

ALMANIAN

The Great American Smoke-Out
and the fear of death
(see page 6)

SERVING ALMA COLLEGE SINCE 1907

VOLUME CII ISSUE XII
NOVEMBER 24-30 EDITION



Photo courtesy of Cathy Millon

Cathy Millon ('09) represented PRIDE at a conference hosted by the Michigan Campus Alliance.

Campus Alliance to 'protect rights of all'

By MEREDITH BROWN
STAFF WRITER

Senior Cathy Millon recently attended an all-day summit hosted by the Michigan Campus Alliance, a statewide alliance of gay-lesbian-bisexual-transgender support groups throughout college campuses as a representative of the Alma College group PRIDE.

The goal of the Michigan Campus Alliance is to "unite students, staff, faculty, alumni and community members to empower the voices of those who are under served and underrepresented on issues of sexuality, gender and sexual identities," states the organization's official Web site.

The convention was held at Michigan State, and was

attended by approximately 25 representatives from universities around the state.

Millon said there were discussions about the hopes, fears, challenges and opportunities of being homosexual in the workplace.

"There was a guy there from Michigan Tech who was majoring in biomedical engineering. He had a lot of concerns about whether he should come out in the workplace, and if so, when, seeing as biomedical engineering is typically a very male-dominated field of study, that he might face quite a bit of prejudice," said Millon.

She said there was also a speaker from Michigan State

See 'PRIDE' on page 2

Chapel attendance reaches record

By ELISABETH BLETSCH
STAFF WRITER

The chapel attendance broke 100 on Sunday, November 9, when Dr. Maurie Luetkemeier, professor of Exercise and Health Science, spoke on hunger, the theme of the month.

Everyone involved with running the chapel was excited about reaching this milestone.

Dr. Carol Gregg, Chaplain and Director of Spiritual Life, said attendance has been strong all semester, regularly hitting the mid 90s early in the fall term. As the semester wears on and students become busy with finals and other commitments, attendance usually drops.

For this reason it was quite surprising to Gregg, the student band, and the student ministry coordinators when attendance broke 100 so late in the term.

Gregg said there are many factors explaining why the attendance was higher than normal on November 9. First, Luetkemeier is a "well-loved professor not shy about telling people when he is going to speak at chapel."

Also, the student band has done an exceptional job at chapel services this semester, the student ministry coordinators put a lot of effort into making sure the campus community is aware of who will be speaking at chapel each week, and with bigger incoming classes each year, there are more people on campus to go to chapel.

Attendance since November 9 has been "strong—not over 100—but still strong," Gregg said.

Jim Scheide ('10), Student Ministry Coordinator, said, "I'm surprised that it happened this late in the year, but happy that the attendance reached this mark. It means people are spreading the

word."

Amanda Carlson ('10), Student Ministry Coordinator, is in charge of taking Chapel attendance during Passing the Peace each week. She informed Gregg that it had broke 100 and Gregg subsequently told Jim Allen ('09), band leader, who then announced the news. Cheer and applause followed.

Notably, it was only 10 years ago when chapel attendance was less than 10 per week. Chapel attendance has expanded almost 10 fold, making for a dramatic change.

According to Gregg, growing chapel attendance means an increase in energy and an increase in fellowship.

Gregg says that although this is a great achievement for the chapel, there is "still space in the pews."

Scheide adds that there is also "a balcony we haven't touched yet."

