

Students and faculty remember the life of Dr. Sonya Sheffert

By ELISABETH BLETSCH
STAFF WRITER

The Alma College community lost a well-respected educator last week. Sonya Sheffert, assistant professor of psychology, died last Tuesday. “We’re going to miss her,” said Gwyneth Beagley, chair and professor of psychology. “She had a lot of energy and a lot of ideas. She was also very generous. She would do anything for you.”

Sheffert, who previously taught at Central Michigan University, joined Alma College as a faculty member in 2008.

Krystine Elchuk (‘12), remembers Sheffert as someone who encouraged her in her studies.

“At such a sad and difficult time for the college community as a whole, I consider myself lucky to have such fond memories of Dr. Sheffert as my professor,” Elchuk said. “She was smart, witty, humble, and kind. She was the one who pushed and reassured me that I could do anything with my future if only I set my mind to it.”

The size of Alma appealed to Sheffert, added Beagley. “She felt CMU was too big. She wanted to be more involved with students and she wanted to spend more time with her kids.



Students and staff remember Sheffert as a hard worker and dedicated and supporting of the students.

She always worked very hard.” sociology, said her interest in “had to run deeply because she Timm Thorsen, professor of increased contact with students gave up a tenured position (at

CMU) to come here. Her research touched undergraduate students.”

“She was an important member of the psychology department, which has a long tradition of valuing relations with undergraduates and their growth,” said Thorson.

Sheffert was an engaged professor, Beagley said. She had a number of articles published regarding child development and cognitive functioning.

“She was impressive in her teaching abilities and was very active in her professional scholarship,” Beagley added. “While here she had a lot of ideas that enriched and improved the department.”

Sheffert was also very involved with several student-led projects and Psi Chi, the psychology honor society, Beagley said.

Elchuk said Sheffert “saw something great in her students; I think she believed in our abilities more than we did. And sometimes that’s exactly what we need, someone to believe in us even when we’re doubting ourselves. She will be dearly missed and never forgotten.”

Sheffert was married and had two children, a daughter, 14, and a son, 10. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Alaska Anchorage and her doctorate degree from the University of Connecticut.

Racial identity explored in Fosberg’s one-man play

By JOSHUA ZEITLER
STAFF WRITER

In celebration of the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., guest speaker Michael Sidney Fosberg performed “Incognito,” a one-man play he wrote about his own personal struggle to balance his racial identity.

Raised to appreciate his rich Armenian heritage by his mother and stepfather, Fosberg was surprised one day to discover that the father he had never met was black. “When I first told my stepfather, he was shocked, and then he caught himself,” said Fosberg. “He realized it didn’t matter; he loved me for who I am.”

Being an interracial couple in the late 1950s, his parents struggled against poverty and prejudice, and in Fosberg’s best interests, his mother surrendered to her parents’ pressure and divorced his biological father.

During the course of the play, Fosberg performs many seemingly stereotypical impressions of African-American, British, and elderly characters on both sides of his family.

“Of course, most viewers are much more likely to perceive the

African-American impressions as stereotypical, when in fact, they all are merely snapshots too small to envelope their entire characters,” said Fosberg. “I think true identity is fluid. It’s a lifelong journey, and constantly shifting.”

While he has enjoyed the lighthearted portrayals of his loved ones, Fosberg’s greatest delight has been the open dialogue that inevitably follows the performances.

“It has blown my doors off to have those kinds of conversations, and to hear so many different perspectives,” said Fosberg.

In addition to performing his personal odyssey, Fosberg led a special MLK Day “Stereotypes and Identities” workshop for the students of Communication 123, Performing Advocacy.

In this, he imparted a progressive lesson that applied King’s principles of equality and respect to a wide variety of racial, religious, and social groups.

“Categories and stereotypes are two very different things,” said Fosberg. “We have categories to help us organize information, but we apply stereotypes to the categories.”

Fosberg began by playing a number of songs, all from his personal library, that ran the gamut of musical genres.

He asked students to describe the type of person who they envisioned listening to each particular song.

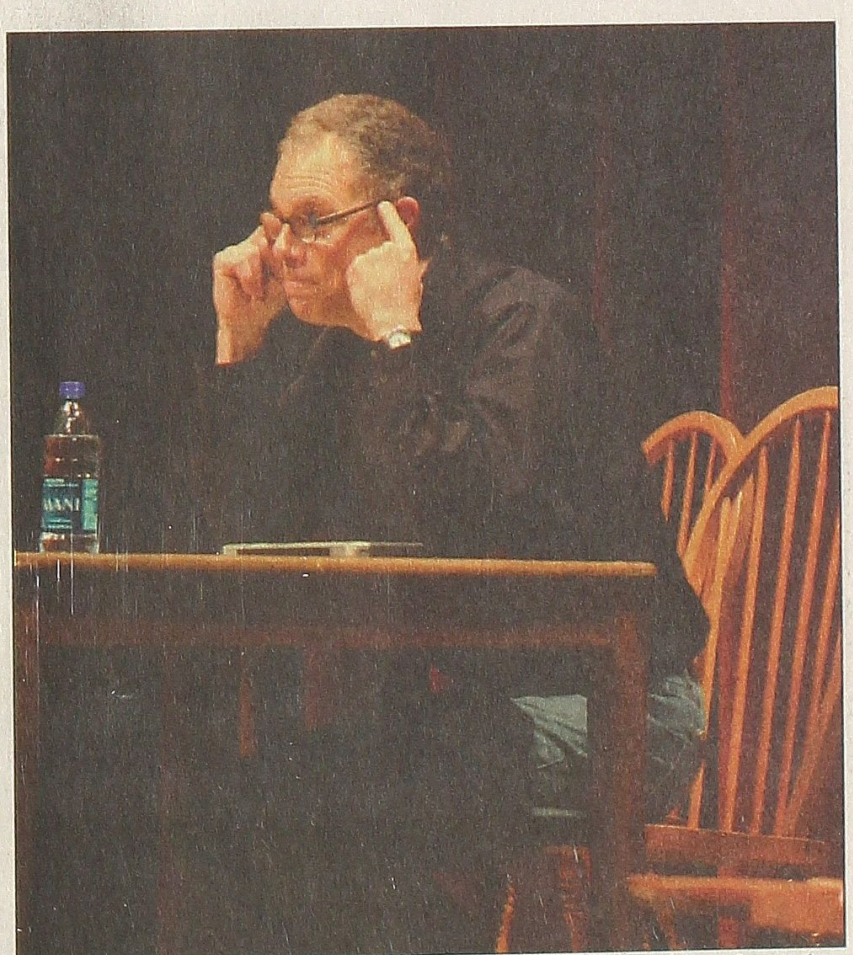
“Just by hearing the type of music someone plays, we often form judgments about their character,” said Fosberg. “In reality, they probably listen to as wide a variety as you or I do.”

He then asked students to form lists of common stereotypes for a variety of categories, including, but not limited to, males, females, cheerleaders, Christians, Muslims, and gays.

Students then examined the stereotypes of every category that applied to them.

“Some of them may be true, but they don’t describe the entirety of who you are as a person,” said Fosberg.

Fosberg has been encouraging race and identity discussion with “Incognito” through various venues, including high schools and colleges across the nation, for the past eight years.



Fosberg acts out various racial stereotypes in order to explain that they do not have to match our true identities.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Snow Showers 26°	Flurries 30°	Flurries 27°	Mostly Cloudy 22°	Partly Cloudy 32°	Snow Showers 28°	Snow Showers 19°

SIFE hosts stock market challenge

By MOLLY HENNING
STAFF WRITER

The annual stock market challenge, on the Website updown.com, began last Tuesday and ends on Monday, March 7. "In the challenge, the students are given \$1 million in virtual money," said **Christine Vicari ('11)**, project manager. "With this money, they can buy and sell stocks in the virtual stock market."

Vicari explained that the stocks in the virtual market are based on real life stocks.

For example, if the students use their virtual money to buy Apple stock and Apple increases in value in the "real world," then the Apple stock in the challenge would do the same, she explained.

