

Model UN gives students the ‘opportunity to better themselves’



Photo courtesy of Danielle Jellison

The Model UN team celebrates after winning three Outstanding Awards. This was the first time in the history of the competition that any team had achieved this.

By DEVIN BRINES

STAFF WRITER

Model UN offers Alma students the opportunity to better themselves socially, academically, and ethically in addition to bettering the world. Forty-six Alma College students—art, political science, pre-med, and education majors—participate under the direction of Dr. Sandy Hulme. The Model UN program that exists at Alma College is among the most elite in the world.

The international Model UN organization exists at Alma College in the form of a four-credit, winter-term class. Hulme

calls the program “a launching pad for other opportunities.” Students feel the same; the program has more than quadrupled in membership in recent years.

Through work done in Model UN, students can gain valuable experience in the type of environment that facilitates some of the world’s greatest changes. Oftentimes, the greatest payoff for work done through Model UN, says Hulme, is the pleasure of seeing students’ suggestions put to use: “Time and time again, United Nations bodies have adopted those suggestions.”

Learning from one

another, members of the Model UN collaborate to research solutions to many of the world’s problems, including HIV/AIDS, education, and climate change from the perspectives of the countries in which the most pertinent problems exist.

Students are separated into teams to research the issues and propose solutions in preparation for competition with other Model UN groups across the world. In competition, teams must present their analyses from global perspectives. Alma students work together throughout the entire process in preparation for the

presentation of their positions.

It is at the National Model UN conference that the magic and opportunity of the Model UN program comes to life. Located at the United Nations headquarters, 5,000 students from 50 of the world’s nations come to compete. At such conferences and within Alma’s Model UN program, **Kim Joki** (‘09) says that “[Model] UN has been a great way for me to surround myself with the likely leaders of our generation.”

At the end of the conference, results of each team’s performance are combined with the performances of the school’s

other teams. “Outstanding delegation” awards are given to the world’s highest-performing Model UN teams. Alma College has been awarded 22 “outstanding delegation” awards in the last 15 years, making it the most successful collegiate Model UN team in the world.

Although Model UN requires a commitment of time and energy, its benefits are tremendous. Opportunities bestowed upon past and present members exemplify this. Nineteen of Alma College’s Model UN members have won a total of *See ‘Model UN’ on page 2*

Inauguration part of week-long MLK celebration

By KRISTEN HAIGHT

STAFF WRITER

As the inauguration of America’s 44th president approaches, despite our varied political views, we must strive to recognize the historic importance of this event. Coinciding as it does with Alma College’s annual Martin Luther King Jr. week, **Laura von Wallmenich**, professor of English and key organizer of the MLK Week, is thrilled to be able to integrate the upcoming inauguration into this year’s schedule of events. The Almanian would like to take this opportunity to showcase Dr. von Wallmenich’s thoughts on the significance of this momentous occasion:

The original plans for this year, plans that were made over a year ago, were built around a speaker -- Spencer Overton. Overton is a Law Professor at George Washington University and a national expert on cases involving voter suppression, as well as on how voting regulations and practices can

selectively disenfranchise voters. We were very excited to have him coming. As the election shaped up, we grew more and more excited, since it was clear that this was a historic election, regardless of the outcome, and Overton was actively involved in the Obama campaign. At that point, we knew that the election, regardless of outcome, would be a centerpiece. However, when Overton was subsequently named to the Obama transition team, he asked to reschedule; obviously he would need to be at the Inauguration. It was at that point that the task force, in consultation with the Provost, President, and the faculty, made the decision to make the Inauguration itself the central event. We felt that, this year, there really was no more appropriate way to acknowledge Dr. King’s vision than to recognize, partisanship aside, the truly historic nature of this inauguration. In 1963, as King stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech, many Americans had trouble imagining a genealogy like Barack Obama’s

*— let alone envisioning that such a person could become our President. Yet in so many ways his story is the very sort of story King would have celebrated. He is the son of a white woman from Wichita and an African from Kenya. He is the grandson of a veteran of the second World War. Yet until the 1967 Supreme Court Case, *Loving v. Virginia*, ruled anti-miscegenation laws unconstitutional, it was still illegal in some parts of the U.S. to “have relations” with someone of a different race. Barack Obama was 6 when the United States effectively “legalized” being biracial. Now, on Tuesday, he becomes the 56th President of the United States of America. This is the dream Dr. King spoke of in action; it is a moment in U.S. history that we all share in.*

When it became clear that Obama would win the election, we chose to make the election the center of the events, with the theme, drawn from one of King’s own speeches, “Where Do We Go From Here?” This, I think,

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\$640,000 of prestigious and international fellowships in the last six years.

Additionally, great personal growth stems from participation in Model UN. According to Drew Emge ('09), self-improvement occurs through "class and conference debates and discussions, public speaking, and position paper and resolution writing."

Because each individual plays a part in preparing and presenting the positions, there is an opportunity for individual excellence. Such achievement is commended; to excel in Model UN is to excel in one of the most

renowned organizations that a student can join.

Although Alma's program is particularly successful, there are no requirements to join; there is no minimum GPA. The organization is always accepting of new members, assuming that they "are passionate and work hard. The rest takes care of itself," Hulme says.

On Alma's campus and elsewhere, there is great excitement surrounding Model UN; "it is not like any other class you will ever take," says Hulme. Model UN, a four-credit class offered every winter, is a unique opportunity for which many Alma College students are thankful.

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is the central question posed by the election of a biracial President. We are in a moment of transition. Although we may not be "past" race, this moment has the potential to profoundly alter the conversation about race in the United States. What that new conversation will be is still a question. For many of my generation and those generations before me, this is a moment we were not sure we would see in our lifetimes. Dr. King matters, the King holiday matters, because the man and the day remind us that we do not have to

accept it when our practice falls short of our ideals. King saw profound contradictions in our ideals and our practices. He saw hypocrisy. Yet he still believed in the power of those ideals. That is, in itself, a profound act and a courageous one. Obama, as an orator, follows in the footsteps of King in this respect. He embraces core elements of American idealism, tapping into them as a way to inspire change, to inspire a faith in the possibility of change. In many of his speeches, he alludes to King — and to the voices that King so often alluded to, from Thomas Jefferson to Abraham Lincoln.

MLK Week

Schedule:

Monday, January 19

**American Red Cross Blood Drive,
11 a.m.-5 p.m.**

**Stone Recreation Center Multi-purpose
Room**

Fourth Annual MLK Poetry Slam, 7 p.m.

Tyler-Van Dusen Campus Center Rotunda

Tuesday, January 20

**Campus-wide Presidential Inauguration
Celebration, 11:30 a.m.**

**Television viewing of the Presidential
Inauguration Ceremonies in Dow Science
Center, Lobby, L-1, L-2, L-4**

**Panel Discussion: "Where Do We Go From
Here?" 4 p.m.**

Dow Science Center L-4

**Michigan Service Scholars Training,
5-9 p.m.**

Dow Science Center L-2

**Dreamfest '09 (formerly the Reflections
Contest), 7 p.m.**

Clack Art Center Theater

Thursday, January 22

Community Café, 4-7 p.m.

Alma First Presbyterian Church

Saturday, Jan. 24

**Kids Night Out youth volunteer opportunity
6:30-9:30 p.m. Contact Susan Smoker at**

ssmoker@almaschools.net

Alma High School



Photo courtesy of Chelsea Clark

The Model UN team travels to New York for competition. While there, students experience the city and the sights-- not only the competition.

New mentoring program unveiled during National Mentoring Month

BY MEREDITH BROWN
STAFF WRITER

January is National Mentoring Month, the perfect time to unveil the new ACCESS Mentoring Program Alma College alumni **Lauren Russell ('08)** has developed in cooperation with **Ginna Holmes** of the Academic and Career Planning Office.

The program's mission is to "support student academic, career and social growth through developing a positive mentor relationship with Alma College students, staff, alumni and community members."

"It's a refreshing idea," remarked Russell, "I definitely could have used a mentor throughout my college years. You can learn things the hard way, or instead, have a mentor to help guide you through the experience."

The program is open to any student who needs help

transitioning to life on campus, whether it be through guidance toward internships and academic advising or discovering on-campus social groups to fit their interests.

