community College in Waterloo, Iowa. "Everyone here really made me feel welcomed and at home."

## Hard topics at chapel

FROM PAGE 1

The authentic conversations he wishes for campus need to be handled with care. Some first steps are to reach out to an RA or a roommate with the knowledge that this conversation will take vulnerability. For those on the receiving end of this conversation, DeYoung encourages prayer and listening ears that are committed to affirming the other in their vulnerability.

"Jesus didn't die for a more 'cleaned-up' version of you, He loved you as you are right now, and he loves you too much to not invite you to more fullness, freedom and healing," DeYoung said.

Students around campus have already seen

positive feedback from this chapel series. Lee has had conversations in his dorm and around the Hoppers cafeteria table. Lydia Pearson, a Stegenga Hall RA, has had several conversations with friends. Ryan Sjaarda, a Campus Ministry Team member has also seen positive conversations happen but has also heard some push-back from other students. Because it is a delicate topic that intimately engages those involved, it is common to see both progress and push-back.

"This is something that our parents and the church have not talked to us about enough, so I'm glad that we are being told about this from an institution that holds Christian values," Sjaarda said.

"Before it used to be a conversation behind closed doors or not at all," Lee said. "Now, it seems that more people are asking questions in public spaces."

The series hopes to continue in its course with upcoming NED talks shaped around disembodiment and shame in the first two weeks of February. It is DeYoung's hope that students can see past their shame to fullness in Christ.

"Although we are all sexually broken people, Jesus came not to condemn the world but to save it, to redeem it, to heal it, including my sexuality and yours," DeYoung said. "Our healing is our wholeness and our wholeness is our freedom."



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PHOTO SUBMITTED  
PORNified Relationships serves as the slogan for this semester's chapel focus.

## WOULD YOU RATHER?

(As voted on by you, the students)

Would you rather go to chapel in...

**The Chapel**

99%

OR

**The Bultman**

1%

Would you rather watch...

**The Office**

64%

OR

**Parks and Rec**

36%

Would you rather attend a...

**Sporting event**

57%

OR

**Theater event**

43%

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

## The wasps deserve to be saved too



**Maggie Winn**  
Writing and Rhetoric

Despite the divisions of language, culture, race, gender, politics and religion, humanity seems to share a universal hatred of wasps. I, like so many others, was once afraid of stinging insects. I laughed along when people said wasps come from hell and go straight back down when they die. However, after observing, researching, and working alongside wasps, I drifted into the universally hated camp of people who like wasps. Wasps don't deserve the reputation they've been given as the fallen angels of the bee family.

A few summers ago paper wasps built a nest in my family's yard. It was terrifying at first. Every day a wasp drifted around me as I gardened, sometimes perching on my arms or shoulders. Its lack of aggression helped my fear turn into curiosity, and curiosity to a cautious affection for my gardening partner. I named the wasp Evangeline. While I was there, she

pollinated. While I was away, she and her sisters picked off the gnats and caterpillars who gnawed holes in my plants, fed their children and worked on their nest. We lived our separate lives in peace.

People often ask me why they should coexist with an animal that could hurt them. However, most of us already do. Dogs rank second on the list of animals most likely to kill people. We adore them nonetheless and rarely think twice about bringing them into our homes or leaving them alone with our children. The benefit outweighs the risk of an animal we bred over thousands of years to dependently obey, communicate with and please us. The animals that we fear most are not the ones who kill us, but the ones with autonomy, defense mechanisms and a realistic view of humanity as a threat.

I often question the ways we judge whether something deserves to live or die. The movement to save the bees, a close relative of wasps, is an excellent example of our selfishness. The movement is primarily focused on honeybees. Never mind that honeybees are not a native species and are less productive than the native solarity bee populations. We act as if we care about honeybees not because we fear losing them, but because of the loss of the tangible addition they provide to our diet. It's a strange and ugly reality that respect for any other life is composed of

the ways it improves ours.

Still, I will not ask you to coexist with a useless animal. It would be wrong to finish this article without listing the ways wasps benefit us, not to justify their existence but to acknowledge their presence in each bite of food, each plant you watch grow, each breath you take that doesn't fill your lungs with gnats. Without wasps there would be no figs. The yeast used to make alcoholic drinks would die out. The pest insects wasps prey upon would explode in number, destroying fields of crops and ruining your picnics with clouds of flies and mosquitos and an important pollinator would be lost.