"The point is to teach students how to invest in the stock market, different ways to trade, and the pros/cons of those different ways," said Vicari.

The other group members on the project alongside Vicari are **Alison Bohnoff ('12)**, **David Polanic ('11)**, and **Jordan Newhouse ('12)**.

They participate as well as monitor how others are doing.

In order to sign up for the challenge and be eligible, one has to create an account on updown.com and join the group, "Alma College Winter 2011."

Last Tuesday, after the group

was opened, Ronald Lemmon, assistant professor of business administration and international business administration, put on a presentation for students.

At these sessions, Lemmon said he provides a brief run through on how to buy and sell stocks on the Website, tips on where to look for stocks to buy, and information on why to invest.

Vicari said that students can sign up at any time during the challenge, but she advises all to sign up within the next few weeks.

At the end of the challenge, Vicari explained that the top three investors win prizes. First place wins \$250, second place wins \$100, and third place wins \$50.

"In order to win you have to have the highest return on an investment," said Vicari.

As the project manager, Vicari said she created, and is an administrator to, the group. "My role is to oversee the group and update everyone periodically on how people are doing," said Vicari.

She also says that anyone can and should sign up for this challenge.

"A lot of students may think this is really only for business majors or people interested in finance, but you'd be surprised at the people who do well... it's for anyone who's interested in winning money and learning about the stock market," said Vicari.

She explained, though, that underclassmen especially should consider signing up,

because as this is an annual project, they can join now and try to improve over the years.

"The more people that join, though, the more fun it will be," said Vicari. "There will be more competition."

Vicari noted one suggestion, though, for those signing up for the challenge: students should pay attention to their stock portfolio.

"If you just leave it sitting there, a lot of things can change in a short amount of time," said Vicari. "If you keep an eye on your stock, buy and sell often, you have a better chance of doing well versus if you just buy and let it sit there for awhile."

Lemmon suggested for students to buy stocks of companies that students know and like.

"Look at who made your jacket, your cell phone," said Lemmon. "Look at stores you buy things from, and then look up information on Yahoo Finance to make sure they look sound. If you like the product, buy the stock."

Bohnhoff said that, overall, the stock market challenge is very beneficial in learning.

"I think that through doing this challenge students will have a better knowledge of how to trade stock as well as become more comfortable with the idea of potentially investing their own money in stocks," said Bohnhoff. "It's a great way to feel out how the stock market works with no risk of losing any of your own money."

This week at Alma College

Tuesday, January 25:

Summer Camp and Internship Fair from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. in the Rotunda/Jones Auditorium

Wednesday, January 26:

Interfaith Committee sponsored Buddhist Meditation at the Van Hanh Temple in East Lansing at 7 p.m.

ACUB Euchre Tournament at 7 p.m. on North and South Commons

Friday, January 28:

Service House open house from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Service Learning House

Saturday, January 29:

Teas for sorority recruitment from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Rotunda/Jones Auditorium

Seniors perform research for theses

By LAUREN ANDALORA
STAFF WRITER

Many Alma College seniors are currently conducting research for their senior theses in various departments.

In psychology, **Emily Plackowski ('11)** is working with Gwyneth Beagley, chair and professor of psychology, to

conduct research on people's attitudes toward Lyme disease.

"Lyme is not well recognized or understood by many in the medical community or elsewhere, so patients must often deal with a lack of knowledge and discouraging attitudes and behaviors from the people they encounter along with the seriousness of their illness," said Plackowski.

"That can negatively impact the psychological well-being of any person," said Plackowski.

"Many studies have investigated

these factors - knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors - in relation to people with various other illnesses and afflictions, so I thought it might be valuable to study them in relation to Lyme."

Also working with Beagley is exercise health science major **Robert Danbert ('11)** on a psychology experiment using rats.

"The mother rats are put on high-fat diets during pregnancy and then their offspring are observed," said Beagley. "We are specifically looking at learning

behavior, obesity, and leptin and lipid levels in the bloodstream."

Another student in the exercise and health department, **Brianna Harfmann ('11)**, is working with John Davis, Dana Professor of exercise and health science, to research barefoot running.

"My thesis is on the biomechanics of barefoot running and I am trying to determine if training barefoot affects your running gait, and in particular how you land on your feet when you run," said Harfmann. "Also, if running barefoot affects the forces applied to the joints, and if it can make the runner more efficient."

In the history department, **Noelle Evans ('11)** is conducting research inspired by her senior seminar, which focused on race and gender, and a spring term research project on John F. Kennedy that sparked an interest in an era, she said.

"My research focuses on interracial rape cases from 1960-1975, and how the stereotypes of black men caused judges and jurors in the courtroom to think that black men deserve the death penalty more than white men," said Evans. "In these cases black men raped white women or white men raped black women and it showed how the law is subjective despite the attempt to be objective; it's impossible when you live in a world full of stereotypes."

Evans plans to present at Honors Day, the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, & Letters conference, and the annual honorary conference.

"My thesis is on the biomechanics of barefoot running and I am trying to determine if training barefoot affects your running gait, and in particular, how you land on your feet when you run."
-Brianna Harfmann ('11)

In the political science department, **Chelsea Clark ('11)** is working with Britt Cartrite, assistant professor of political science, on research for her foreign service major.

"I'm studying environmental migrants and what legal ramifications they have for protection," said Clark. "Small ocean island developing states are in danger of flooding because of global warming and the people will have nowhere to go because nobody wants them."

"My research is looking at the legal options for these people, and how we could help these people petition for acceptance into nearby countries such as Australia and New Zealand."

Clark recently presented a rough draft of her paper at the Southern Political Science Association conference in New Orleans and is a Fulbright finalist for Malaysia.