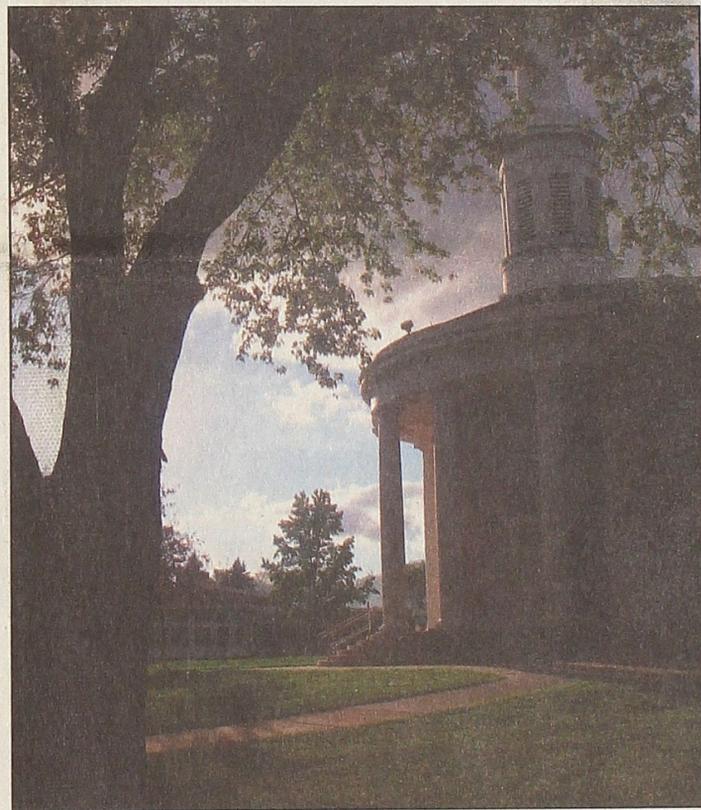
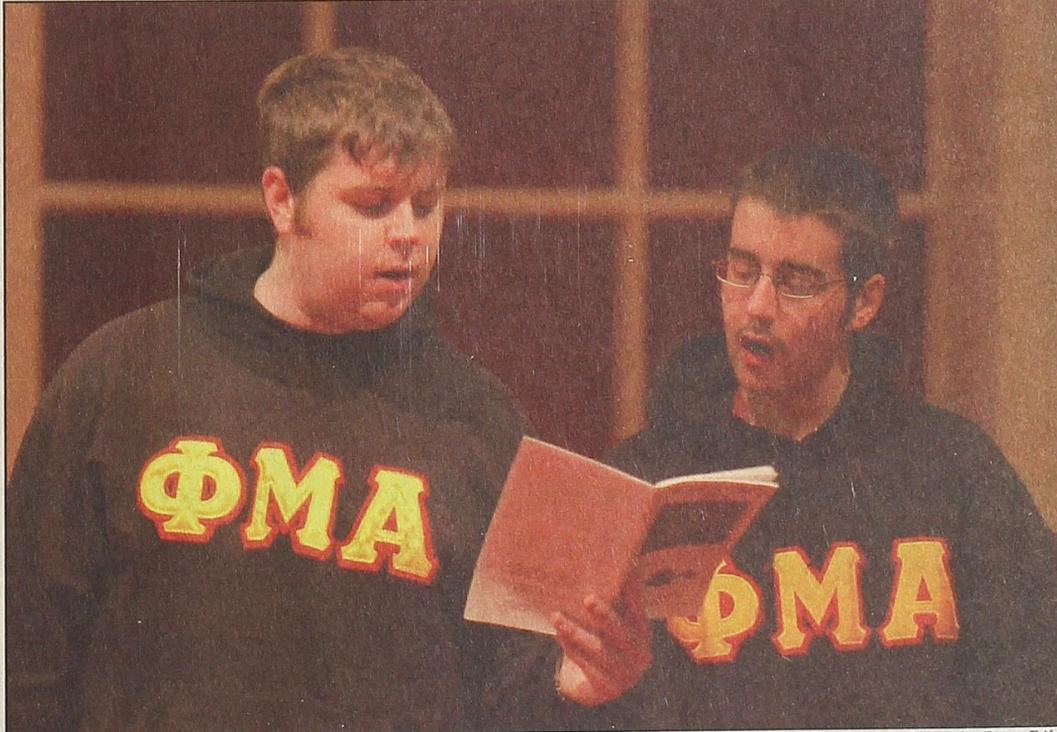


Photo by Catherine Finley

Weekly chapel services are held Sunday evenings at 9.



Photos by Brent Riley

(Left) Nichole King ('11) performs "A Christmas Carol." (Right) Nathan Glitman ('09) and Donald Best ('11), sing "Auld Lang Syne" in Sigma Alpha Iota's Holiday Musicale November 20. The Sisters of Sigma Alpha Iota were joined by the brothers of Phi Mu Alpha and played a variety of festive instrumental and vocal holiday music for a crowd of over 40 people. The concert coincided with SAI's Operation Christmas Child gift drive.



