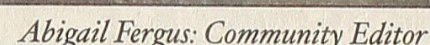


BY CHELSEARAE ROWLEY
WEB EDITOR

"It makes sense. They are

This was not the only dining change to take place this week. The same time Sodexo announced the candy bar



It was announced that students would have to pay for a can of soda to drink with their meals, instead of being

There is currently a sign posted on the Dow Cart

If students have any questions concerning the new dining options at Joe's or at the Dow Cart, please contact Michaela Steele at steele@alma.edu.

BY ABIGAIL FERGUS
CAMPUS EDITOR

Burrell continued, “[Alma] used to have a ton of events on campus sponsored by Greek Life. There have been a few Adventure trips. Those are really good, I wish that started my freshman year.”

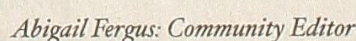
Smith knocked on his bedroom door while entering the room.

Craddock's response to this was, "Your lawyers aren't living in these situations. Your lawyers aren't part of this community and don't understand everything that has gone on and the degree to

"Things are different, we have guest speakers all the time," explained Delpaz. "We have more student representation through student and administration meetings. We have new water fountains and that's something that hasn't happened at all in my time at Alma-Student Congress has done something to improve

"I used to love to go to the Counseling and Wellness Center to see the cats. They were comforting and helped me cope with how much I missed my pets. Now it's just a waiting room.

www.almanian.org.



Random last Friday to Abigail Fergus: Community Editor

This Week at Alma College February 16 - 22

Monday

Economics Candidate Presentation
4 p.m. SAC 109

Tuesday

Lavern Cox, actress in *Orange is the New Black*
8 p.m. at SVSU

College Positive Volunteer Training
7p.m. Smith Room, Library

Wednesday

Life Drawing Co-op
7 p.m. Clack 113

Thursday

Therapy Dogs
6 p.m. Library

Alma College Choir Tour Concert
7:30 p.m. Heritage

Friday

Escape for break as soon as classes get out

Saturday

Hibernate for the rest of winter

Trees removed in effort to improve Superior Street

By **CHELSEY COBB**
STAFF WRITER

Many of the trees lining campus have been cut down without much notice, bringing up many questions from the student body. The City of Alma has an answer. Starting after Memorial Day, Superior Street will undergo renovations. This reconstruction will include putting in parallel parking and a wider sidewalk on the north side. The trees being removed are preparation for this construction.

"The original plan was to remove seven trees to facilitate the construction project slated for this summer," said Phil Moore, Alma city manager. "Three trees were removed to improve the sight lines for the pedestrian crossing."

As well as repairing the road, the plans include replacing the water main and sewer line as well as putting in new

streetlights to illuminate the sidewalks. The current lights shine more on the road surface.

"It is important to note that the street project is not an Alma College project," said Michael Silverthorn, director of communications and marketing. "It is a joint Michigan Department of Transportation and City of Alma project funded by a MDOT grant."

This project will affect the part of Superior Street that is between the railroad tracks and Charles Street, soon after the conclusion of the Highland Festival on Memorial Day in May. The project will likely extend into the fall.

"The construction will likely take at least four months. When the college students return in the fall, Superior will still be under construction," said Moore.

When the project is completed, it is planned to leave Superior as a two lane street with parallel parking on the north side. There will be the elimination of

the turn lane, which will result in slower traffic in the reconstructed area, which was desired for safety. Around 50 parallel parking spaces will be created.

"The plans call for the addition of new lampposts, consistent with the style of the city's downtown lampposts, on both sides of Superior," said Silverthorn.

In addition, there will also be renovations to the Reid-Knox parking lot, and a driveway onto campus north of Maple Street. A new 10-foot wide sidewalk and bike lane is planned to be put up on the north side of the street to connect with the rail trail from Harvard Street.

When the project is completed, 30 new trees will be planted to replace those cut down. Alma College selected the species of trees to be the replacements.

"The project, when completed, will provide an improved road surface and enhance the safety and aesthetic improvements for the Alma College campus," said Silverthorn.



Rebekah Irani: Staff Photographer

Trees were recently removed along Superior Street; this one is near Reid-Knox. There seemed to be an even split of students outraged over the loss of more campus trees and students who didn't notice the chopped trees until they were pointed out. Alma was once known for its abundance of trees, which prompted the line "campus, grove and jungle fair" in the Alma Mater.

Plasma brings in money, helps fight disease

By **CHELSEY COBB**
STAFF WRITER

Plasma is the liquid portion of the blood that is made up of a protein and salt solution where the red and white blood cells as well as the platelets are suspended in. It is a substance that cannot be duplicated in a lab; it's comprised mostly of water and proteins.

"A friend first got me involved into donating plasma," said **John Gaffney ('16)**. "I have been donating since half-way through my freshman year, which was almost two years ago."

"Plasma can be used for many different medicines that can be used to help many different people," said Gaffney.

The functions that plasma performs range from maintaining a satisfactory blood pressure and volume for the proteins crucial for blood clotting and immunity to being an exchange of minerals like sodium and potassium to

maintain a proper balance critical to cell function.

"I feel like donating is important on both ends of the spectrum; donors get paid for their contribution and the plasma gets used to help save lives," said **Matthew Loomis ('15)**.

Payments vary, but those who donated usually receive at least \$50. The medical products that can be produced from plasma can be used to treat and help people with many different ailments. It can be used to treat things like hemophilia, immune deficiencies, shock and burns. One of the organizations that deals with plasma donation is BioLife Plasma Services in Mount Pleasant.

BioLife Plasma Services, as a part of Baxter Healthcare Corporates under Baxter International Inc., manufactures products that help people with hemophilia, immune disorders, infectious diseases, kidney disease, trauma and other medical conditions.

"Donating plasma really is a

great thing," said Gaffney. "People do not realize how important it is and how many people it helps."

While a plasma donation is similar to donating blood, the blood is drawn from one arm and channeled into an automated machine that collects the select components, such as plasma or a combination of plasma and platelets. After it selects the plasma, the automated machine returns the other blood components back into the donor's body along with some saline.

"What I say to people is if they are afraid of needles, this probably is not for them, but if someone has the time and mode of transportation, then they should definitely give it a try," said Loomis.

In order to donate you must be at least 18 and at least 110 pounds. If a person is interested in donating, more information can be found at www.biolifeplasma.com and at www.redcrossblood.org/donating-blood/types-donations/plasma.

A.C.U.B. EVENT CALENDAR

JANUARY							FEBRUARY						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
25	26	27	28	29	30	31							

MARCH							APRIL						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					29	30	31				

Special Events



#3 Movie Nights



Off-Campus Trips

ACUB Coffee House

Open Mic Night at Slouch's

Weekend Events

MN: Movie Night in Lounge
GN: Game Night in Lounge
GG: Grilling Games (\$5 fee)
BR: Breath Run Shopping Trip (\$10 fee)
KJ: Ken Jam Tournament
LS: Life Siblings Weekend
NN: Magician Norman Ng on campus
GN: Annual Casino Night hosted by T. John E.
SP: St. Patrick's Day Party in Segra
CR: Craft Night in Lounge
RL: Relay for Life
MM: March Madness Tournament
ET: Euchre Tournament
RR: Rest & Relax in the ACUB lounge
CJ: Comedian Chris James at Exam Treats

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Email letters to:
Crystal Snow
editor.almanian@gmail.com

Alma alum takes on new role

New VP for finance and administration brings memories, new ideas

By **MONICA KUNOVSKY**
STAFF WRITER

After graduating more than 30 years ago, **Todd Friesner ('79)** is back on the Alma campus, taking over a key administrative role as the new vice president for finance and administration.

After settling in his post in January, Friesner has been able to finally adjust to the changes he's faced, not only with coming into this new job, but also returning to a campus that's very different from what he was used to as a student.

"Being a '79 graduate, it is more like what hasn't changed! The campus has expanded; facilities have been added or upgraded; and the grounds look great—something I immediately noticed when visiting in the summer."

