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The Almanian

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Serving Alma College since 1907

Issue 12

Associate dean candidates visit campus

By Laura M. Paetz News Editor

The top three candidates for an associate dean position completed a series of on-campus interviews Friday.

According to James Kridler, dean of students, the college received a total of 86 applications for the position. After narrowing the search to 10 applicants who were interviewed by phone, three of the four finalists accepted an invitation to visit campus.

Lisa McGettigan, a presenter of numerous leadership and organization seminars across the country, was the first finalist to interview on campus last week.

McGettigan earned her M.A. in educational psychology and col-

lege student personnel at the University of Nebraska and has B.A.s in communication and psychology from the University of Wisconsin. She has had professional experience as the director of college programming at St. Norbert College and as coordinator of student leadership development at Kent State University.

The selection committee invited Lori Varlotta to campus last Monday. Varlotta, the director of student activities and college union at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, received her bachelors in philosophy and the arts and letters program for administrators from Notre Dame.

Varlotta then earned her masters degree in cultural foundations of education with concentrations on philosophy and sociology of education at Syracuse University. She has gained experience in groups such as student government association, Greek council and women's history committee.

David Biggs, who has masters of divinity and arts and a bachelor of arts in philosophy from the Boston University of Theology, Boston University Graduate School and the University of Pennsylvania respectively, interviewed here last Friday.

Biggs is currently employed by the University of Pennsylvania as the assistant dean in residence for advising at its College of Arts and Sciences, where he serves as the chief administrator for the W.E.B. DuBois College House, a facility dedicated to the study of AfricanAmerican literature and culture.

While on campus, all three finalists underwent rigorous interviews by the student affairs staff; Robert Perkins, dean of student development; Leslie Brown, provost; John Seveland, vice president for enrollment and student affairs; the cocurricular committee; Mark Nazario, director of admissions; Fran Groves, Heritage Center for the Performing Arts secretary and the orientation committee.

"I think they are all three strong candidates," said Brown. "[The associate dean position] is an unusual position. There is a very global view of what this person would be doing and I think the candidates have a pretty good sense of what they would be getting into. They have a mixture

of strengths—no two of them are alike. They are really very well balanced and I enjoyed my conversations with them all."

"They all came with good credentials. However, they tend to have more co-curricular experience and Student Affairs-type of experience than theater experience," said Groves.

"The search committee will be meeting on Tuesday to review their own perceptions of the candidates," said Kridler.

"They will make a recommendation to Dr. Brown and myself as to who the associate dean should be."

The associate dean will begin duties at the onset of Winter Term in January.

Choir performs concert, bringing Christmas joy and spirit to all

By Jennifer Mounts Freelance Writer

Percussionists beat rhythmically on their drums, the air became energized with magic and the shadow of a stained glass window mystically illuminated behind the entering performers.

This enchantment began Friday night in the Heritage Center for the Performing Arts as the Alma College Choir and the Men's and Women's Glee Clubs presented "What Child is This?"

The performance was divided into three parts, the Advent, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Morning, and included songs both old and new.

"Keep your lamps trimmed and burning, the time is drawing nigh," sang the choirs in their first selection in their performance of the Advent, which encouraged people to prepare for the coming of Christ.

The traditional "Wassail Song,"
"The Holly and the Ivy" and "The
Christmas Rose" comprised some
of the pieces in the Advent.

The gentle, often mystical notes of "The Collecting Consort," consisting of visiting instrumentalists Anne and Gary Wakehut, enriched the magical evening. Anne played the Irish harp while her husband alternated between the hammer dulcimer, flute, whistle and pan

nines.

Christmas Eve began as seniors Becky Clemmer and Jessica Murray performed "Pat-a-pan." Shortly after, as the men began "Shepherds, Shake Off Your Drowsy Sleep," the backdrop transformed and the Christmas Star emrged.

Senior Erin Emery sang the title song, which cast a spell over the audience, heralding the true spirit of Christmas: the gift of the Child.

Junior Becky Shelley, through her inspiring performance of "Jesus, Jesus Rest Your Head," sang the simple story of the child

born in a manger.

