Crossing cultures on campus

“Nationwide, the idea of cross-cultural housing is on the rise and is always debatable regarding its potential to retain students and/or alienate them from the campus community,” Franklin said.

The hope is that the cross-cultural housing on campus will create a place where community can thrive.

Located on the second floor of Bolks Apartment B (East), the Cross-Cultural Community House is home to 22 students from a wide variety of racial and cultural backgrounds.

Students found out about the opportunity to live in this community through friends, roommates, La Mosaic meetings and the Day of Learning. For senior Samantha Bender, living in another country made her realize the importance of what this type of environment could offer.

“I spent a semester and a summer in Romania. Something I found to be really valuable was spending time with people who are different from you,” Bender said. “Although we approach life differently in different situations, there’s a lot of beauty in diversity. I was excited to just do life together. We don’t usually get outside our social sphere, but it’s the best thing you can do for yourself.”

Junior Gee Daka said she also saw the cross-cultural housing as a way to branch out from her normal group of friends: “I thought living here would be really cool. As an international student, I was hanging out with the same people and I wanted to meet new people,” Daka said.

“You never know what you can learn from someone, and I wanted to learn new things about myself, too.”

Still others weren’t immediately sure about what to do for housing.

“Last year the cross-cultural housing was mentioned in La Mosaic. It sounded cool, but I didn’t really want to do it because I wanted to stay in the dorms. I had a few roommate offers, but I was still struggling with where I wanted to live,” said sophomore Talitha Witt. “I was praying and asking God, ‘What do I do for housing?’ After that, I just saw the words ‘cross-cultural’ everywhere I looked. I took it as a sign from God.”

Living with people from other cultural backgrounds is already beginning to transform opinions.

See “Learning” on Page 4

King-Vilsack debate brings opportunity for both parties to visit NW

“How a debate works is different from the Romney rally because at a rally it is more to get people hyped up and not go in depth about the issues,” said junior Ethan Raysby, a political science major. “At the debate the candidates won’t be able to avoid questions, and they will go more in depth.”

Unlike the Romney rally, NW sought out the opportunity to host this debate on its campus.

“How do we go about solving the Pell Grant and the cost reduction and access act,” said senior Jeff Van Der Werff, a political science major. “We need to be asking the questions and be researching the candidates’ positions. "We need to be asking the questions and researching the candidates’ positions.""
West RD makes music to connect to God

BY JEFF HUBERS

“It’s funnily that people think I’ve played a lot this year already,” said West RD Resident Director Corey Kundert. “To me, it feels like I haven’t played in a long time.”

Since the semester began, Kundert has performed for The Red Letter Festival and a night of music at The Old Factory. Those that have seen West RD’s R.D. perform know he is also a singer/songwriter.

Kundert is known around Northwestern for his solo act, but everything he has done for the NW audience remains only a portion of a much fuller and distinctive experience.

“The things I’ve played here are really watered-down compared to their sound as part of a band,” Kundert said.

Back in Kundert’s home in Indiana, his collaborations with his brother and friends are truly the treasures in his musical experiences. Kundert started making drum sets out of Lil’ Caesar’s pizza boxes as a child. This led to his parents purchasing a drum set for him and his brother to share. For six years, Kundert shared the drum set with his brother, until he came into possession of his uncle’s guitar.

“Unfortunately, this album fails to capture the sincerity and potency of previous favorites from the band like “When You Were Young” and “A Dustland Fairytale.” This album falls for the same trap that the band’s hometown of Las Vegas practically invented: Behind all the lights and showiness, the music lacks true heart.

“While the Killers have mastered the arena ballad, but don’t expect tears or pensive reminiscence or remorse with the fond memories presented here.

Rating: ★★★
Key Track: “Runaways,” “Flesh and Bone”

West RD Corey Kundert plays his own brand of music, a genre he would define as “post-indie rock.”

Carly Rae can’t replicate ‘Maybe’ magic

BY TOM WESTERHOLM

This may be difficult to believe, but The Kiss, Carly Rae Jepsen’s first full-length release since “Call Me Maybe” blew up like napalm, sounds quite a bit like “Call Me Maybe.”