Having been a college athlete, Friesner recalls many changes made to the sports arenas and surrounding areas as well.

"I remember the burned out grass and dandelions throughout the campus in August when

I would report for football. The football stadium was concrete blocks and the locker rooms were built into the stadium. By the end of the season, the football field was more of a mud bowl."

"The baseball field was close to the old stadium, not outside the main campus," he continued. "Some of the classrooms have not changed much although instead of overheads and "transparencies" used by professors, there are computers and PowerPoints.

The Heritage Center, the Hogan Center, the Stone Center for Recreation, and Bahlke Stadium are all new to the campus from when I was a student. I could go on about the changes but have already sufficiently dated myself."

Despite all the changes around campus and town, Friesner has been quick to adapt and accept them all, saying that "philosophically, change is necessary and change is good. That said, we have to be able to provide the facilities,

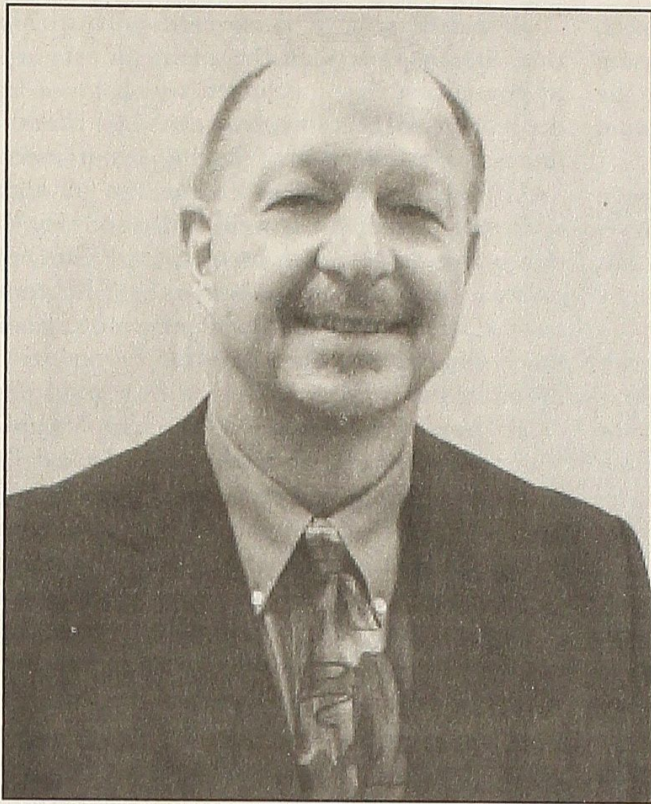


Photo Courtesy: alma.edu

Todd Friesner ('79) has been added to the administrative staff.

extracurricular activities, personalized educational opportunities for the students, and the campus community that keeps our students engaged and provide a fulfilling educational experience."

Friseur added, "certainly our peer group in the MIAA have created a very competitive landscape and we have to change

to ensure we are providing the experience that college students expect. I think all the changes are for the better. What hasn't changed, is the feel of the campus and the passion that faculty has to influence and motivate our students. I still keep in touch with some of my retired professors and coaches and see that same drive or passion today from the faculty I have met."

Focusing more on the job itself, Friesner has been able to bring a new enthusiasm to his position and keep things fresh.

"What I bring to the job is someone who has passion for the college and a strong desire to 'win' or help the college be successful. My work experience is very diverse but I have skills that are transferable to my position. I believe strongly in developing staff members and allowing employees and students to have a 'voice.'

I use the word "team" with my staff because we need to ensure we work together and help to balance and build off our strengths and skills together.

Finally, my experience as a student at Alma College included sports, working campus jobs,

Greek life, and a double major. I understand the pressures of driving for success and what it takes. My personal experience, work ethic, drive, experience and commitment to the college differentiates me."

President Jeff Abernathy is also thrilled to have Friesner back on campus.

"Todd brings extensive experience as a senior executive with a proven track record in the areas of budgeting, management, financial services, and strategic planning. He's also a creative leader, forward thinker and his familiarity with the mission and values of Alma College are an added bonus."

Working in a more corporate environment before coming to Alma, Friesner enjoys the atmosphere the college brings, stating that "Alma is about people and learning—the students, faculty, and administration—all working as best as possible together to create something special and take pride in. This is a great place to work. We do make a difference together and help to create life-long memories."

Despite having been away from Alma for a while, at heart, Friesner says that he is still a true Scot and doesn't hesitate to wish warm words to all the students with an enthusiastic "Go Scots!"

Alternative breaks expand trip offerings

Students look forward to a week of service learning

By **SAMANTHA COYKENDALL**
BUSINESS MANAGER

As the college's Spring Break draws closer, many students prepare to leave campus and embark on a variety of trips, spring training sessions, and the college's Alternative Break program. Alternative Breaks strives to "enable action and ignite passion" through service learning trips.

The college's first Alternative Break began in 2003 as a single trip of 20 students and faculty and has since grown to over 10 or more weeklong trips happening during the academic year. To this point, nine have happened over both the fall and holiday breaks.

This spring break, there will be five opportunities travelling to the following areas: Freedom Foundation of Selma, AL,

U.S. Immigration and Border Issues, United Cerebral Palsy of middle Tennessee, St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge, and Mammoth Cave National Park.

Each trip will focus on a different service aspect and will work to provide students with life changing experiences. To share each group's Alternative Break experience, the organization will be participating in Honors Day for the first time ever. Each service learning trip will present a poster sharing their experience with students, faculty and community members.

"Alternative Breaks are important to me because they've all been game changers for me," said **Katie Grunder ('15)**. "The idea that we can take what we've only heard about in class and contextualize it in an

intensely real situation is and has always been an incredible opportunity to me."

"I originally started participating in Alternative Break to learn about social justice issues occurring outside my field of study," stated **Lauren Engels ('15)**. "It is also a perfect opportunity to connect with communities around the United States and Michigan."

In an attempt to interest more students who have a wider variety of careers and passions to participate, Alternative Breaks has been working to form new partnerships.

"Sallie Scheide, the director of Alternative Breaks, and I have connected with new community partners and have added two environmental trips – Mammoth Cave National Park and St. Vincent National Refuge," said Engels. "We are

very excited by the popularity of these trips. We are going to have over 50 students participating in spring Alternative Breaks."

After the life changing experience, many students decide to give back to the program and other students by serving as site leaders.

"I wanted to become a site leader because of the second Alternative Break I went on in my junior year – the Freedom Foundation group in Selma, AL," said Grunder.

"I wanted to be a site leader for this trip specifically because I had gotten an internship in Selma, so I'd be familiar with the town and its issues by the time I went there with Alternative Break (and I'd be informed enough to confidently lead a group down to Selma), and also because I really wanted the op-

portunity to return to Selma, because it feels like I'm being welcomed by family every time I go."

As participants head into the final week before the trips depart, past Alternative Break-goers share their advice for a successful and eye-opening trip.

"Be prepared to have your life changed. I went to Selma thinking that it'd just be an OK trip—now, I'm going to move there after graduating," stated Grunder.

"If things change, it is totally OK—better that you figure out what exactly you want to do with your life in your junior year of college than when you're 40 and have established a life that you live unhappily. You've had a good experience helping other human beings on this planet for a week straight, and that itself is great."

Black History Month: Highlights and Achievements

By **SAMANTHA COYKENDALL**
BUSINESS MANAGER

February serves as a celebration of Black History Month, highlighting the accomplishments and influential members of the black community and their contributions and central roles as African Americans in U.S. history.

Beginning in 1915, Black History Month grew out of national Negro History Week which inspired schools and communities nationwide to organize local celebrations, establish history clubs, and host performance and lectures. Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February Black History Month. Highlighted below are sev-

eral influential members of the black community and their contributions and achievements in society.

1. **Thurgood Marshall (1908 – 1993)**

Thurgood Marshall served as the first African-American justice to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court. Marshall was a member of the team of lawyers involved in the historic Supreme Court trial, *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954.