This summer, I ask that you keep your distance from wasps rather than kill them for the sake of killing. Watch their delicate movements. If you're curious observe the paper of their nests and the routine they follow throughout the day. Give names to the things you fear. If you're feeling generous, offer them a drop of your lemonade. It's true that if you kill a wasp, nothing will happen. No one will pause to mourn for a smear on the pavement. The cycle of life will continue until you are dead and forgotten just like it. Considering the fragility of our existence, I urge you to live with humility and kindness towards all life. In the end, we are all just food for insects.

## Art, and your grandma's figurines



**Naomi Lief**  
Art

What is art? I'm asked this question at the beginning of almost every art class that I attend. The answer comes in many different shapes and sizes, and the definition of art itself seems to differ with every new age. Art is frequently described as a form of communication, a visual language. It is a configuration of self expression, a means by which people are able to show something that words simply cannot express. What makes something art? Are your grandmother's kitschy collectable figurines considered art? What about your grandfather's puzzles? Think about the mass produced print of a lighthouse hanging in your bathroom. Do these things have meaning?

In the 1300s, European art was used most often for the sole purpose of worshipping God. Artists could make a legitimate income from their work,

even if it took them months, if not years to complete a single painting. People were moved, even to tears, by their work. According to the book *Of Pictures and Tears*, by James Elkins, it would have been seen as strange if a person could look at a painting and feel no emotions.

Now, art is everywhere. It's in everything. Everyday, our minds are flooded with so many images that we become immune to the things that art has invited us to feel. Art can be found in advertisements, entertainment, social media platforms and even consumerism. Art as a concept is accessible and easy to create. Anyone and everyone can be an artist. However, it is deemed difficult to make a living off of creating something, as society makes it seem as if there isn't any coherent value.

We inhale art in almost every aspect of our lives. Good artists are efficient artists; they have to be able to whip out their work on a daily basis, lest people lose interest in their creations. Art is fast. We assume that we are entitled to it for free, of course, and judge its credibility with merely seven seconds of our attention.

The definition of art has broadened significantly from centuries past. Many people jump to the conclusion that there is good art, and then there

is bad art. However, even though our modern world is filled to the brim with imagery and color, who are we to decide what has meaning and what does not, or what is "good," and what is "bad"? Finding meaning in something is simply a figure of our imaginations. Maybe we should be asking, "how do we slow down?" There's a difference between what we see, and how we see it. Maybe we need to broaden our understanding.

Take your grandmother's figurines or your grandfather's puzzle that is now framed and hanging on the wall for instance. Think about the mass produced print of a lighthouse hanging in your bathroom. As cheaply designed as they all might be, people find meaning in these things, whether or not they are categorized as art. Maybe it's about what brightens the eyes. Your grandfather bought and built that puzzle, and he's proud of how much time he put into connecting all one thousand pieces together. He feels a sense of accomplishment whenever he looks at it. Your grandmother has collected figurines for years; she delights in arranging them and they're special to her. Can these things be defined as art? Maybe. As for the print of the lighthouse hanging in your bathroom, that's for you to decide.

### Editor's Note

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## Women's soccer welcomes new head coach

### GREAT HEAD COACH HIRED

**JILLIAN SIMON**  
CHRISTIAN ED/YOUTH MINISTRY

Northwestern's women's soccer team has been in search of a new head coach for the upcoming season. The search committee believes they have found the fit in Shannon Andringa.

Dan Swier, head men's soccer coach and member of the search committee, was very excited to be a part of this process. This is Dr. Micah Parker's first head coach hire since beginning his position at NW as athletic director this summer.

The head women's

soccer coach position was not out for very long and according to Dr. Parker, "We had over 50 applicants and many more inquires".

Something had to be special about Shannon Andringa to make her stand out in the hiring process. The new coach is a Michigan native, playing at high levels and having much success in her high school and college soccer careers.

Dan Swier, shared that Andringa has only lost 14 games in high school and college combined. He says that her winning mentality brings something special to the table and sets her apart from other applicants.

Everyone involved in the hiring process made it clear that Andringa prioritized

her faith and truly wants to invest in her players, not only as athletes, but as people.

"I have a desire to invest in the next generation of woman and to see them transform the world by following Jesus and living like he did Shannon said, Soccer has always been a big part of my life, both playing and coaching, and it has changed my life. An opportunity to combine both passions made this position really appealing to me."

This position will be Andringa's first collegiate coaching position, but she is already excited about leading the Raiders. She hopes to lead alongside her team, pushing them to be champions on and off

the field. She believes that challenging the players to lead will create a winning culture.

Andringa describes the winning culture she strives for as "where winning is not only defined by our record, but by how our lives are lived. I hope that lives are transformed through being a part of this program."

Shannon Andringa will officially start her position as head women's soccer coach at NW on Feb. 1. She says she is excited to move to Orange City and meet the girls that make up the women's soccer team. The staff and her future coworkers are excited to have her, and her passion as part of the Red Raider team.