Photo by Brent Riley

After the conclusion of the organized concert, the sisters of SAI invited everyone to gather around the piano for some impromptu carolling in the chapel.

Second annual Christmas party promotes philanthropic work

By LAUREN SYPNIEWSKI
FEATURE EDITOR

The Multicultural Black Student Union (MBSU) will be hosting their second annual Christmas party in order to benefit their philanthropy, the Phelan-McDermid syndrome.

"We don't have a goal to reach," said Clay Roberts, MBSU president, "but we hope to raise as much as we can to send out; all of the profits are going straight to our philanthropy."

"We're constantly trying to raise awareness," commented Rachel Assendelft ('11). "I thought it would be a good philanthropy and a good way to get the word out."

Assendelft, whose own brother has the syndrome, stated that about 300 families worldwide have the syndrome. Every two years as many of these families as possible meet for a convention in South Carolina.

The Christmas party is being held in Jones Auditorium on Friday, December 5 from 10 p.m.

until 2 in the morning.

"I think a lot of people will show up," continued Assendelft, who also said brochures will be available at the party to better inform participants of the syndrome.

Throughout the night there will be music groups performing, a photo opportunity, food, and beverages.

One of the performers, "The Cartel," is coming from Chicago. Other groups include "Stylez Affiliated" whose members are

Zach VanHarris Jr., Tony Romano ('10), and Clay Roberts; "Young Reese," a hip-hop artist from Mt. Pleasant; "DJ Exclusive" who will be the DJ for the evening, along with Duncan Ferguson ('10) and Taylor "Stix" Jackson ('12); and Cameron Foley ('10).

Performances begin at 11 p.m. and end at approximately midnight. The dancing will continue after that.

"Mainly, it is just a big dance party with a concert," said Roberts.

The theme is Christmas, so

members of MBSU encourage all guests to wear their best Christmas apparel for the occasion.

Tickets are only a dollar a piece and will be sold in Hamilton Commons from November 24 through the fifth. Personal invitations are being sent out to the fraternities and sororities in order to try to limit other campus parties and include all students in this fundraiser.

"It's a way to incorporate the campus in one big event," continued Roberts.

Labyrinth walk to ease exam stress

By MEREDITH BROWN
STAFF WRITER

If you are feeling overwhelmed by finishing all those final papers and studying for exams and need a place to just think in silence, the campus Chapel is hosting a spiritual labyrinth walk in Jones Auditorium Tuesday, Dec. 2, through Thursday, Dec. 4.

"Walking a labyrinth can be a deeply spiritual experience," said Alma College Chaplain Carol Gregg. "It helps us to embody our prayers and symbolizes our desire to draw close to the divine mystery."

"Of course, this will not be so for everyone. The labyrinth itself is only a piece of canvas and has no magic or mystery, but for some, a meditative walk on the painted canvas can be a means to connect with God and find peace."

The Westminster Presbyterian Church further explains that walking a labyrinth "is not something to learn or memorize, but something to experience. It is a walking meditation, a path to quiet the

mind, and become more closely in tune with God. The labyrinth walk is a way to nourish the spirit and provide an opportunity to discover our sacred inner space and find insight into life's journey."

Labyrinths have been a part of a multitude of cultures throughout history, and are first thought to have been created over 3,000 years ago.

"Whilst we cannot be exactly sure what the labyrinths were used for, they were clearly a symbol of the Christian way, representing the path of the soul through life," write Kevin and Anna Draper, members of the alternative worship group Live on Planet Earth and advocates of the spiritual powers of walking labyrinths.

"Medieval pilgrims re-enacted this, following the path of the labyrinth in the cathedral on their knees as a means of prayer, or to symbolize the journey to Jerusalem, or as a ritual to mark the end of a pilgrimage. People walked it on the eve of their baptism or confirmation, as an aid

to contemplative prayer in Holy Week, and as an illustration both of the life of the Christian and of the life of Christ."

Rev. Christine Vogel purchased the Alma College chapel's labyrinth when she was chaplain in 2004, with the support of grant money provided by Lilly Endowment, Inc. It has been used on campus occasionally since its purchase, but Gregg plans to offer the labyrinth from now on at least a couple times a year, particularly if it is well used during exam week.