2. **Martin Luther King Jr. (1929 – 1968)**

Dr. King devoted his life to working for racial equality in the U.S. He participated in the movement for civil rights through organizing and participating in many peaceful demonstrations that protested the unfair treatment of African Americans. In commemoration of Dr. King's work, we celebrate MLK Day each year in January.

3. **Rosa Parks (1913 – 2005)**

Rosa Parks became famous for her refusal to relinquish her seat to a white man which triggered the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which launched Dr. King's to his position as the head of the civil rights movement. Rosa Parks is remembered as the "Mother of the Modern-Day Civil Rights Movement".

4. **Jackie Robinson (1919 – 1972)**

Jackie Robinson became famous while making history as he stepped on the Brooklyn Dodger's field as the first African American to play in a Major League baseball game. Robinson endured discrimination and ridicule both by fans and players. He went on to win Rookie of the Year in 1947 and was the first African American to be inducted into the Base-

ball Hall of Fame.

5. **Maya Angelou (1928 – 2014)**

Maya Angelou, made famous though an extensive 50-year career as an author, playwright, poet, dancer, actress and singer, enchanted the world with her writing of growing up in a segregated community and the tragedies of her childhood. Angelou is best known for her autobiography, "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings."

6. **Louis Armstrong (1901 – 1971)**

Louis Armstrong born at the turn of the century into poverty, rose above his origins to become a masterful trumpet player and beloved entertainer. Armstrong was one of the first players to perform scat-style singing and played a key role in the development of the jazz musical style.

7. **Madam C.J. Walker**

(1867 – 1919)

Madam C.J. Walker worked to become the first female, self-made millionaire in the U.S. by developing and marketing hair-care products for African-American women. As a supporter and proponent of the advancement of African Americans in business, Walker trained and employed thousands of black women in her business.

8. **Jesse Owens (1913 – 1980)**

Jesse Owens was the first person to ever win four gold medals in the track and field modern Olympic Games. In the 1936 Berlin Olympics—known as Hitler's Olympics—Owens won the gold in the 100-meter dash, 200-meter dash, long jump and the 400-meter team relay. Jesse Owens is considered one of the best athletes of the 20th century.

Long winter months bring on SAD

Tips for alleviating the effects of Seasonal Affective Disorder

By **MONICA KUNOVSKY**
STAFF WRITER

The sun hides behind a mask of clouds creating a dark ambience and blocking out the light, and oftentimes, people's happiness. Walking from class to class becomes more of a chore, especially when the air is so cold and bitter that it rips through the

thickest and warmest of jackets, infiltrating the skin and causing a chill that lasts even when the comforts of any warm classroom heats up a cold body.

The freezing air starts to seep in, going deeper than skin level and affecting students' emotions as well, reflecting the moody weather into your personality.

Known as seasonal affective disorder, this condition affects over half a million Americans each winter, making even the most chipper of individuals a victim to winter blues, but there is still hope. Here are five ways you can kick this seasonal sadness to the curb and stay as radiant and enthusiastic as the sun itself.

Vitamin D:
One main biological reason for increased cases of depression in the winter is lack of Vitamin D.

Researchers have discovered that vitamin D acts on the areas of your brain that are linked to depression and that low levels can increase the chances of having SAD (because the sun is a large source of vitamin D as well, and during the snowy season, many individuals stay cooped up indoors because of the cold and don't get much exposure to the low-levels of sunlight that are available.)

To help combat this, taking Vitamin D supplements or simply adding more fruits and vegetables that are high in this vitamin (like oranges or spinach) should help.

Exercise:
By exercising, not only are you getting out and socializing, but you're moving and getting your body to work. It not only improves your mood but can also reduce anxiety and stress.

Anything from nice walks outdoors to swimming inside can help. At least 30 minutes per day, 4-5 times per week, will improve your mood (and it doesn't hurt to get a jump ahead at a rocking body for the summer season).

Go Outdoors:
In terms of exercising and moving around, leaving the house promotes socializing and also is a good way to sneak in some extra Vitamin D! Even if the sun is blocked by clouds, there is still a small percentage of light that peaks through those clouds and can reach you, increasing both serotonin and dopamine levels, two natural brain hormones that increase positive feelings.

Add more healthy foods to your diet:

You are what you eat, and often times the foods that you ingest can

have a direct effect on your mood. Cushioning sad moods with junk food will perhaps help for a moment, but come back to bite you later, making you feel groggy and worse than before.

Love your body and fuel your body with fruits and vegetables! Anything from eating straight salads to sneaking in little bits of vegetables into your favorite dishes helps.

Surround yourself with good company:

If all else fails, there's nothing that good friends and fun can't fix—being around the ones you love and sharing a good laugh can help even the moodiest of folks, and being distracted from the dreariness outside is an instant mood booster and can make you forget—for a moment—that it's cold and miserable outside.

World Report:

American media ignores Boko Haram attack

“Je Suis Charlie” gathered far more attention than Nigerian massacre: Why?

By **NICOLE ECCLES**
OPINION EDITOR

Last month the world stood in solidarity after two Islamic terrorists shot and killed 11 people at a Parisian magazine. The attack immediately created a mass solidarity movement both online and in the streets of major cities. It became known as the Je Suis Charlie movement, meaning “I am Charlie,” which references the name of the magazine that was attacked, Charlie Hebdo.

In the same week, and almost completely ignored by American media, around 2,000 people were brutally murdered in Nigeria by the Boko Haram Militant group. The group is mostly known for the kidnapping of around 270 girls back in April, which sparked the “Bring Back our Girls” movement that spread all over the Internet and the world.

Fact: Monday will mark the 308th day those girls will be missing, while most of the world seems to have forgotten the hashtag movement that was once on many peoples' Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Tumblr.

“I don't think [the massacre] was catchy enough. When the girls were kidnapped it was horrific and it had a nice angle. Women's rights are a hot topic now, and “Bring Back our Girls” sounded nice. It's really sad and terrible, but I think it's the truth,” said

Lauren Engels ('15).
Amnesty International reported, back in early January, that Boko Haram militants attacked the town of Baga, Nigeria, and the surrounding towns on January 3rd. It was reported later that in the town of Baga itself, 620 structures were damaged or completely burned, and in the surrounding town of Doron Baga, 3,100 structures were destroyed leaving the area completely ravaged.

It is estimated that around 2,000 people were murdered and a thousand more fled into nearby countries to escape the violence.

According to Amnesty International's research, in 2014 as a whole, Boko Haram is responsible for over 4,000 civilian deaths in Nigeria. Furthermore, Médecins sans Frontières, known as Doctors without Borders in the U.S., reported on January 14th that 5,000 survivors of the attack on

Baga are staying in a camp in Maiduguri, Nigeria.

There were limited posts on Twitter and Tumblr that expressed solidarity for the Charlie Hebdo attack and also expressed sadness for the Nigerian massacre. Meanwhile, the American media was silent on the issue. International new sources, such as Al Jazeera, covered the event, but it received nowhere near the coverage the terrorist attack did.

There was also a strange silence from the African news media, while it received some coverage, according to Simon Allison, a writer for the Daily Maverick, a partner on the Guardian Africa network “no [African] leaders were condemning the attacks, nor did any talk of a solidarity movement...our outrage and solidarity over the Paris massacre is also a symbol of how we as Africans neglect Africa's own tragedies, and

priorities western lives over our own.”

Not to diminish the 11 deaths of the Charlie Hebdo attack, but why did this movement, which even received a featured position on Snapchat, get so much recognition when these 2,000 Nigerians were majorly ignored by the world. Where is their movement? Where is their solidarity? How it that there tragedy can be forgotten before they even hit major airwaves?

“I think we, Americans, are used to hearing about conflict in Africa, not in the center of Europe. Which made [Je Suis Charlie] more important. Mainstream media has an issue with race, it's a hot topic only if it's in America, Africans dying isn't newsworthy in America, and that's unfortunate,” said **Matt Yettaw ('15).**

The Almanian.

