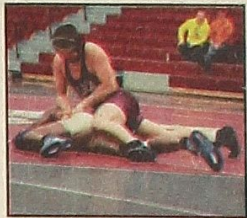




THE

ALMANIAN

SERVING ALMA COLLEGE SINCE 1907 VOLUME CVIII ISSUE XVI FEBRUARY 10 - 16, 2014



Wrestling stomps on Trine University see page 7

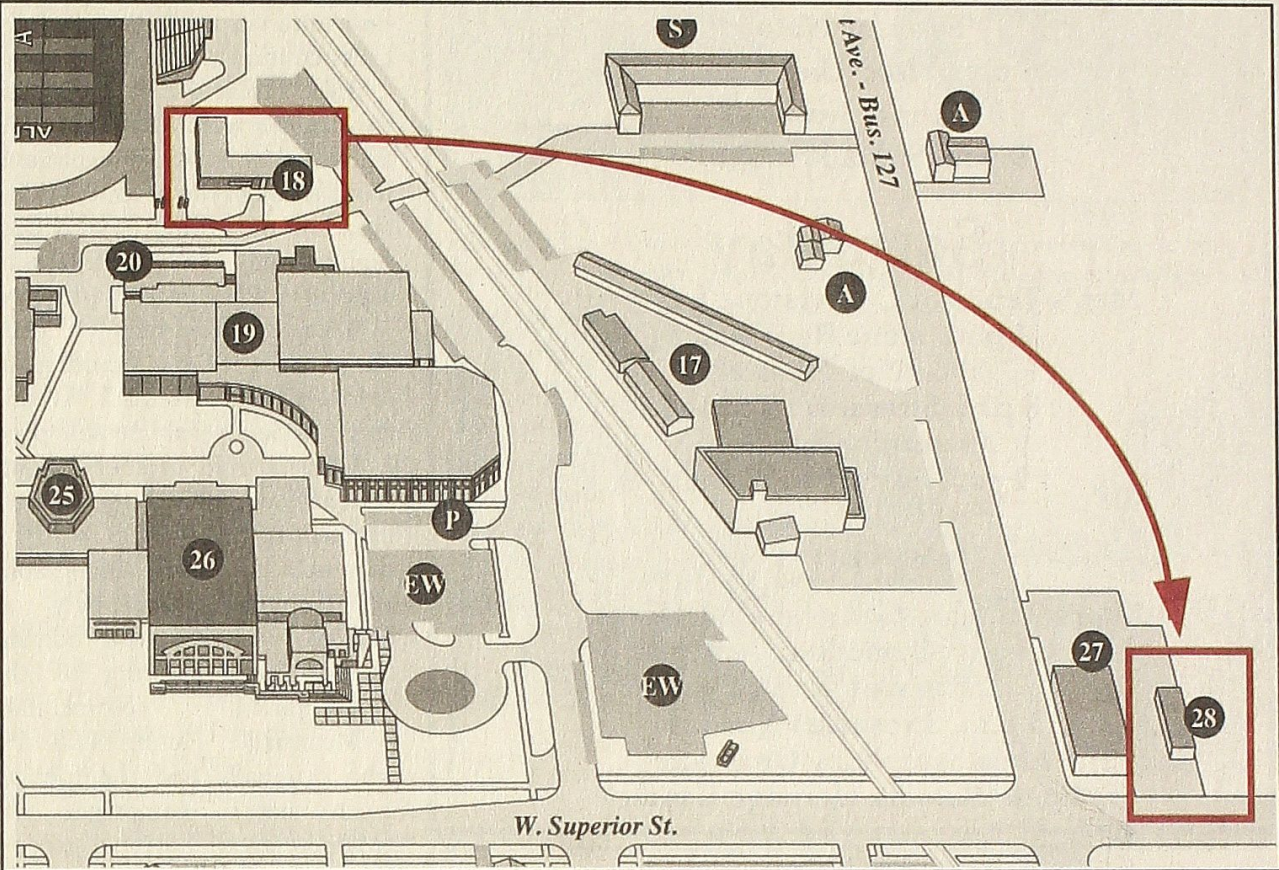
Writer discusses unconventional Olympian see page 5

Mail center migrates off campus; offers access to community, too

By SAMANTHA COYKENDALL
STAFF WRITER

In the beginning of January, Alma College announced that the mail room was going to relocate to a new building. Previously, it shared building space with the Wilcox Medical Center. The new home is at 320 W. Superior Street, which is between College Corner and Downtown Drycleaner. The new site features a more spacious layout with better capabilities for handling and storing student packages, sorting and delivering of incoming and outgoing mail, as well as serving as the copy center. "The way everything is set up will take time for adjustment, but it will be able to obtain an easier flow with a better organizational system over time," said Matt Loomis ('15), a mail room employee. Additionally, the mail room will continue to offer all its previous services. Students who are looking to have online purchases and packages sent to Alma can continue using the college's original mailing address. "The hours at the mailroom will remain the usual 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

as they were before," Loomis said. The transition between locations only closed down the mail room for one business day. "With any transition there are challenges," said Ashley Strawn, manager of auxiliary services. "The transition went as smoothly as possible. Facilities and IT were extremely helpful with the transition to the new location and making sure the building was functional. "It will take a little bit for staff to work out the kinks and adapt to the new layout, but overall, it has been easy," said Strawn. However, with the new location comes a further walk for students to access the services of the new mail room. "I drive to the new location," said Cassie Haley ('15). "I don't have much time during the day, so that is the most efficient way for me to pick up my packages." Other students agreed. "I think it's rather inconvenient," Barbara Otey ('14) said. "I rarely ever walk down to College Corner because it's freezing right now and pretty much the furthest thing from Mitchell." Nevertheless, students still need to utilize the new mail room for its services, regardless of their support of the new site or not. Along with change of location, there are many additional



Courtesy of Alma College Marketing Department

Campus brochures and pamphlets will now feature the new location of the mailing center.

benefits to relocating the campus mail room to a new space. "The new location is a better facility in regards to space and access for deliveries and pickups," said Strawn. "We are also able to offer our services to the community to grow the relationship between the college and community." With Alma College working to further integrate and extend

the existing campus into the community, the mail room appears as just the beginning of the campus' process. "I think it is great that the school is working to integrate more with downtown Alma," said Otey. "College Corner was a great addition because it pulls students and faculty from the college, as well as a large

population from the community." "Students may walk down to the mail room and decide to take a walk downtown and visit all of the shops," said Haley. "It may get students more involved in the Alma community. I do think, since Stucchi's is right there, that people may plan more trips to eat at Stucchi's and pick up packages at the same time."

Elements of theater production demand attention

By MECHON CAREW
STAFF WRITER

What would you do if you fell in love, lived happily ever after, and then face the possibility of losing it all thanks to a wandering heart? You can find out what happens to a handful of characters when they have to battle that very question this Valentine's weekend. Starting Thursday at 8 p.m., the theater department will perform Steven Dietz's "Force of Nature," including a Friday and Saturday night performance at the same time and a Sunday matinee at 3 p.m. in the Heritage Center. "Force of Nature" is a play based on Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's novella "Elective Affinities," incorporating many of the same

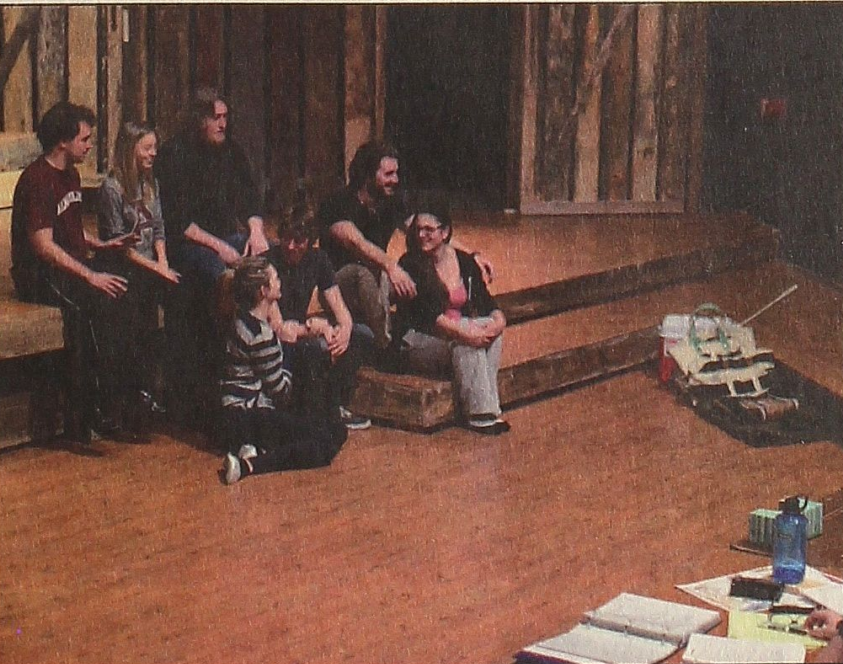
themes. Work began for the theatre department back during the end of fall term, with auditions and casting taking place between Thanksgiving and winter break. "It's about the force of love and the impact that love and how it's not anything anyone can control," Assistant Director Tara Riedel ('13) explained. The play follows the increasingly complicated lives of four main characters as they get caught up in their own "elective affinities." There are many components to this play not seen regularly, incorporating time period changes, asides, and a large amount of theatrical flair. As such, certain elements have captured the interests of many of the members of the cast. Riedel herself has very strong

feelings for the overall meaning. "I think this play does a really nice job of representing the unexplainable love that we experience but never get to talk about it," she said. "You know it when you experience it, and no one else can tell you that you're in love or not." Jake McAskill ('15), who plays Edward, the male lead, is particularly interested in the depth of the plot. "Every time something happens, it intertwines with something previous, or something that happens later," McAskill said. "It's just one giant, perfect connection, and I just think that's really smart." Sara Day ('15), on the other hand, is rather fascinated with the fact that she will be playing a character that was originally written as a man. "It just offers so much more variety and provides a strong, independent female character," she said, careful to add that there are still other strong female characters in the play. She believes the gender switch will "add another layer of intrigue" to the script. An important part of the play will be the use of asides, a dramatic device in which a character speaks directly to the audience. Often what is said is essentially what's going on in the character's head, allowing a better understanding of their reasoning and thoughts. "Force of Nature" will also integrate other theatrical elements; from the use of a fog



Patrick Mallett: Staff Photographer

Above: Emily Roberge ('14) and Ray Antel ('16) rehearse for the show. Left: The cast goes through a scene with all members on-stage.