Based on their individual needs, these students will be paired with a mentor—a faculty member, community member, or fellow student who has been at Alma College for at least 2 semesters.

"The Academic and Career Planning Office is so helpful to students, but the reality is that they can't be here after 5 p.m. or on weekends. The mentoring program will give a more personal connection between students and their mentor," Russell said.

Mentors are expected to make a one-year commitment to their mentees, communicating at least once a week on the phone or through e-mail and spending at least four hours a month together. This makes the scheduling very flexible for students.

"They can do whatever they want during their time together, such as going to a movie or attending a concert on campus," said Russell.

Thirty mentees have already been picked out and matched with their respective mentors, but any student wishing to apply is still welcome to do so.

The brochure for the program spells out the benefits of being a mentor very clearly, focusing primarily on the "satisfaction in helping someone realize and meet their potential" as well as being a solid "resume builder for students".

"Developing the ACCESS Mentoring Program was exciting for me because it allowed me to give back to a place that has given me so much," Russell said.

An informational meeting will be held on the 28th at 7 p.m. in SAC 109, so that students may learn more about the application and screening process to get involved.

Calvin's 500th birthday celebration: writing creative reflections of vocation

BY ELISABETH BLETSCH
STAFF WRITER

July 2009 marks the 500th anniversary of John Calvin's birth and Alma College will be celebrating with a contest.

"John Calvin is a French reformer who spent most of his life in Geneva," said **Carol Gregg**, Chaplain and Director of Spiritual Life, "He lived in the 1500s; his theology and form of government were very influential in his day and continue to be influential. Moreover, Calvin is considered the founder of Presbyterianism. Since Alma College was founded by Presbyterians, we are appreciating our heritage."

The planned contest will encourage students to reflect

on Calvin's writing about God's "calling," or vocation.

"Students may express their reflections through various mediums, including a paper, short film, artistic piece, original song, or creative writing," said **Kate Blanchard**, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, "I would love to see a variety of works come in."

Five hundred dollars will be awarded to the first-place winner, \$300.00 to second-place, and \$150.00 to third-place.

Entries must be submitted to the Kirk Center office by 5:00 p.m. on November 2, 2009. Full contest rules can be found at http://www.alma.edu/student_life/chaplain/calvinist.

Blanchard believes that Calvin is important to Alma College because "his theology was a catalyst for a lot of changes in Western philosophy and politics."

Alma College chose to celebrate the anniversary in this way because "the project gives students a way to directly engage with Calvin's writings. Dr. Stratton, Dr. Blanchard, and I chose vocation as the focus of this contest because reformers believed that every work could give glory to God. Participating in this contest will help students reflect on their own vocation as they consider whether a calling is a burden or a gift. And we hope that the prize money will also be an incentive," said Gregg.

Vagina monologues bring awareness to the campus

By **CHELSEA CLARK**
SPORTS EDITOR

The Vagina Monologues are coming back to campus February 6-8 with several new monologues and cast members.

"It was exciting to see the number of students that got involved this time. There were an ungodly amount of women that auditioned and it sucked that we had to say no to some. It is great to know that awareness is being raised and people are becoming passionate about women's issues," said one of the directors, **Cathy Millon (09)**.

The monologues are performances done every year at colleges and communities across the country. Eve Ensler, the author, conducted over 200 interviews with all kinds of women, taking about the stories of their vaginas. She then wrote the monologues as a compilation of the specific stories she heard.

"Vagina Monologues show the importance of women's issues in the world today. Even though we're in a modern world there are still problems out there. [The Monologues'] campaign is [to last] until the violence stops and that is a great campaign," said **Amanda Cruickshank (11)**.

The Monologues first came to the Alma campus in 2003 with the help of Joanne Gilbert, Professor of Communications. Directed by **Becky Peacock (08)** for the past two years, this year's reenactment has been taken over by Millon, with the help of another Alma Alum, **Kat Johns (07)**. All of the performances will be held at Jones Auditorium on Friday, February 6 and Saturday, February 7 at 8 p.m., as well as on Sunday at 3 p.m. The tickets will be \$3 for Alma College students and \$5 for the community.

The Monologues are sponsored by the MacCurdy House, the women's resource center on campus. Besides facilitating the Monologues and putting on events for women's month, MacCurdy residents are also always available for women on campus in need of help or advice.

"When I first saw the Vagina Monologues as a freshman in high school, people told me it was too obscene and that it was for adults. My mom almost didn't let me go, but I'm glad I went. It changed my life and helped create my interest in women's rights," said Cruickshank.

This year's performance will feature sixteen women in tradi-

tional monologues plus three special pieces to accompany them. Two of those are called: "Say it," a piece about Japanese comfort women, presented by **Annie Jennings (10)**, and "Under the Burkah," which presents the lives of Muslim women, performed by **Laurel Tilot (11)**.

The 2009 special feature for all Vagina Monologues preformed this year is about breaking the silence for the women in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Ensler coined the term femicide, a term meaning "rape used as a weapon of war to torture and humiliate women and girls," to describe what is happening in the DRC. Ensler, who spoke on campus last year, traveled to the DRC this past September with the United Nations Development Fund for Women in order to help break the silence about the problems there. In their honor, **Lauren Kimpel (11)** will be presenting "Village".

Millon believes that the Vagina Monologues are important because, "people forget that it is not just a part of the anatomy; it is everything surrounding being a woman. It acknowledges that people are raped and celebrates all women."

Counseling Wellness Center provides vital resource for students

By **ELISABETH BLETSCH**
STAFF WRITER

When students are inflicted with anxiety, sadness, anger, a bout of the winter-time blues, or even homesickness, there is a place on campus where they can find consolation: the Counseling and Wellness Center.

"It doesn't matter if it's major or minor. The door is always open here and we are willing to see anybody," said Jennifer Cary, counselor for the Counseling and Wellness Center.

The center provides many services, including individual, group, and couples counseling, athletic counseling, outreach programs, and consultation.

Cary and Anna Grajek, Associate Director of Counseling and Wellness, make up the staff. "We are also looking to get another part-time counselor," said Cary.

Cary said that "individual counseling is not wrong for anyone" and that many students discover underlying issues once they meet with her. Often the key to solv-

ing big problems is to first sort through these underlying issues.

The Counseling and Wellness Center is a necessary facet of Alma College because "students need a safe place where they can go to talk about their problems or issues," said Cary, "Without a service like this, who would they go to?"

Grajek believes that "the Counseling and Wellness Center is important as a holistic part of student development—to learn and grow socially, academically, emotionally, and physically. Plus, there are many new stressors associated with going away to college and being alone for the first time."

The Counseling and Wellness Center is located in the northeast corner of campus, between Bahlke Field and the Hogan Physical Education building. The door for the Counseling and Wellness Center is around the back on the north side of the building.

The center is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Students can set up an appoint-

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ACDC showcases talent in student choreographed concert

By **ANNA DYSINGER**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Months of preparations and rehearsals finally led up to the Alma College Dance Company Student Choreographer's Concert.

Held Friday through Sunday, in the dance studio of the Heritage Center, the show consisted of twelve pieces, all choreographed by members of the Alma College Dance Company (ACDC). Pieces varied from an adaptation of "Those You've Known" from the Broadway show Spring Awakening, choreographed by **Tara Roberts (09)**, to a lyrical duet

choreographed by **Jacquelynn Olson (11)**.

Kayla Pesko (11), a sophomore member of ACDC, was a first time choreographer for the show.

"My piece was called 'Come Together,'" Pesko said. "It was a collaboration of five Beatles' songs." She chose six dancers for her piece, which was a "competition of jazz versus ballet dancers." They rehearsed once or twice a week, for an hour at a time. "After a lot of hard work, I'd say the piece turned out really well," said Pesko. "I'm very proud of them [the dancers]."

Olson also said that the show

turned out to be a great success. "Thursday night's show is usually the favorite because it's student night. Our friends are always in the audience supporting us."

Carol Fike, professor of dance and one of the artistic directors of ACDC, said the whole point of a Student Choreographer's Concert "is to showcase the many diverse talents of our dance company members." The dancers are responsible for all aspects of the show. "This concert provides a venue for creative expression, for learning practical production skills, for opportunities to engage in designing the lights for the

pieces and for an overall sense of what it takes to produce a concert," said Fike.