The problem, of course, is that capturing the same magic twelve tracks in a row is nearly impossible, and unfortunately for Jepsen, The Kiss fails to accomplish the nearly impossible.

Much of what made “Call Me Maybe” so unspeakably catchy was the minimalist way the song was presented. There were very few synthesizer effects. The song relied on quick-hitting drums, a simple drumbeat and extended spaces in between chords to create a bouncy, energetic sound. It was oddly simple.

Jepsen’s producers went completely away from the minimalist sound for most of The Kiss, making the album little different than the Katy Perrys and the Nicki Minajs of the music world. It’s easy to see why they would make this decision: it sells records. But it doesn’t make for a particularly distinct sound, and it definitely doesn’t make for an album that lives up to the “Maybe” hype.

Two of the more egregious offenders include “Tonight I’m Getting Over You” and “Guitar String/ Wedding Ring,” both of which abuse the synth sound and auto-tune Jepsen to nearly unrecognizable lengths.

The heavy auto-tune on Jepsen’s voice is painful. Her unaffected voice is an extremely light soprano, like one’s eardrums are resting on a cotton ball. Jepsen’s auto-tuned voice is a high-pitched saw, hacking away at the eardrum with unpleasant intensity.

When Jepsen operates simply, the album works. The gem is “Beautiful,” three minutes of pop-superstar power, as Jepsen is joined by Justin Bieber, owner of Jepsen’s label Schoolboy Records. Jepsen and Bieber play a stripped-down acoustic song that allows both to demonstrate their considerable vocal talents without the overly polished auto-tune that usually pervades their songs.

As a pop-sensation, Jepsen will gain a lot of money, but not a lot of critical acclaim.

That’s probably fine with Jepsen, and it’s definitely fine with her handlers. It’s just a little disappointing for the rest of us.

Rating: ★
Key Track: “Beautiful”
Students bring confidence from camp to college

BY KATI HENG
AND EDITOR

For counselors and kids alike, summer is a wonderful time of the year because of summer camp. Days are filled with swimming, hiking and playing outdoors in the sun, and nights are filled with s’mores and counting stars. Especially for counselors, it’s a time when clothing, makeup and appearances hardly matter.

“I kinda forgot what it was like to look nice over the summer,” said junior Holly Hassman, who spent her summer, “I wouldn’t take time at all getting ready. Sometimes I’d sleep in clothes for the next day.”

“Especially for counselors, it doesn’t matter. Counselors were more concerned with getting in time for sleep, or waking up early to do devotions than spending time getting ready most mornings.”

But when August and the beginning of school comes around, coming back to college can demonstrate just how different the two environments can be.

“It’s a whole different environment at school,” said senior Laura Tellinghuisen, who worked at Inspiration Hills in Inwood for the third summer in a row. “You’re not just around 10-year-old kids anymore.”

Hassman said now she feels as if she is conforming more to the culture of the campus, putting more time into her appearance before classes.

“I didn’t wear make-up at all this summer, so when I first came back to college, wearing any make-up at all felt fake,” Hassman said. “Eventually, I’d start to enjoy putting more on and looking nice.”

For others, such as sophomore Laura Jonker who spent her summer working at Camp Grow in Markesan, Wisc., it took some time to get back into the routine of dressing up.

“For the first couple of weeks at school, I was just used to wearing shorts, t-shirts and sandals,” Jonker said. “I started to try to wear nicer things because it makes me feel more professional.”

Coming back to school, counselors said they realized it’s okay to look a little different.

“Working at a summer camp has helped me to feel more comfortable without makeup on,” Tellinghuisen said.

“Maybe it’s the ease of not caring about style for a few months of the year, or maybe it’s the camps themselves that make the counselors feel confident, no matter how they look.”

“I feel more confident in who I am after working at camp,” Jonker said. “You’re expected to act crazy to show the kids that it’s okay to be yourself.”

Resident Evil: Retribution ranks very low, and even for a Resident Evil movie, it’s not very good.