Earlier, Shelley helped to warm up the audience before the concert, along with juniors Phil Allman and Tom Schweinhart and sophomores Debbie MacDonald and Mark Andrews. "The Stains," performed various Christmas tunes a capella.

Junior Gordon Meyers helped Christmas Eve come to a peaceful end in his solo "Silent Night."

"De Mornin' Come" announced Christmas morning in a fun style, including an audience-pleasing solo by sophomore Jorge Livingston.

This section of the performance featured international songs such as "Hodie, Christus natus est," "Ai, nama mamina" and "Kalanta of the New Year."

The singers and players have developed remarkably since I was singing with them years ago," said John Arnold, professor of German. His reaction to the performance was that it "was a tribute to [the performers]."

The concert ended with a wave from the ensemble and a wish for a Merry Christmas to all.

Phi Mu Alpha presents Christmas concert with remarkable student talent

By Tera Biebuyck Staff Reporter

The eighth annual Sinfonia Christmas concert featured traditional Christmas favorites mixed with creative Alma talent. Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia is a fraternal organization which promotes creative musical excellence in both performance and research. Its members strive to enrich the human spirit through musical awareness.

Wednesday night's Sinfonia concert, which took place in the Heritage Center for the Performing Arts, not only featured the talent of the fraternity but other students' talent as well.

The evening began with the brothers of the Sinfonia singing the traditional Gregorian chant, "OCome, OCome, Emmanuel."

Further into the program, senior Kelly Marino and sophomore Laura Ringle performed a piano duet of the Christmas classic, "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen."

Another piano duet featured juniors Jennifer Brcka and Audrey Palmreuter to the tune of "Have Yourselfa Merry Little Christmas."

First-year students Melinda Towns, Bethany King, Julie Shier, and sophomore Katie Madigan combined their talents to sing the traditional "Angels from the Realms of Glory." Senior Sherri Tulloch performed Tchaikovsky's "Dance of the Red Flutes" on the piano. Marino and Ringle took the stage once again as they played their second duet to music they had been composing since October. In tuxedos and top hats, they comically played a "rocky, jazzy, funky tune that has never been played the same twice," said master of ceremonies sophomore Tom Burzyck.

"We were really glad to be able to perform something that we composed ourselves in front of other people. We were even compared to Victor Borge. It is too bad it is my last year because Laura and I could make an annual event out of this," said Marino.

The traditional "Silent Night" ("Stille Nacht") was sung alternating German with American versus by sophomores Brian Martin and Mark Petrocelli and junior Elizabeth Hill.

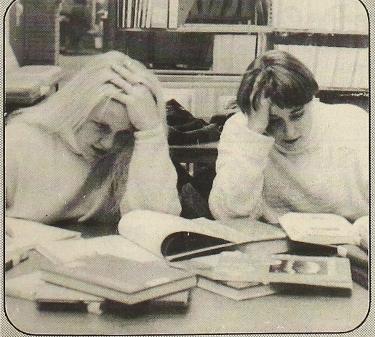
The Alma College Jazz ensemble closed the concert with three Christmas tunes. Sophomore Matt Groves was the featured performer in this piece, singing the Blues Brothers' "Sweet Home Chicago."

Senior Shannon McNeal performed his last Sinfonia concert and was impressed with it's progress.

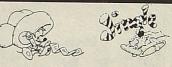
"It was our best concert ever. Student and community support was phenomenal. It can only get better next year," said McNeal.

Everyone pitched in to make the concertrun smoothly. It went really well," added Palmreuter.

Students flock to library!



First-year students Jennifer Cornell and Lesley McDougall, amidst a pile of books, wonder what final exam to study for first. Photo by Beth Knam



Merry Christmas





Students reveal Christmas dreams By Jessica L. VanSlooten

Feature Editor It is 9 a.m. Christmas

morning. You grab your slippers and dash to the Christmas tree in anticipationdid Santa Claus really bring me what I asked for?

You search among the brightly wrapped packages for your name, snatch up the box, tear off the wrapping paper and you find: a car, money, good grades, members of the opposite sex and world peace.

These are the top six requests from Alma college students participating in the recent Almanian Christmas wish list survey.