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

The Almanian is a newspaper published not only for the students at this institution, not just for the faculty on campus, and not solely for the administrators who work for Alma, but for all people interested in Alma College and the lives it touches. The writers, editors, publishers, and distributors of this newspaper are dedicated to producing an interesting, accurate, timely, fun, and error free newspaper on a weekly basis in order to inform and educate the people for whom it is intended about the culture and nature of Alma College.

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Highly anticipated movie “Fifty Shades of Grey” lacks focus, offers wooden dialogue

By **RAY VISSER**
STAFF WRITER

The most hotly anticipated movie of this year opened this past weekend in theaters nationwide. In “Fifty Shades of Grey,” based on the hit novel, suave billionaire Christian Grey (Jack Nicholson) befriends mild-mannered Anastasia Steele (Jennifer Aniston), and the two predictably become involved.

All this takes place within the first ten minutes of the film, and at that breakneck pace it’s hard to imagine what makes up the rest. But we soon learn that Christian hides a dark secret: in a locked room of his sprawling mansion, he raises and trains dragons (all-CGI, naturally, in this post-“Hobbit” world), for an illegal monster-fighting ring.

Readers of the novel will know that this secret drives the conflict: Christian insists he is just making a living, while Ana is secretly horrified at how he treats his “pets.”

But the film (directed by Steven Spielberg, in what might be the most disastrous move in his career) cuts that conflict off at the knees, in favor of a muddled underdog sports narrative that

feels entirely inconsequential.

The monsters and effects are inconsistent at best, and downright hideous for the most part. Occasional musical numbers make the best use of the dragons, and it is, admittedly, a delight seeing Nicholson expanding his range this late in his career (even if it means singing in front of a green screen).

But the rest of the cast is not nearly as game. Aniston delivers flat line readings as Ana, and there is never any real chemistry between the two leads.

The film also struggles to keep its focus. Ostensibly about human-monster relations, freedom of expression, and the neuroses of competition, “Fifty Shades” spends the majority of its 208-minute running time on Christian and Ana’s vapid conversations, which screenwriters Ethan and Joel Coen fail to make interesting in any way.

The film’s wooden dialogue and well-worn clichés (copied wholesale from the novel) make for some excruciating dialogue scenes. “We have every right to do what makes us happy, even if that means chaining up dragons in our basement,” Christian deadpans at one point. Ana’s response: “I worked down in the mines for five years. Christian, I know what happiness means to me.”

At times, it seems as if the

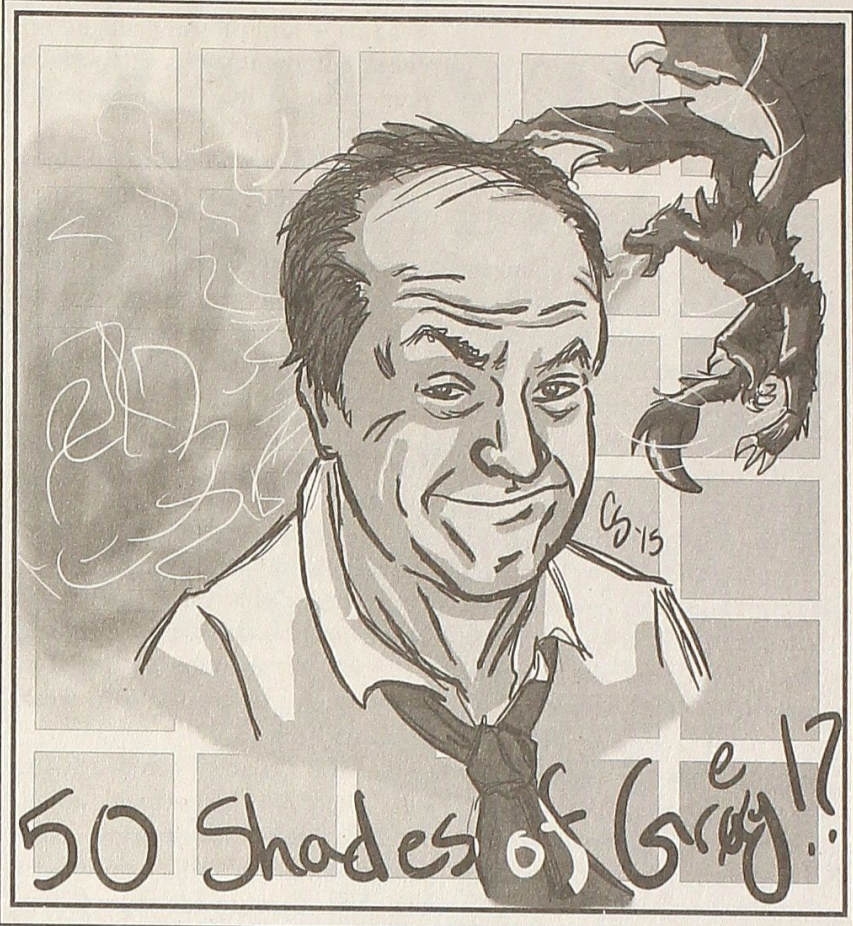
filmmakers are nudge-winking the audience, almost demanding an eye-roll. But attempts at serious dramatic turns—an early plot twist revolving around a stolen dragon harness, presumably meant to complicate Christian and Ana’s relationship (and jeopardize Christian’s career), falls completely flat.

That’s not to say there aren’t a few hidden surprises, though. One subplot involving Steele’s author friend and confidant, Kate (Meryl Streep), shows some promise, as Kate embarks on the journey of having her vampire romance novel published.

A chance encounter with a real vampire (Robert Pattinson), enslaved by one of Grey’s fellow monster trainers (Alan Rickman) and forced to fight in the ring, pushes Kate’s character into something resembling development. But the thread gets dropped almost immediately.

Like most of the older cast, Rickman phones it in, playing the grizzled trainer Leonard James as a recycled hybrid of “Harry Potter’s” Severus Snape and “Die Hard’s” Hans Gruber. But he’s a magnetic enough performer to elevate every one of his brief appearances onscreen.

Early previews of the



Cassidy Shankleton: Staff Illustrator

film suggested that only a small percentage of “Fifty Shades” consists of the dragon action that the trailers promised. Audiences flocking to theaters in droves to see a film full of intense monster fights might be disappointed to learn that this is true—apart from an extra-length fight in the third act, most of the film consists of the

above-mentioned stiff dialogue and fumbled character arcs.

In the words of Ana, haltingly delivered by Aniston without a hint of conviction: “Oh, Christian, you know I’ve always felt like I had so much more potential.”

If that’s the best you can do, “Fifty Shades,” I’m not sure the potential was ever there.

“On a scale from one to 10, I’m perfect the way I am,” defies society’s ideal of perfection

By **ALEXANDRA BOURNE**
STAFF WRITER

It seems lately that every time I watch a movie, turn on the television or every time I look at a magazine I am bombarded with a plethora of images of what I should look like. As a dancer, this is even more prominent.

A ballet dancer who is 5-foot-6, like myself, should, according to The Dancer’s Body Book, only weigh about 110 pounds.

What you may not know about me is that because of this image I was told I had to maintain, I developed anorexia my junior year of high school, something I continue to struggle with today.

Society is constantly pressuring women to be paper thin with a round butt and big chest. It also pressures men to be tall and extremely muscular.

The reality is, no one is naturally like that. Most of the images we see in magazines or online are photoshopped, and much of what we see on television is also edited.

Sadly enough, I have noticed that many of the people who are critical of what I or others look like or do are extremely hypocritical and do not follow their own standards.

What is truly sickening to me is that not only does society tell us that we should look a certain way to be accepted, but that we buy into it as well.

Every time I see a model or dancer, singer or actress, I feel extremely self-conscious.

Why don’t I have that body? Why am I not as pretty? What’s wrong with me?