The content is barely context, the acting is sub-par, and the few small glimmers of cleverness are drowned out by dialogue that might have been written by a seventh-grader. The costume design is barely semblant of the characters the actors are supposed to be representing. The score sounds like a self-respecting sound designer got asked to make a “mashup of dubstep and the Inception soundtrack because those are popular.” The musician sullenly created the music as satirically as possible and when presenting it to the producers was met, aghast, with a “Yeah, that sounds perfect! Great work!”

All technicalities aside, this movie is about people shooting other not-quite-people and sometimes people, too. That’s tolerable.

What isn’t tolerable is how offensively bored every actor and actress is and how poorly done every potentially cool concept is. Let’s have them fight through an underwater fortress made of gigantic urban recreations of major population centers full of clones and where a giant evil corporation tests their bioweapons. There’s a chase scene wherein heavily armed Soviet zombies, some of which are on motorcycles, pursue four humans in a fancy car through a full-scale recreation of downtown Moscow. Oh, and there’s a giant zombie bulldog-ape.

As impossible as it seems to screw that up, Resident Evil manages to do so.

The movie would be an hour long if every action scene wasn’t in slow motion. It’s as impressively saturated with slow-mo as the slow-mo is arbitrary. There’s little rhyme or reason to when it kicks in aside from “is there a bullet? or “is someone being kicked?”

The only fun cinematic trick involves reversing the opening action scene in (surprise) slow motion. And it isn’t even slow-mo used to hide the bad choreography. It just emphasizes how nine out of every ten shots is poorly composed.

The lowest point in a series of sub-oceanic points is probably the fact that everything could have been good. There are great concepts here, but they’re executed with such clumsiness and amateur filmmaking that it’s an embarrassment to kinda-dumb zombie action movies everywhere. Doomsday would be disappointed with you, Resident Evil. Not angry. Just disappointed.

Resident Evil: Retribution” is simple. Picture what a 12-year-old thinks is a good action movie about zombies, then make it poorly, and slow it down.

Rating: ★
FROM PAGE 1

“I had so many perceptions of people, and they’ve already changed,” said senior Jasmine Smith. “We had perceptions of each other as roommates, but they’ve changed. For example, my freshman year Samantha [Bender] was a lot different than she is now. Just seeing the growth of someone that you haven’t been around for so long is fascinating.”

In weekly meetings, roommates join other students on the floor to get to know one another and to discuss ways to break down walls. Bender and her roommates collided on multiple issues, especially those regarding faith. In their apartment, not everyone is Christian. They are learning different perspectives about what it means to love one’s neighbor and what it means to love God. Bender said they appreciate the beauty in other faiths and have books about Islam, Jewish prayer books and the Bible lying out on coffee tables at the same time in their room.

Junior Isaiah Custer and his roommates are learning about perspective in another way: They are discovering how to appreciate each other’s passions. Custer is a theatre major and involved in many productions, and his roommates are on the football team. Busy schedules make it difficult for the five of them to find time together, but they are learning to appreciate one another’s interests.

“It’s been interesting because the four guys I’m living with have known each other forever,” Custer said. “They play football together, lift weights together and eat together. It’s been interesting coming in not knowing them, but it’s been a good experience that has made me conscious of other groups on campus and what their schedules are like.”

Not only are Custer’s views changing about interests other than his own but he’s also become aware of another thing.

“I’m a minority. I’m the only white guy on the entire floor,” Custer said. “I’m used to being one in the crowd where I blend in with everyone else, so it’s really interesting to me to be the one who stands out because of my race. That’s kind of a cool thing to me because I’m so used to seeing white people as the prevalent race in America, but I realize that there are so many different cultures around us that influence things like politics, music, acting and management.”

Life in the cross-cultural housing is also helping to teach students that no matter where they’ve come from or what they’ve previously dealt with, they are living life together.

“A thing we found out about stereotypes is that they’re funny at times but other times hurtful,” said junior Isaiah Twitty. “We all share some of the same issues.”

As students begin to relate more to one another in this way, personal viewpoints have begun to change. Sophomore Kaela Prachar is realizing the importance of her own cultural background, which is something she hasn’t noticed until now.