More unique requests drifted into our survey box: a pair of jeans from the GAP, a pink hippopotamus, a lava lamp, a Franklin planner, and a chance to meet Tina Turner.

Anonymous quotes include "A harmonica gig in a blues band," "Peace on earth and a non-materialistic Christmas for everybody," "Our band to get signed by a big record label," "A nice college environment free of sexual harassment," "To run across the country like Forrest Gump," and "Stock in Real Goods corp. (an environmental company)."

Oh, and Chad Rojeski, some young woman really wants you to ask her out, so keep your eyes peeled and you could make someone's Christmas a season to remember!

First year student Dan Scripps receives the most creative Christmas wish award for his contribution, "All I want

for Christmas is my two front teeth. Okay, my two front teeth and some bubble gum to chew with my two new teeth. Pink bubble gum. White teeth. Don't mix these up, it's important. I also want a horse. I'll keep it in my room. That would be fun. I could also train my horse. Yeah, train it to blow bubbles. Big bubbles. With bubble gum. Pink bubble gum. That's all I want. Merry Christmas!"

The Almanian staff also compiled a Christmas wish list:

*Kristen M. and Sarah Barclay-a nice man

*Bonnie—be able to play my

*Alexandra—an ice storm on Dec. 15 so my boyfriend can't

*Kari-boyfriend's safe return from Colorado

*Kim-a little fun before I

*Kristin A.—a thoughtful, handcrafted Christmas card from my brother and a date for the Feature Editor

*Emily-money to pay for Germany spring term

*Amy—travel to South Padre without anyone getting arrested

*Beth—a Super Nintendo to play Zelda instead of studying

*Weed—a Viennese babe

*Jessica—acceptance to English graduate program of my choice and a bottle of wine and a wonderful man to celebrate with

*Ben-hmmr...

*Brooke—a 30" diameter disco ball, the 70's preservation society CD and a smooch from a cute boy (Keanu Reeves would be

nice)

*Dr. Ottenhoff-the new Paradise Lost nintendo game

*Paige-proof that life exists after Alma

*Wade-dictatorship of a small Caribbean nation

*Sara Ballard-nice roommates who don't shave my head

Whatever your holiday wish, may Santa surprise you with whatever he brings, may you enjoy three weeks of well-deserved rest, but most of all: "Have yourself a merry little Christmas, let your heart be light, from now on our troubles will be out sight!"

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The Santa Clause provides family fun

By Wade Renando Staff Reporter

Once again, it is Christmas time; a time of universal love and harmony when we all put our differences aside and become better people. A time to celebrate the birth of Christ by over-charging our credit cards and purchasing Mighty Morphin Power Rangers equipped with kung fu grip for our little loved ones.

Each holiday season, new Christmas movie releases also add cheer to the holidays. This season is no exception. Tim Allen, featured in last week's Time magazine, is the man of the hour. He celebrates the success of his autobiographyDon't inThe Santa Clause

Allen is hilarious as Scott Calvin, a divorced father who new-found dubecomes Santa Clause after ties, but as the the real Kris Kringle falls off movie his [Calvin's] roof. Allen innocently sports Kringle's red adapts to his new coat; however, he discovers that in doing this he has transformed into good ole Saint both him and his Nick himself.

Calvin must deliver Christmas gifts to all the boys and Clause is an ideal girls of the world. In his jour- family movie. ney, he often encounters Parents will enhouses without chimneys. joy it because This would be a problem if it they'll relate to weren't for the magical pow- the conflicts beers of the Santa ensemble. tween Calvin, his Due to the powers of the suit ex-wife and her chimneywill

magically appear on the rooftop, if it doesn't already have one. The red coat also enables Calvin to become extremely thin so it is easier to slide down narrow chimneys. The special effects of the suit make for some amusing scenes.

Santa's bag mysteriously fills up with toys again after it is emptied and it contains enough room to house a small water buffalo

Another dilemma Calvin encounters is: how is it possible for him to visit all of the world's children in one night? The movie never completely explains this. However, it did mention something about the flow of time slowing down when Santa delivers his gifts. Although that explanation sounds Stand Close to a Naked Man more like a Star Trek episode and makes his film debut than a Christmas movie, in Hollywood, anything is possible

At first, Calvin detests his

progresses, he identity and the love it brings son.