It takes a lot of work to transform the studio into a performance setting.

"We work on the show starting in the summer," said **Diana Walton (09)**, one of the directors of the Student Choreographer's Concert. "We begin communicating with the choreographers and planning out the pieces that will be in the show."

The dance company holds auditions for the show during the first week of school and rehearsals begin in the following week. The

week before the show, the studio is transformed; the curtains are pulled, the wings are set up, and the lights are hung.

"There is a lot of work that goes into the show, but it's worth it," said Walton. "The end result is a show we're very proud of. It's fun, creative, and a completely different kind of show from what the campus is used to."

Didn't get a chance to see the Student Choreographer's Concert? Don't worry, because the Alma College Dance Company will perform in its annual winter concert March 20th through the 22nd.



Photo courtesy of Anna Dysinger

ACDC dancers perform with grace this past weekend in their own choreographed concert.

Cartrite's book focuses on how nations are able to become states

By KRISTEN HAIGHT
STAFF WRITER

What would it take for the Flemish to secede from Belgium or the Basque from Spain? Britt Cartrite, assistant professor of political science, is researching

these four phases in terms of level of organization. If they just have cultural groups that don't do anything political, they get a One. If they have some kind of interest group, although in the European context interest groups don't usually make sense, but they're ask-

the situation in Scotland. There is supposed to be a referendum on Scottish independence in 2010, and yet " [When] I went up to Shetland and Orkney, the two island groups off the north coast of Scotland, I found that the people there don't think of themselves as Scottish, at all. The basis of their identity is very Scandinavian."

So Cartrite pointed out a central question: if Orkney and Shetland do not consider themselves to be Scottish, are they likely to remain part of an independent Scotland? As island groups with relatively strong ethnic identities sitting on top of large oil reserves, the answer could very well be no.

While doing preliminary research on these two Scottish island groups, Cartrite discovered a connection with the Faroe Islands, a group of Danish islands in the North Sea. Faroe is home to an active political movement with previous secession attempts and a planned independence referendum in 2010. And, unlike Scotland, Cartrite believes there is very little chance it will not pass.

The question could very well be asked, does it matter if these tiny islands secede except to the people who live on them? It could matter a great deal. Cartrite discussed

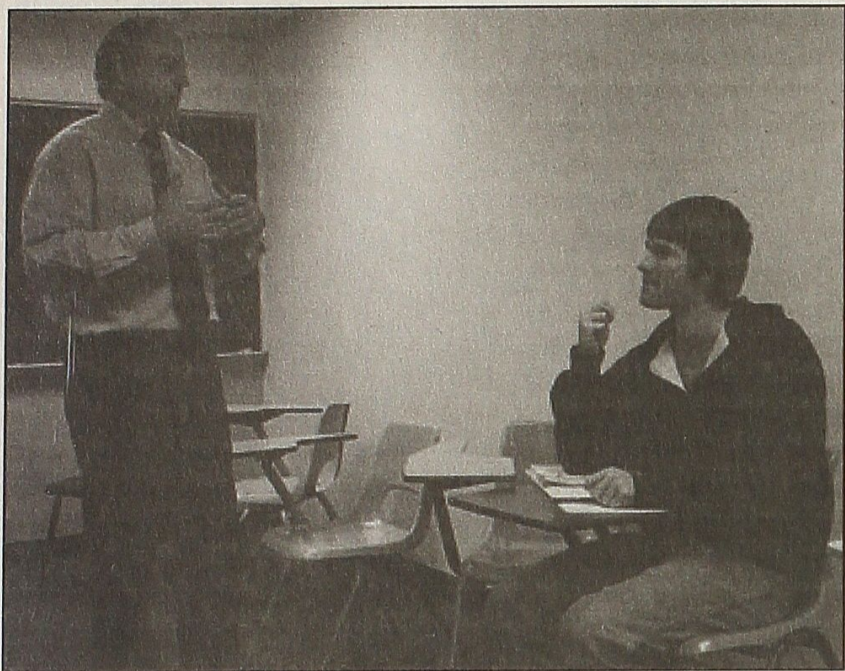


Photo courtesy of Britt Cartrite

Professor Cartrite explains classroom material to student Kalif Mathieu

and writing a book devoted to the question of what causes a nation – a people within a state or across state lines that share a common culture, history, or language – to try to become its own state.

According to Cartrite, his research is an attempt to determine why some nations are able to form effective political parties which help them achieve their goals and others are not. "What I was concerned about was that only your really well organized, salient groups ever even have such parties to begin with. There's a disconnect when people talk about possible nations and they say that if you have a distinct language, that that almost makes you a nation. And yet not all language groups pursue political rights. So what I did in my work is I said, I want to understand what it is that makes a social cleavage of some sort, whether it be language or religious cleavage, why it is that sometimes but not always that makes a basis for a group identity. And then sometimes but not always those groups go on to seek political rights, and then some of those but not all of them form political parties, and then some of those but even fewer go on to demand independence. I want to know why it is that relatively few possible nations actually get all the way to wanting independence," Cartrite said.

So how does a person measure the development of political success in a process that can take decades or even centuries? First one must figure out how these parties develop in the first place. Cartrite explained his process: "There are

ing other politicians to advocate for them, they get a code of Two. If they form a small political party, one of these types of parties which doesn't seem to be trying to win elections, but is simply trying to



Photo courtesy of Britt Cartrite

Cartrite spends much of his focus on the situation in Scotland

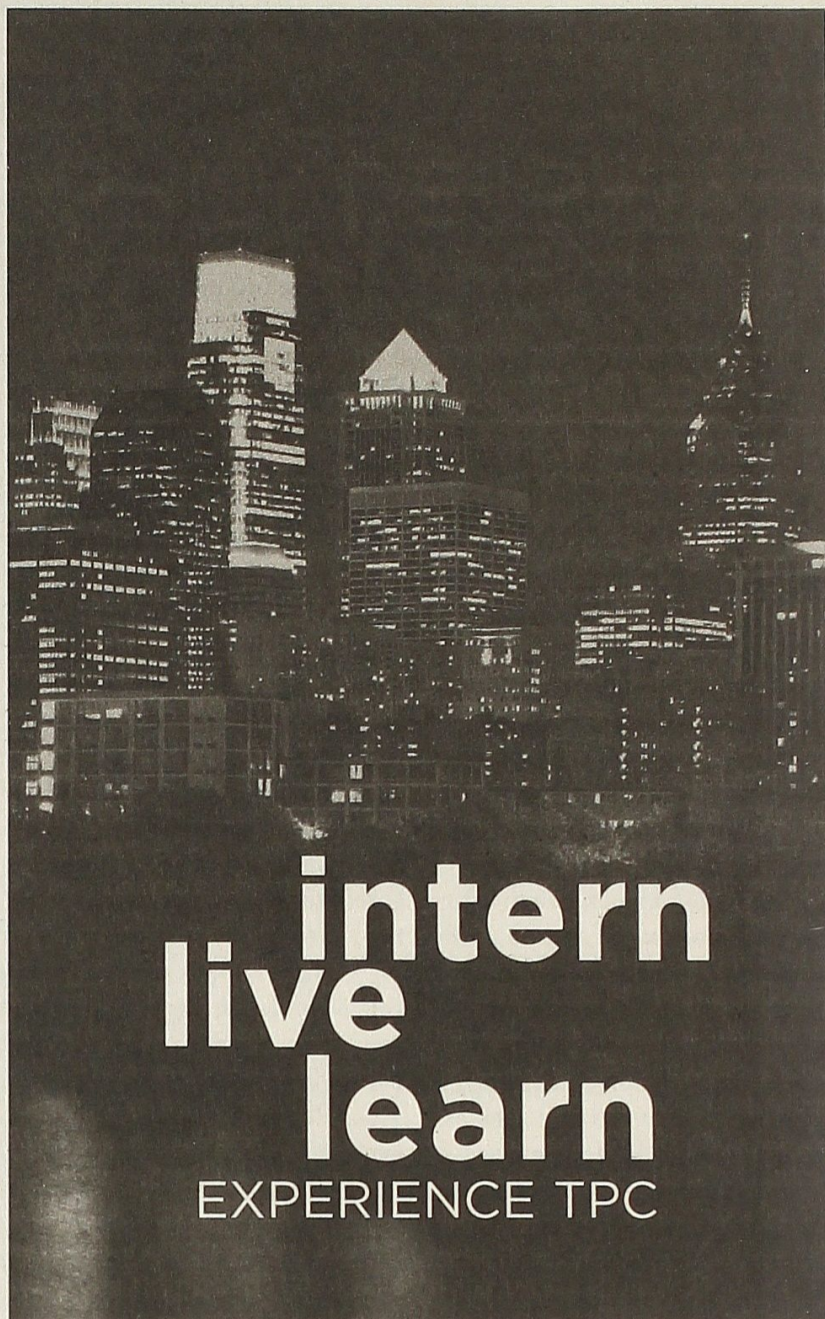
get big enough to run a candidate in every seat of their territory, essentially peeing on the bushes or marking their territory, they get a code of Three. And then Four is they form these parties that are actually trying to win elections at the national level."