“A lot of people have come up to me and asked, ‘Why do you live in the cross-cultural housing? You’re white.’ In being asked that question, I have become aware of the parts of culture in my life that are unique to me,” Prachar said. “I’m learning that there are things in my culture that I’ve taken for granted.”

When people have addressed Witt with the same remark about her skin color, she has always responded, “I still have a culture!”

Living in the apartments has encouraged students not only to identify with their unique cultural backgrounds but also to celebrate those differences with others.

“There’s so much emphasis on community, on loving other people and inviting other people into your space,” Prachar said. “It’s pushed us a lot not just be intentional about living here but going out to campus and bringing people back here.”

One way in which Prachar and her roommates are being intentional about this is through hosting Saturday morning breakfasts in their apartment. Witt said the large space of the apartment allows them to create a place in which people can come and feel welcomed. So far, they’ve served between 30 and 50 people every weekend. The six students had originally planned to serve breakfast every Saturday but due to a lack of funds are only able to do so every other weekend.

A diverse community is being built not only within individual rooms, or even on one floor, but instead, it’s being spread throughout campus.

“We’ve had to approach so many things with an open mind,” Prachar said. “The cross-cultural house is not just about living together. It’s about walking in and being so open and so flexible. It’s created something that doesn’t happen in all places.”

Hit the clubs: Gospel Choir

BY ERIN VAN HORN

A flash mob in chapel

According to Raab, Gospel Choir’s aim is to provide students with an unintimidating opportunity for musical involvement. Members are not required to participate in performances. Raab said the group isn’t only about singing but also meeting new people and having a good time together. She described Gospel Choir members as “very fun and very energetic.”

Students interested in Gospel Choir can email Raab at katie.raab@nwciowa.org. The group rehearses at 7 p.m. on Tuesdays in Christ Chapel.
NW grad returns as Steggy RD

Hannah McBride is serving as Stegenga Hall’s resident director after spending the last year working with a nonprofit organization in Louisiana.

BY SARAH WEDEL
For Stegenga Hall’s new resident director Hannah McBride, living in a building surrounded by people is nothing new.

“My family is big! Six kids and two parents,” she said.

McBride grew up outside of Philadelphia, Penn. After graduating from high school, she began attending college at a state school. There she majored in English and was a pre-law student, but she soon discovered she wasn’t satisfied. McBride started considering transferring to a Christian institution and discovered Northwestern.

“I wanted to have personal relationships with my professors, and I wanted to go to school to people I wanted to be like,” McBride said.

At NW, McBride switched her majors to English and theatre. She was a RUSH choreographer, an actor in various theatre productions and an employee at The Hub, yet she still did well in her classes.

After graduation, McBride began working as an admissions counselor for NW. She said she loved her job because she could give kids confidence in a time when they were in doubt or stressed about their college decisions.

After two years as an admissions counselor, McBride said she felt God calling her to Opelousas, La. to work with the nonprofit agency Hope for Opelousas.

The organization offers academic help, an after-school program, internships for high school students, neighborhood support and enrichment experiences for young children.

McBride specifically worked to revamp the organization’s communications department. She wrote publications and advertisements and redesigned their website.

“Moving to Louisiana was harder than I expected, but God taught me how to identify goodness even in hard situations,” McBride said. “Every day caused my faith to grow and me to have to sacrifice giving up parts of my pride and expectations.”

As her year of working with Hope for Opelousas neared its end, McBride began thinking about her future plans. Her former RD at NW called and encouraged her to think about returning as an RD herself.

At first, McBride said no. However, the more she thought and prayed about it, the more she became interested in the job, she said.

McBride called NW to ask if the job was still available. She discovered it was and applied. Later, she was offered the position and accepted it.

McBride is excited to be back at NW and living in Steggy.

She said her goal is to make everyone in the dorm feel they are seen, known and wanted.

She hopes to accomplish this while coordinating hall events, balancing the hall budget, solving maintenance issues and attending meetings.

As someone who has spent much time at NW, McBride has advice for students.

“Take being a student and being engaged in the community seriously, don’t take yourself too seriously,” McBride said. “God has a way of growing us the most when we let go of ourselves and surrender to him.”