The Santa

annoying psychologist husband. Kids should enjoy the cute reindeer and elves Calvin and his son meet when visiting the North Pole.

Yet, many of us may be disappointed by The Santa Clause. Although the film has a few comical scenes, such as the hilarious meal at Denny's; it is just not as humorous as it could have been. The film is

too sentimental to be funny and it lacks the quality of such Christmas classics as Miracle on Thirty-Fourth Street or It's a Wonderful Life.

Overall, The Santa Clause ranks as a warm-fuzzy flick, a Christmas special sure to interest children and parents alike. However, if

you don't have children and revel in intellectually challenging movies, The Santa Clause may appear bland and boring.

Nonetheless if you're a huge Tim Allen fan, see it. Although it is no It's a Wonderful Life, it is a fun family film.

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Women's Basketball

Aquinas and Concordia no match for Scots

By Alexandra Orr Staff Reporter

Cappaert Gymnasium glowed and fans roared at the Alma College women's first home basketball game on Thursday, Dec. 8, against the Concordia College Cardinals.

The Scots picked up a fast tenpoint lead early in the first half, but the Cardinals were quick to recover the ball and make several key plays that dwindled the Scots' advantage to two points at half-time. The score was 26-24.

Disappointed but not defeated, the Scots came back in the second halfrejuvenated. They used smooth passes and quick thinking to reestablish a strong lead over Concordia within the first three minutes of play.

The skill of both teams made the game a crowd-pleaser and the Cardinals could not make up the point difference.

At the sound of the final buzzer the victorious Scots left the court with a 68-45 win over the Cardinals

Top scorer for the evening, sophomore Melissa VanDamme led the Scots by adding 23 points to the win followed by senior Michele VanDamme and junior Ashley Reagh, who each scored ten points.

Head coach Charles Goffnett commented, "We played pretty well overall. We had a little foul trouble and a scoring drought during the first half, which allowed Concordia to catch up. We were shooting a poor 37% during the first part of the game, but we came back in the second half by shooting 68% and averaged at 51%.

"Anytime we can have a success of 51% or higher, we stand a fairly good chance of winning the game. We took advantage of Concordia being a small team and we got some solid inside plays in the second half, which led to our win."

Sophomore Michele Olds said, "The second half had more intensity than the first. We were able to pull our offensive out and slow them down defensively."

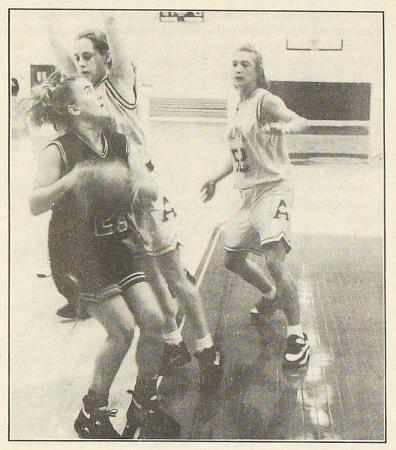
On Saturday the Scots took to

the road once again to compete against Aquinas College in Grand Rapids. Led by Melissa VanDamme, who added 22 points to the Scots' score, Alma beat Aquinas by a close 58-56. The Scots now have a record of 7-2.

Sophomore Annie Delind commented, "It was a close game and Acquinas was a tough team but we worked together to pull out a win."

Goffnett said, "The team did an excellent job defensively. They held Aquinas' top scorer Nikki Tuttle to 8 points, which frustrated her. Our strategy was to take away their inside game and it helped that they weren't shooting well. Aquinas has always been a very solid, competitive team and for us to go in and win on their home court shows we are off to a good season."

The Scots return to the home court on Dec. 30 against Aquinas and then will travel to Albion on Jan.4. The Scots will host the Olivet Fighting Comets on Jan.7 and are looking forward to fans cheering them on Tuesday, Jan. 10 against Manchester.



The Scots performed victoriously last week, evident by these defensive moves against Concordia. Photo by Paige Sandberg.