A nation must have a cohesive identity before it can become a state. But in order to strengthen this theory, Cartrite needed to find real-world examples. He said, "There is an overall upward trend in Europe and ethnic groups all over Europe are becoming more politically active. I built a data set based on 15 linguistically distinct groups in the UK, France, and Spain. Minority groups, so groups like the Basque, the Catalán, the Corsican, the Welsh, the Scottish, and so forth."

In attempting to find a nation in an early One or Two stage, Cartrite found himself focusing heavily on

the fear amongst Europeans of a domino effect. "So if Faroe secedes, [Danish controlled] Greenland is watching what Faroe does and Faroe is trying to do what Iceland did. Shetland is watching Faroe and Greenland, and if Shetland goes, Orkney goes. And suddenly it's happening all over. Flanders secedes from Belgium, the Basque from Spain, Corsica from France." He continued on to say there is a very real fear that the European Union could double in size and they have an interest in trying to stop that from happening.

Cartrite's theories are certainly interesting, but the practical applications could affect millions of people. If tiny Danish islands in the North Sea will spark an outbreak of secession fever all across Europe, we could all benefit from paying very close attention in 2010.



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'Counseling and wellness' from page 3

ment at the center by calling 7225 or emailing either of the counselors. Additionally, walk-in emergency appointments are accepted at any time. Sessions usually last for 50 minutes.

Once students meet with a counselor, coming back is up to them. "It's based on individual need," said Cary, "I might see students one or two times and then we're done; the issues have been solved. But then there's other students who I see more."

All services provided by the Counseling and Wellness Center are free of charge to students and everything shared between a

counselor and a student is private and confidential.

However, counselors will break confidentiality in the event of clear and imminent danger to the individual or another person, if information is disclosed regarding child abuse or neglect, or because of legal and ethical requirements.

Grajek believes that students should bring their issues to the Counseling and Wellness Center because "pro-active is always better than re-active. If students realize that they're starting to have a hard time, it's better to come in early than when they've reached their breaking point."

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United States needs to abolish current jury system

By ALEXANDRA OSWALD
STAFF WRITER

The audacity of believing the jury system we use in this nation is brilliant is completely unfounded, inconceivable, and cannot be defended with utmost intelligence. Our use of the jury system is unjust and downright shameful. If you take an insightful look into our use of it, you can see with open eyes the flaws within the system. Jurors are usually a random assortment of average citizens whose knowledge is either lacking or simply not there.

The jury system within our courts is flawed, worthless, and abundantly idiotic. Average Americans, mainly those without

a background in criminal law, lack the necessary knowledge to make legal decisions when it comes to the fate of those “innocent until proven guilty.” We are now not just seating the uniformed, but simpletons who are easily fooled and swayed by prosecutors who can maliciously manipulate people’s sense of justice. We as a society see accusations of certain crimes in black and white, knowingly avoiding the grey area, and base our judgments on our individual sense of criminality.

Americans believe they have a sense of absolute right and wrong, correlating with morality, and make decisions merely on their own sense of emotion, disregarding facts and evidence.

“What is the point of a jury by your peers when you can hardly consider a random assortment of people to be of the intellectual level where they can make informed, legal decisions in regards to criminal cases?” said Sarah Bechtold (’12), adding that, “this is what makes the system so entirely flawed.” Emotions are very persuading when humans make decisions and this alone is a persuasive argument against the use of juries.

Also, the preparation of witnesses and the shaping of trial strategy, the manipulation of jury selection is not a new phenomenon – it resembles “social science” in the sense that the process of picking individuals to participate in

jury duty is outright flawed and deceitful. There are certain types of people who are swayed when making judicial decisions. Women of course do not like rapists. People who have a hard time paying the rent are great if the defendant is a big corporation. Is this fair? No. Does this reiterate a sense of justice? No. So why do we use it? I cannot intelligently explain the mindset of those who support this system.

The civil law system (also known as “Socialist law”), in which the judge gathers the evidence and makes the decision on a crime, needs to be practiced in the United States. Though there is great opposition to this, mainly because it allows one person

to make such a tremendous decision, it is a better alternative to jury duty. Judges at least have a sense of the law and can make enlightened decisions on cases, ranging from misdemeanors to felonies. Compared to common law, which is practiced in this nation, evidence is usually not interpreted narrowly, and legal opinions are usually short and to the point whereas in criminal law they are elaborate and can be interpreted differently from person to person.

If the United States collectively contained any intelligence it would abolish the jury system completely. There is no need for this unjust system of stupidity to plague our courts any longer.

Rush week provides no outlet for those not interested in greek life

By AMANDA LABBY
STAFF WRITER

With Greek recruitment upon us, there’s little much I can do but hole up in my room. The thought of an entire week devoted to fancy teas and swanky chatting with girls who never looked my way before, even when we sat next to each other for an entire semester, makes me a little anxious.

Although some may beg to differ, Greek life seems to have pulled the reins taut on the Alma campus. I appreciate service fraternities more over social life. However, as a member of the 2007-2008 student congress and present for the meeting where a service fraternity was unanimously voted for approval while Amnesty International, which had been a campus group in the past, was denied, I can’t help but be skeptical of it all.

Before anyone can say that as a willing nonmember of Greek life that I don’t know what it’s all about, I do have small idea. As a

graduate of a religious school, I went on a religious-based three-day retreat with fellow classmates. I can’t talk about a lot of the goings-on, just like some parts of Greek rushes and ceremonies are kept hush-hush. On the retreat I bonded with people I had never talked to before, and was said I would make friends that would last me the rest of my life.

My sister is part of Greek life. Although not an Alma student, she invited me to visit and spend the night at the sorority house she lived in. The next morning, as we were leaving the house, a member of her sorority bade us goodbye, first asking how we knew each other.

“We’re sisters,” my sister replied, but the girl looked confused.

After a few minutes of drilling us on the colleges we had ever attended, she came to the conclusion that we could not be sisters.

While I stared at her with a confused expression, my sister, after a moment, understood. She then proceeded to explain we had the same parents; we weren’t

sorority sisters, like the girl thought we were.

Maybe we caught the girl on a bad day. Maybe she had just finished a tough test and was taking a mental break. All I know is that I would not want to get involved in something that takes up my entire thought process.

The argument could be made that I’ve only seen the bad or very rare occurrences, but for now that’s been enough for me. I’ll never go socially Greek.

Bad experiences aside, I doubt I would ever look into it. I work two on-campus jobs and earn less than \$100 monthly. I can’t afford those pricey dues.

If I pay that much for dues, I’ll have to eat only at SAGA all year long.

I’m always willing to lend a hand through service, but not in exchange for handing over four paychecks and getting back a few lettered shirts. I can do service work for free.

Currently, going Greek socially is not for me. I’ll stay far away from the activities and wait for the week to pass.

PUZZLE CORNER

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

Answer to last week's puzzle

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

Puzzle courtesy of www.sudoku-puzzles.net

SUDOKU

Fill the 9x9 grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 boxes contains the digits from 1 to 9. Each number must occur only once in each column, row, and box.

the Almanian.

“ALMA COLLEGE’S STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER SERVING THE CAMPUS 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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Inauguration Day provides opportunity to reflect on past

By **KEVIN BILBREY**
OPINION EDITOR

June 12, 1963.
November 22, 1963.
September 21, 1965.
April 4, 1968.
June 5, 1968.