Patrick Mallett: Staff Photographer

machine to a gun duel, there will be physical forces that "[represent] a lot of the emotions that happen with [humans]," Riedel said. However, this work with theatrics has resulted in less time spent focusing on the actors than in other productions. Nonetheless, Riedel asserted that "they all have risen to the challenge." Overall, it seems that the members are very eager to perform, McAskill mentioning that he's "excited to see

how people respond to it." Day predicted that "the audience will leave with questions about fate and destiny." Meanwhile, Riedel requests students to see the play if for nothing more than taking a break from their usually busy schedules and to enjoy the experience. "I think this is a very strong, realistic, and raw representation of what love actually is," McAskill said, "and I think that's something that's worth checking out."

This Week at Alma College February 10 - 16 Thursday

"Force of Nature"

8 p.m. Strosacker Theatre

Friday

"Force of Nature"

8 p.m. Strosacker Theatre

Sorority Walkouts

9 p.m. Stone Rec Center

Saturday

Men's Tennis v. Cornerstone University

1 p.m. Stone Rec Center

"Force of Nature"

8 p.m. Strosacker Theatre

Fraternity Runouts

9 p.m. Stone Rec Center

Sunday

Men's Tennis v. Cornerstone University

1 p.m. Stone Rec Center

"Force of Nature"

3 p.m. Strosacker Theatre

Alma Symphony Orchestra

4 p.m. Remick Heritage Center

Letter Policy:

Letters are published as layout space allows. Submission of a letter does not guarantee publication. The Almanian reserves the right to condense letters for layout purposes. Deadline for publication is 5 p.m. the Friday before requested publication.

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Student-created company advertises for national parks

BY CHELSEARAE ROWLEY
STAFF WRITER

From Midland to Colorado this summer, an Alma College sophomore plans to take his humanitarian marketing business cross-country to aid national parks.

Lex Hollenbeck ('16) and two friends from Midland, Mich. found a way to assist 10 national parks through the production and creation of promotional videos highlighting the recreational aspects of each preserve.

This three-man team operates under the brand name "Monumental Media." Within this business, each person plays a different role in the intricate system of video production.

Brendan Babinski, who is currently studying videography at Columbia University in Chicago, handles the editing, filming, and shooting of the humanitarian commercials.

Meanwhile, Hunter Wilson—who originally had the idea to create nature campaigns and commercials for national parks—is in charge of the marketing, financing, and business relations surrounding the success of Monumental Media.

While Wilson handles the business aspect and Babinski shoots the footage, Hollenbeck composes the scripts and directs the overall production.

Hollenbeck, currently a dual major studying integrated

physiology and health sciences and business, said that he originally had no idea he wanted to go into marketing or videography.

"I had no idea what I wanted to do, until we started doing it," he said.

The spark for video creation began last summer when the three-man team won a Minute Maid video competition, earning the group \$4,000.

From there, the company expanded into its current project: aiding national parks across the country. This venture is titled the "Reserved Ground Project."

Hollenbeck refers to the creation of this operation and the business by using the "Green Dot Theory."

"A business is going to start out with making product A or a green dot," he said, "and the only way the business is going to be successful is if it comes out looking like a red square—something completely different than what you start with."

So far, the business is planning to aid a variety of parks on travels from Michigan to Colorado.

While assisting parks, the members will also create humanitarian videos for small companies. These small-business videos will aid in the funding of the trip, because national parks do not currently have enough government funding to pay for video advertisements.

Monumental Media is also receiving sponsorship and donations from four large benefactors, including Columbia.

"The donated gear is half of the help," Hollenbeck said. He

"We are hopefully going to do a big documentary on the story of us, just the story of three guys using their skills to travel from Midland, Mich. to Colorado and back."

- Lex Hollenbeck ('16)

also takes pride in "knowing that companies (like Columbia) would support us and help our cause."

Currently, the group is still looking for more funding.

The "Reserved Ground Project" can be found on Kickstarter.com. The goal is to raise \$3,000 for the project. Currently, the group has raised \$2,545 from the help of 38 supporters.

In the future, the group hopes to create a documentary.

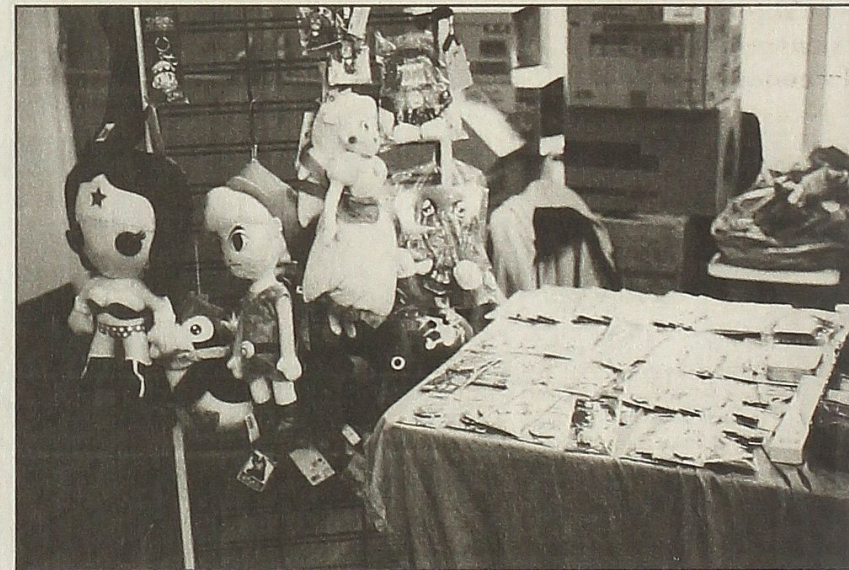
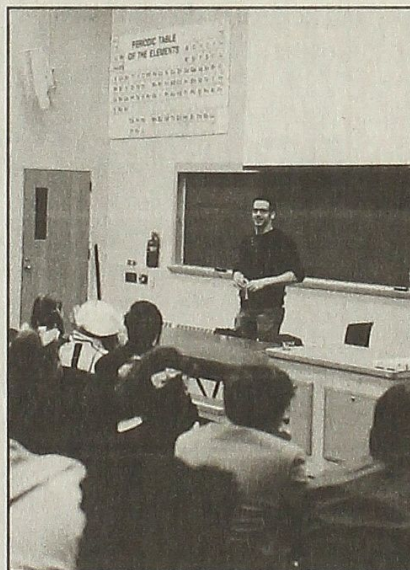
"We are hopefully going to do a big documentary on the story of us," Hollenbeck said, "just the story of three guys using their skills to travel from Midland, Mich. to Colorado and back."

"[It will be] not so much the story of making commercials for national parks, but the story of taking three talents and doing something for a good cause and for the national parks," he said.

Overall, Hollenbeck said that he learned a great deal from the creation of this project and business. The experience "gave me confidence to articulate who I am and what we are doing," to large businesses, Hollenbeck said.



AlmaCon, from last Friday to Saturday, featured booths with items for purchase, as well as speaker J. Michael Tatum.



Patrick Mallett: Staff Photographer

Spring Term offers variety of course options

BY HANNAH KING
STAFF WRITER

From tropical songbirds to Japanese art history, Alma's 2014 Spring Term offers a wide range of courses in many subjects. Each Alma student must complete two Spring Terms in his or her four year Alma career. One of these spring terms must count as an "S," or travel, course.

Travel courses can be found in almost every subject. In the art department, Carrie Anne Parks-Kirby is teaching a class on 16th century Japanese ceramics. Students will travel to the Japanese Tea House and Cultural Center in Saginaw.

In another excursion, Mike Bishop, a biology instructor, will instruct a travel course to Ecuador, where students will catch and collect data on the songbirds of the Ecuadorian Cloud Forest.

"We will be collecting data on the molt patterns of the birds we catch," said Bishop. "Studying in this environment is a unique experience because this is a wintering ground for birds. You can find residential species and migratory species, and that makes studying and aging them a little more of a challenge."

The group of 11 will stay near Quito, the capital of Ecuador, and studying birds is not the only activity the students will do.

"We are going to explore the Ecuadorian culture on our trip," said Bishop. "We will visit indigenous villages, shop in the local markets, and sample the local foods."

This is the third year that Bishop has instructed this travel Spring Term, and he will be joined by Biology Assistant Professor Brian Doyle, who will take a group of 10 to study the medical ethnobotany of the

Amazon. Dave Clark, another biology professor, will also take a class to Ecuador to study the behavioral ecology of lizards.

Spring Term offerings in the English department include environmental literature, taught by President Jeff Abernathy. Students will read classic literature and study sustainability with a primary focus on Michigan.

The class will venture to the organic farms of Gratiot County and spend days hiking and kayaking in the Upper Peninsula.

Associate Professor Robert Vivian will teach another English class, titled "Always a River: Fishing in Literature, Fly Fishing in Michigan."

"The course centers around fly fishing and all its glory, pathos and bathos and its long history as an art and way to reconnect to nature," said Vivian.

Students in this course

will have the opportunity to travel to Grayling to fish on the Au Sable River with professional fly fishermen.

"Students will read books on fishing, and will write their own nature essays," said Vivian. "Those interested in ecology, in exploring our relationship and place within the greater natural whole, and who would like to learn the basics of fly fishing are encouraged to apply."

In "Exploration of Health Disparities," a course taught by Business Administration Assistant Professor Dale Sanders, students will have the opportunity to explore challenges faced in health care in numerous environments.