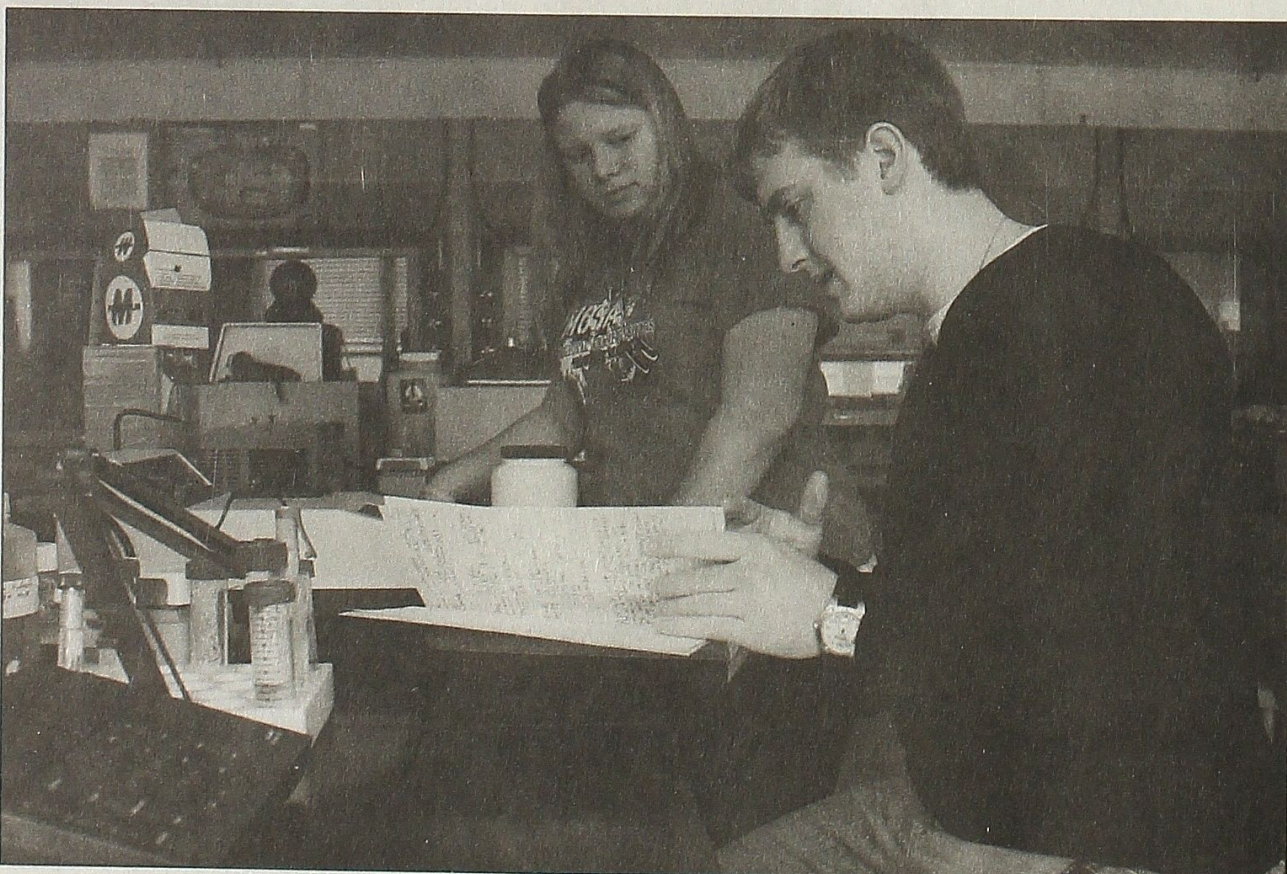


Photo by Simone Boos

Joan Schmeling ('11) and Cory Schall ('11) are two seniors who have been conducting research for their theses.

Traveling group of acrobats visits campus to entertain students

By LAUREN ANDALORA
STAFF WRITER

Performers from Tanzania and Kenya, which make up the group called the Kenya Safari Acrobats, came to Alma College to perform their show “Lost In Africa.”

The performance included high-flying jump rope, fire limbo, human pyramids, contortion and chair stacking.

“I couldn’t look the entire time the contortion was going on,” said **Maricat Eggenberger (’11)**. “The amount of flexibility and balance was just unbelievable.”

“It was crazy, it was amazing, and I was terrified the whole time that someone was going to fall and get hurt,” said **Katie Greenough**

(’14). “I give the performers so much credit because what they do is so intensely physical and insane.”

The story told by the Acrobats began with a tourist visiting Africa.

After being separated from the group, he stumbled upon an abandoned native village. The villagers, intent on killing the tourist, are tricked and entertained by the tourist’s “games.”

Each game utilizes some tool the villagers were going to use to kill the tourist. For example, a rope that would have been used for a hanging turns into a jump rope act.

“It was really cool,” said **Kyla Wojtas (’11)**. “The incredible amount of strength and training that must go into their work just blew my mind.”

Each major production number is tied together with the tourist buying more time by creating more games.

The more the natives are entertained, the longer



Photo by Kayla Roy

Traveling performers from the Kenya Safari Acrobats wrap up their show, “Lost in Africa,” at the Heritage Center last week.

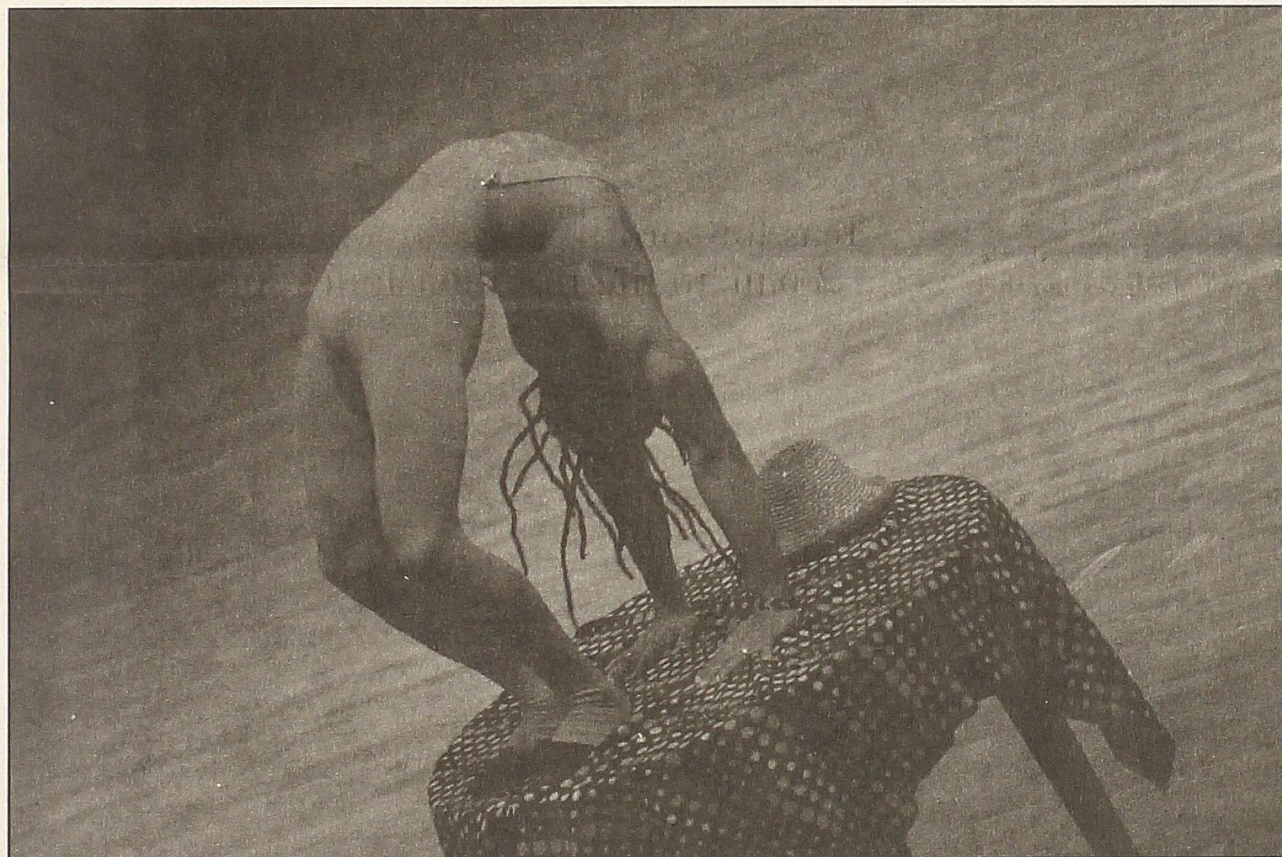


Photo by Kayla Roy

The acrobats hail from both Kenya and Tanzania. In the off-season, the group trains in Kenya.

the tourist has to live.

“The acrobatics and feats of strength reminded me of Cirque de Soleil,” said **Alex Colwell (’13)**. “I like how there was a story along with the acrobatics and the humor injected into the performance was my favorite part.”

The performers also worked to integrate the audience into the skit, sometimes bringing people up on stage.

“I couldn’t help but bob my head to the music and clap to the beat,” said **Anna Leonard (’14)**. “The energy in the audience was great.”

The Safari Acrobats have found much success as a traveling group over the years and their shows have sold out across the country. Originally from Kenya, these acrobats learned their talents in their homeland with hopes of escaping the poverty surrounding them.

The group was founded by Jacob and Karen Kalama over

10 years ago and now also includes their daughter Krystina.

Today their mission is to spread positive feelings about their home country while entertaining and

“I couldn’t look the entire time the contortion was going on. The amount of flexibility and balance was just unbelievable.”

—**Maricat Eggenberger (’11)**

educating audiences of all ages.

The troop spends part of the year in their American base in North Carolina and the off-season is spent training in a small village in Kenya.

Poetry Slam celebrates MLK’s legacy

By MOLLY HENNING
STAFF WRITER

The sixth annual Calvin Hilson Poetry Slam celebrated MLK Week last Tuesday.

The event took place at 8 p.m. in the Van Dusen Rotunda and was sponsored by the Multi-Cultural Student Union (MCSU) and the English Department.