= Men's Basketball

Rocky week keeps players on toes

By Amy Majestic Staff Reporter

This week saw the men's basketball team at both their best and at their "not-so-best."

The week's play started at Lake Superior State University on Wednesday. Thanks to double figures by six of the Scots and 12 out of 19 successful three-point shots, the team came out victorious in overtime with a 100-99 win over the team from Sault Ste. Marie.

At half-time, Alma was down by two but started fighting back when, according to Coach Bob Eldridge, sophomore Jeremy Trent hit a three pointer "from the parking lot."

The team played with force throughout the second half and outscored the Lakers 12-11 in overtime. Senior Matt Lotterman hit a lay-up with 13 seconds left to win the game.

According to the stats, senior Todd Blomquist scored 25 points to lead the attack. Senior Mike Bjorne put in 20, Trent had 19 and Lotterman added 11 points. The starters had 83 of the 100 points, their best showing for the season so far. Also in double figures were junior Rich Katona with 11 points

and senior Chad Reagh with ten.

"We played well as a team and shot quite well also. It was a great game," concluded Bjorne.

The bad news started when the men prepared for their return to Alma. One of the buses broke down and half of the team was forced to remain in Sault Ste. Marie.

"Luckily we weren't too far out of town. I had to stay at the hotel with eight of our players until Thursday and the guys that had to be back left on the other bus," said Eldridge.

Saturday's game against University of Michigan-Dearborn bore a striking resemblance to the bus ride home: they only made it half way. The team started out strong and played a great first half, looking much like the team that played Wednesday.

"We started out excellently and [Blomquist] was just killing them. But from half-time it all went downhill," said Trent.

Eldridge agreed. "We lost all of our energy in the second half and it just snowballed from there. It was like two completely different teams."

Although the Wolves caught up quickly and easily beat the Scots in

the second half, there were highlights to the game.

Junior Jason Gray and sophomore Nathan Lounds, who usually don't receive much playing time, made it into the game and kept the team going in the final minutes. Gray's three-pointer was one of the few exciting moments of the second half.

"The only real highlight of the game was when Gray came in and hit a couple shots," reflected Bjorne.

Another bright spot in the second half was first-year guard Adam LaLonde's seemingly endless will to keep the spirit in the game. His seven points and aggressive play kept the fans cheering.

"[LaLonde] is really starting to come into his own," said Eldridge. "You can't question his heart."

Overall, the players realize they didn't show their best on Saturday but know they can't dwell on it. They look forward to playing Concordia on Dec. 30 to remedy their mistakes. Eldridge looks forward to this opportunity to redeem themselves.

"I'm not worried about our team at all. We're going to take two or three days off and then get ready for Concordia. That game should go much better."

Hillsdale meet filled with lifetime bests

By Emily Damstra Staff Reporter

Incredible is the only way to describe the women's swim meet at Hillsdale last Tuesday.

The Scots made a big splash against their opponent in an evening filled with lifetime-best times. Neither snow nor illness could dampen the women's spirits, though Alma lost due to insufficient depth in the team. However, they did not let Hillsdale swim them out of the water.

It was the best unshaven meet I've coached since I've been here," said Greg Baadte, head coach, "But," he added, "it's disappointing when you swim that well and have to lose." The final score was 126 to 72.

Assistant Coach Dave Hutchison echoed that sentiment, "We were pleased with how we swam, but not [pleased] point-wise."

Sophomore Dana Thibault led the way with a best time in the 200 yard freestyle of 2:01.94, followed by a respectable 55.43 in the 100 yard freestyle.

Then, she topped off the evening by qualifying for nationals in the 50 yard freestyle when she led off the 200 yard free relay, which finished second. Because it was not a relay start, her swim was eligible to make the cut, and it did.

"I was really happy to finally swim better [than previous meets]," she said, noting that her time in the 50 was four tenths faster than last year at this point in the season.

Thibault added, "I'm hoping a lot of other swimmers qualify for Nationals. The team has been working hard and is doing well."

First-year student Renee Degraaf highlighted her evening by swimming a lifetime best of 25.45 in the 50 yard free, snatching second place.