This way of thinking is extremely dangerous. We are who we are, and we should be proud of that.

I started thinking about this subject Tuesday when I was watching an episode of “Liv and

Maddie” on Disney Channel.

The premise of this episode was that a group of guys at the school began rating the girls based on how they looked on a scale from one to 10.

This sparked a hot debate amongst the friends.

Maddie was upset about guys saying “wow, you’re pretty good at basketball...for a girl.”

Another girl felt betrayed that people told her that science and mathematics were fields for men.

The girls were angry at being objectified in this manner, and showed up to school the next day wearing garbage bags for clothes and paper bags over their heads in protest.

All except one.

One of the girls, unhappy at being rated a five for being athletic rather than “girly” wore a dress and high heels, makeup, and had curled her hair, automatically earning a nine from the guys.

Liv, outraged that her friends

felt the need to be someone they were not to make another person happy, wrote a song in protest, “What a Girl is” (the actress, Dove Cameron, accompanied by Christina Grimmie and Baby Kaely, actually has this song available on iTunes).

The song has lyrics such as “on a scale from one to ten, I am perfect like I am,” “and the stupid magazines want me to change my everything. They don’t even matter. They’re not taking my power.”

In the episode, when Liv is done singing her song, the girl who had changed what she looked like went back to being herself, and ripped up the signs the guys held rating her a five once again.

The female scientist won the blue ribbon at the science fair.

Maddie won a basketball game against a group of guys.

This song was truly empowering to me, and really got me thinking about how society views not only what women should be like, but men as well.

There is no such thing as

“perfect,” yet that is what society wants us to be. We are perfect by being imperfect.

Our flaws are part of what make us who we are, some of us struggle with our looks, some have internal struggles, and some have both.

We are not all the best artists or athletes, politicians or scientists, dancers or singers, actors or speakers, or writers or readers—part of being human is that we are consist entirely of flaws.

You find in yourself who you truly are when you look at these flaws. If you don’t like them, find a way to turn them into strengths.

You can’t define any one person based on an overgeneralization. No girl is the same as the one next to her, and no guy is either.

We are all our own people: special and important in our own ways.

Don’t let society tell you who you should be or what you can do. Live your own life. Leave your own legacy. Show the world you are special for who you are, not for who they think you should be.

Sudoku

Sudoku is a type of number puzzle. If you’re not familiar, here are the rules:

- Each 3x3 square can contain each number (1 through 9) no more or less than once.
- Each row and column can contain each number no more or less than once.
- The puzzle is complete when all spaces are filled in.

Sudoku difficulty is determined by how many numbers are initially filled in. This sudoku is considered “medium.”

There are many different types of sudoku, so if you like this, try out some more!

	4	5	1					
				3				8
				2			7	3
	2	9	7					4
8					1	3	6	
1	8			6				
7				5				
					4	6	9	

Taylor Swift's new song "Style" highlights her new direction and ability to stand tall above gossip

By PAIGE DANIEL
STAFF WRITER

With the release of the music video for her song "Style" last Friday, Taylor Swift built upon her new persona in a four-minute long dreamlike haze of elegance and, one could say, style.

The tightly edited video features double-exposure cinematography, various scenes of nature, and a love interest with two differently colored eyes. Swift puts the smolder on high volume, lipsticked and mysterious in the cracked mirror motif.

She and her love interest evocatively take turns being the focal point of each shot, and the layers of double-exposure reveal moody glances within melancholy splashes of color.

Texture blooms and grows into new landscapes as Swift gracefully poses in profile.

This purely aesthetic display does not seem to imply anything more than that; the true meaning lies within the song itself.

For fans and haters alike, there are many things worth noting about her ever-evolving form. Here is Swift, an international

sensation, calculatedly revamping her image and offering tongue-in-cheek commentary on the public's perception of her ("Blank Space," anyone?).

It seems that all of her previous work has led up to this point in her career. She even recently trademarked the phrase "this sick beat," and removed her music from Spotify to much criticism. She's treating the game of the music industry like a business plan.

To those who have written off Swift's arguably admirable skills, I present this consideration: Her album 1989 marked a paradigm shift from crossover artist to full-blown pop star, and this music video is no exception to the transformation — Swift is abandoning her old techniques and moving into fresh territory.

I, too, once hated Swift, but there is something about 1989's sleek songwriting and instrumentation that grew on me. My yearning for sugary '80s inflected pop was awakened, just as my hatred for Swift died out. Her melting pot of inspiration is served up steaming hot.

There is a certain rarified context to the song "Style" as well. Only the celebrity realm could produce such conditions perfectly made for Swift and her ex-lover, Harry Styles.

As discovered in her interview



Photo credit: billboard.com

with Rolling Stone last September, the song is literally named after Styles. The classic Hollywood archetypes of James Dean and the "good girl" in scantily-clad clothing are mythologized in this song.

In sporadic shots of the video, you can see the airplane necklace Styles gifted to her; the symbolization is built in so subtly that one might miss it. Notice how this time around Swift is the one wearing the "tight little skirt," when not so long ago she was sitting on the bleachers.

Their hidden romance and its hard-boiled presentation in the lyrics of "Style" suggest a Hollywood idealism that is cleverly intended by Swift. This further mystifies the details of her love life. Perhaps that is the point — to be explicit would be to surrender to the public eye.

Swift knows that the disclosure of information is what gossip magazines feed on. In the midst of all the talk about her personal life, Swift stands tall, newly devoted to her New York City lifestyle and her heavily publicized circle of

friends.

The stoop of her apartment has become a beacon surrounded by intrusive paparazzi, but still the most authoritative source on Swift's life is Swift herself—her songwriting both illuminates and shrouds the sought-after portrait of her inner life.

If I haven't made a convincing enough testimony as to why Swift and her song "Style" are so cunning in the paragraphs above, I don't know what else to say. The haters are gonna hate, hate, hate, hate, hate.

"Breaking Bad" spinoff series "Better Call Saul" starts strong

By DAN MURAWSKE
STAFF WRITER

The high quality of AMC's new original series, "Better Call Saul," should be pleasing both to fans of its predecessor, "Breaking Bad," and to newcomers.

In this one hour comedy/drama, we follow Saul Goodman, the defense lawyer from AMC's extremely popular show "Breaking Bad." The show, set in New Mexico, follows the misadventures of Saul in the years leading up to when he first met Walter White and Jesse Pinkman. In "Better Call Saul," Goodman goes by the name "Jimmy McGill."

To clear things up, "Jimmy McGill" is his real name. But in "Breaking Bad" he went by the name "Saul Goodman" (which conveniently sounds like 'it's all good, man').

Jimmy is an ambulance chaser. As a lawyer, he will take any case he can get because he is struggling to make ends meet.

In the pilot episode, we see Jimmy having difficulty paying bills and finding happiness. He would be a little happier if two potential clients who have been

accused of embezzlement would let him take their case. But alas, that doesn't happen.

Then Saul has a run-in with a couple of really small-time con artists. They are both young men, probably not much older than 18 or 19.

While Jimmy is driving home one day, one of the cons, who is on a skateboard, purposely runs into Jimmy's car and fakes an injury, trying to get money out of McGill. But he doesn't buy their scheme and he gets them to admit they are con artists.

Later in the episode, Jimmy hatches an idea. In short, he devises a plan where he will use these guys to help him get the case of the two people I mentioned earlier who have been accused of embezzling.

Unfortunately, things do not work out for Jimmy as planned; the consequences of his actions are shown in the second episode.

"Better Call Saul" promises to be one of the more exciting series on television.

Bob Odenkirk, who plays Jimmy, continues to impress me with how he can be both very funny and, when necessary, deadly serious.

In "Breaking Bad" he was usually more of a comic relief character (although he always moved the story along). In "Better Call Saul," we get to see that he has some serious acting chops.