Assistant Professor of English Laura von Wallmenich and MCSU president **Jamie Young (’11)** directed the organization and planning of the event. Young also served as the MC.

Von Wallmenich explained that the purpose of the slam is to remind everyone of how King used words to move the nation instead of violence.

“It is also to remind us that Dr. King was not alone in the use of words to transform the nation,” said von Wallmenich. “The Civil Rights era is also an era of tremendously important politically conscious poetry and prose... So many other great

writers are part of the campaign to make the lives of African Americans visible to a dominant culture that wanted to keep the real costs of segregation and real legacies of slavery hidden.”

The presentations consisted of mostly students and faculty. The list of presenters included, but was not limited to, **Emma Kornelis (’11)**, **Aysha Abiade (’11)**, von Wallmenich, Professor and Chair of Communication Joanne Gilbert, Assistant Professor of Modern Language Stephany Slaughter, Digital Media Editor and Photographer Skip Traynor and retired Professor of English Ute Stargardt.

This year’s poetry slam even implemented works of Spanish poets to further the message of diversity and acceptance.

“One of my goals is to promote Afro-Hispanic culture throughout the campus,” said Slaughter, who read a poem in Spanish. “There are many connections between Hispanic cultures and MLK celebrations; King was very inspirational for civil rights movements

for Mexican Americans.”

Gilbert noted that there were three main benefits of the poetry slam.

“The first is that students become aware of the way King’s legacy continues in our daily lives,” said Gilbert. “Poetry reading is always in the spirit of liberation of some kind.”

“The second reason is that it exposes students to different perspectives, which is critically important and is part of the college’s mission.

“Third, students don’t have enough experience with poetry,” said Gilbert. “This shows how poetry is broad; it is a way of speaking from the heart and soul and is an amazing example of what language can do.”

Slaughter also explained that poetry and language are important political devices and tools in discussing issues of race. Those discussions, she said, need to happen more often and more publicly.

Von Wallmenich added that diversity is not about ethnicity—it is about a culture being open to all voices and



Photo by Kayla Roy

The Poetry Slam was held at Van Dusen last Tuesday night.

one that is willing to make room for different experiences and different identities.

“The slam does not require any particular content to the poems that are read,” said von Wallmenich. “Instead, it asks every reader to give voice to some aspect or some topic that he or she sees as part of why we celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. King.

We come to the slam to see what this day means to others... A slam

is really an open-ended dialog. It is a conversation about what it is we remember on this holiday.”

Kornelis, who read “Balada de Los Abeulos,” also mentioned that the environment of the poetry slam was very accepting.

“I was glad to present and also participate in this event that was not only a celebration of Martin Luther King Jr., but also served as a reminder of the current need for global acceptance,” said Kornelis.

14th Annual Student Choreographer's Concert spotlights 12 dance pieces

By ELISABETH BLETSCH
STAFF WRITER

To dance is to grow like a flower. "The students in the dance company are so dedicated and they love dance so much," said Carol Fike, chair and professor of theatre and dance. "It's like watching a flower grow and then all of a sudden it blossoms into this beautiful creation. That's what it's like to watch the students in the dance company. They take it on so well," said Fike.

The 14th annual Student Choreographer's Concert, which took place last Saturday and Sunday, was composed of 12 pieces that were all choreographed by students. Anna Dysinger ('11) and Jacki Olson ('11) were the student directors this year, Fike said. The first piece, "Distortion," was choreographed by the two of them. "Anna and I choreographed a dance for the entire dance company—this has never been done before in the Student Choreographer's Concert. It was a little challenging at first trying to make a dance with over 20 people, but we are very proud of it!" said Olson. The second and third pieces

in the concert, "Pictures at an Exhibition" and "Hide and Seek" were choreographed by Kim Barker ('12).

"Ready to Pump" was choreographed by Devon Brisbon ('13).

"Was Lost but Now Am Found" was choreographed by Tyler Sheets ('12).

"This song really spoke to me because it is about being lost and being abandoned," said Sheets.

"I wanted to do something different so I decided to bring up the issue of prostitution, which is very apparent in the song. In my piece I gave the woman the voice and the power.

"I wanted to show that women can escape from this life and can help others and that they must fight back in order to survive. I hope that when people saw my piece, it made them think of dance as not only as an art form, but as a way to bring about social issues and social awareness to topics such as prostitution," said Sheets. "In Memory Of" was choreographed by Dysinger.

"It is a tribute to the death of six high school classmates of one of the dancer's; it is a very touching piece, especially because of the significance behind it," said Olson. "Satellite" was

choreographed by Olson.



Photo by Simone Boos

The pieces that were presented in last weekend's dance concert were all coordinated by students.

choreographed by Olson.

"I choreographed a jazz dance with four girls in it," she said. "I am very fortunate to have gotten to choreograph on them; they are all so talented, and the choreography fits their dance style really well."

"Apres Moi" and "Face to Face" were choreographed by Simone Boos ('12) and "Kaleidoscope Heart" by Jaclyn Bodary ('12).

Bodary's piece used music by popular singer-songwriter Sara Bareilles.

"There are eight girls in my dance, which was kind of a challenge because we have such a small stage, but the overall outcome with the lights and costumes turned out great," added Bodary.

"The Next Best Thing" was choreographed by Angela Flynn ('12).

The final piece, "Our Gift," was choreographed by the production managers.

"Anna and I choreographed a senior dance together," said Olson. "It's called, 'Our Gift', and it is

really a tribute to our families and the people who have made an impact on our lives and helped us become the young women we are today," said Olson.

"The wonderful thing about this particular show is that it is all student choreographed," said Fike. "Dance students come up with their own concert ideas, figure out rehearsal schedules, set up the space, hang the lights and bring in the curtains. They do it all."

Planning and preparation for the Student Choreographer's Concert begins in September and continues until the curtains open.

"The whole thing is a hands-on learning experience that shows students what it's like to produce a concert," added Fike.

"This show has a lot of variety in choreography and more dances than one of our normal concerts would have, but the pieces are also shorter so the show is really fast-paced and entertaining," said Olson.

"I think that the Student

Choreographer's Concert allows the college community to see the students of the arts work together to create a showcase of dance in an intimate setting, as it is held in the dance studio rather than the Heritage Center auditorium."

Dance professors oversee and advise students, but students are given a lot of freedom and space.

"When you are creating as an artist, you can't follow a lot of rules during the creation process," said Fike.

"Once students show me their piece, then I advise and coach. I help them go deeper into their work and dance at a level that is more communicative to the audience," she added.

This year Fike and her dancers were very pleased with the concert.

"Every single January the work gets better!" she said.

"The students just get better and better. The pieces were sophisticated, youthful and well thought out; they were beautifully created."

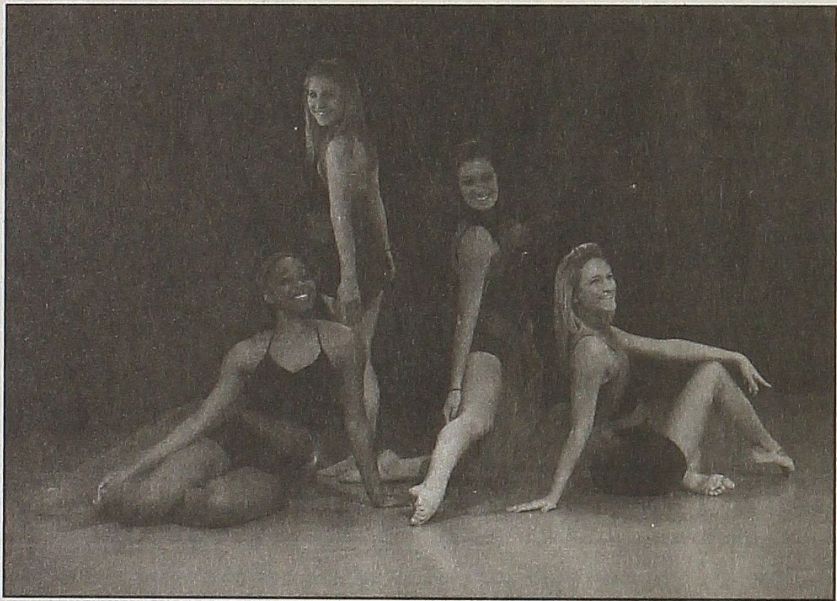


Photo by Simone Boos

Devon Brisbon ('13), Ashley Alore ('14), Jaclyn Bodary ('12), and Anna Dysinger ('11) performed "Satellite" by Jacki Olson ('11).