New profs express creativity

BY TYLER LEHMANN

Northwestern College’s new faculty members include sculptor and ceramicist Yun Shin and novelist Dr. Sam Martin.

Shin, who joined the art department as an assistant professor, said she appreciates NW’s Christian atmosphere after participating in an artist residency program where she was the only Christian.

At the Rochester Folk Art Guild in rural New York, Shin lived and worked with 13 other artists, including glassblowers, bookmakers and woodworkers.

“It was really good to go to a rural area and get away from the city,” Shin said. “I was isolated, so I was able to focus on my art.”

Inspired by everyday activities, Shin calls herself a conceptual artist, meaning she emphasizes the ideas behind the work, even if the material is nothing new.

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Dr. Sam Martin is a novelist who joined Northwestern’s English department this fall.

McBride previously lived in Newfoundland, a Canadian province that has become largely secularized in recent history.

“To come to a place where the churches are full was eye-opening,” he said.

While in Newfoundland, Martin completed his doctorate in English language and literature at Memorial University.

Martin received a master’s degree in creative writing from the University of Toronto, where he struggled to reconcile his opinions on writing with those of other students.

“People wanted to be jaded or ironic about things,” Martin said. “Cynicism was the tone that people assumed you needed in creative writing of that level.”

Instead, Martin said he seeks to depict the world truthfully without disregarding compassion.

“There is a difference between seeing clearly and being cynical,” he said. “Cynicism is just another way of closing your eyes.”

As a professor, Martin bases his teaching philosophy on his belief that writers must represent the world both truthfully and compassionately.

“In terms of teaching here, I teach people that you can pay serious loving attention to things,” Martin said. “Everything you look at, you should try to see truthfully, but you need to see things compassionately as well.”

Martin authored a short story collection titled “This Ramshackle Tabernacle” and the novel “A Blessed Snarl.”
Politics at NW should spur conversation

BY JASON KATSMA

With 2012 being a presidential election year, political awareness at Northwestern has been at an all time high, and I could not be any happier about it. I loved the opportunity we had as a campus to host a presidential candidate.

I was hoping to hear more about Romney’s beliefs and policies, but I had to check my expectations and realize that the intent of the rally was no different than the pep rally that was held at Korver Field. The NW Pep Rally and the Romney Rally were similar. Free swag (if you would call it that), connecting faces with names that we often hear, a social event and a fun atmosphere.

It’s my first time experiencing the craziness and whirlwind of a political campaign because this will be my first time voting for a presidential candidate. Would the rally have been any different if President Obama would have come to NW? No. We would have gotten the same security, -press and missed classes. It was a political rally. The Romney campaign dreamt it up with hopes that the insanity would carry us to the polls and encourage us to vote straight ticket. The rally got me charged up to decide who I will vote for. A lot of this has come up in the conversations I’ve had and the questions I’ve asked since the rally. I don’t know if the conversations would have happened if the rally hadn’t taken place.

These conversations have led me to wait in eager expectation for the political debate being held on campus next week between Kristie Vilsack and Steve King. I can’t wait to get the disgusting glamour known as politics out of the way and actually hear a debate, one in which the candidates will hopefully stand up for what they believe and what they will do in office and explain why.

The policy, beliefs and action plans that were missing at the Romney Rally will hopefully be present at the debate. The bickering, candidate-bashing and overserious promises that were present at the Romney Rally will hopefully be left at home.

I am not expecting much from façade-filled politicians reciting answers they have practiced for weeks, but I am excited for this campus to continue to be active this political season.

Teachers’ strike in Chicago hits home

BY KRISTIN TREASE

Trease is student teaching at Kelvyn Park High School in Chicago this semester.

It was the first week of school. I was in a high school with approximately the same number of students that walk Northwestern College’s campus. There were 150 some odd freshmen passing through our classroom. I was attempting to learn names; they were re-learning how to go to school. And then the walkout happened. After four days of school, teachers were outside holding signs and chanting rather than inside the classroom teaching. Students were not in the classrooms. And I was not fulfilling my student teaching requirements. It was slightly problematic on all counts.