Participants will travel to Washington, D.C. to learn about the United States health care system, to New Jersey's Richard Stockton College to understand health care from an urban viewpoint, and even to

the Upper Peninsula to look at health care from a rural angle.

Sanders will also take students to Toronto to be educated on the Canadian health care system.

"I think there are many misunderstood aspects of the Canadian health care system," said Sanders. "I think that upon our trip to Toronto, students will find that their health care system is just as good as ours; we just have to be able to understand it better."

Other Spring Terms include creative writing, digital film production, geography, and the Bible, and many more.

"I think that our college is unique to have this opportunity for students to peel back the layers of their education in just four weeks," said Sanders. "Spring Terms allow students and professors to look at non-scripted learning, and apply classroom theory to the real world."

Mount Pleasant hosts Polar Plunge fundraiser for Special Olympics

By JESS SUTHERLAND
STAFF WRITER

Picture this: a below-freezing day. Snow piled up all around.

That brings jumping into a cold lake to mind, does it not? For the Mount Pleasant Polar Plunge participants, that is exactly what they plan to do.

This fundraiser is designed for the tough people, for those who want to live life to the fullest. It is also designed for those who want to help others.

The Polar Plunge is a fundraiser for the Special Olympics, which seeks to provide opportunities to children and adults who want to play a sport but cannot because of intellectual disabilities.

Before jumping into the water, participants must raise a minimum of \$75, according to the event's page on FirstGiving.com, www.firstgiving.com/polarplunge.

There are also prizes given out to those who raise larger amounts of money. For \$75, the participant gets to jump in the water and also receive a long-sleeved shirt. For \$500, the jumper is awarded a sweatshirt.

"It's for a good cause, but it's insanely cold," said **Katie Greenough ('14)**.

Nor is it difficult to join. All a potential participant has to do is go to the website www.firstgiving.com/polarplunge/mtpleasant and click "register."

Some people even do the Polar

Plunge in teams, enabling more money to be raised.

"I know people who have done it, and they've enjoyed it," said **Clayton Every ('14)**, who coaches the Alma Tigers' Special Olympics basketball team.

"It is not for everyone, but there are plenty of people who want to join in."

"The Polar Plunge is a great event, and there are always high numbers of involvement," said Tracey Fuller, head coach of Alma's Special Olympics basketball team.

For \$75, the participant gets to jump in the water and receive a long-sleeved shirt. For \$500, the jumper is awarded a sweatshirt.

"It is fun for the jumpers and does well raising money to help fund the sports that these athletes participate in." Fuller encourages the Alma campus to get involved, as the money is "going to a great cause."

This particular Polar Plunge will occur at Rose Ponds. The registration itself starts at 10:30 a.m. An hour later, the parade begins, along with the plunge itself. The parade includes the participants who dress up in crazy costumes.

This is by no means the only Polar Plunge happening in the state.

"Michigan will be having 30 Polar Plunges in 2014," according to the FirstGiving page.

Imagine the number of people dressing up to jump into lakes across the state, raising money for a beneficial cause.

The Special Olympics does not embody a small group of athletes, either. The state is divided into regions, and according to Fuller, Gratiot County falls within Area 7, along with Isabella and Clare Counties. She is in charge of four basketball teams, which amounts to 48 athletes.

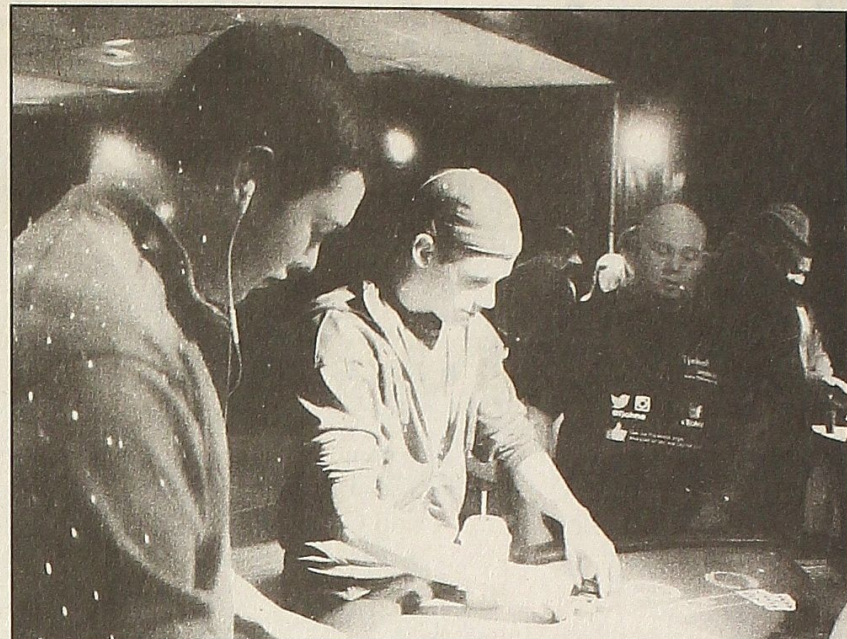
Although Special Olympics appears to just be about giving people the opportunity to participate in sports, it actually encompasses much more, according to Fuller.

"We are a support system for families, educators of life-living skills for our athletes to maintain jobs, advocates for athletes and families," said Fuller. "We are a family."

There are multiple sports available for participants in the Special Olympics. In Area 7 alone, the list of sports is quite lengthy.

It hosts "aquatics, athletics (track and field), basketball, bocce, bowling, cross country skiing, cycling, golf, horseshoes, poly hockey, snowshoeing, soccer, [and] softball," according to the page for Area 7 on Michigan's Special Olympics website, www.somi.org.

The Polar Plunge offers support to many people. All it takes is a dip in some icy water, along with a bit of donation money.



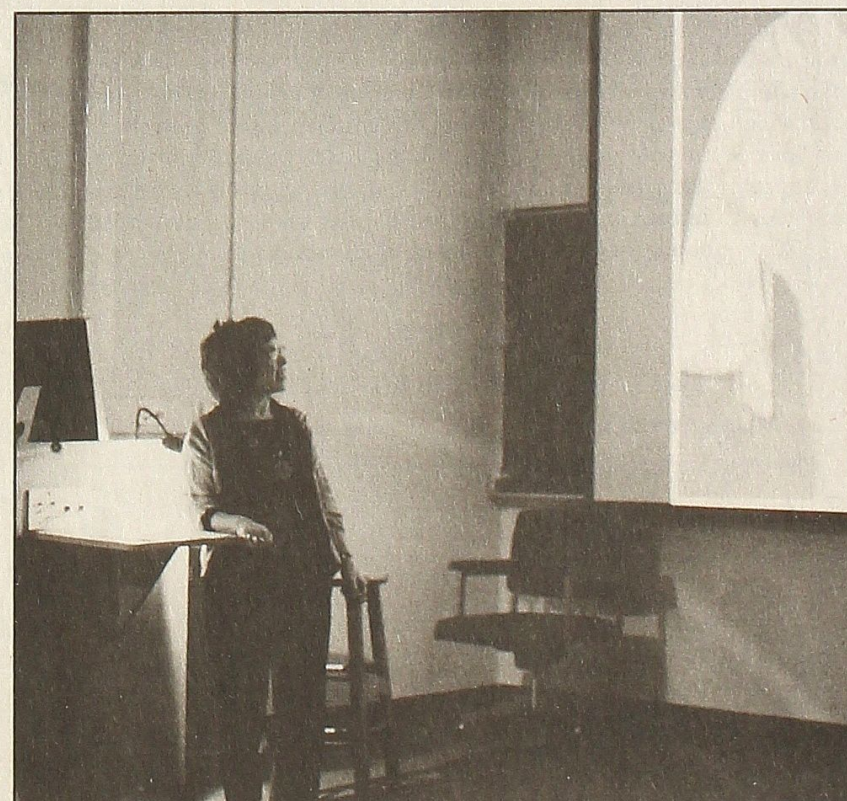
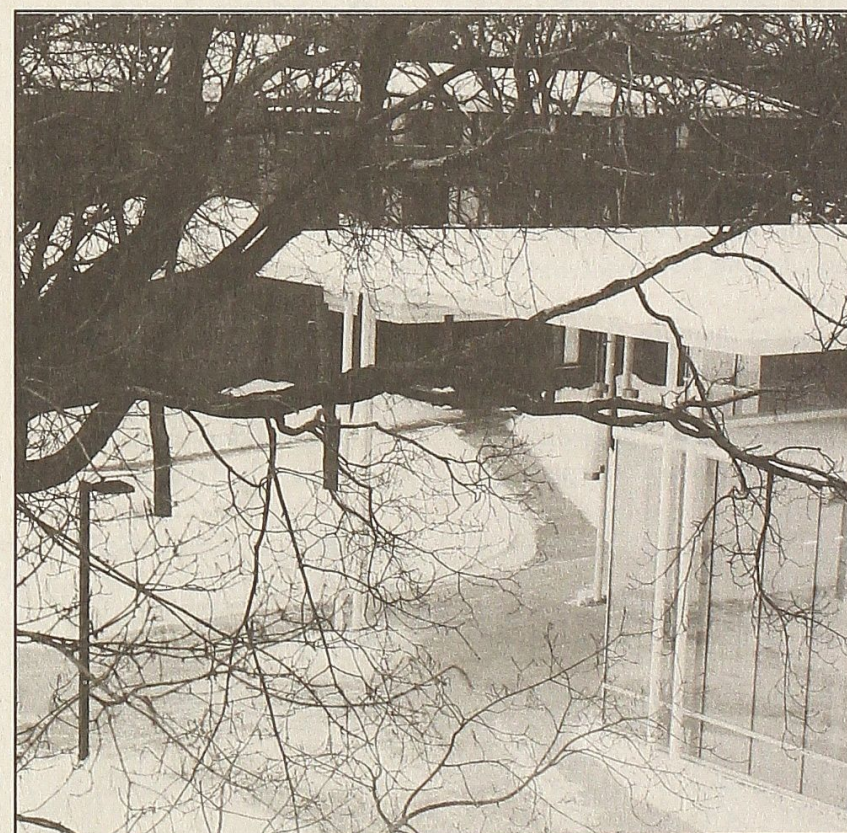
Kayla Roy: Photo Editor

Alma College Union Board hosted its annual Casino Night last Friday and gave out prizes, the biggest of which was an iPad.