Vivian to finish trilogy in March

By JOSHUA ZEITLER
STAFF WRITER

In less than two months, Alma College's Robert Vivian is scheduled to publish "Another Burning Kingdom," the final installment of his "Tall Grass" trilogy.

"Personally, it's the fulfillment of about ten years' work to write this trilogy," said Vivian, an associate professor of English. "It has been a wonderful experience with lots of missteps, but there's a quiet, deep sense of peace and relief with its completion."

The novel is preceded by "The Mover of Bones" and "Lamb Bright Savior," which are connected by technique, first-person narrative and their Nebraska setting, rather than character overlap.

"Another Burning Kingdom" is told from the perspectives

of three characters: Lem Purchase, his estranged wife Lissa and his brother Jackson. When Lem, an ex-baseball player and alcoholic currently living in

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-Robert Vivian

California, receives a call from his disturbed brother threatening domestic terrorism, he races across the Great Plains to put a stop to it. "It all leads up to a supernatural

confrontation that incorporates the landscape of the West and wild horses," said Vivian. "The end takes its cues from the book of Revelation."

In addition to the "Tall Grass" trilogy, Vivian has published a collection of essays entitled "Cold Snap as Yearning," as well as a variety of award-winning drama and short stories.

Another collection of essays, "The Least Cricket of Evening," is scheduled for publication this fall, followed by a fourth novel in 2012, entitled "Water and Abandon."

Vivian's professional work can give many interested students valuable insight into the life of a writer.

"It can often take decades to finally see your dreams come to fruition," he said.

"You live with these private visions for a long time and then suddenly they're out in the world and have their own life," said Vivian. "When a book is published

it's ultimately the time when you have to say goodbye to it and then it's on to the next work."

Vivian also offered

"Dr. Vivian is a wordsmith and a storyteller, a gifted writer and a thoughtful and insightful mentor for Alma students who strive to become writers. We are fortunate to have him as a teacher."

-Margo Brines ('12)

some advice for potential writers: "Read voraciously!"

"Read all different genres, too," said Vivian. "You have to be

familiar with literature in order to write it. Toni Morrison once said, 'If there's a book you really want to read but hasn't been written yet, then you must write it.'"

Since the best writing teachers are widely considered to be those who write, Vivian's activities in the professional world reveal a great deal of his value to the Alma College community.

"I hope it makes me a better teacher, especially for young fiction writers, to be able to share this experience," said Vivian.

"Dr. Vivian is a wordsmith and a storyteller, a gifted writer and a thoughtful and insightful mentor for Alma students who strive to become writers," said Margo Brines ('12). "We are fortunate to have him as a teacher."

Vivian teaches literature and creative writing.

"Another Burning Kingdom" will be available from University of Nebraska Press beginning Mar. 1.

New Zimbra e-mail system is an easy upgrade

By ELIZABETH CORBIN
STAFF WRITER

The new e-mail system, Zimbra, has only been active for one week but it's already obvious that it is a wonderful upgrade to the previous system. The former system's interface was horrendously outdated and even frustrating. Because it remained embedded into the Alma Portal, where there was limited space for the e-mail interface, checking mail required plenty of scrolling. Sorting through or attempting to delete old e-mails was a time consuming task as it forced you

to flip through different pages in order to view older messages. However, with Zimbra you can now simply search for select phrases if you are looking for a specific e-mail. The inbox stores all of your messages in one area and you can just scroll down to access them. Unlike the former system, Zimbra allows you to bookmark the page and save your password information to your computer instead of first having to access the Alma Portal. This makes checking your college e-mail so much more convenient, especially when, right before class, you need to quickly print off an essay that you e-mailed to yourself. "The new e-mail system is much

more convenient for students," said **Gwenevere Mueller ('14)**. "It allows for better organization and time management, as well as many other interesting features." Perhaps the most interesting feature on Zimbra is the currency converter. If you happen to receive an e-mail that includes a price in the message and mouse over it, it will instantly be converted into Euros, British pounds, Japanese yen, Indian rupees, Australian dollars, Canadian dollars, and Swiss francs. It's definitely not necessary for our campus aggregate but it does make checking your e-mail more fun and globally informative. Also, as may be of interest to the international students on campus, Zimbra allows you

to change the layout of the interface between 20 different languages although the e-mails you receive will remain as usual. Zimbra also makes finding addresses of students and professors easier. "Instead of typing someone's entire e-mail address into the bar, you can simply type the person's first or last name and it will find them," said Mueller. This takes out the extra step of having to do a search on the P.I.G. Book directory. You even have the option to download Zimbra Desktop, which offers many unique qualities. First of all, it allows you to work seamlessly between online and offline modes. Even if you are traveling without

Internet connection, you will be able to access your contacts and write e-mails which will be saved until you are able to send them. Zimbra Desktop also lets you combine all of your e-mail accounts in the same place so that you no longer need to check multiple accounts. Other than its features, Zimbra is plainly more aesthetically pleasing than the old e-mail structure. The layout is sleek and doesn't look like it was merely created just after the Internet was invented. The interface also has a nicely organized appearance even though it allow so many more options. So hopefully with Zimbra you'll find yourself checking your college e-mail regularly.

Chinese president visits D.C.

By MASON WARLING
STAFF WRITER

Chinese President Hu Jintao visited Washington, D.C. last week and he spent a large amount of time in front of cameras with President Obama answering a lot of questions. Among those topics discussed were China's undervalued currency, Chinese relations with Taiwan, trade, and North Korea. Perhaps most interesting was Obama's inquiry into Chinese human rights issues. Jintao was seen conversing with his translator, on air and at great length, and then simply moving on without answering. Obama came back to the point a few times, eventually coaxing Jintao into admitting that his country had some work to do in the human rights department. Perhaps receiving the most attention, however, was the talk about China's currency, the yuan, being artificially devalued by the policies of the Chinese government. The important part of this issue is that the low price of the

yuan makes Chinese exports cheaper, and therefore it hurts American manufacturers because their labor and products are much more expensive. China has, in the past, expressed extreme reluctance to let its currency rise in value, and has routinely decried Western governments who attempted to pressure them into doing so as aggressors and imperialists. Somewhat refreshingly, Jintao and Obama both said that in order for China to rise up in the world and prosper, it would require cooperation with the U.S. and a lasting partnership. Just as planned by the Chinese government, Jintao's visit went off without any major hitches. Photographs were taken of the two presidents shaking hands, talking grandly behind podiums, smiling, and eating meals together. The most awkward moment of the Chinese leader's visit to the states happened during a posed photo with Democratic Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, who only days prior called Jintao a "dictator," a fact Jintao was no doubt briefed on by his staff. However, the two men were

"Obama came back to [human rights issues] a few times, eventually coaxing Jintao into admitting that his country had some work to do in the human rights department."
-Mason Warling ('14)

able to smile and look good for the cameras, signifying a victory for Jintao. Representative John Boehner, the new Republican Speaker of the House, said of private talks with Jintao that he had pressed for stronger protection and enforcement of U.S. intellectual property rights in China and called on Beijing to curtail North Korea's aggressive behavior toward South Korea. Boehner said he had also raised strong concerns about reports of human rights violations in China, including the denial of religious freedom and use of coercive abortion under the country's 'one child' policy. Jintao denied the existence of

PUZZLE CORNER

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Puzzle courtesy of dailysudoku.com

any policy of coercive abortion. Meanwhile, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi said she focused her complaints to Jintao on human rights, singling out China's treatment of imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize winner Liu Xiaobo and dissidents in Tibet. The visit was, of course, focused more on looking good and

taking nice photographs than actual substance and change. The Chinese news agencies certainly got that. Obama also managed to secure many billions of dollars worth of business deals with Chinese state-owned firms. All in all, it was a success on both sides.

the Almanian.