PHOTO COURTESY OF NW ATHLETICS  
Coach Andringa is excited to begin her new journey with NW.

## NW Track and Field starts off strong

### A GREAT START TO THE SEASON

**KAELIN ALONS**  
PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Northwestern Track and Field program has competed in three indoor meets so far this season. The athletes have been putting effort in both practices and meets. There have been many participants who have won or been top two in their specialized events.

This past December, the teams traveled to Concordia for their first meet, the Bulldog Early Bird Invite. A few top finishers for the squad included senior Autumn Muilenberg who placed second in the 3000m run with a time of 11:04 and sophomore

James Gilbert Jr. who placed first in the long jump with a distance of 7.54m (24.74ft).

The second meet of the season was the Dakota Wesleyan Open on Jan. 16. Due to the weather, the women's team was unable to compete the day before. For the men, three athletes placed first in their respective events. Gilbert set a school record in the triple jump with a distance of 14.46m (47.44ft). This distance also put him in second place in all of NAIA. Junior Dylan Hendricks won the 5000m run with a time of 15:38. And junior Aaron Shepard tied in the high jump with a height of 1.83m (6ft).

The third meet of the season took place last weekend at Dordt University. On the men's side, three

athletes once again placed first in their events. Hendricks won a race for the second meet in a row. He ran a time of 4:28 to win the mile. Gilbert took first in an event for the third meet in a row winning the long jump with a distance of 7.17m (23.5ft). Finally, freshman Lorenzo Jones won the triple jump with a distance of 13.63m (44.7ft). On the women's side, senior Allison Birks took both of the first place finishes for NW. In the long jump, she cleared a personal best with a distance of 5.29m (17.4 ft) to win the event. In the high jump, Birks won a tie breaker against both Dordt and Mount Marty with a height of 1.48m (4.86ft). Both teams will compete at the Mount Marty Invite on Saturday, Jan. 30.



PHOTO COURTESY OF NW ATHLETICS  
Track and Field athletes show great potential as the indoor has just begun.

## Raiders Cheer and Dance team's first competition

### HIGH HOPES FOR THE YEAR

**BREANNA CARR**  
ENGLISH TEACHING

On Jan. 20, the Red Raiders Cheer and Dance team had its first competitions of the season. The competitions were held at Northwestern in the Rowenhorst Student Center and the Bultman Center respectively. In these two home competitions, the Raiders went head-to-head in two tri-matches against Mount Marty and Morningside.

In the cheer tri-match, the Mustangs took home

first place with a score of 66.45 points. Not far behind, the Raiders brought home second place with a score of 61.6 points. Earning third place, Mount Marty scored a total of 51.15 points. NW had a few fumbles, but that did not hurt their score too much. The total deduction for the fumbles was one point. Mount Marty also had some fumbles in their routine. With four violations, 1.25 points was deducted from Mount Marty's overall score. Morningside had no fumbles or violations which means they had no deductions. All three teams

performed well for the first competition of the 2020-2021 competition season. The cheer tri-match was held in the Rowenhorst Student Center. Cheer and dance coach Taylor Nygren said, "we added lots of new talent this year and are excited to showcase our skills. Hopefully we can get back up in the top two out of the GPAC and place well at regionals." In the dance tri-match which took place in the Bultman Center, the Mustangs took home first place again with a score of 89.5 points. The Raiders

brought home second place with their score of 73.1 points. Mount Marty earned third place in the competition with a score of 55.15 points. Each team performed well in the 2020-2021 competition season opener. After the competition came to a close, all three of the teams were able to perform their routines at the NW men's basketball game against briar cliff for a half-time show. They performed in order of third to first place. "we are excited for this season to showcase new skills we have been working on. We may be a small



PHOTO BY ALYSSA GLANZ  
Cheer and dance teams show great potential for the first meet of the season.

group this year but the talent we have shows! I'm Excited to see where we end up in the GPAC this year"

Coach Nygren said. The Raiders compete at Concordia University in Nebraska on Feb. 6. Both

cheer and dance will be competing. Good luck in the competition season Raiders Cheer and Dance.



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# Biden takes office as next President

JOE BIDEN'S INAUGURATION  
DRAWS NATIONAL ATTENTION

**RACHEL SMART**  
ENGLISH TEACHING

On Wednesday, Jan. 20 at 12 p.m., Joe Biden was sworn in as the 46th president of the United States. Shortly beforehand, Kamala Harris was sworn into office as vice president, making her the first woman, South Asian, and black person to hold this office in the country's history.