If you listen to the mainstream media, chances are you will not find much about the teachers’ strike. There are news outlets that reported on the walkout, but they were mainly reporting on the fact that the walkout happened and how they had to check the policies, but I had to check my expectations and realize that the intent of the rally was no different than the pep rally that was held at Korver Field. The NW Pep Rally and the Romney Rally were similar. Free swag (if you would call it that), connecting faces with names that we often hear, a social event and a fun atmosphere.

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Raiders establish ground game in victory

BY DALTON KELLEY

The Raiders emerged victorious over the Tigers from Doane College with a score of 28-14. The excitement started off with a four-yard touchdown pass from junior Davis Bloemendaal to junior Brice Byker to put NW ahead 6-0. The Tigers answered with an 80-yard drive ending in a 23-yard field goal making the score 7-6.

With about three minutes left in the half, the Raiders took the lead once again on a three-yard run from senior running back Brandon Smith topping off a 68-yard drive. Bloemendaal rushed to convert the two-point conversion. The Raiders came out strong in the second half. They scored right away on a five-yard pass from Bloemendaal to sophomore Ben Green, which put NW ahead 20-7.

The last score from the Raiders came on a seven-yard run by junior Theo Bartman and a successful two-point conversion pass to senior tight end Jacey Hoegh, making the score 26-7.

Bloemendaal went 15-22 passing with a total of 144 yards and two touchdowns. He adjusted to senior Willie Willats’ snaps after redshirt sophomore Tyler Janota had to leave the game due to injury.

Defensively, NW was led in tackles by senior linebacker Aaron Jansen, who recorded 8.5 tackles, three of which were for a loss of yards. Junior Nate Van Ginkel also had an impressive interception in the fourth quarter, giving the Raiders another chance on offense.

“Our guys stopped the run well which put them into predictable situations,” Van Ginkel said about his defensive teammates.

The defensive side went on to work against the Doane offense. They held the Tigers to 234 total offense yards, irregular from the 443 yards they had averaged in previous games.

“Our defense played well and did a good job at making stops,” Bartman said. The next match up for the Raiders will be at 1 p.m. tomorrow against Dakota State at Kover Field.

NW pulls record even after spilling games

BY LACY GREEN

This was another busy week for the Raiders, who started off with a strong 3-1 win Saturday at Oskaloosa against William Penn. They followed the success with a 3-2 loss to Central College on Tuesday. In the Raider loss to Central, possession was in favor of Northwestern. The game’s momentum was toward NW as they consistently moved the ball forward.

However, the majority of balls moving forward didn’t find feet, and the passes through the midfield were not connecting.

Freshman Mattie Ostrowski tied the game at 1-1 in the 9th minute with an assist from fellow freshman Michaela Gibson.

After Central scored in the 52nd minute, freshman Nikki Zika finished sophomore Tyler Farr’s pass to knot the contest at 2-2.

A goal in the last 30 seconds of the game dropped NW. Farr led the team with six shot attempts.

“I think that we were the better team in this game,” said junior Caiti Shaw, “but the score did not show it.”

In the William Penn game, Zika scored the first goal of her collegiate career in the 38th minute. After William Penn scored just after halftime, Farr answered back with two goals to make the score 3-1 in the 70th and 89th minutes.

“The team’s passes were really starting to connect,” Shaw said, “and no one player stood out, but everyone all played as one.”

The offense of NW got 18 shots off, and William Penn was only able to get nine attempts on goal.

Even though the Raiders were not prepared for playing on the turf and lacked ball control, they found a way to keep possession and create scoring opportunities.

The Raiders had a spectacular week from junior goalkeeper Ariel Watts, who won GPAC Defensive Player of the Week for Sept. 12-18. She allowed one goal with 12 saves in the William Penn and College of Saint Mary’s wins.

The team’s record is now 3-3-1. The team will play again at 5 p.m. tomorrow against Nebraska Wesleyan in their opening GPAC game.

Raider golfers finish tourney in first place

BY JORDAN DYKSTRA

The Raiders took home first place at the Doane College Invitational at the Wilderness Ridge Golf Course September 17-18, finishing with a 36-hole total of 611, and finishing 22 strokes ahead of second place Morningside.