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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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On a campus with very little diversity, MCSU lends support

By ELIZABETH CORBIN
STAFF WRITER

After a quick look around campus, it's pretty obvious that Alma does not have a widely diverse student body but the statistics are even more surprising than I imagined.

According to Cappex.com, a college search Website, the Alma College student body is 92 percent Caucasian, 1 percent Native American or Native Alaskan, 2 percent Asian, 2 percent African-American, and 3 percent Hispanic.

According to these given statistics and the fact that the current number of students enrolled is 1,422, that means the mere 8 percent of minorities make up only about 114 in total.

Students often go to college with the conception that they will

be presented with a more diverse environment than in high school.

Yet, for the majority of students, this is probably not what they found at Alma.

"We definitely have a long way to go before we can be truly multicultural but we are a very tolerant campus, I think," said President of the Multicultural Student Union (MCSU) **Jamie Young ('11)**. "But tolerance isn't the same as understanding."

By interacting with and getting to know people of a wide-range of cultures, we have the opportunity to learn of backgrounds that may be very different from our own.

This particularly allows us to gain creativity because we will be more likely to come across a variety of ideas compared to if we were only to associate with

those who are similar to us.

"Because we are such a tolerant campus, I don't foresee too many problems because of diversity as far as anything like the incident we had last year where the n-bomb got dropped," said Young. "But incidents like that show that students need to be educated better on issues of race and ethnicity so that we don't end up at each others' throats because of some stupid remark that so-and-so didn't know any better not to make."

With the small amount of students outside the classification of Caucasian, some feel that the college environment is not prepared to support the minorities who do come here.

"I'm Haitian, and Michigan already has a low population of

"Yet, for the majority of students, [diversity] is probably not what they found at Alma."

-Elizabeth Corbin ('12)

Haitians so, if I don't go home to Florida, I do not experience my culture or get to share it," said **Jessica Alexandre ('13)**.

"Also, I do not feel any presence of ethnic diversity on campus because the school recruits international and ethnic students, or they happily decide to come here, but they do not set up a support system when we arrive," Alexandre said.

Essentially, some minorities on campus feel unable to display their culture and are compelled

to assimilate themselves into the overall culture of our campus.

MCSU exists to inform the campus of various cultures and support healthy interaction between students.

"Our mission, in short, is to spread cultural diversity across campus," said Young. "We hope to put on educational programs for the students to learn about other cultures and open their minds to new things, as well as educating ourselves."

If you are a minority who feels without a support group or if you are interested in participating, you are welcome to join MCSU.

"We encourage anybody with any interest in diversity of any kind to come to our meetings Wednesday nights at 9:30 in SAC 103," said Young. "We love to hear new viewpoints."

Orthodox Church pushes for national dress code

By MASON WARLING
STAFF WRITER

The Russian Orthodox Church caused major outrage among secular Russians when it called upon the Kremlin to implement a compulsory national dress code that would ban miniskirts and tank tops for women, and shorts, t-shirts and track suits for men.

The church, which is a large entity in Russia's political world and carries a lot of political clout, issued an edict claiming that lax dress standards incited crime and madness among the population.

Women, said Archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin, can't be trusted to clothe themselves properly.

"It is wrong to think that women should decide themselves what they can wear in public places or at work," he said last

Tuesday. "If a woman dresses like a prostitute, her colleagues must have the right to tell her that."

Chaplin added, "if a woman dresses and acts indecently, this is a direct route to unhappiness, one-night stands, brief marriages followed by rat-like divorces, ruined lives of children, and madness."

The statement caused outcry among less-extreme religious and secular Russians.

Russian women, famous for their love of flashy colors and provocative fashions, are not likely to let the church's edict affect their lives.

Masha Lipman, editor of the Moscow Carnegie Center's Pro et Contra journal, says "The average Russian woman will just shrug this off and regard it as having nothing to do with her life.

In post-Soviet times, the church has enjoyed much more success at winning concessions from the state than it has in winning souls... Polls show that the majority of Russians respect the church as a traditional institution but not as a moral authority over their lives."

In post-Soviet times, the Russian people have enjoyed a degree of personal freedom that they had never had before.

The current generation of Russian citizens enjoys and expects a certain degree of personal freedom that will be difficult to wrest from them.

The Kremlin, though an authoritarian institution in many regards, has, in recent years, been hesitant to interfere in people's everyday lives in the ways that the Church seems to be calling for.

Critics say the proposal signals

"The church... issued an edict claiming that lax dress standards incited crime and madness among the population."

-Mason Warling ('14)

the growing political ambition of the Russian Orthodox Church, which has lately enjoyed great success in forcing the Kremlin to hand back hundreds of churches and monasteries, along with thousands of religious artifacts, that had formerly belonged to state museums.

They see this recent success as a sign of decisions to come, and some worry that elements of the dress code may actually have a chance of coming into effect.

The Church's proposed dress

code has received applause from some conservative quarters.

Russia's Association of Islamic Heritage expressed its support for Chaplin's call for "creation of a national dress code," which might also involve compelling women to wear headscarves, a rule already in force in Orthodox churches and church-run orphanages.

Muslims make up about 20 percent of Russia's population.

A sort of scary prospect, isn't it?

Though the edict hasn't received the outcry of opposition it might in Western countries, it is still expected by many sources to not even have a chance of coming to fruition.

Still, something interesting to think about: what would happen if the same thing was attempted in the U.S?

Following the Beat with Ben King: Indoor activities are best when weather is freezing

By BEN KING
GUEST WRITER

As much as I like to go outside, even I am not foolish enough to recognize when I have been scorned by Mother Nature.

Try as I might, I find myself heartbroken by the outdoors because it is just too cold outside.

I find the cold and biting wind embracing and raw.

I enjoy the sting as it whips about my face.

However, everyone has their limits.

It is important for one to recognize that there are simply times when we are not meant to be outside.

Nature gets sick of us and concocts hurricanes, tornadoes, torrential downpours and

sub-zero temperatures.

Recently, the cold has not permitted me to get outside as much as I would like to.

When this occurs, I can be found staring out my window, like a child whose mother will not let him go out and play with his friends.

For days I mope about, with my hands deep in my pockets and a most melancholy spirit in my soul.

I tear through the works of Jack London and John Muir, in an attempt to taste the treasure that I have lost.

A melancholy mood must be combated with all resources at hand to bat down the hatches and prepare for battle against the wintertime blues.

Reading helps to a degree.

So, if your suffering from seasonal affective disorder, or S.A.D., I recommend opening a good book and perusing its pages.

If it is the sun that you miss, read a book about the tropics.

The same principle can be applied to movies.

As nice as it would be to have the ability to instantaneously find oneself on a sun-drenched beach in the Caribbean, this is simply out of the question.

The best option is simply to throw a movie on and let the pictures on the screen distract from the cold outside.

I find it best to keep myself occupied.

Try and be productive and bake some warm cookies and enjoy them with hot chocolate.

Make it a group activity and try

and spread some joy about what appears to be a dreary campus.

After finishing said treats, sit down and play a board game or have a relaxing chat with your friends.

While what I am suggesting may seem trivial, I feel that it is most important to just keep oneself busy.

If one cannot enjoy the winter, it is best not to give up and resign to a blue mood.

Do anything but that.

One of the most effective ways to combat the winter blues is to go swimming.

Mosey on down to the swimming pool and swim for a little while.

The warm water almost always reminds me of the summer months that seem so far away.

Plus, swimming is an

awesome way to get exercise.

Cabin fever can get just about anyone and everyone has their own ways of dealing with it.

My Grandpa recently wrote me telling me that he was suffering to the "doldrums of winter."