Five dates that will forever be seared into the hearts and minds of the United States and the world at large. They were days that the world changed. Days that the world mourned, and days that the brightness of humanity dimmed. These were the dates that Medgar Evers, John F. Kennedy, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated.

Now, I am not going to argue about these individuals' politics, nor am I going to get into a

debate concerning conspiracy theories or corrupt legal systems. In fact, I don't even really want to get into a conversation about who assassinated them. It just seems that on this day, when we honor the life and message of the late Dr. King, on the eve of what is one of the most historic events in American history, it is important to look back on the tragic events of the past so that we can really appreciate what this inauguration means.

I mean, think about it: in the space of five years, the five greatest voices for change and racial equality and tolerance in America were cut down. In a world full of hatred and fear, they offered a dream. They offered a world where that hatred and fear were nothing but a distant

memory. Now, they all approached this dream in radically different ways, and I am completely willing to agree that some were more effective and true to their goal than others (although I will let you decide whom that is), but I sincerely believe that at the heart of all of them was a desire to make the world a better place for all people through the recognition and respect of our fellow man. And all of them were killed for trying to accomplish this goal. It is without a doubt one of the darkest periods in the history of our country—in the history of the world.

By the end, after Bobby Kennedy was shot, it was a commonly held belief that the last great hope for equality was gone. It was thought by many that the civil rights and

human rights movements would never recover and never fully accomplish their goals. Yet now, here we stand, on the brink of the inauguration of the first black President of the United States of America, and I have hope for the future.

Don't get me wrong. I fully understand that our country and our world are far from resolving all of our issues. I know that the plight of minorities in America is still in many ways just as bad as it has ever been. I recognize that this inauguration doesn't really solve anything. I mean, I for one am not even a supporter of Barack Obama, but his presidency does give me a sense that something in the world is different. He advocates change, and while I don't agree with all of his politics,

I hope beyond anything that he can make that happen.

I remember the exact moment that this hope entered my being. I was in the Stone Recreation Center, watching the election results with a friend, when CNN announced that Obama had just secured the electoral votes necessary to win the election. My friend looked up at me and said, "It already feels like something is changing. Like the world won't ever be the same again." Well, as of tomorrow, that change that the great leaders of the past whose lives were so tragically ended because of their pursuit for the dream that Barack Obama now in many ways personifies, starts to take place.

Here is to hoping that the dream comes true.

Alma tutoring policy not conducive to high academic achievemers

By **LAUREN SHAW**
STAFF WRITER

Last Friday, I took my first quiz in Introduction to Microeconomics. I promptly decided it would be a good idea to get a tutor before the next quiz.

I stopped by the Academic and Career Planning Office after lunch to request a tutor.

I was rejected.

Evidently, having a cumulative GPA that is higher than a 3.0 disqualifies me from the tutoring offered by Alma College.

Now, I can't speak for everyone, but I distinctly remember being told during my senior year of high school that Alma offered free, unlimited tutoring to all of its students. The tutoring didn't really play any factor in my decision to come here, but I've always taken some comfort in knowing that if I got in over my head in a class, I could get a tutor.

Maybe I just haven't been paying attention, but was anyone else aware of the GPA policy? This seems like something that should be disclosed on all those fliers and emails produced by the Academic and Career Planning Office. Maybe I would have failed a few classes last year so that I could qualify for a tutor.

The thing that really gets me is that prior academic success isn't always an indicator of how well a student will do in a class. Okay, so I'm pretty good at political science and history. Okay, so I got through English 101 without any problems. How exactly does that prove that I will be successful in Introduction to Microeconomics?

And what if I want my GPA to be better than a 3.0? I plan on going to graduate school. The majority of schools that I'm considering want a 3.5, and even that's a stretch. Unless my plans change in the next two years, I need to keep at least a 3.75 to be

competitive.

Furthermore, even if I did meet the qualifications to be tutored, every student only gets 10 hours of tutoring per semester. That's not even one hour per week, at a college where students are told to expect three hours of homework for every hour spent in class.

Professors can sign off on more tutoring hours, if requested by a student—but who wants to have that conversation? "Professor, seeing as I'm only averaging a 3.8 percent in your class, can you sign this form so I can have extra tutoring?" And this is after the professor has already signed the form that allowed you to get tutoring in the first place, assuming your GPA is lower than 3.0.

I understand that there are budget issues, I really do. I get that there has to be some kind of verification process because the Academic and Career Planning Office can't afford to pay for unlimited tutoring for any student that wants it.

But why?

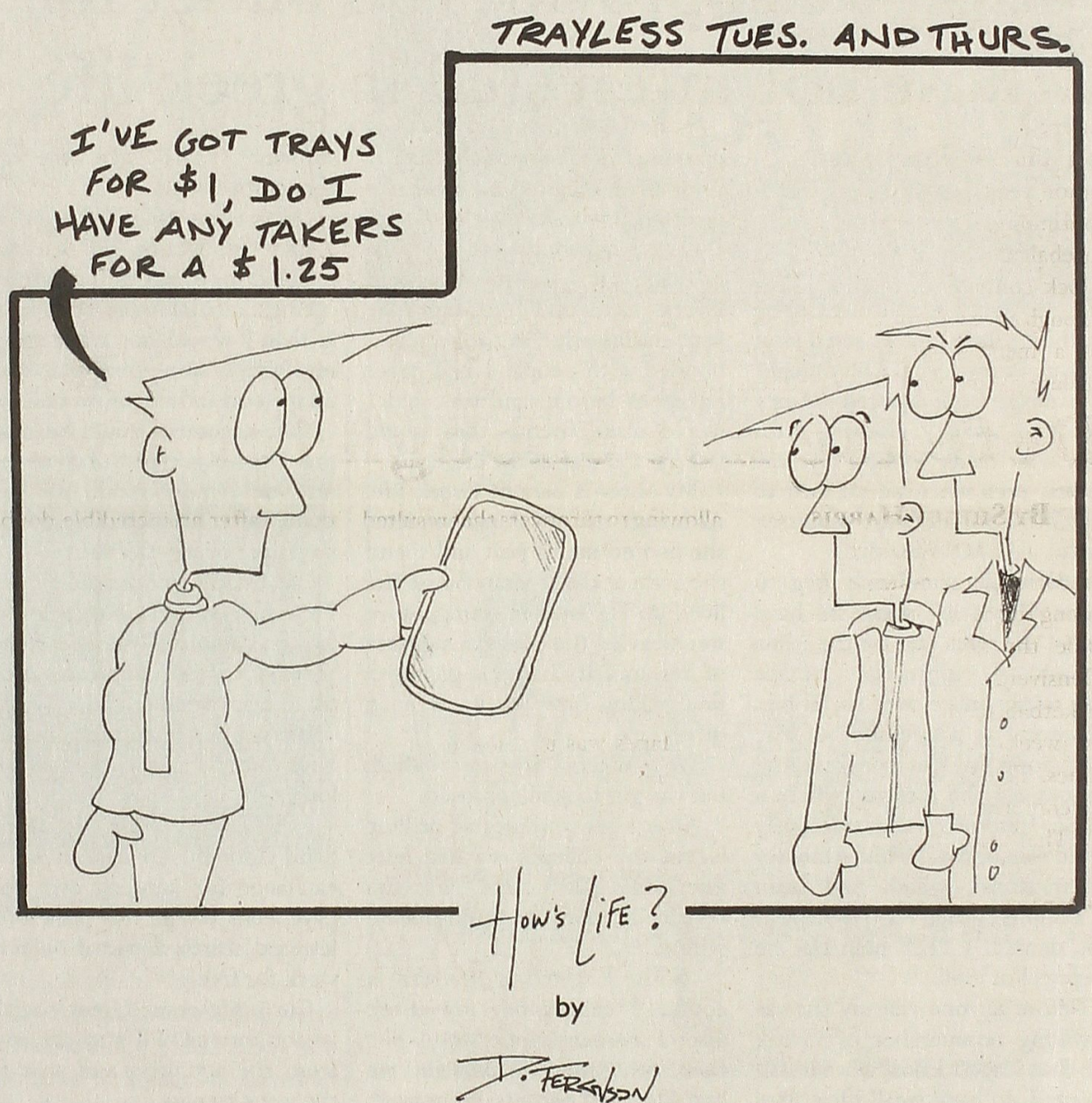
Why is it that the tutors themselves are so incredibly frustrated with the system?