Junior Neil Malenke took home the individual championship by shooting a 146 for a two day score (71 and 75). Junior Ryan Kiewiet finished in fifth with a 154 (78 and 76) and senior Michael Dykema tied for sixth with a 155 (81 and 74).

“Neil played really well, shooting a 71 at that tough of a course,” said junior Kyle Stanek. “He put the team on his back.”

However, members of the team admitted that while they were victorious, they felt that their play was definitely not as sharp as it could be.

Sophomore Jay Monahan, who shot a 157 (79 and 78 for both days), said, “It is always good when you get the win, but I know that we can play better as a whole. It was comforting to know that even when we did not play up to our standards, that we could still manage to get the win.”

Monahan won GPAC Golfer of the Week for his efforts at this meet and the GPAC Qualifier on Sept. 13, making this the third straight week a Raider has collected the honor. Juniors Kyle Stanek and Ryan Kiewiet also have claimed the award earlier this year.

“It was a very tough course, probably the toughest course we will see all year,” Stanek said. “So winning by 22 strokes really shows the potential of this team. Coach [Aaron Aberson] was pleased we won, but understands that we need to play well there next spring for the GPAC meet, so this benefited us in getting a good feel for the course.”

The Raiders will play today and tomorrow at the Palace City Invite in Mitchell, S.D.

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• Men’s soccer wins big on road

• Volleyball routs Briar Cliff
Strike impacts Chicago Semester

BY JULIA LANTZ

Chicago public schools are in the middle of their second week without school due to the ongoing Chicago Teacher Union (CTU) strikes that began Sunday, Sept. 9.

Senior Kristin Trease and the other 13 student teachers enrolled in the Chicago Semester have been discussing the teacher strikes in their seminar sessions. Each student teacher was asked to write about the pros and cons of the strike and reflect on how the strike has impacted them personally.

“We are looking at this as a learning experience, as are most of the teachers we are working with,” Trease said. “It’s been 25 years since the last strike, so there is a lot of unfamiliar ground.

The teacher strike was announced one week into the school year after CTU delegates and school administrators failed to reach a contract agreement despite 10 months of previous negotiations. The next day, teachers affiliated with the union began managing picket lines instead of their classrooms. Monday's picketing activated the first teacher strike the city has had since 1987.

“This is a stressful time for [student teachers] as they were ready to teach and jump into their schools, but on their first days there were already talks of strike,” said Lisa Hensey, the student teaching program coordinator of Chicago semester.

Compensation, health care benefits and job security are the key issues surrounding the strike. CTU teachers want their existing health benefits and salary increases preserved and want additional job security, especially in light of the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system.

This new system has the potential to pull as many as 6,000 teachers from their jobs because the system proposed by the Chicago school district stipulates 40 percent of teacher evaluation should be based on students’ standardized test scores. The teacher strike has also caused education majors on campus to think about their futures as teachers.

“It is ridiculous that a teacher's evaluation is so highly impacted by student standardized test scores,” said junior Becca Rens.

Junior Kiersten Van Wybe says she is also concerned about the teacher evaluation criteria. “I think it is good that we are trying to hold our teachers accountable and giving districts a way to weed out bad teachers, but I don’t like that good teachers are worried about their job security,” Van Wybe said.

The CTU strike has left 350,000 students without schools to attend and caused parents to scramble to arrange alternative daytime plans for their children. Chicago Public Schools (CPS) has expanded its activity offerings to comply with the lengthened strike.

CPS students are being served by the Children First Plan, which can serve more than 160,000 students at 450 sites in neighborhoods across the city. These sites provide full-day opportunities for children and are being held in school sites, parks, libraries and community and faith centers across the city.

Trease has been reassigned from her original student teaching placement to a day camp for high school students. “I have a special assignment with a program called Language for Scholars Camp, where students are learning speaking skills, business English and social cues,” Trease said.

The last teacher strike in 1987 lasted 19 school days. Hensey is hopeful that this one will not go on for that long.