Despite damage incurred at the U.S. capitol from the attack on Jan. 6, the inauguration took place at the west end of the U.S. Capitol per tradition.

On the other hand, breaking tradition, President Trump did not attend the ceremony, making him the first president in over 150 years to not attend the inauguration of his successor.

In his inaugural address, Biden recognized and paid tribute to the pandemic and harsh political division that surround this transition of power.

"To overcome these challenges—to restore the soul and to secure the future of America—requires more than words," he stated. "It requires that most elusive of things in a democracy: unity."

Biden also took a moment to recognize the Capitol Hill attack and celebrate the victorious spirit of democracy in America: "We've learned, again, that democracy is precious. Democracy is fragile. At this hour, my friends, democracy has prevailed."

Harris' first speech as vice president was also filled with optimism and encouragement for the future.

"In many ways this moment embodies our character as a nation," she said. "It demonstrates who we are, even in dark times. We not only dream, we do."

She added: "We are undaunted in our belief that we shall overcome, that we will rise up."

Following his oath of office, Biden immediately got to work signing 30 executive orders in his first three days as president. Several of these reverse policies put into place by



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNSPLASH.COM

Despite damage, the presidential inauguration was held at the Capitol, per tradition.

the Trump administration.

Biden reversed the "Muslim Ban," which set U.S. entry restrictions on passport holders from seven Muslim majority countries. He also rejoined the Paris climate accord and stopped the United States' withdrawal from the World Health Organization as set into motion by Trump.

Biden also halted the construction of the border wall begun by Trump and canceled the Keystone XL pipeline.

"The 100 Days Masking Challenge," one of Biden's many new COVID-19 combatant policies, was also passed via executive order, through which Biden encouraged the American people to mask for 100 days, required masking and physical distancing in federal buildings, on federal lands and by government

contractors, and urged local and state governments to do the same.

Finally, Biden's order that extends the pause of federal student loan payments and interest accumulation was executed in hopes of being helpful to many college students and graduates.

According to an ABC/Washington Post poll, Biden enters his term with a 67% approval rating. While this is higher than 54% approval rating at the beginning of Trump's term, Biden's numbers are still historically lower than past presidents like Obama, G.W. Bush, Clinton and H.W. Bush.

In other words, despite Biden's plea for unity, he still has a long way to go to win over the remainder of the American public.

## Spring COVID-19 cases

LOW CASE COUNT  
AFTER BREAK

**VANESSA STOKES**  
WRITING AND RHETORIC

As of Jan. 25, Northwestern only has five active COVID-19 cases.

Fall break of the 2020 semester saw 30 active cases post-break. After Thanksgiving break, the trend took a turn for the better and only saw 11 active cases.

When the student body left for Christmas break, the campus had a total of 14 active cases. Two of those were employees and 12 were students. Following the trend of Thanksgiving break, the campus body came back after Christmas with 11 total COVID-19 cases, one of which was an employee.

Thus, the current statistic of five active cases is a positive number. Compared to the rest of NW's COVID-19 data, it is significantly lower.

Now, this statistic of only five active cases hinges on the word "active". Active, as defined

by NW, means "cases where individuals are still in isolation."

However, NW's COVID-19 information does not display the number of students currently quarantined either from exposure or caution. Yet, it is still good to take this information into account when contemplating NW's COVID-19 status.

"The number of students in quarantine can change by the minute, so we do not report or keep historical track of that data," said Jill Haarsma, executive administrative assistant to the president of NW and part of the COVID-19 Response Team.

NW has kept up quite a few precautions that have aided in the lowering of virus cases. In the fall semester, masks were required and social distancing in almost all activities around campus. The Raider Check app was integrated into students' daily lives to try to keep track of student body health.

President Greg Christy in the latest responsible Raider reminder stated, "We are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel, but we are not there yet."

These same measures have been sustained throughout this first month of the spring semester with a further step of requesting that students receive a COVID-19 test the first week of January before returning. Though many of these mitigation measures will remain the same, there have been a few precautions that have been lifted.

Some changes to the cafeteria stations have already been put in place with self-service lines. As the semester progresses, the COVID-19 Response Team will continue to monitor measures with the hope that there will be positive changes further down the road.

In the meantime, Raiders are asked by the COVID-19 Response Team to continue to wear a mask, practice physical distancing, wash their hands, stay home if they are sick and complete the Raider Check app daily and truthfully.

Haarsma said, "We're all tired and a little weary of life not being normal, but we have to keep up mitigation efforts to do our part to stop the spread of the virus."



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PHOTO BY JADEYN VELTKAMP

In order to keep numbers down, students must stay diligent in mitigation efforts.