Patrick Mallett: Staff Photographer

Above and below: With two weeks until spring break, snow has bombarded the campus.



Brenda Sipe hosted an artist's talk entitled "An Exhibition of Mixed Media Sculptures" last Thursday.

Symphony orchestra concert showcases student talents

By JON CLARK
STAFF WRITER

Each December, the school's music program holds the Alma College Concerto Competition. Students compete against one another in an effort to be featured in the yearly Alma Symphony Orchestra student-based concert.

This year's winners will be featured in a performance on Sunday at 4 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for seniors, and free for all Alma College students, staff, and anyone under the age of 18.

The orchestra will perform eight different pieces during the event.

The students who will be featured in Sunday's concert are **Samantha Grace ('15)**, **Jacob Schmeltzer ('14)**, **Kirstyn Baker ('14)**, **Jamie Dunn ('14)**, **Branden Listh ('14)**, **Kamryn Kurtzner ('14)**, **Alex Hegedus ('14)**, and **Marcus Alston ('14)**.

The musical event will feature these students as soloists,

conductors, and composers.

Alston, the principal clarinet player, works as both a full-time personal banker and full-time student.

"Playing in the Alma Symphony is special because we get the privilege of playing pieces by some of the greatest artists of all time," said Alston.

"Going to class and playing a symphony by Shostakovich is the musical equivalent to an athlete studying the tenacity of Muhammed Ali."

Principal viola player Dunn has been playing piano and violin since she was ten years old but, along with three other students, will showcase her abilities to conduct during the piece "Suite of Scottish Dances."

"[Being in the Alma Symphony Orchestra] has provided me with phenomenal leadership opportunities and connections to some of the most incredible mentors of my life," said Dunn.

In addition to the musical talents of instrumentalists and conductors, viewers will witness the debut of Kurtzner's original composition "Sono Forte Adesso," which translates to "I Am Strong Now."

"Being in the Alma Symphony

means a great deal to me because it has given me many opportunities to grow as a musician and as a person," said Kurtzner.

"I highly recommend this concert because it features very talented musicians, composers, and conductors," she said.

While the orchestra contains both students and community members, this concert puts the spotlight on our very own Scots.

"The primary focus of the concert is to feature our very talented Alma students," said Murray Gross, faculty conductor of the Alma Symphony Orchestra.

"In the music department, we get to know our students very well and it's always a pleasure to see how much people grow over the years here at Alma, both musically and personally."

"Playing in the ASO gives me the chance to play wonderful music by many great composers from different eras," said Schmeltzer, a featured trumpet soloist and guest conductor.

"A lot of the students who play in the orchestra are not music majors," said Gross. "They know they don't want to be professional musicians, but they don't want to put their violin in the closet. They would still like to play."

Ukraine faces upheaval over East-West tensions; riots, protests surface

By NICOLE ECCLES
STAFF WRITER

It can be hard to think about life outside the bubble of Alma, let alone outside Michigan and the U.S. As cliché as it might sound, however, there is a whole world out there.

Crazy, sometimes terrible, things happen that can change how the world understands itself. It's important for people to look out and see what's going on.

These articles, and all the other ones to follow, are to highlight these occurrences and recognize the impact they have.

If you've turned on the news or glanced at one of the many free New York Times papers in SAC, you might have heard that there is something happening in the Ukraine. You probably know it's bad.

Pictures of fire-burned cars and young men strapped with guns and knives have flooded the Internet, but the pictures don't tell the real background of this conflict.

What's going on is a lot deeper and a lot more complicated, and it starts with understanding the ties between the Ukraine and Russia.

The Ukraine used to be a part of the former Soviet Union and stills holds heavy ties with Russia. Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula still holds a Russian naval base for the Black Sea Fleet, making the Ukraine a strategic point for Russia.

But even more than strategic ties, Russia and the Ukraine share cultural ties.

Britt Cartrite, chair of Alma's political science department,

commented that, "Russia and the Ukraine share similar languages and cultures. Ukraine is a unique situation because of its size, proximity, and its cultural ties to both Russia and Poland."

This connection to Poland, and ultimately to Western Europe and the European Union (E.U.), is what brought the country to the current protests and riots.

This uproar has now been dubbed the Euromaidan, and this term has spread to refer to all of the ongoing demonstrations and unrest.

Last November, protestors crowded in Independence Square after the announcement that Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich panned a trade agreement with the E.U. that would deepen Kiev's, Ukraine's capital, economic and political ties to the 28-member bloc.

"Russia and the Ukraine share simliar languages and cultures. Ukraine is a unique situation because of its size, proximity, and its cultural ties to both Russia and Poland."

-Britt Cartrite, chair and associate professor of political science

Yanukovich panned the trade agreement because of significant pressure from Russia.

The protestors are mainly comprised of Ukrainians in the West, who want to join the E.U.; they differ from eastern Ukrainians, who favor Russia.

"I think it's important for students to notice and understand what's going on in the Ukraine so that we can see how governments treat their people and how governments are formed and preserved."

-Danielle Redilla ('14)

The protests have progressively become more and more violent as time has gone on. The violence began when the government passed anti-protest laws last month.

During the early violence, two people were shot and killed in the riots, and 300 were injured. The details of these deaths are unclear, but according to a New York Times article, other protestors claim that the police opened fire on them.

Cartrite said, "Ukraine" is an incredible example of the interface between international and domestic politics. Ukraine is still a new democracy; it still has an uncertainty toward democracy."

The situation in the Ukraine shows how cultural and political ties can affect a young country, especially when those ties link to a country that used to contain the region in question, and when the two regions share a culture.

"I think it's important for students to notice and understand what's going on in the Ukraine so that we can see how governments treat their people and how governments are formed and preserved," said **Danielle Redilla ('14)**.

Bursting the Bubble

In Gratiot County, the road commission has already spent more than \$1 million this season with two months of winter still to come. Last winter the budget totalled \$590,000, less than half of what has already been spent on snow removal and other costs. If snow continues as it has so far this season, there will be a significant impact on Gratiot's budget.

Courtesy of: The Morning Sun

University of Michigan students are organizing an overnight speak out this month, protesting the school's low underrepresented minority enrollment of what the group calls "a poor racial climate for students of color." The "Speak Out" event will be held Feb. 18 and 19, beginning at 8 p.m. The event will begin with an open mic session for students.

Courtesy of: Mlive.com

The federal government will soon treat married same-sex couples the same as heterosexual couples when they file for bankruptcy, testify in court or visit family in prison. The changes were set in motion last year when the Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional to refuse federal benefits to married same-sex couples.

Courtesy of: The New York Times

2014 Olympic Medal Count as of Sunday, Feb. 9:				
Rank	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze
1	Norway	2	1	4
2	Netherlands	2	1	1
3	U.S.	2	0	2
=4	Canada	1	2	1
=4	Russian Fed.	1	2	1
6	Austria	1	1	0
=7	Germany	1	0	0
=7	Poland	1	0	0
=7	Slovakia	1	0	0

The Almanian.

"ALMA COLLEGE'S STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER, SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1907."

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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Staff Writer

Staff Writer

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Staff Writer

Staff Writer

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Faculty Advisor

Bricklayer/Olympian heads to Sochi

By RAY VISSER
STAFF WRITER

As the end of the semester looms (68 days until graduation, seniors!), the typical anxieties set in. Students stress over what their future may hold and whether their major is relevant.

But as countless inspirational speakers may have told you over the years, there is no way to know what life will be like 10, 20, or 30 years from now.

“But as countless inspirational speakers may have told you over the years, there is no way to know what life will be like 10, 20, or 30 years from now.”

- On moving on after college.

If you need proof, look no further than the Sochi Winter Olympics that officially began last Friday. Specifically, look at one competitor whose life story has more twists and turns than the world’s deadliest luge track.

Dachhiri Sherpa was born in Chulemo, a remote village in Nepal nestled in the foothills of Mount Everest, in 1969. If he wanted to find a normal road, he had to walk for days.

At the age of 17, Dachhiri’s life approached its first twist. He became an assistant cook,

preparing food for tourists going on hiking expeditions around Nepal.

What came next was even more unexpected, and started Dachhiri on his path to the Olympic Games.

Dachhiri says some tourists from the Netherlands paid for him to officially train as a mountain guide, and a few years later, he began running. He was able to move to Switzerland, because why not?