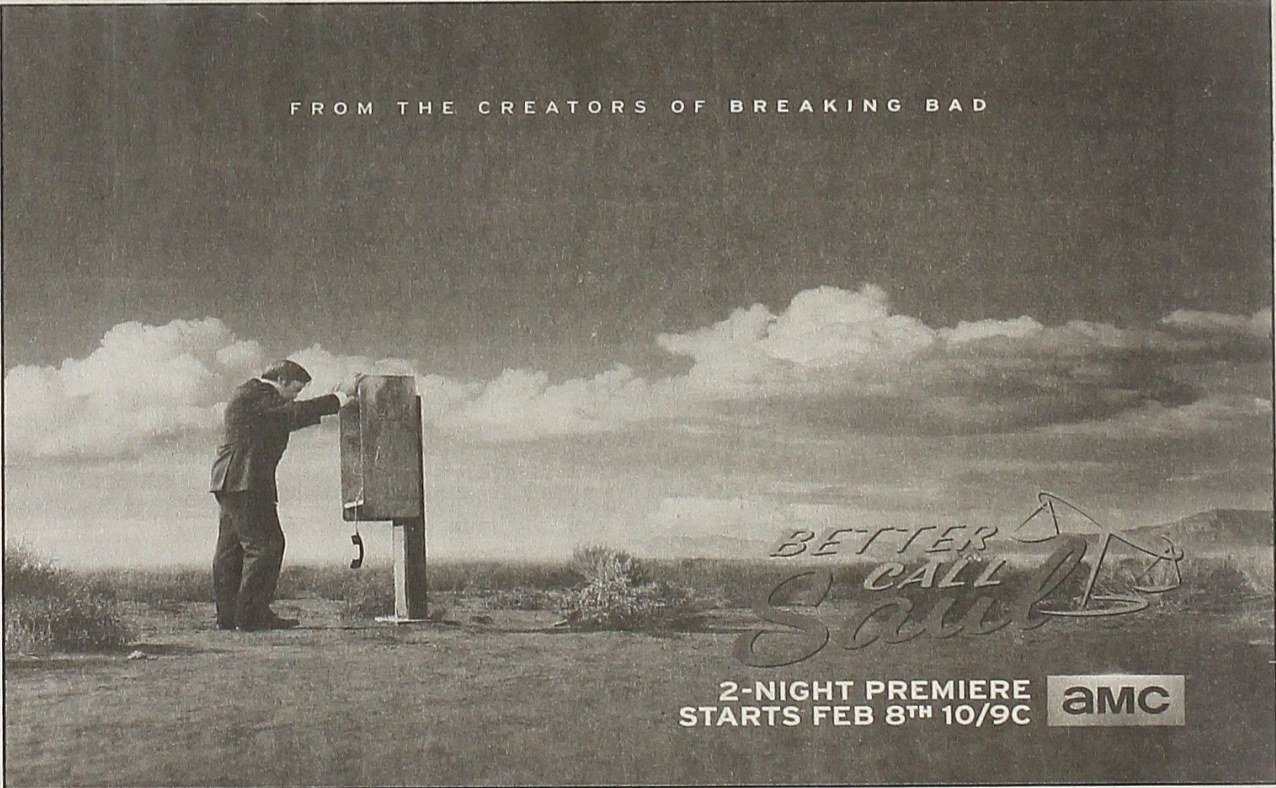


Photo courtesy: www.latam.ign.com

I was pleased to see that this is not a show that only "Breaking Bad" fans will be able to understand. So far, the only connection between the two shows has been that some of the characters are the same.

"Better Call Saul" is a show that can stand by itself. There is no need for a viewer to see "Breaking Bad" before tuning in to this fine new drama.

It is difficult to say just how good the show will be. After all, it only started on February 8.

While I cannot predict exactly where it is going, I am confident when I say that it will have decent success.

The pilot episode set the record for number of viewers for a series premiere on cable, with 6.9 million viewers, according to the "Boston Globe." The second episode had 3.4 million viewers, according to "Entertainment Weekly's" website.

Will "Better Call Saul" be as popular as "Breaking Bad?"

Probably not, as I am not sure any television show will be as popular as "Breaking Bad."

Will it be as high quality as "Breaking Bad"? It is too early to say. But after seeing the first two episodes, I have even higher hopes for it.

I give the first two episodes of "Better Call Saul" a a "B+."

"Better Call Saul" airs Mondays at 10 p.m. and is rated TV-14 for dialog, language, some sexual situations and violence.

Happy Midterms and Spring Break from the Almanian!

This will be the last edition of the Almanian until after break. The paper will resume publication on March 9.

Think you have an original idea for a story? Tell us!! &

Don't forget to follow us on Twitter or "like" our Facebook page for more content.

Scots stay undefeated at home after two big conference wins

BY BRENT LUPLOW
STAFF WRITER

Coming into last week, the men's basketball team was looking at a very tough stretch of games at home.

The Scots hosted league Trine University last Wednesday and turned around to host rival and 3 place Hope College last Saturday night.

Sitting on the verge of a post-season playoff berth, the Scots needed to win at least one of the two to keep their chances alive.

Students came out in full force last Wednesday as Alma looked to stay undefeated at home in conference play.

Chase Fairchild ('17) came out on fire, scoring 10 of the first 18 points, setting the tone for Alma offensively.

However, it was a back and forth defensive battle the rest of the way, as Alma's zone defense didn't let Trine get any easy looks at the basket.

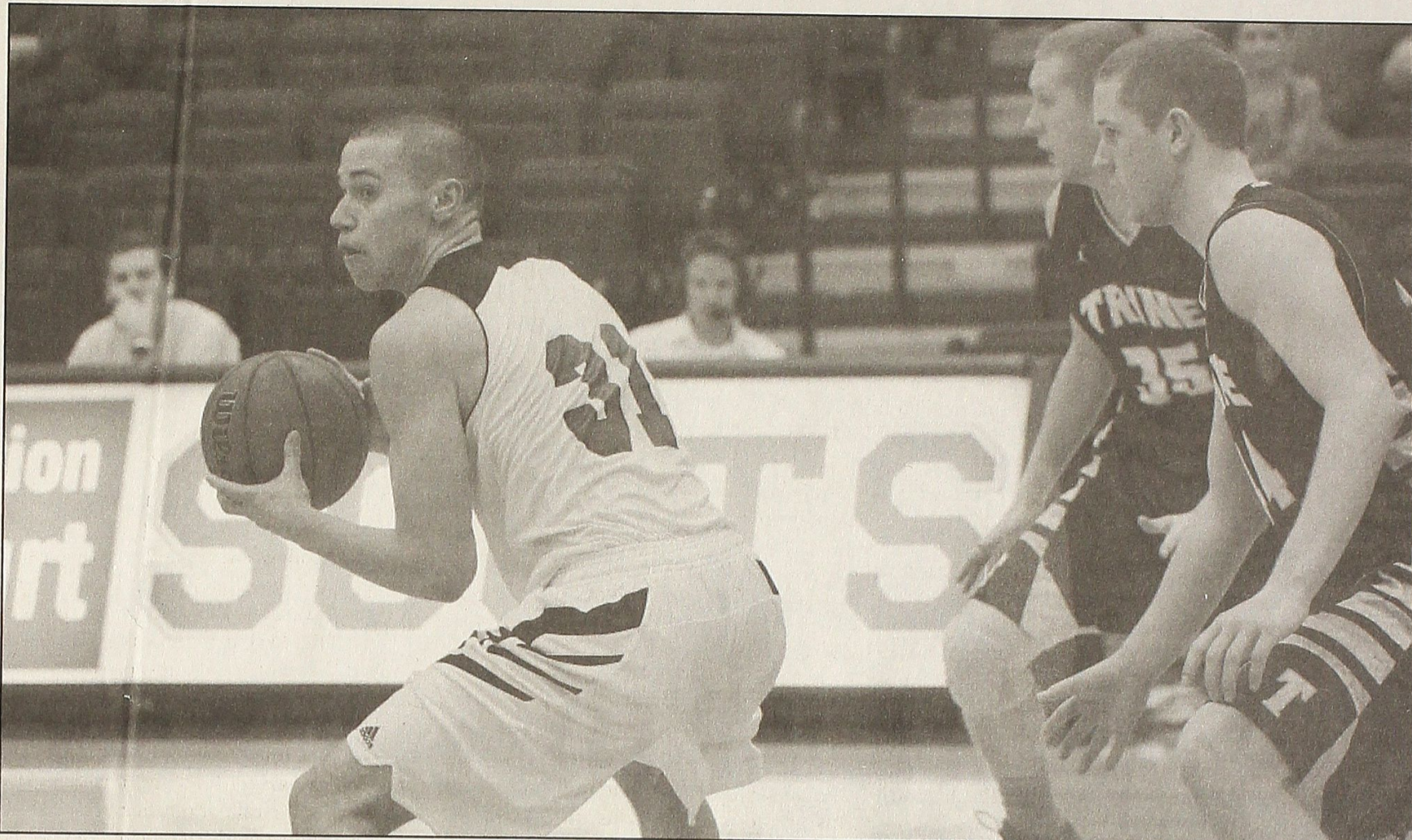
Scott Nikodemski ('16) would hit a three-point jump shot with 6:14 remaining in the first half to take a 21-18 lead and the Scots wouldn't let go of it the rest of the game.