Why is it that system prevents them from giving enough help to students who need it?

Why is it that the many of the Greek organizations on campus have become so frustrated with the system that they ignore it altogether, forming their own tutoring networks?

Why is it that at a Phi Beta Kappa institution, a school that produces winners of the Fulbright, Truman, Udall, Marshall, and Gates-Cambridge scholarships, a college that has 90 percent placement rates into medical and law schools, academics are so desperately underfunded?

I could speculate about where that money is going, but it would be just that—speculation. So instead I'll find the boy that would have been my econ tutor and beg him to do his job for free.



Dreadlocks provide outlet for one's individuality

By **Meredith Brown**
Staff Writer

There are very, very few things more important to members of our culture today than their external image. Examples of this can be seen absolutely anywhere, particularly in those ridiculous commercials we are bombarded with every time the television is turned on, advertising wrinkle reducing creams, hair dye, teeth whitening products, etc.—you name one thing you don't like about your physical appearance, and someone has come up with a way to cover it up.

A part of me buys into the idea that the clothing we wear, our piercings or tattoos (or lack thereof) are small manifestations of the character we have within us. I think as humans, part of our calling is to be creators. We can use our bodies as canvasses.

But in a large way, I'm also sick of feeling judged. I'm sick of caring about the way my skin looks, or if my jeans fit the way everyone

else's do, and you know what? I'm especially sick of trying to tame my hair.

I have massive, red lion mane hair. It does not sit flat. It has a personality of its own, and on particularly bad days, its own zip code. I have a humble affection for it, like one might have for an embarrassing younger sibling who refuses to shut up in fancy restaurants, airports, and elevators.

While most would go about solving this problem by cutting or straightening—silencing the sibling, if you will—I want to make my hair's voice louder. How do I plan to do this?

DREADLOCKS!

For many, this might be considered a fashion statement. It establishes me as a hippie even more than my personality and political views might. But I want it to be clear that that is not my primary reason for doing it.

It's because I just don't want to tame it anymore.

I don't want to tame myself

anymore.

I do not want to feel like I must calm down, be boxed in, flatten myself out for anyone else's comfort. I want to be myself, and I want to grow and be adventurous.

If you asked anyone who knew me about my flaws, they would probably tell you that one of my biggest problems is impatience. Dreadlocks will force me to grow in that area; taking weeks, months, sometimes even years, they form slowly into their intended state.

And now that we've established all of this, I'd just like to inform everyone that dreadlocks are not disgusting. True, for about the first week I won't be able to wash my hair (but that's what shower caps are for). After that, I can wash them as much as I like, provided I use an all-natural shampoo. Simple.

It's time we stopped trying to cover up the things that make us unique. Notice, accept, and love those things, and give them a voice. Then make it shout.

Spotlight: baseball player puts a focus on leadership

By MARIA CASTANEDA
STAFF WRITER

For **Bobby Jock ('09)**, baseball has been a part of his life for as long as he can remember.

Beginning with tee ball, Jock now continues his baseball career at Alma on the varsity baseball team. At first, Jock enjoyed tee ball just for the pure enjoyment of being outside and spending time with friends.

Jock played for Memphis High School and earned several awards throughout his four years, including All Conference for Macomb County, Honorable Mention All-State, All Academic, and Scholar Athlete.

During high school and middle school, Jock participated on various travel teams in the Connie Mak league. He also played basketball and soccer along with baseball.

At Alma, Jock played soccer his junior year, but decided against continuing that to focus on baseball and his studies.

Jock contributes to the college through more than just baseball. As a member of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee,

he works with other students to try to make sports at Alma more recognized, improve sportsmanship, and provide input on decisions that affect student-athletes at the college level. Jock also improves his leadership as a member of the Center for Responsible Leadership.

On the field, Jock has provided leadership on the varsity team.

"Not so much by being loud, but by leading by example," Jock said. "I know how to play the game right and try to help the guys academically."

Jock's favorite baseball memory is beating Adrian last year in the last game of the season.

"Adrian was tied with Calvin for first," Jock said. "After we beat them they almost lost their bid to the NCAA tournament."

For this season, Jock hopes to have a winning season and be competitive in the league.

"I think we're going to be better this year," Jock said. "We have a good freshmen class coming in and good senior leadership."

Hitting and lifting three times a week, plyometrics, swimming along with team bonding will also help the baseball team have a better season than in the past.

"In the past, we haven't worked out in the off season as consistently," Jock said. "We've also had more team bonding. Last year, no one knew each other. By the first practice and people formed their own little groups. This year we don't want the freshmen to feel excluded or scared of the seniors."

As to why Jock has continued playing baseball at Alma he said it is simply because of his love for the game.

"I would miss it too much if I stopped," Jock said. "I'm glad I stuck with it. There's always some doubt freshman year when you don't play too much, but things turn around."

His sophomore year at Alma, Jock was awarded Most Improved Player of the year.

As a senior Jock will graduate this year with a major in Exercise and Health Science, Jock plans on following a career in pediatrics or family practice. Taking steps toward this career he was recently accepted into Physician Assistant school at Central Michigan University.

Next year Jock will begin studying at CMU, but will no longer be playing baseball.

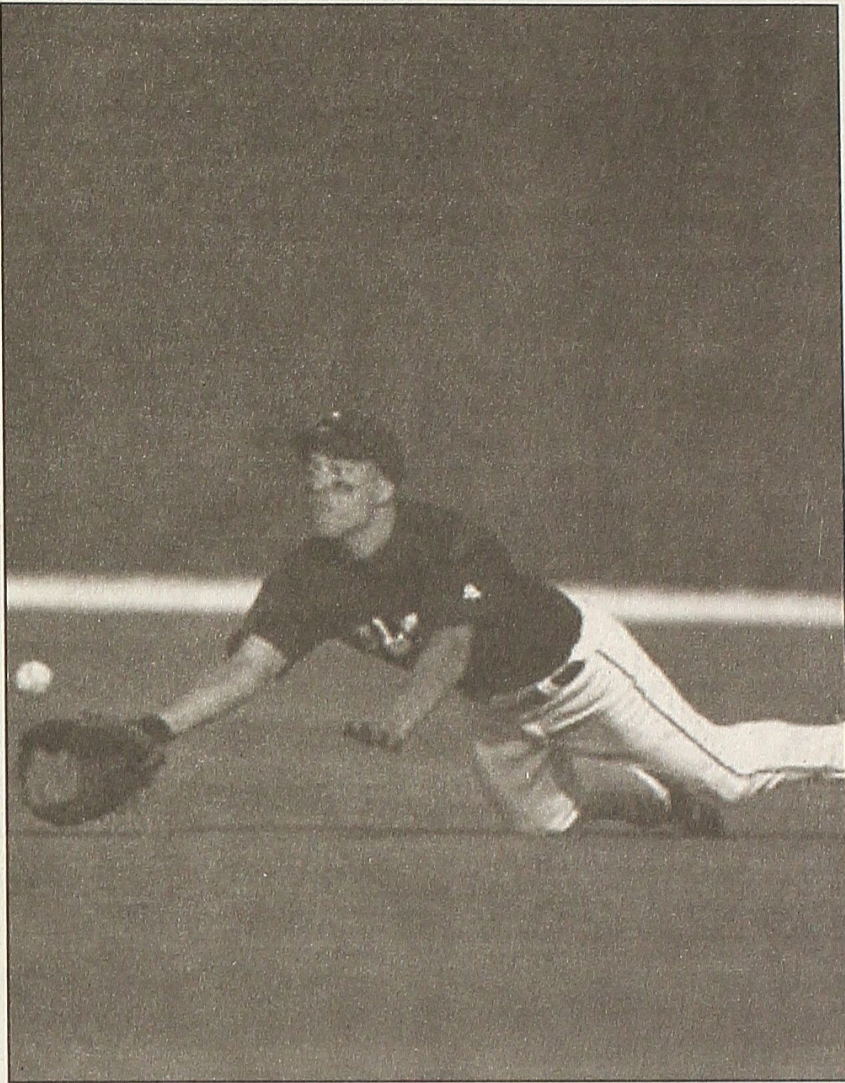


Photo courtesy of Bobby Jock

Bobby Jock ('09) catches the ball in the out field.