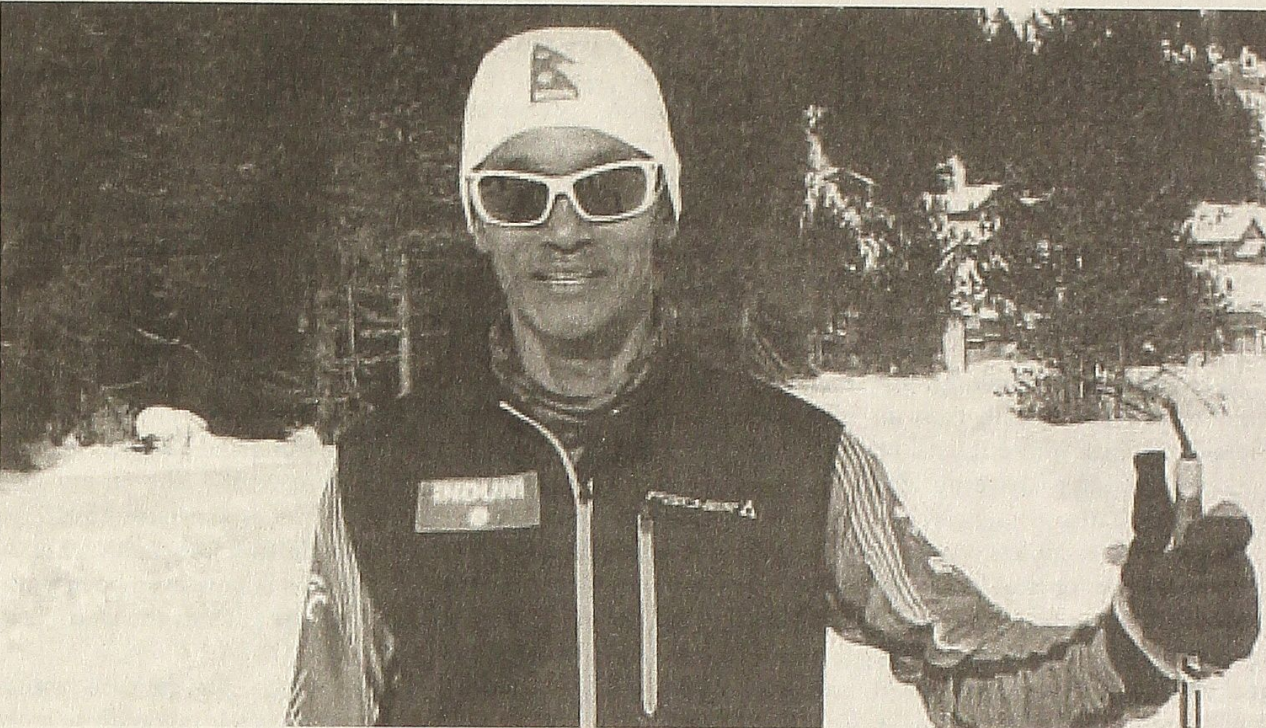
Then, in 2003, the offer of a lifetime presented itself: the Asian Winter Games were set to take place in Japan. Nepal’s Olympic Committee decided Dachhiri might have the potential to compete. So they contacted him in Switzerland and invited him onto the team.

Dachhiri wanted to know what sort of distance he would run, but maybe he didn’t get the memo. These were winter games. Nepal didn’t want him to run. They wanted him to ski.

He had never skied before. He told the Committee that he had never skied before. The Committee assured him it was no problem that he had never skied before.

The Committee said that with a few months of training he would do OK as one of Nepal’s only internationally competitive cross-country skiers. And so Dachhiri, at the fresh young age of 33, skied for the first time, building up skill in an expertise he most likely never expected growing up in the shadow of Everest.

A few years later, Dachhiri set



Dachhiri Sherpa, from Nepal, competes in the Olympics not to win, but to experience the Olympic spirit. He expects himself to finish last, but feels no remorse for doing so.

a record in Turin, Italy, in 2006—but not a skiing record. Instead, he became the second-ever Nepali to compete in the Winter Olympics.

Dachhiri placed 92nd at Turin and 94th at Vancouver in the 2010 Games. He has never thought of himself as, or been considered, a serious contender. He trains for a few months before every Olympics.

But the Olympics only come every so often. What does he do for the rest of the year in Switzerland, that fabled land of chocolate watches and bank vaults full of multipurpose knives?

Dachhiri is a bricklayer. He builds foundations and walls, piece by piece. He’s an immigrant blue-collar-worker former

cook-turned-tour-guide-turned-Olympian who, at the age of 44, is gearing up to compete in his signature event in Sochi, Russia.

It’s impossible to keep track of the number of twists at this point.

Dachhiri says he took four months off work and skied every day since December to prepare for Sochi. Most Olympians live and breathe their sport for four or eight or twelve years, training constantly, eating right (or apparently a lot of Subway, if you’re Michael Phelps).

This Nepalese hero prefers to make his living laying brick after brick, only preparing for his event when he absolutely has to. He never could have expected any

of those ridiculous curveballs life threw at him.

But Dachhiri has a message that applies to everyone, not just Olympians or Nepalese-Swiss bricklayers.

“I think there is a very big chance I will finish last,” he said. “But the placing is not important if I can teach young people in Nepal about the Olympic spirit. This spirit is in my heart.”

So as you go out into the world, worried that the pieces may not fall in place perfectly or that you might end up somewhere with no idea how you got there, remember the story of Dachhiri Sherpa. He may have a thing or two to teach us about following life wherever it may lead.

Flower petals hold special meanings for V-Day

By MECHON CAREW
STAFF WRITER

It’s that time of year again: when the supermarket aisles are painted red with images of cherubs and adorable little hearts from the toothpaste to the pineapples.

Of course, by this I mean Valentine’s Day.

Couples across the nation and the world will invariably spend the entire 24 hours being lovesick.

Whether they go on a picnic, to a movie, a fancy restaurant, ice-skating, or even just staying at home and pampering each other, they’ll be together. Inevitably, many will exchange gifts, be it love notes, chocolates, cards, stuffed animals, or flowers.

Yet despite all this variety, more often or not, the giving of flowers seems to always remain the same: red roses.

Believe it or not, there are more flowers out there, even different colors, too. In fact, hundreds, and you can even mix and match in a bouquet to create your own unique way of saying “I love you.”

OK, maybe not exactly.

True, there are a number of colors, species, and combinations available, but not all of them are really Valentine’s Day material.

For instance, although roses are lovely in red, often giving your sweetheart a black one isn’t going to end well.

Our society has imbued in these

colorful little florals with deeper symbolic meaning, allowing the giver to communicate their feelings without saying a word.

Over time, each color, species, and combination has been assigned certain connotations: mourning, love, friendship, even rejection.

So be careful: what you believe to be perfectly innocent blossoms could put that sweetheart into a fit of angry tears. Yet worry not, ladies and gentleman, for I will help you navigate the world of symbolic florae.

Let’s begin with colors.

Although the meaning of color can change with the individual flower, there are some general rules.

Red is invariably the color of passion, love, and desire. Pink, on the other hand is more innocent, associated with youth, grace, and sensitivity. White, is even more innocent, representing honesty, perfection, and purity (which is why you see them in weddings so often).

Be careful with yellow since it symbolizes friendship and filial love more than romance. Orange is safer, offering proud energy, happiness, and joy.

Then there are the cooler colors: blue is peaceful and calm with a sense of intimacy. Deep purples are enchanted with mystery, royalty, and admiration while lavender hues are refined, sending messages of elegance and femininity.

As for specific species, the

most common outside of roses tend to be carnations, tulips, and lilies, since they also come in an assortment of colors.

Carnations are the rose’s little sister, considered more commonplace and childish, but can serve their purpose.

Whatever you do, don’t give someone you care about yellow or striped ones: they symbolize rejection of love.

Lilies can add a little bit of exotic flair due to the diversity of shapes across the species, from

bold stargazer to graceful baby lily-of-the-valley.

Tulips are elegant and enduring, rivaling roses as one of the world’s most popular flowers. Honestly, if you want to communicate undying love, deep red tulips are the way to go.

Uniting flowers in a bouquet also changes the meaning, so much so that it’s practically an art. For instance, one could take those passionate red roses and couple them with friendly yellow to create the same message a

couple of orange ones would, but with a little more flair.

Of course, it doesn’t need to be that difficult. You could always just buy violets, not caring what they mean to the world because they are your significant other’s favorites.

Be it carefully researching and combining to say just the right thing or just getting the special someone their favorite color instead of generic, I implore you all to think outside the box this Valentine’s Day.

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!

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

First date worries? Biddy has answers

By BIDDY

STAFF COLUMNIST

Ask Biddy: From relationships to study tips, I'm your go-to columnist! Don't forget, anyone can e-mail me their questions at askbiddy@gmail.com.

Dear Biddy: After liking a guy for several weeks I finally built up the nerve to ask him out, and he said yes! But now I have no idea where to take him.

I want to be cool and not do the classic dinner and a movie, but I am starting to think that is my only option. I have until next week to figure it out and while that seems like it would make things easier, I feel as if it needs to be extra awesome now! Help!

Dear First Date Girl: First of all, you asked a guy out. Way to be fearless; you are already cool. Second, a first date seems like it should be handled as a big deal, but it really doesn't have to be.

If you think about it more as a situation where you guys are really just hanging out for the first time, it will seem a lot less stressful.

Now, while it seems like there aren't a lot of options around

here, the more you simplify your date, the easier it will seem.

I think you should pack some snacks in a backpack, get bundled up, and go hiking. There is a great park—Pine River Park—right on the Pine River (you can find it on Google Maps) about 2 miles from campus. There is a very nice trail and it would be perfect for a first date.

After, you can go to Stucchi's or Highland Java for hot chocolate! However, based on the winter thus far, there is a chance that the weather will not be on your side.

Another non-traditional date idea is to volunteer together. Earlier this year I served dinner at a local church and it was fun and very rewarding.

Serve a meal at a local church or shelter, and then go grab coffee or something. You will have a nice time, and contribute to the well-being of the community!

Whatever you choose, don't freak out about it. Enjoy your time with him without worrying.

Good luck—you've got this!

Dear Biddy: So I have a lot of guy friends and when I am with them I get to be myself. I goof around, and don't feel weird bringing out my inner tomboy. That is one great thing about

having so many male friends.

However, recently I seem to have developed feelings for one of these guys. It started out as us just goofing around as normal, but the goofing around has turned into kind of flirting and that has turned into me liking him. I can talk to him about anything but I don't know if I can tell him about this.

I can't decide if I should just keep doing this weird goofy/flirting thing and just stay friends with him or if I should try and pursue him as a love interest.

In addition, he knows about every guy I have ever been with so that just adds to the weirdness of it all.

If things do escalate on a romantic level, should I stop being so "bro-ish" around my guy friends, and try to act more girly?

He has also told me—in reference to other girls—that he is not looking for anything serious. What should I do?

Dear Tom-girl: Isn't it nice to have guy friends? Well, until you start to like one, anyways. It is really great that you have found a group of friends whom you can truly be yourself around.

It sounds like this guy really likes you for who you are. He

probably says he is not looking for anything serious because his options aren't as down to earth as you.

I really think you should just tell him how you feel. I know that can be really hard as it can either go amazingly or horribly.