Trine would cut the margin to 2 points twice in the second half but both times, **DJ Beckman ('16)** hit big three pointers to extend Alma's lead.

Alma held Trine's league leading scorer to just 10 points on 3-17 shooting, and held Trine to just 37 percent shooting for the game. They also outrebounded Trine 32-25 led by DJ Beckman's 11 rebounds to go along with his game high 22 points.

Fairchild was the only other Scot in double figures as he scored 15.

With the 54-58 win and Adrian's loss on the same night, Alma moved into sole possession of fourth place in the league and a playoff spot, with three games to go in conference play.



Chase Fairchild ('17) attempts to get the ball around two Trine University guards.

Marcella Flury: Staff Photographer

It wasn't long after the win and Alma had to turn its focus on rival Hope College.

Behind a packed Art Smith Arena, full of community members and student section in a "blackout" theme, the energy in the gym was electric.

"Our student section was huge for us", said **Jason Beckman ('18)**. "We got down a little early but they kept us in it and kept the energy up."

Alma came out hot as the two big men, **Quinton Cook ('17)** made a jumper, and **Doug Bradfield ('18)** followed it up with a three pointer to bring the fans to their feet just a minute into the game.

Bradfield, again increased the Scots' momentum as he threw down a two handed dunk with 10 minutes to go in the first half to push Alma's lead to five, 25-

20.

It stayed a tight margin the rest of the first half as Hope, behind a 14-15 free throw shooting performance and a 13-7 rebound advantage, led at halftime, 41-39.

Alma would score first in the second half, when Cook hit another 12-foot jump shot, to tie the game back up at 41-41.

"I had a big opportunity to hit some shots tonight," said Cook. "That's the good thing about our team, anyone can hit them on any possession."

Bradfield, who only played 9 minutes in the first half, picked up his fourth foul with 17:28 left in the second half to send him to the bench for about 10 minutes.

"My fourth foul was pretty dumb, but I never lost confidence to come back in and play well," said Bradfield.

Scott Nikodemski and DJ

Beckman, the two junior leaders, led the Scots out of the break, the combo scored 16 of the first 23 points of the second half for Alma, and a Nikodemski layup with 11:12 to go pushed the lead to 8 points, the largest of the game.

Contributions kept coming from all around as Bradfield came back in to score seven points and keep the lead in favor of Alma.

With a 6-point lead with 2:30 left, Hope started to foul hoping Alma would miss its free throws down the stretch.

They were wrong as Alma shot 14-16 from the line the last two and a half minutes to seal the 91-84 victory over Hope, the first since 1998, and the first in 43 games.

Alma shot 68 percent from the field in the game, a phenomenal percentage.

It was a complete team effort as six players scored in double

figures. Nikodemski continued to star for the Scots as he scored 21 points and dished out 7 assists. Jason Beckman had 16 points, DJ Beckman, Bradfield, and Cook each had 12, and **Tyler Edwards ('17)** contributed 11 points.

"This was a huge win for our program," said Beckman. "The last three home games are program building wins, we just keep taking a step forward with each win."

With the victory the Scots improve to 9-14 overall and 7-5 in the MIAA. They sit in sole possession of fourth place and a game behind Hope and Trine for third place.

Alma hosts Adrian College on Wednesday night at 7:30 for a chance to finish the conference season undefeated at home, and clinch a berth in the MIAA conference tournament.

Swim, dive compete in league meet

BY BRENT LUPLOW
STAFF WRITER

The Alma College swimming and diving teams traveled to the Holland Community Aquatic Center to partake in the 2015 MIAA Championships. The men's club finished in sixth place and the women finished fifth in the four-day competition.

Jaclyn Shetterly ('16) shone for the Scots as she collected a

gold medal in the 400 IM, and a bronze in the 200-meter backstroke, as well as being part of the team of **Hannah Schroeder ('16)**, **Sara Stemen ('17)**, and **Victoria Bishop ('16)**, who set the school record in the 400-medley relay with a time of 4:01.96.

"The team overall had great performances," said Shetterly. We had a lot of season bests and a good chunk of lifetime bests all around. The women had 10 new school records set and

four swimmers placed in the top three."

Also, for the women, **Taylor Musselman ('17)** collected a bronze medal in the 1650-meter freestyle.

Schroeder and **Bailey Sopjes ('17)** both won bronze medals as well. Schroeder collected bronze in the 200-meter backstroke and the 100-meter breaststroke, and Sopjes in the one-meter dive.

With the strong performance for the women's squad, the future looks bright.

"I am very excited for the future of Alma College swimming and diving," said **Brianna Bianconi ('17)**. "I think we have a lot of potential and a lot of good things coming our way."

The men's team had good performances as well. **Cody Kayser ('15)** collected a seventh place finish in the 200 butterfly. **Daniel Biggs ('15)** followed him with an eighth place finish in the 200 meter butterfly, he also took 11th in the 200-meter freestyle.

Heath Thornton ('15) col-

lected a tenth place finish in the 100-meter backstroke and also placed 11th in the 50-meter free-style.

Kurtis Smith ('16) ended the event with a ninth place finish in the 1650-meter freestyle.

"The team did very well," said Biggs. "Many people were getting best times and there were a lot of good swims. Team spirit was also really high which was good."

The Scots will return to the pools for the 2015-2016 season in October.

Womens' basketball searching for win

BY DOMENIC BAIMA
STAFF WRITER

The Alma College women's basketball team is currently on a five game losing streak they will be looking to break Wednesday

as the Scots travel to Angola, Indiana, where they will be facing Trine University, which they lost 71-57 in the first match up this season between the two teams.

The squad is looking to rebound after the tough loss it suffered at the hands of Calvin College last Wednesday when they were taken down 76-38.

Calvin remains unbeaten this season.

Alma struggled to get anything going on the offensive end of the floor that night shooting 28.6 percent from the field, and even worse from beyond the arc, making only three of its twelve attempts.

The Scots were, however, able to make 87.5 percent from the char-

ity stripe, but were only able to get to the line for 8 attempts.

The Scots also fell victim to the problem that they have been having all season: turnovers.

The ladies turned the ball over 20 times and forced only nine Calvin turnovers.

The Scots were led offensively by **Morgan Henry ('15)**, who scored

11 points, and also knocked down three shots from deep.

The Scots have only two games left in the season and currently have only won two of their conference games, and seven games overall.

They will finish out the season when they host Adrian College on Saturday.