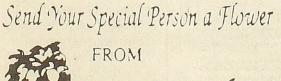
"I was shocked," said Degraaf,
"I didn't expect to be going that
fast in mid-season, considering
we've been working so hard."

Team captain Jill Murany, senior, swam faster than ever in both the 200 yard individual medley and 100 yard breast-stroke, earning a 2:25.11 and a 1:16.87 respectively.

Sophomore Melissa Merwin took third in the 50 yard free with a college-best time of 26.76.

Despite illness, sophomore Danielle Sullivan managed to achieve a 1:03.81 in the 100 yard butterfly, her best ever, and a 5:24.83 in the 500 yard freestyle, her second best ever. Later that night, she discovered that she had been swimming with mononucleosis for the past two weeks.

As the term comes to an end, the swimmers get a small break before they travel to Orlando, Fla., for their annual training trip.





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Staff Editorial =

Students not the only victims of stress

Exam time: stressed-out students pack into every nook and cranny of the library and descend upon every computer in Swanson Academic Center. They complain about 20-page papers that they have not yet started and about Friday morning exams.

But who are the ones who have to grade those papers? And who are the ones who have to stay until the following week calculating students' grades?

You guessed it—the very people who assigned all that work in the first place. Students sometimes overlook how hard professors work in order to ensure that their students receive a good

education. *The Almanian* editorial board would like to recognize them for their efforts.

During this busy time of year, professors spend their time preparing class materials, grading homework, making up new exams and filtering through final papers, in addition to helping their advisees through preregistration for Winter Term.

After pre-registration, when the registrar discovers how many people signed up for certain classes, the faculty try to accommodate students who don't get into the classes they have chosen. Professors may sign a few students into classes or create additional sections in order to help as many students as possible.

To most students, this is a much better policy than those at larger universities. First come, first served is their motto as classes close after the limit of students has been reached. At Alma, professors take into consideration why their students might be taking their class and try to select the group that would most likely benefit from it.

For example, next term's environmental science class attracted approximately 100 students during pre-registration. Since the instructor could not offer an additional section, he requested that all the seniors and juniors who signed up be admitted into the class, since they probably need the credits to fulfill distributive requirements in

order to graduate.

Knowledgeable, flexible, helpful professors are a major contributor to the success of Alma College students. Without this type of faculty, students would have difficulty not only scheduling classes, but also fulfilling their goals to be outstanding members of the work force.

So now, let's think about those 20-page final papers again. If a professor assigned papers to one class of 25 students, s/he would have to contend with reading 500 pages before turning in grades. And those 500 pages probably aren't as exciting as reading a novel by John Grisham.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editors

I am writing in regards to Anne Buyze's article concerning unplanned pregnancies which was printed in last week's Almanian.

Although it may seem to make sense that unplanned pregnancies lead to abused children, this is not so. About one half of the pregnancies in the United States are unplanned. One half of the children in this

country are not abused or killed by abused just as often as unplanned their parents. abused just as often as unplanned children, as can foster children, chil-

Abuse stems from poor parenting skills and not from how much children are planned. Not every parent who plans to have children has good parenting skills, just as not every parent who has unplanned children has poor parenting skills. There have been studies that show that there is no significant correlation between planned pregnancies and abuse. Planned children can be

abused just as often as unplanned children, ascan foster children, children conceived through in vitro fertilization and children who were adopted. How the children were brought into the family does not affect the skills of the parents.

On a more personal note, soon I will be the mother of an unplanned child. I can guarantee that my child (and most children born in similar situations) will not be "forced to grow up in an environment that

offered little support, encouragement, or love." Please remember that unplanned does NOT mean unwanted. Many people have been blessed with children when they least expect it and these children are just as loved and wanted as any planned child is.

Thank you, Melissa VanDyk Class of '95

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The Almanian Letter Policy

All Letters to the Editor must meet the following standards for publication: signed, include the author's phone number and address, and pertain to the Alma College community. Letters are published on a first come, first serve basis, up to three per week. We reserve the right to condense letters for layout purposes. Deadline for publication is 5 p.m. the Friday before requested publication. Address letters to: The Editorial Board, The Almanian, Newberry Hall, Alma College, Alma, MI 48801.