Regardless, you have this guy convinced that you are a super cool girl. If it doesn't go exactly how you want it to, just brush it off and don't let it stand in the way of your friendship.

On another note, I have a feeling that one of these times, amidst the flirting and such, something will just happen and it will simply click between the two of you.

I say either give it time and let it happen naturally, or tell him how you feel.

Either way, I think you are in for a very pleasant surprise. And NO, do not act any different if things work out! You are comfortable being yourself around him, and that is the basis for a great relationship. Don't worry about it too much; you already have a great friendship with him. Maybe that's all you'll need after all!

Keep hanging out with him and see where it leads you! Don't let the thought of a possible relationship ruin your friendship.

TEARS & CHEERS

By LISA FOLKMIRE
OPINION EDITOR

CRY

-In an attempt to use a mixture of expansion and lighting with a side of special effects, Sochi's Opening Ceremony remained lacking when the fifth and final Olympian Ring refused to open along with the rest of the celebration.

-The American team walked out into the stadium with 1990s-patterned "American Pride" cardigans supplied by Ralph Lauren.

-Valentine's Day is this weekend. All chocolate is extremely overpriced at this point.

-Britney Spears went brunette. This might not be quite as sad as the fact that it earned an entire article in E! News, and a (happily short) blurt in this column.

-Many Americans were outraged that Coca-Cola would allow so many languages to sing "our national anthem." Even more sad, this was posted on YouTube, informing the world that many people don't know 1) that the national anthem is not "America the Beautiful," and 2) that the country's official language is not English. In fact, there is no official language for America.

-Jay Leno is leaving "The Tonight Show." Although I have no doubt that Jimmy Fallon will share the spot so beautifully, it's time for all of us to say so long to Leno's famed segment, "Headlines."

REJOICE

-AlmaCon happened this past weekend. Hello donations to Relay for Life.

-Jimmy Fallon said "so long" to his post at "The Late Show" with the Muppets singing farewell.

-The attorney general extended marriage equality to give federal benefits to all couples, including prison visits, survivor benefits, and bankruptcies. These extensions also allow couples married in states that have yet to recognize all marriages.

-"Flappy Bird" is no more. Say goodbye to all of the complaints heard from your game-addicted friends. Or, at least, know that the game cannot spread much further—distribution has ended, but it can still be played if previously purchased. The owner called it quits this week, saying he simply cannot take it anymore.

-Winds in England reached 80 mph this past week, according to Time magazine. The coolest part of this? The Brits, when in the right location and in appropriately wind-catching clothing, could practically float over the ground.

Somewhere in an alternative universe, a 5-year-old Lisa is running around in excitement, knowing that it's possible for people to fly.

-'90s playlists always include Rusted Root's "Send Me On My Way." Which brings back fond memories of Danny DeVito's narrative and a magical little girl who wants a home and a book to read.

Alternative feelings for nonromantics on V-Day

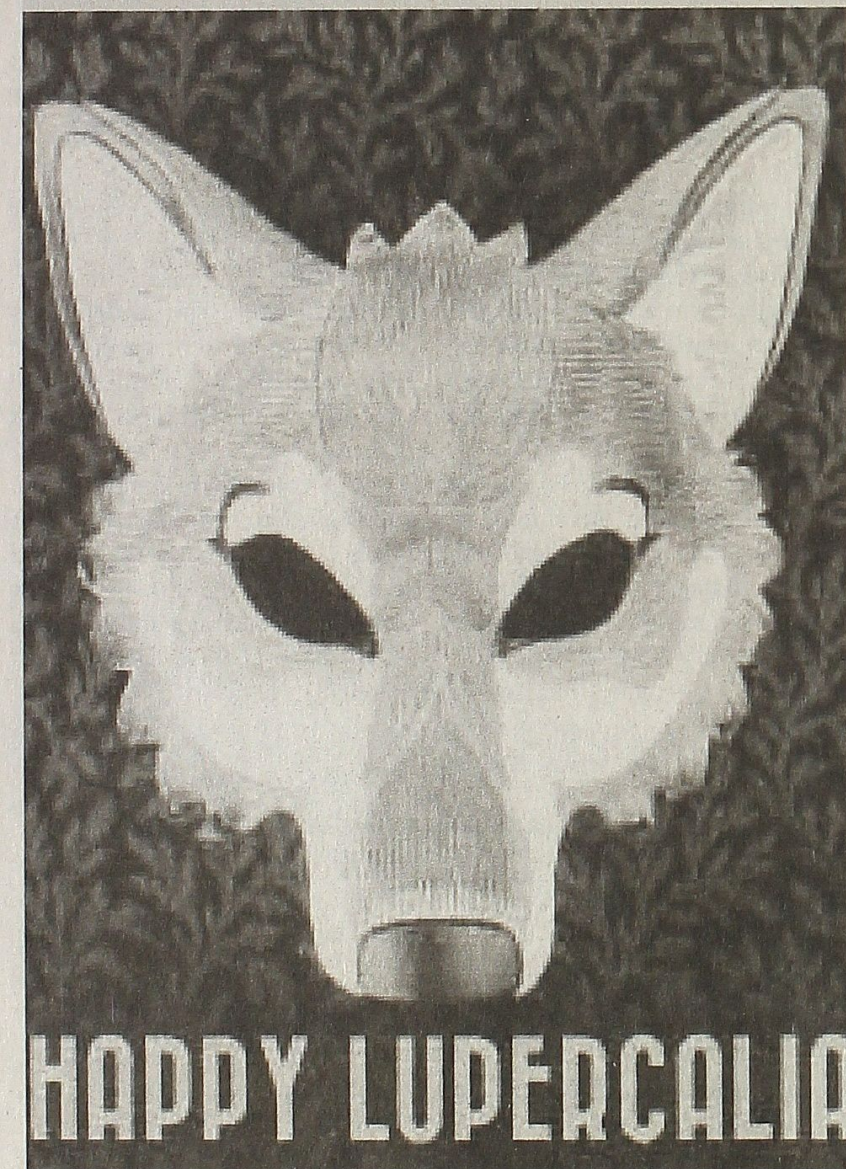


Photo Courtesy of dpcdsb.com

While many couples are attempting to figure out what flowers, chocolates, cards, or elaborate gifts to get for each other, many other people are trying to figure out how to ignore the conversation hearts and rom-coms of the day. For those on the single side, consider celebrating the origins of the holiday instead. Rather than focusing on love notes, focus on the Roman holiday Lupercalia—a weekend-long activity to rid the city of evil spirits. How to celebrate? Hug a shepherd and grab a dog. This holiday has pastoral roots with a wolf awarded honorable mention.

Realism beats fantasy tales

By KILEE DEBRABANDER
STAFF WRITER

Like a lot of people today, I often find myself choosing which books I want to read based on the short blurb on the back cover to draw the reader in.

Whilst perusing Barnes and Noble one day, I came across a book with a uniquely empty cover, a wonderful title (referenced from an Ernest Hemingway book—genius!), and after flipping it around, the shortest description I had ever read.

"Where to?" he asked.

"Take me to the Quarter," I said.

Intrigued, I purchased what would soon become one of my favorite books.

"Isn't It Pretty To Think So?" is a bildungsroman novel written by a first-time novelist, Nick Miller.

The story is about Jake Reed, a recent college graduate with a liberal arts degree who has a stable job and family, but is constantly struggling with feelings of dissatisfaction and boredom.

At one point, Jake states, "I'd begun to grow weary of my constant daydreaming because, as I retreated more often into fantasy, it had become a reminder of my growing discontent with real life. And my thoughts, after very little sleep, seemed to float even further into the realm of the superfluous."

However, an untimely death in his family leaves him with a good amount of cash and endless possibilities, and Jake quits his job and decides to enrich his life through travel.

After leaving his town, Jake meanders through small beach towns, quiet hotel rooms, and then, in a spur of the moment idea, finds himself in West Hollywood, a place crawling with young adults that constantly lose themselves in

the madness of drugs and sex.

Throughout the novel, Jake meets and forms relationships with a number of different people who are all interesting in their own way. In this process, Jake tries to do what he originally set out to do—learn something, anything, about who he is and what he wants to do with his life.

As a college student, I am constantly longing to travel and experience not just what America has to offer, but the world as well. Miller perfectly captures this angst and relentlessness of our generation—a crowd of young people who want to experience life to the fullest in the midst of an economic downturn.

So why do I love this book?

For starters, Miller has a very unique writing style. Many times I find myself enjoying a book simply because of the story and not because it is well written.

Miller carries his readers on a journey of tragedy, loss, heartbreak, music, sex, drugs, social media, love, literature, and friendships, and will have you hooked on the book after reading for only a few minutes.

Not to mention, Miller's story is realistic.

He isn't afraid to sugarcoat anything and I am obsessed with that.

Much too often, we find ourselves reading books that are enjoyable to read but aren't genuinely representative of the world we live in. As much as I love the fairy tales with the promised "happily ever after" ending, this novel tells a story that isn't just rainbows and unicorns, and a vast majority of people can relate to it.

All in all, I would give "Isn't It Pretty To Think So?" a ten out of ten rating, five stars, and highly recommend it to anyone who is looking for a good book to read.

Wrestling trounces Trine, 40-9, on senior night; now 7-3-0 overall

By JUSTIN KETTERER
STAFF WRITER

Senior night happened last Friday for the Alma College wrestling team.

Matt Tuttle ('14) is the only senior on the squad. Coach Todd Hibbs said that it was very fitting to have the ceremony to honor him.

"I believe Matt is a leader athletically on the entire campus," Hibbs said. "It's really nice to honor him on his own like this."

Tuttle did not wrestle last Friday. He is nursing an injury that

Hibbs said should be healed with a week's worth of rest.

The Scots beat the Trine Thunder on their senior night 40-9. Assistant Coach Jeremiah Tobias said prior to the meet that his team should pull the victory out.

The Scots now hold an overall record of 7-3-0 and are 3-2-0 in the conference.

"Trine is voiding the 125-lb and 157-lb weight classes," Tobias said last Thursday. "There are six points right there, and we should be able to pick up enough points after that to pick up the win."