Alma baseball and softball teams prepare themselves for upcoming season

By **TONY KNOP**
STAFF WRITER

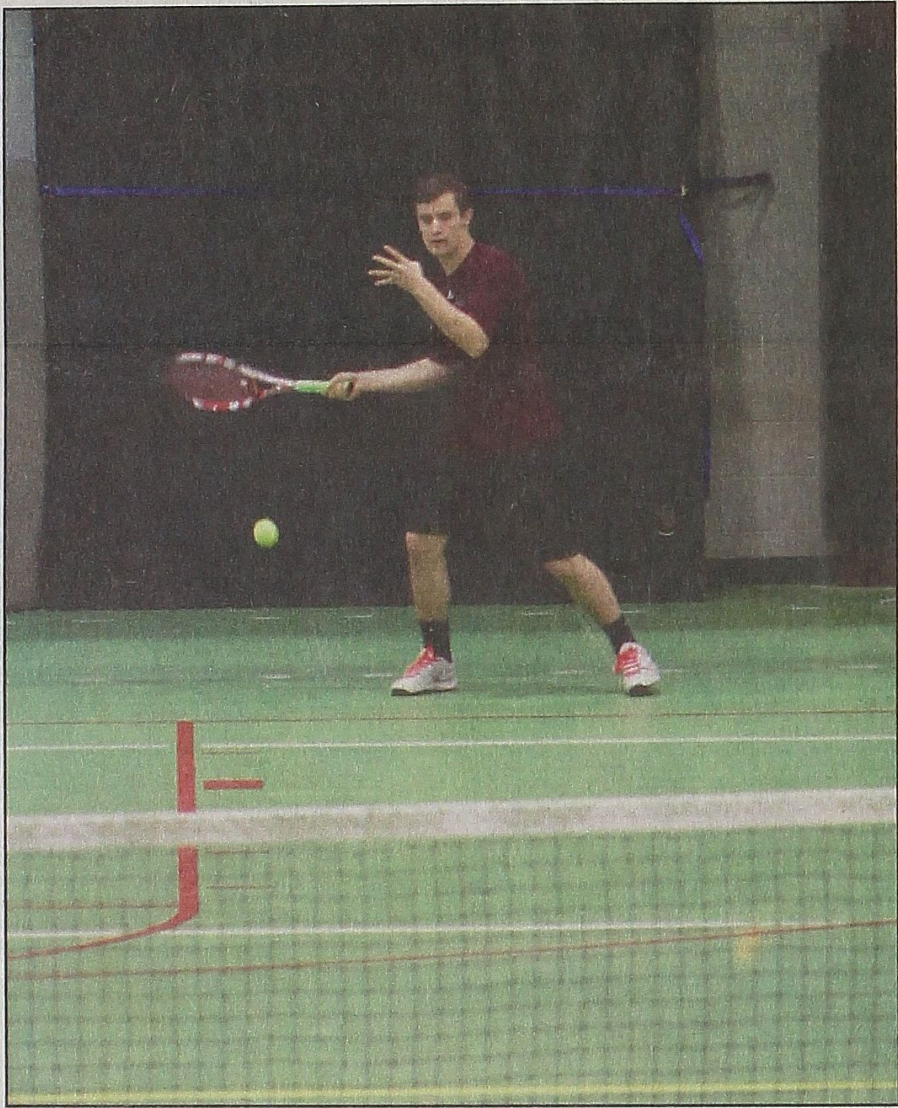
Spring is almost here, which means the Scots' baseball and softball teams are ready to take to the field to begin the 2015 season. The baseball team is looking to improve upon last season, where it finished 18-20 overall and 12-16 in the MIAA. Alma finished sixth in

the conference standings. This offseason, the Scots have worked to improve many aspects of their game to aid them in hunting for that elusive MIAA championship. "Overall, we have been working hard to be more consistent offensively and defensively. Everyone has become a lot more mentally tough, which will help us immensely when we may be in a slump," said **Doug Walters ('16)**. "The team has been getting after it in the weight room as well. Many kids have seen noticeable physical changes to their body." The Scots look to build on the many young players who played last year and look to rely on the good mix of upperclassmen to lead the team. "I think we have a very much improved defensive team all

around the board. We have a lot of speed and athleticism at every position," said Walters. "Offensively we have been working hard to have better at-bats and we have improved tremendously." The team has spent a great deal of time building depth across the board. The baseball players are excited and ready to start the year. "Our goal since day one has been to compete for an MIAA championship," said Walters. The Scots softball team looks to also improve from the 2014 season, where the squad turned in a 16-16 overall record, going 9-9 in the MIAA. The squad has been working all offseason to develop its younger players and improve in every aspect of their game. "We've been working on fighting until the last out and capitaliz-

ing on situations when necessary," said **Marie Zill ('15)**. "The practice atmosphere has been more intense and we all understand what it's going to take." The Lady Scots also bring back two first team all-MIAA selections from last season. MIAA offensive MVP **Devan Olah ('15)** and **Lea Lusk ('15)** look to power a potent offense that finished the year with a .306 batting average, good for third in the MIAA. The Lady Scots are projected to finish fifth in the conference, but the team has set its sights much higher. "We have the work ethic and talent to clench the number one spot this year. We have the potential to have a loaded batting line up and solid defensive team on the field," said **Brooke Hein ('15)**. "I truthfully believe this team will

go far, and playing at nationals is what we have our eyes on." Last season was a disappointment to the softball team, but players are coming into this year with a new mindset and desire to clinch the MIAA. "I am very confident that we can be a great team. The energy our team is bringing to practice everyday makes me extremely excited to get on the field with these girls," said Hein. "A fire has been lit in each one of us and I am ready to win and be successful with a great group of girls," said Zill. Both squads will travel to Florida over spring break and open up their seasons. The baseball team will start its year on February 21 against St. Joseph's. The softball team will open the year the same day and face Northwood (FL).



Luke Van Fleet ('18) pulls back to send the ball back to his opponent.



BJ Schutte ('17) sends the ball flying over the net.

Marcella Flury: Staff Photographer

The Alma College men's and women's tennis teams hosted Spring Arbor in the Stone Recreation Center for two matches against the Cougars this past weekend. Friday's match resulted in a loss for the Alma Scots' men's team, 6-3, and Saturday's match a setback for the women as well, 9-0. Alma's **BJ Schutte ('17)**, **Luke Van Fleet ('18)**, and **Jared Guy ('16)** took 1st, 4th, and 5th singles for the men, and all other matches—both men's and women's doubles and singles—were losses to the Cougars. The tennis teams will head off to Baldwin-Wallace University Saturday for their third match of the season.

Alma cheerleaders conquer Spartans

By **DOMENIC BAIMA**
STAFF WRITER

The competitive cheer and stunt season is officially under way after last week when Alma College hosted both Michigan State University and Davenport University for the Alma College Stunt Tournament.

Alma first faced off against Division I Michigan State. In front of a capacity crowd, the Scots dominated the Spartans, claiming the 16-8 victory in game one. "It was our first win of the year," shared **Tia Wilson ('16)**. "It was a really good feeling and it helped to get some of the jitters out." "I feel that our team bonded over this win," Wilson continued. "If we can keep the momentum from it, we hope for many more wins this season."

In the final competition of the evening, the Scots took on Davenport in a matchup of two final four teams from 2014. Despite some great performances, Alma fell to the Panthers 18-10 to end the event, but the team's confidence has not wavered despite the loss to Davenport. "Davenport is one of the toughest teams we face and are always competitive," commented Wilson, "and even though we lost, the team really fought and came

together with the most passion I have seen out of us this season." Although the season is still young, the Scots already have their eyes on the National Championship Tournament in Daytona. "I'm excited for Daytona," added Wilson. "The team is really going for a first place win this year to bring home a national title. We took second place last year and that wasn't good enough." Wilson also shared how the team has been preparing.

"We are making sure we always give 110 percent in practice, but also making sure we put the time in outside of practice as well as in the weight room." The sport of stunt is still in its infancy, as it became an intercollegiate sport just three years ago. Stunt, however, is rapidly growing with 500,000 participants nationwide. The next event for the team is Saturday at the Birch Run Expo Center.