Defense not enough for a win

By SHELBY HARRIS
STAFF WRITER

Statistically the team's defense is among the best in the conference, while the Scots have struggled offensively. The women's basketball team hit a rough spot last week, losing both of their games. The Scots are now 3-4 in the conference and 4-10 overall.

The team played at Adrian College last Wednesday and lost with a final score of 57-50. Adrian took an early 14-4 lead and the Scots were unable to bounce back, despite some tough defensive play.

At halftime, the score was 28-20, and in the final minutes of the game the Scots brought the score to 50-46. Unfortunately, the Bulldogs held on for the win. Adrian is now ranked third in the conference.

Forward **Kathryn Bigelow ('10)** led the Scots in scoring, picking up 14 points. Guard **Lacey Best-Rowden ('10)** added another 13 points. Forward and center **Meagan Hoblet ('10)** led the team with nine rebounds. Overall the Scots held rebounds close, picking up 38 as a team to the Bulldogs' 40. The team also shot an outstanding 75 percent on free throws, with Guard **Heather Keenan ('09)** shooting 100 percent.

On Saturday, the Scots took on Trine University at home and fell to the Thunder with a final score of 53-33. Trine is now in fifth place in the conference.

Hoblet played a strong individual game, putting up seven points and six rebounds. Keenan added another six points. Trine kept the penalties to a minimum, allowing the Scots only eight free throw attempts. The Scots capitalized on four.

The Scots struggled defensively,

allowing 19 turnovers that resulted in 13 points for Trine.

On Saturday, January 10, the Scots lost a hard-fought game to St. Mary's. St. Mary's is now in first place in the conference, with a final score of 69-47. At the time St. Mary's was undefeated in the conference.

The Scots struggled early against St. Mary's, and were never able to overtake the scoring lead. Forward **Sydney Beckwith ('11)** led the Scots with 10 points. Guard **Stephanie Bradshaw ('11)** put up seven points and was one of three players with a team-high five rebounds. Bigelow and Hoblet each had five rebounds as well.

The Scots' current streak

comes after an incredible double-overtime win over Olivet College on Wednesday, January 7.

For the season, Hoblet leads the Scots in points, having put up 142 in their first 10 games. Hoblet also leads in rebounds with 105. Keenan leads in steals, and Bigelow in blocked shots.

The Scots' next game is on Wednesday at Albion. Their next home game is a non-conference on Saturday against Rochester College. The game begins at 3:00 p.m. at Cappaert Gymnasium.

Their next conference home game is Wednesday, January 28 against Hope College, currently second place in the MIAA. The game will begin at 6:00 p.m. at Cappaert Gymnasium.

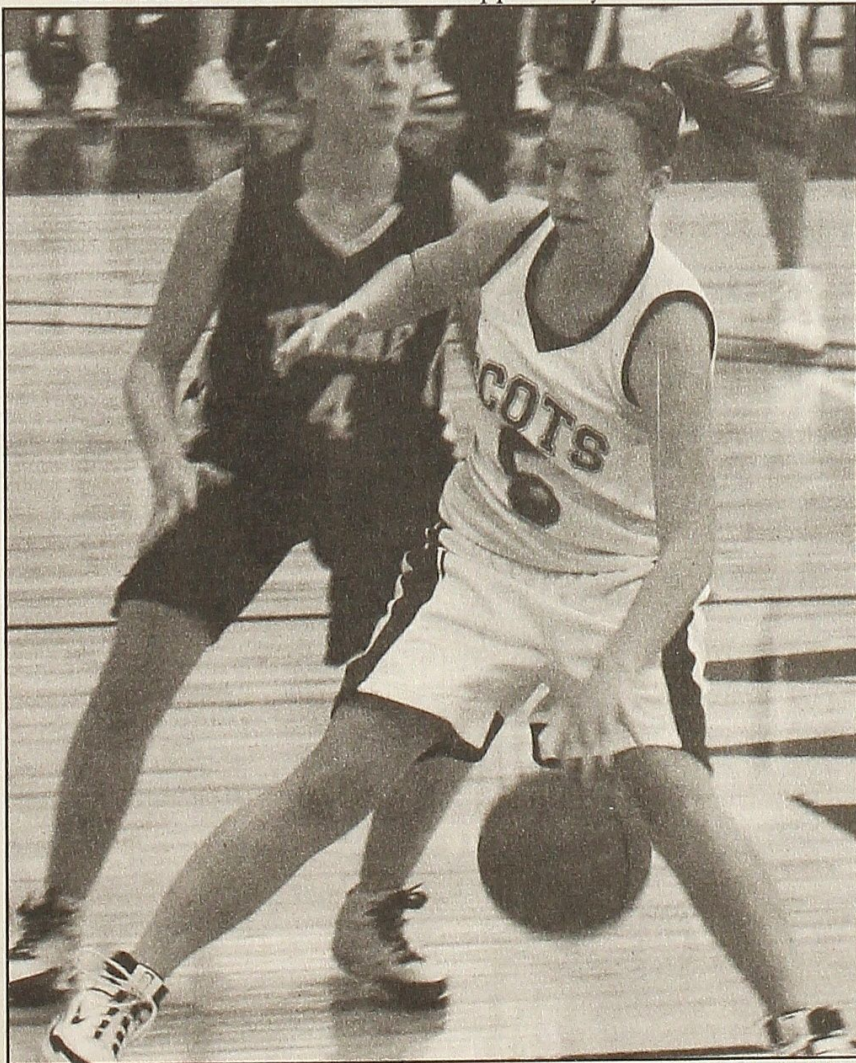


Photo courtesy of Vaughn Brines

Stephanie Bradshaw ('10) blocks the defensive player from Trine.

Rugby looks for new players

By SHELBY HARRIS
STAFF WRITER

Women's rugby has been making strides recently in establishing a new sport on campus; they have a coach, scheduled tournaments and all they need now is more women interested in learning a new sport.

"Legend has it that during the early 1800's in Northern England, William Webb Ellis picked up a soccer ball and ran with it," said Coach Robert Burns. This is how the sport of rugby came into being. Now rugby is starting as a part of Alma's recreational team for women.

President of the rugby team, **Maggie Kimball ('12)**, was the one who got the team started up this year. Kimball started to play rugby her senior year of high school. When she got to Alma, she missed playing that type of contact sport, so Kimball talked to her advisor, Karen Ball. Ball led Kimball to Robert Burns as a possible coach.

Burns gladly accepted the challenge of making a team, even though many of the perspective players had never heard of the sport to begin with. The rugby team has officially come into being now on Alma ground. However, there are currently only twelve girls on the team. The team is looking eventually for a roster of 20 to 22 girls.

"We are defiantly looking for more players, and we are not going to turn anyone away," **Emi Allen ('12)** said. "We would prefer off-season athletes, but you don't have to be. You don't even have to have played before."

Burns said, "I played Rugby in college, through grad school, and just recently stopped playing six years ago. The best tips you learn are from opposing players after they beat you up. It's the type of sport where on the field you are enemies, and then you step off,

and have a beer. It gives you social interaction with your opponents after the game."

The object of the game is to get a try, which is similar to a touchdown like in football. It has the general flow of play like soccer. This is why rugby is considered a mixture of soccer and football without the padding. During a game there are 15 players on the field from each team and a referee totaling 31 people at once. There are also two 40-minute halves that are played.

"Rugby is a game of possession," said vice president of the team **Emily Endres ('12)**. "You are allowed to pass only backwards or sideways. The more passes you have gives you more field. I like it because it's different, not the norm. It's really a strategically played game, and it gives you an adrenaline rush."

Kimball said, "You usually get pumped up for a game by coming up with a cheer, getting in a circle, and keeping everyone positive. Once you get negative it all goes downhill from there."

"My favorite part about the game is tackling and the contact part," Kimball said. "Many people think that the tackling is dangerous, but it's not. It's a great competitive and teamwork sport."

Burns said, "There are places on the rugby team for all shapes and sizes. It's a fast paced game where you switch from offense to defense at the drop of a ball, literally. There is a way everybody can play, and, in rugby, you can play all positions."

"Anyone is welcome to come and we would love to have you," said Allen.