The only victory that Trine was able to capture was at the heavyweight class. Trine's

285-pounder Mack Green pinned **Jacob Lonergan ('17)** of the Scots.

Tuttle said that the ceremony was nice last Friday even though he couldn't wrestle.

"It started with my credentials from high school where I took second, third, and second in state," Tuttle said.

"Coach Hibbs congratulated me on my career so far with 73 wins and 50 of them coming by pin."

Tuttle set the school record for pins with 19 last year and has already tied that two weekends ago at the Wheaton tournament, with regionals and nationals still to go on the schedule.

"Hibbs thanked and congratulated my mom and stepdad, Bruce and Leslie Keeling, and my dad, Larry," Tuttle said.

The Scots are coming off of two performances that Hibbs said were good going into the post season, the Mid-States Championships for the reserves and regionals for the 10 starters.

"Overall, I give the performance at Wheaton [two weeks ago] a B," Hibbs said.

"We were a little hit and miss but had some really good performers."

Hibbs said that **Jamie Jakes ('16)** had a solid meet.

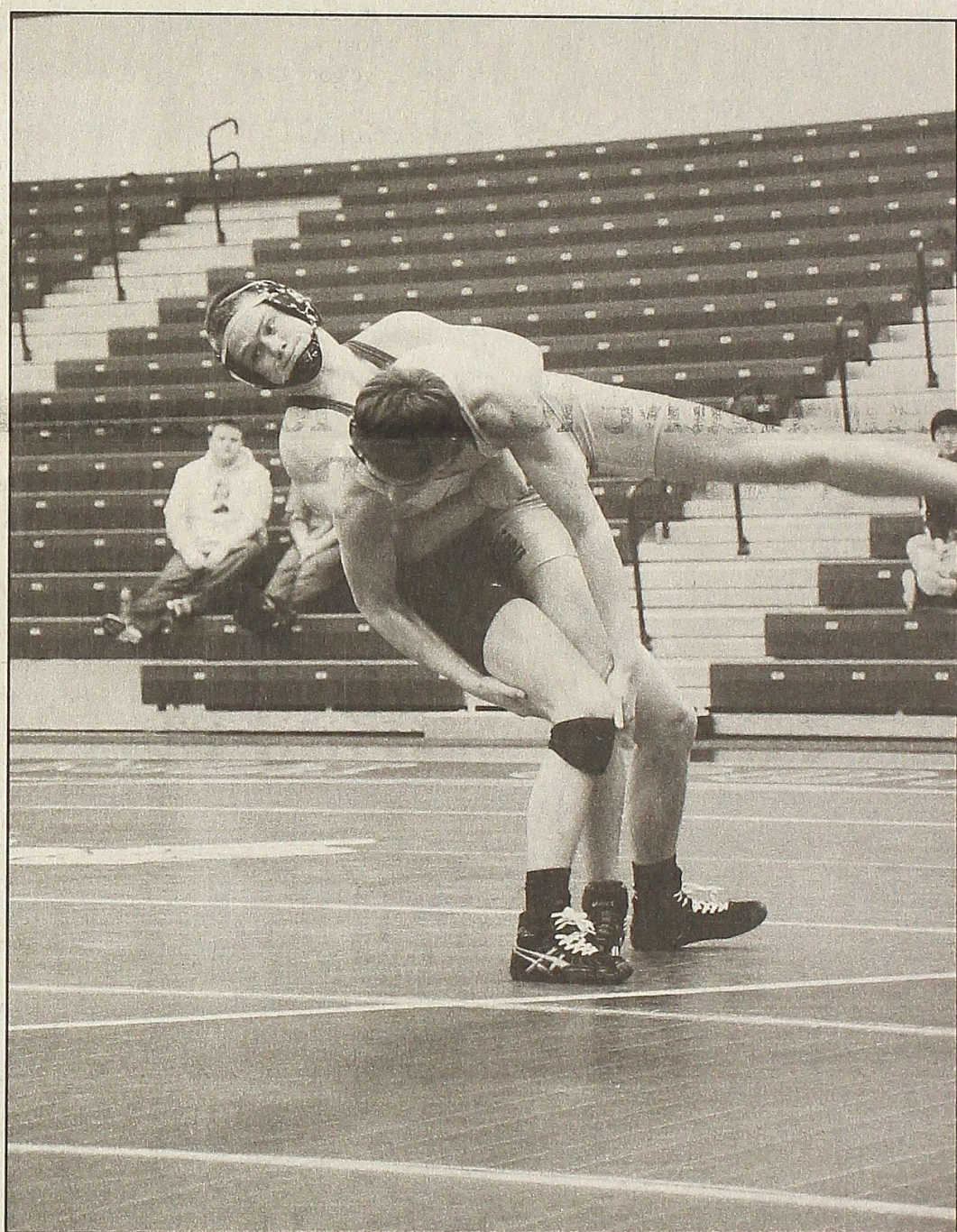
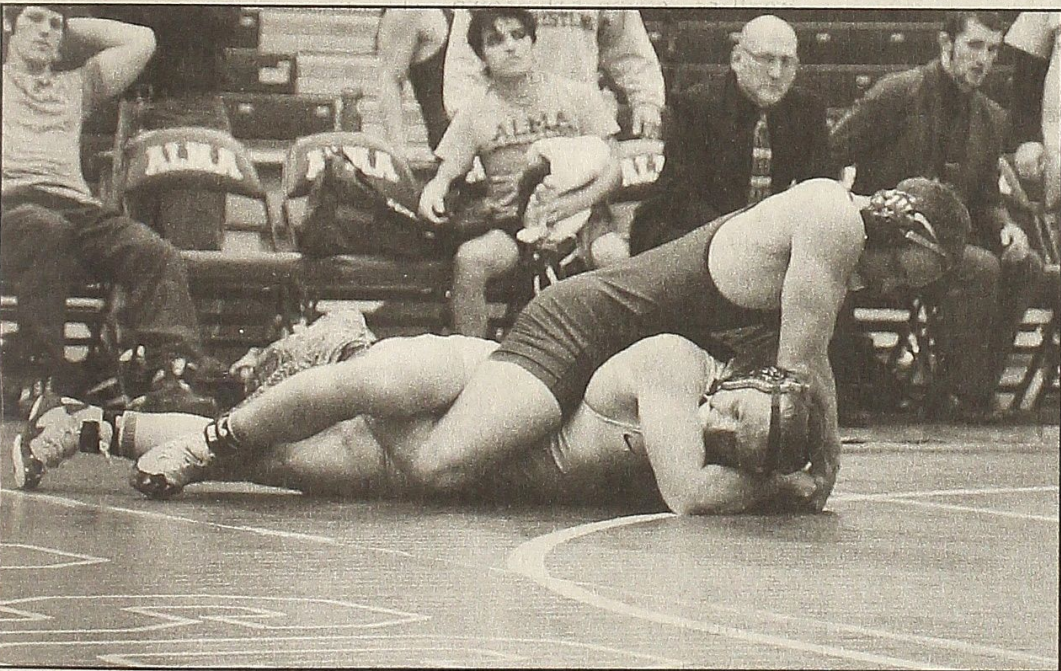
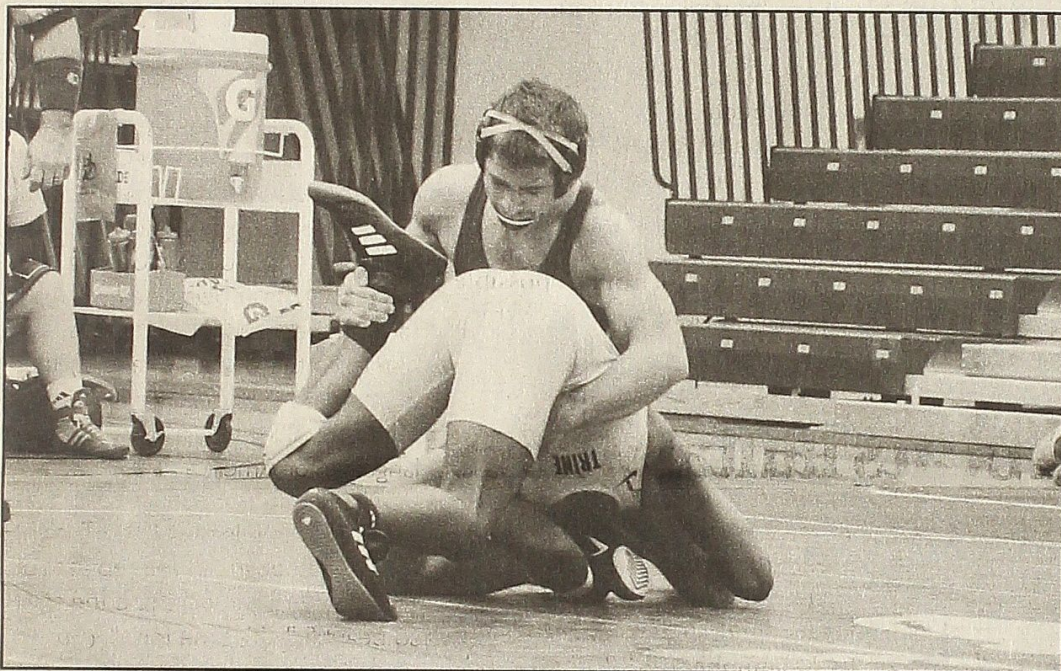
Jakes placed second in the 157-lb weight class from the seventh

seed. **Casimer Strzynski ('15)** and **Dan Martinez ('17)** were one spot away from placing, losing in what Hibbs called the blood match.

Tuttle finished second behind a wrestler from Wisconsin-Whitewater, who is ranked third in the nation according to Tobias.

"Whitewater is a good program," Tobias said. "They usually get even better in between semesters because they get transfers into their program."

The Mid-States are hosted by Wabash College on Saturday at 9 a.m., while the regionals will be the following Saturday, March 1. The host for that event is to be determined.