In order to avoid succumbing to this sadness, my Grandpa has decided to train his Jack Russell Terrier pup to give chase to rabbits.

While this is not an option for most college students, one must recognize that he or she must do something.

Get out and, if you are unable to handle the cold, at least get up and move around.

Fight and empower yourself, for the only enemy we have in this battle against winter time blues is ourselves.

If you see anything in the Opinion section that you want to respond to, please write a letter to the editor!

E-mail 11amlabb@alma.edu with any thoughts/feelings on the articles

SPORTS

January 24-30, 2011

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Men and women's swim teams fall in last home meets of their seasons

BY ADAM MUNCY
STAFF WRITER

The Alma College Scots swimming and diving teams hosted the Olivet College Comets last Saturday for Senior Day 2011 at the McClure Natatorium. The Lady Scots fell just short of victory with final score of 108-105. The men also lost but with a larger gap: 104-81.

"We have one more meet next weekend against Hope and St. Mary's," said Head Coach Chris Hamstra.

"I like to take a bigger break between the last of our dual meets and our championships. We have a countdown on our white board for the event.

We don't let up practices, we have had a hard week but we are going to continue through the dual on the weekends and we are going to do that again next week."

Four swimmers, **Andrew Brunner ('11)**, **Jordan Byrde ('11)**, **Shaina Buhl ('11)** and **Christine Vicari ('11)** competed for their final time in front of fans at McClure Natatorium.

"We have been hammering out a lot of yards preparing for the conference meets; everyone just wants to do their best," said **Jacob Hammer ('14)**.

"We have to be strong both mentally and physically. You can't have one without the other. Next week, as we prepare for Hope and St. Mary's, we will still be up there in yards but beginning to ease-up in intensity after the meet."

The Scots look ahead to the final MIAA dual of the season where the Hope College Flying Dutchmen will host the Scots and Saint Mary's on Saturday at 1 p.m. at the Holland Aquatic Center.

"We are hoping to break multiple records. Over the past two years we have already broken 27 records."

-Chris Hamstra, head coach

"From Monday Jan. 31st, following the Hope meet, we will begin tapering off our practices, starting to rest, and slowly taking out yards so that at the MIAA Championships we swim faster than we have all year," said Hamstra.

"Physically, we will be able to handle things a lot better. We will be able to sustain higher speeds for a longer period of time. We are hoping to break multiple records. Over the past two years we have already broken 27 records."

The 2011 MIAA Championships will be held at Jenison High School Feb. 17-19.

"The team as a whole has gotten a lot better," said Hamstra. "The

progression is pretty simple: we are in a lot better shape than we were when we started.

We have begun swimming faster and handling workouts

better. That's really all swimming is, we start here, and we progressively work our way through harder practices to get in better and better shape."

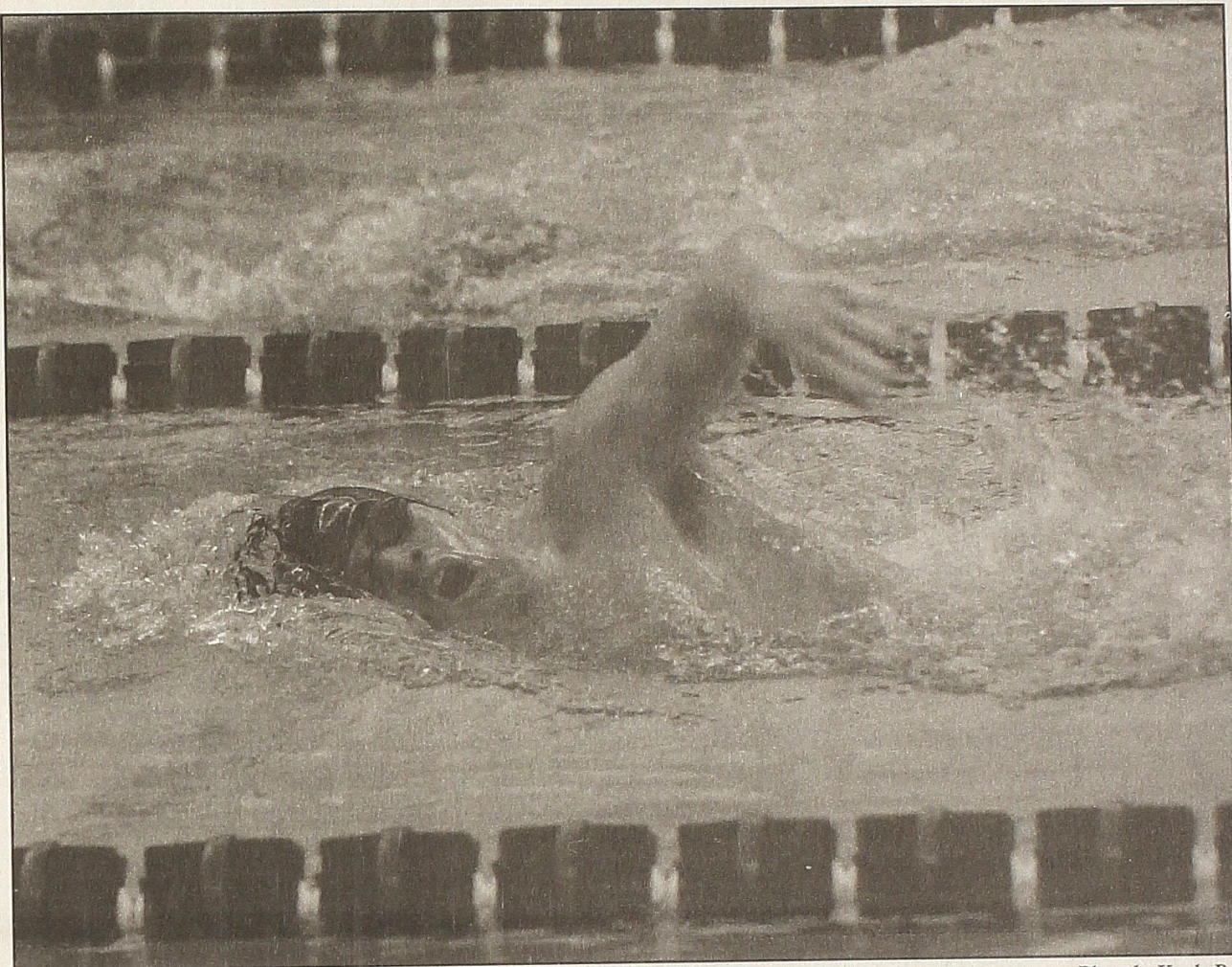


Photo by Kayla Roy

Jacob Hammer ('14) swims against Olivet College in the last home meet. This meet also celebrated the four seniors on the team this year. The Scots lost to the Comets with a final score of 108-105 for the women and 104-81 for the men.

Spotlight: Faller inherits father's passion

BY TARYN HANDYSIDE
STAFF WRITER

Stephanie Faller ('13) started playing basketball when she was 6 years old and since then has dedicated most of her life to the sport.

She played for Saginaw Swoosh, a club team, from sixth to eighth grade and attended Valley Lutheran of Saginaw, where she was a four year varsity basketball player.

Faller says that her father played a huge role in her career and success as a basketball player. While most parents support their children's athletic goals, Faller had an especially passionate parent—her father was the coach of all of the teams that she played on during her childhood.

"With all of his coaching, he is the main reason why I am the player that I am today."

-Stephanie Faller ('13)

"My mom wanted to put me in dance class when I was younger, but my dad put me in sports instead," Faller said.

"With all of his coaching, he is the main reason why I am the player that I am today." Though her father was her main source of inspiration, Faller also idolizes pro Steve Nash because she believes that he is a great point guard.

In 2009, Faller was named second place, among colleges

in the state of Michigan for three-point shooting. She is also ranked seventh all-time in the state for three-point shooting.

During Faller's freshman year at Alma College she played in 22 games, scored 26 points overall and had the fifth highest field goal percentage and the highest three-point percentage on the team.