The rugby team plans to have their first scrimmage in the beginning of February on an indoor turf field. This spring, the team will play in a few tournaments. They hope to get their official season underway next fall with the help of more members.

Swimming and diving lacks personnel for victory

By MARIA CASTANEDA
STAFF WRITER

Individual swimmers and divers have been going hard into the pool this season, but the lack of numbers is inhibiting the team so far. On Saturday the men and women's swimming and diving team lost to Olivet at home. The men ended with a score of 148-113 while the women ended 159-93.

Going into the meet both teams felt prepared to compete against Olivet. "We'll do better than we did last year," **Max Regan ('12)** said. "There should be some close races and we just have to make sure to beat the person next us."

Last year the men's team lost to Olivet 115-76, showing tremendous improvement this year losing by only 35 points.

Individually, 9 of the Scots 23

total swimmers and divers had a first place finish Saturday, 4 of which are freshmen.

"We've been training harder, we have a bigger team, and we've been getting along well," Regan said as to why they would be able to compete with Olivet this year.

The women also hoped to compete but were inhibited the size of their team. "I think as individuals on our team we will do well, but we just don't have the numbers to put up the points," **Geri Gaskell ('09)**.

Last year the women lost to Olivet by only 3 points. "Our meet against Olivet was very close last year with Olivet beating us 103-100, so hopefully this year we're able to compete with them again," Gaskell said.

Both the men and women's team recently traveled to Florida for an extra opportunity to train.

"Our Florida training trip was a great time for us but it was by no means easy. It was a very hard training week which started the toughest point in our season," Gaskell said. "We've been training very hard since we came back from break."

The swimming and diving teams' goals for this year were to each individually swim faster. "We all wanted to swim our best times and have fun," Regan said. "A goal for the guys was also to beat Albion, who is a big school rival."

"Any swimmer's main goal throughout a season is to train hard and swim faster," Gaskell said. "Our team has been doing just that, training hard."

Through long training sessions, two times a day for four days a week, the team supports and push each other to improve. "One thing



Photo by Devin Brines

Madison Behmlander ('12) took first in the Women's sopen 100 m. breast stroke with a time of 1:14.37 and Shaina Buhl took fourth.

I love about the team is that we all support each other during practice and competition," Gaskell said. "We have our days, as all teams do, but looking at it in the long run we're all here for one purpose, to swim fast, and we all support each other through it."

Despite these team efforts both teams agree that the lack of people on the team led to their defeat on Saturday. "We don't have enough to compete they had twice or three times as many people on their team," Regan said.

Gaskell also agreed that the size of the team did hurt them during the competition. "Even though our team has a lot of great swimmers it's

hard to do well against other teams because, comparatively, our team is just small," Gaskell said. "We just don't have the personnel to back up those getting the first place finishes and it really hurts us when it comes to points."

For the swimming and diving team the conference meets are the most important. "We see meets as just to see what we can do and we use them to see where we're at. They're more for extra practice," Regan said.

Continuing to prepare for the conference meet, the men and women's team will travel to Kalamazoo College on January 24th.

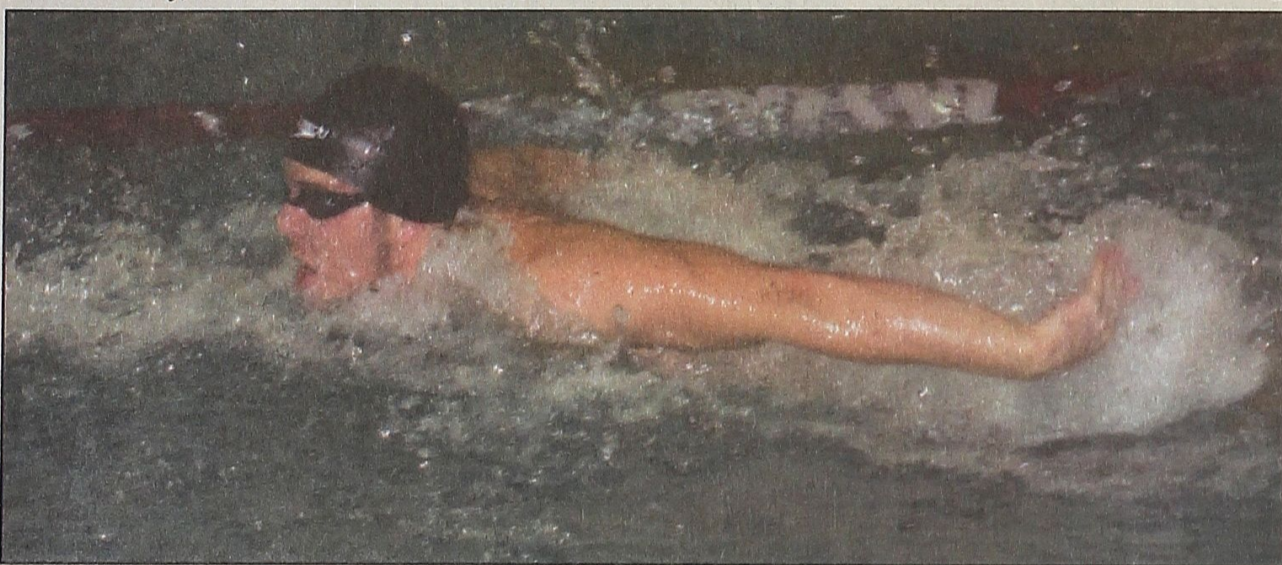


Photo by Devin Brines

Andrew Brunner came in second during the Men's open 200 fly.

Men's basketball celebrates first conference win

By LAUREN SHAW
STAFF WRITER

The men's basketball team had two home games this past week and won both despite the close finishing quarters.

On Wednesday, Alma matched up against Indiana's Trine University. It was an aggressive and intense game. There were many times during the game where players were scrapping on the floor for the ball.

At half-time Alma had pulled a 16 point lead. When both teams came back from their locker rooms the intensity increased. Trine started to come back with their leading scorer Wes Weir

"I think I played pretty well. As a team, we were up all game and learned that we can stay up all game"

scoring strong. In the end, Alma was able to hold off Trine and end up with a 77-65 victory. This makes the first conference win of the season for the Alma men.

6'4" forward **Ryan DeHaan ('09)** said, "I think I played pretty well. As a team, we were up all game and learned that we can stay up all game."

This game improves Alma's record to 1-2 in the conference and 3-10 overall. With a solid win, the Scots' head coach Terry Smith seemed pleased with his players as **Isaac Thaler ('10)** said, "Coach wanted post touches inside. We did this and got points

that helped the team."

Dehaan also found what he needed to do in order to lead his team to their first conference win, "being a Senior I need to be a vocal leader, so I think that was my role in this game." The whole team played a key role in this win and was proud of it. "I felt good today and made moves on the inside," said Thaler. "This was the best that I've played this year."

The game was not an easy win for the Maroon and Cream, near the end the players became tired and threatened the Scots lead. "At the end we didn't make our free-throws so that was a struggling part of the game," said Dehaan. According to Thaler, toward the end the Scots had a couple of turnovers, which tampered with their safety net of a lead.

Alma's second home game was on Saturday afternoon against Adrian College. Thaler said, prior to the game, "We are pretty pumped for it. Coach does a good job of getting us prepared."

Alma led for most of the game. They got off to a quick start, with **Thomas Erickson ('12)** scoring most of the points. However, with 11 seconds to go Adrian tied it up.

A time-out was then called. The players resumed the court determined to take a second win this week. **Jordan Redditt ('11)** received a pass. Redditt made the game winning two-pointer shot just as the buzzer went off. The Scots are now 2-2 in the conference.

On another note, the Scots Junior Varsity team suffered a loss on Wednesday.

Injured member of the team, **John Hawkins ('09)** said, "Alex Hancock had an outstanding game. He made a lot of points and got a lot of rebounds."

"Overall, the game was evenly

matched," said Hawkins. "It went back in forth. There were a few key stops at the end of the game, and then Trine converted." This is what led to a loss for Alma's JV team in such a close game.

The next game for men's basketball team will be on Wednesday, January 21, at Hope College and will be home again January 28, against Albion at 8 p.m.



Photo by Devin Brines

Jordan Redditt ('11) makes the winning two-point shot to win the game just as the buzzer sounded.