Kayla Roy: Photo Editor

Top left: Casimer Strzynski ('15) won on a technical fall, 18-3, last Friday against Trine. His season record is now 12-13. Bottom left: Jamie Jakes ('16) also won 18-3 on a technical fall at Trine, making his season record 27-10. Right: Cody Sullivan ('17) pinned his Trine opponent for a victory. The Scots honored Matt Tuttle ('14) as their only senior last Friday.

Scots' roundup: women's bowling and tennis

By JUSTIN KETTERER
STAFF WRITER

The season did not start as the Alma women's tennis team had planned. The first meet of the spring ended with Aquinas College taking the match in Alma last Saturday 9-0.

The Lady Scots were not able to win any matches from the Saints in double or single competition.

"We're still getting familiar with our new lineup after losing three

great players from last year," **Morgan Waier ('15)** said.

"We're going to work on getting our doubles teams in sync with each other since they are all new and also work on more strategies for singles."

The closest the Lady Scots came to winning a match last Saturday was their first doubles team of Waier and **Megan Solano ('16)**. The duo lost their match 9-7.

"The first match of the season is always the most difficult, but as a team and individually we just have to play our best and hope for the win," **Nicki Malekadeli ('16)** said.

Malekadeli lost her fourth seeded singles match to her Aquinas opponent, losing both sets on a score of 6-2.

Due to the weather, the beginning of the spring season's practices have been held in the Stone Recreation Center for the Lady Scots.

"Practice has been going really well," Solano said.

"Practicing in the rec is not the ideal situation, but we are making the best of it and are working hard every day."

Solano also mentioned before the meet that Aquinas' program is a good one, and it will only improve the team by playing good

competition.

"We have a young team this year, so this season will definitely be a learning experience for everyone," Solano said.

"I think as we continue to practice and play more matches we will have success as the year goes on. I am excited to see everyone improve and grow as tennis players."

The Lady Scots will be back to work as they take on Lake Superior State University in Alma next Sunday.

The Alma College women's bowling team is ranked 38th in the nation in Division III. After being off since Jan. 25, the Lady

Scots travelled down to Indiana for the Terre Haute Bowl in Terre Haute, Ind.

The Terre Haute Bowl is a two-day event held this weekend. The results of the tournament were not available at the time of press.

The roster for Coach Ken Shunk is a young one this year. **Jessica Cords ('15)** is the oldest on the squad.

The bowling team's next event is in Indiana as well; the women will travel to the Hoosier Classic in Indianapolis on Friday.

The sectionals tournament is scheduled for Thursday, March 13; the competition's location is yet to be determined.

Men's basketball snags a win at Light It Up Blue game

By EMILY ZADNY
STAFF WRITER

The men's basketball team put on quite the exhibition last Thursday night at the Light It Up Blue for Autism Speaks game with a clutch second-half win over Albion, 82-71.

Coach Sam Hargraves and his squad suffered a loss at home last Saturday at their pink game against Olivet and will be on the road for the next four games until

ending their season back in Alma on Feb. 22.

Hargraves and his team had good feelings about the matchup.

"We have the confidence of knowing we can beat Albion, as we did that on their home floor in January," said Hargraves.

"They have a little more size and athleticism around the basket, but we have a little better shooting.

"As usual, this game will probably come down to a few key possessions at the end," Hargraves added.

Isiah Law ('14) put the first points on the board with a three pointer only two minutes into the

game. Law continued to hit threes all night, shooting 80 percent from beyond the arc, and set a school record of eight three-point shots in a single game.

"My teammates helped me a lot," said Law.

"Obviously, it was a good shooting night, but I couldn't have done it without them."

The Scots kept the score tight in the first half with quick feet, intensity, and accuracy all over the field.

Law led the team offensively with a staggering 30 points for the night, followed by **Brandon Krause ('14)** with 17, and **Scott Nikodemski ('16)** with ten.

DJ Beckman ('16) had a strong defensive performance with five rebounds and a take away.

"We passed the ball well and played good defense," said Nikodemski.

"We brought a lot of enthusiasm, and the crowd's energy helped a lot."

Coming out after halftime, the Scots were down by one, but the deficit did not slow their momentum.

With 6:38 left in the game, Alma pulled away with a 63-61 lead over the Britons that only continued to grow.

The crowd went wild in the

remaining ten. The arena erupted after Law sunk another three with under five to go before calling a time-out.

This game was also an unforgettable experience for the 389 fans in attendance to support the men and the fight against autism.

"Our team loves it when the student body, and especially the Greek system, shows up to support," said Hargraves before the event.

"Everyone coming out to support a fund-raising cause is a great thing and so important in the big picture of athletics and education."



Left: Isiah Law ('14) set a school record of eight three-pointers in a single game last Thursday against Albion. The previous record was seven three-pointers. Right: The squad wore blue in its Light It Up for Autism Speaks game last Saturday to help Alpha Xi Delta raise money for autism awareness.



Kayla Roy: Photo Editor

Women's basketball hosts "Pink Game"

By EMILY ZADNY
STAFF WRITER

The Lady Scots could not pick up a victory at their final home game of the season against Calvin, falling 82-70 last Saturday afternoon.

Going into the matchup, the team understood there was a lot to bring to the court.

"The game this Saturday is important because not only is it against the number two team in the league, but it is also our pink game, which is always a fun day for us," said Head Coach Keisha Brown in a pre-game interview.

"We played Calvin early in the season and were still growing and developing, but we have made some great strides and improvements," Brown said.

Indeed, the Scots improved drastically, limiting the Knights to a 12-point victory versus a 60-point loss at their last meeting.

"We didn't let them score as

much as they did last time and we kept the game close," said **Tara Padgett ('17)**.

"We came out with a lot of fire today."

Padgett had much success from three-point range and contributed a total of 21 points to the board.

Before the first basket for Alma came from **Faith Weier ('16)**, the team held Calvin to a mere six points.

"We came out of the gates right away," said **Mallory Pruett ('15)**.

"We were able to stop their key players and create some chaos for them out there on the court."

Going into the half, the game was still in reach for the Lady Scots with the Knights only up by 9.

The second half started out strong with a three-point jump shot made by **Kassidi Adams ('16)** in under a minute. Padgett added four more throughout the half.

Pruett lead the Scots in both offensive and defensive rebounds. She and Padgett also had four steals apiece.

Even after the loss, the team

members found reason to keep smiling and celebrate as they took part in their pink game festivities, including raffles, cheer performances, and a post-game speech from Brown.

"The pink game is for a great cause," said Padgett.

"We play for Coach and for all the people who have been affected by breast cancer and that really inspired us to come out and fight just like all the fighters out there."

Looking forward to the remainder of the season on the road, the team is prepared to take on the competition.

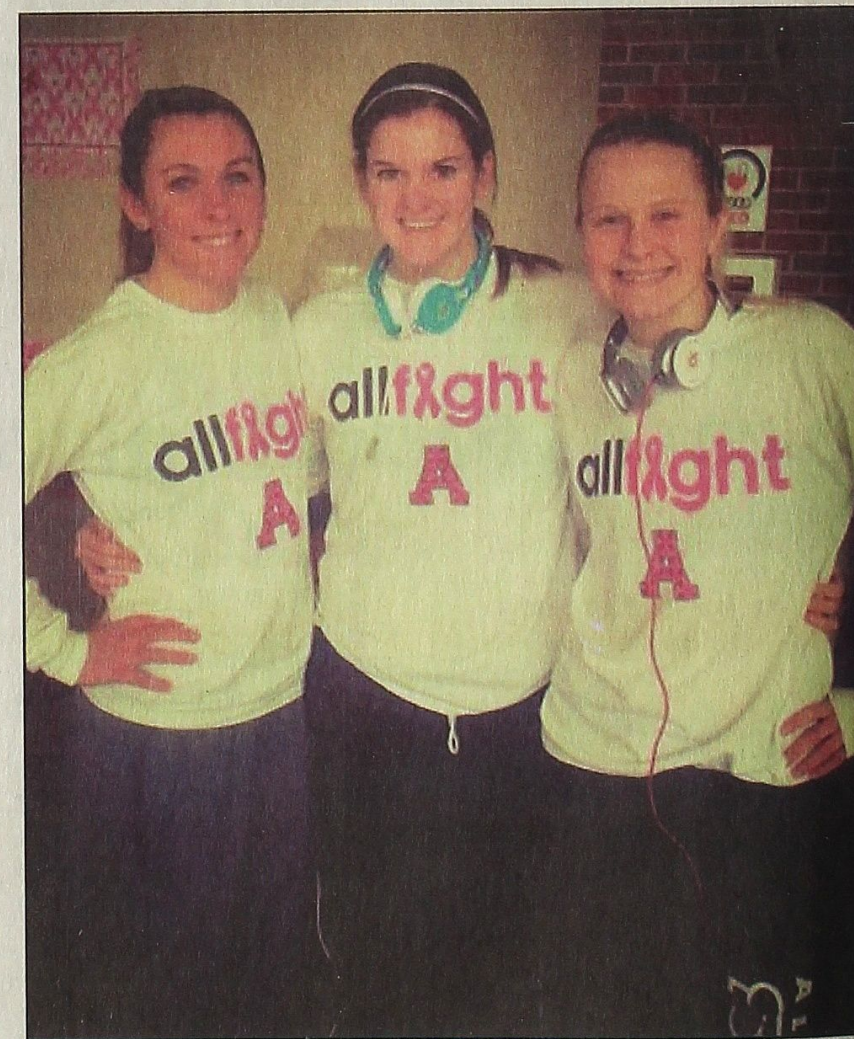
The Scots will play at Albion on Wednesday and then at St. Mary's on Saturday.

"We really need to keep that calmness and keep the patience on offense," said Weier.

"When they go on a run, we need to slow it down and bring it back to our pace."

Brown has faith that with the team's chemistry and heart, their hard work will pay off.

"We show up every day giving it our all and best. And that win will come," said Brown.



Courtesy of Facebook

Tara Padgett ('17), Kassidi Adams ('16) and Cora Essenmacher ('15) wore pink to support breast cancer awareness last Saturday.