Now that Faller is a

teammate held another over her shoulder upside down at the ice cream machine in SAGA before one of our games," said Faller. "Also, our trip to California this year was a lot of fun, especially going to Disneyland."

"My favorite thing about playing basketball at Alma is the team and the friendships formed because of it. I wouldn't be who I am today without my team."

-Stephanie Faller ('13)

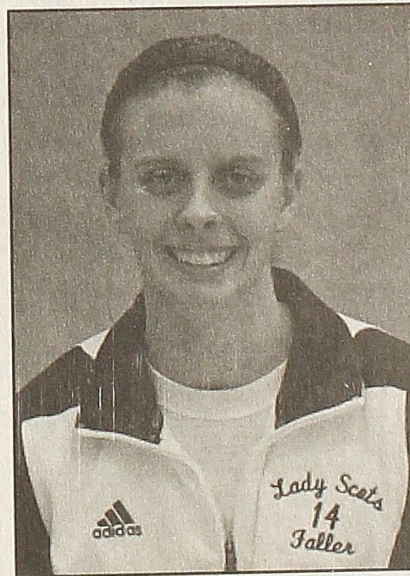
As a student athlete, Faller doesn't have much time on her hands. When she isn't in the classroom or on the basketball court, she participates in Students in Free Enterprise and the Chinese Club at Alma.

"For fun, I just like to hang out with my friends and play other sports outside of basketball," Faller said.

Faller is majoring in accounting and she hopes to obtain a career in her field after taking the Certified Public Accountant exam when she graduates.

Faller says that she has enjoyed her time at Alma so far and is looking forward to her next few years here.

"My favorite thing about playing basketball at Alma is the team and the friendships formed because of it," Faller said. "I wouldn't be who I am today without my team."



Courtesy of www.alma.edu

sophomore, she says that her biggest accomplishment so far is being a starting point-guard for the Lady Scots.

"Before each game I usually listen to music and give **Sydney [Beckwith ('11)]** a drink of my Gatorade before the game—it's our tradition," Faller said.

Faller says that she has made many memories with her teammates over the past two years as they have developed their sense of camaraderie and trust.

"My most memorable experience was when one of my



Photo by Catherine Finley

Stephanie Faller ('13) dribbles the ball in a game against Hope College. The Scots played the Dutch at home on December 4 and lost, 70-44. Faller recorded 20 minutes played in this game and added two steals to her stats.

Men's basketball loses a close game to Calvin

By TARYN HANDYSIDE
STAFF WRITER

The men's basketball team took on Calvin College in the Art-Smith Arena last Wednesday in a conference game and fell, 73-64. "We had chances all night to win this game," said **Kevin Ginther ('11)**. "We missed a few key shots, but it was a winnable game."

This loss puts the Scots at a record of 1-4 in the league and 5-10 overall and the Knights are at 3-2 in the league and 8-8 overall.

With such a young team, Alma players say they are improving each day and trying to reach their full potential.

"Since we have a lot of young players it is taking time to get acclimated to each other and to mold the team so that everyone fits in," **Tommy Erickson ('12)** said.

While Calvin took a 10-0 lead in the first four minutes, the Scots managed to put the score at 22-21 with 7:36 left in the first half.

However, the Knights were able to outscore the Scots by 15-4 in the remaining time in first half, which earned them a 37-25 lead at halftime.

The Scots finished 10 of 29 shots in the first half and made four three-pointers. The Knights nearly made 15 of 35

shots in the first half while also making four three-pointers. In the beginning of the second half, the Scots were able to score six baskets and put the score at 39-37. The Knights came back with a nine basket run which put them ahead, 48-39.

With 1:40 left in the game, the score was 68-64 in Calvin's favor and the Knights then closed out the game scoring five more points.

"The loss against Calvin was disappointing for all of us but encouraging for us at the same time."

-Tommy Erickson ('12)

On offense, **Cory Schneider ('12)** led the Scots with 20 points, including four three-pointers.

Ginther earned the Scots 16 points and five assists. In addition, Erickson and **Brett Lackie ('14)** tallied in with seven points each.

Erickson led the Scots on defense with 10 rebounds and three blocks and Lackie pitched in four rebounds.

"The loss against Calvin was disappointing for all of us but encouraging for us at the same time," Erickson

said. "We played poorly and yet were in the whole game."

The Alma men traveled to Adrian last Saturday and left with a loss, of 81-42, putting its record at 1-5 in the league and 8-9 in the overall season.

Ginther led the Scots with 13 points, one assist and four rebounds, while **Greg Silverthorn ('13)** added four rebounds.

Kyle Aho ('14) contributed five points for Alma, while Erickson and **Joey Jerisk ('14)** each added four points.

"We have only played a few league games so we still have a lot of basketball to play," Erickson said. "At this point in the season we feel that we can compete with anyone in the league and look forward to the rest of the season."

The Scots play at home on Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. where they will host Olivet in the Art-Smith Arena.

The Scots say they are eager to improve and are striving to meet their goals of the season.

"We have shot the ball well this year and we have come together as a team," said Ginther. "There are no outsiders, everyone is part of the team and wants to win regardless of the cost. We obviously would like to be winning more, but we are moving in the right direction. There are many goals still to be fulfilled."



Photo by Elaine Cunningham

Brett Lackie ('14) goes up for a layup against three Calvin players.

Two new varsity sports added

By ADAM MUNCY
STAFF WRITER

Over the past year the college has put significant energy toward creating new academic and athletic programs to market to potential students.

Recently, college administration has launched searches for coaches to develop new intercollegiate varsity programs for men's wrestling and women's bowling.

Earlier in the year, administrators they announced the addition of new integrated science majors in biotechnology, health care administration and environmental studies, along with the sponsorship of women's and men's lacrosse as varsity sports.

"We are terrifically excited about the set of academic and athletic programs that we are adding," said President Jeff Abernathy.

"Women's and men's lacrosse, bowling and wrestling we have added this year, alongside a set of new academic programs, for the first time in 17 years."

Historically speaking, Alma carried intercollegiate wrestling teams throughout the 1980s and the teams were among the best in the MIAA during their existence.

The new additions of both men's wrestling and women's bowling, along with women's and men's lacrosse (announced in the fall), increases the number of varsity sports at Alma College from 18 to 22, with equal opportunities for male and female athletes.

The new sports programs are expected to start competition during the 2011-12 seasons, pending the successful hiring of coaches to develop and take the programs forward.

"Wrestling and bowling have the highest high school participation rates in Michigan of those sports that Alma College has not previously sponsored," said Athletics Director John Leister.

"Both sports are significantly under-represented at the college level. Adding these new sports programs will provide opportunities for students to maximize their college experience at Alma."

There are more than 450 high schools in Michigan that offer varsity wrestling,

with approximately 11,300 participants in 2010.

Among neighboring states, approximately 45,000 high school wrestlers are present in Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

"My sense is that we will attract a great number of students from regions that we are not now in," said Abernathy. "We will bring students from Chicago, the East and West coasts and we will bring Canadian students in for lacrosse."

"As important as Michigan is and always will be for Alma College, we need to be thinking about markets beyond our state. It is my intent to make sure we are known and the addition of the new programs will help us do that."

Bowling is sponsored by more than 300 high schools in Michigan.

In 2010 high school girl's bowling set a new high for participation in the state with more than 2,900 students, according to data from the Michigan High School Athletic Association.

"Alma College has a wrestling legacy, with varsity teams competing through 1984," said Leister. "The 1980-81, 1981-82 and 1982-83 wrestling teams won consecutive league titles and are members of the Alma College Athletics Hall of Fame. Students and alumni have expressed interest in offering wrestling as a varsity sport again. More than one-third of Alma students typically participate in intercollegiate athletics, and as many as 50 percent of all new students consider playing a sport," said Leister.

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Staying on top of the game: This week in sports

Women's Basketball:
January 22nd vs. St. Mary's College at HOME

Men's Basketball:
January 22nd vs. Olivet College at HOME