All are welcome to make use of the labyrinth at any time between Tuesday and Thursday, except after 9 p.m. on Wednesday. A pamphlet of instructions will be available upon entering to explain the history and protocol of the walk for participants.

"In the season of Advent, when we await the birth of Jesus and in the season of exams, when we await the conclusion of coursework, I think we all can benefit from deeper connections with God and the peace which that brings," said Gregg.

'PRIDE' from page 1

who described the employment environment of past jobs she had held, and the varied reactions she received. She also discussed when she felt comfortable enough to reveal her sexual orientation to coworkers.

A transgender art professor and a spokesperson from the Lansing Area Aids Network also spoke at the summit.

Millon played a key role in the rewriting of the Michigan Campus Alliance constitution.

"We discussed our goals for the future, and how to get new members to join groups like PRIDE here on campus that are

really passionate and want to be active in pursuing equal rights for all people," described Millon.

Millon said Alma's PRIDE group will sponsor a candlelight vigil that will take place Wednesday, Dec. 3 at 9 p.m. in McIntyre Mall as a formal recognition of World AIDS Day.

She said The Michigan Campus Alliance challenges all to "create welcoming, affirming and safe environments at institutions of higher learning throughout the state of Michigan," and Alma College, as a place of diversity and tolerance, should continue to rise to the challenge.

This week in Chapel: Carol Gregg,
Alma College Chaplain to speak
November's theme is hunger!
Sunday services at 9 p.m.
All are welcome!

2nd Annual
MBSU
Christmas party
December 5th

in Jones Auditorium
Tickets are on sale for \$1 in Saga

Sales benefit those with
Phelan-McDermid syndrome

English department hopes to implement writing minor in the fall semester 2009

By ELISABETH BLETSCHE
STAFF WRITER

Mary Wendt, Visiting Instructor of English and Writing Center Director, has constructed a writing minor that, if passed, will offer Alma College Students a great complement to many majors.

Wendt says only 10 percent of colleges the size of Alma have a

program like the proposed writing minor.

The program would greatly strengthen the academic reputation of Alma College.

"A writing minor would add depth to Alma's course offerings, give us a competitive edge, and attract new students," said Wendt.

The writing minor must pass through the Educational Policies

Committee, hopefully by the fall of 2009.

Wendt received her undergraduate degree in English from Alma College in 2003. However, she has always been more interested in the art of writing than literature.

As she worked on receiving her Ph. D. from Michigan State University, Wendt recognized that "people are writing about many

things besides literature."

Michigan State University added a writing major and minor about five years ago and it took off at an extraordinary rate, said Wendt.

The classes were always full, and the university had to close courses to incoming students in order to ensure seniors would meet all the requirements to graduate on time.

Leaving the "Alma Bubble" and seeing a writing program successfully working in another place, Wendt realized that a writing minor would greatly benefit Alma College.

She designed the minor in the 2008 winter term, writing a rationale for the program and creating the requirements of the minor. The English Department was very receptive of her ideas.

In her rationale, Wendt writes: A writing minor for Alma College would not necessarily put us in the forefront; it will help us catch up with other schools who are realizing the trends of our working world and our need for more capable writers in various modes and media. It isn't enough these days to be able to simply write a good paragraph: now we have to know how to understand rhetorical situations and write accordingly more than ever.

According to Wendt, there are a lot of English students who do not want to teach literature.

"A writing minor is important for those students eager to major in English yet compelled to concentrate more on the writing aspect of the field rather than the literary aspect."

Wendt believes the writing minor could be a great complement to a history major, psychology major, as well as to an English major.

"With technology changing the infrastructure of the way many businesses and corporations handle text, good writing is becoming indispensable for people in all fields and all disciplines, as many people are beginning to do most, if not all, of their own writing in the workplace."

To complete a writing minor, students would be required to take Digital Rhetoric, which would instruct students on how to write for many different digital environments, including the internet; Professional Rhetoric; and Reading, Writing, and Research, a new requirement for the English major that would also be a component of the writing minor.

Students would also need to take Creative Writing as well as an additional three courses in writing.

The writing minor will reside within the English department.

"The writing minor will give the department diversity and depth, bringing together all the aspects of English," Wendt said.

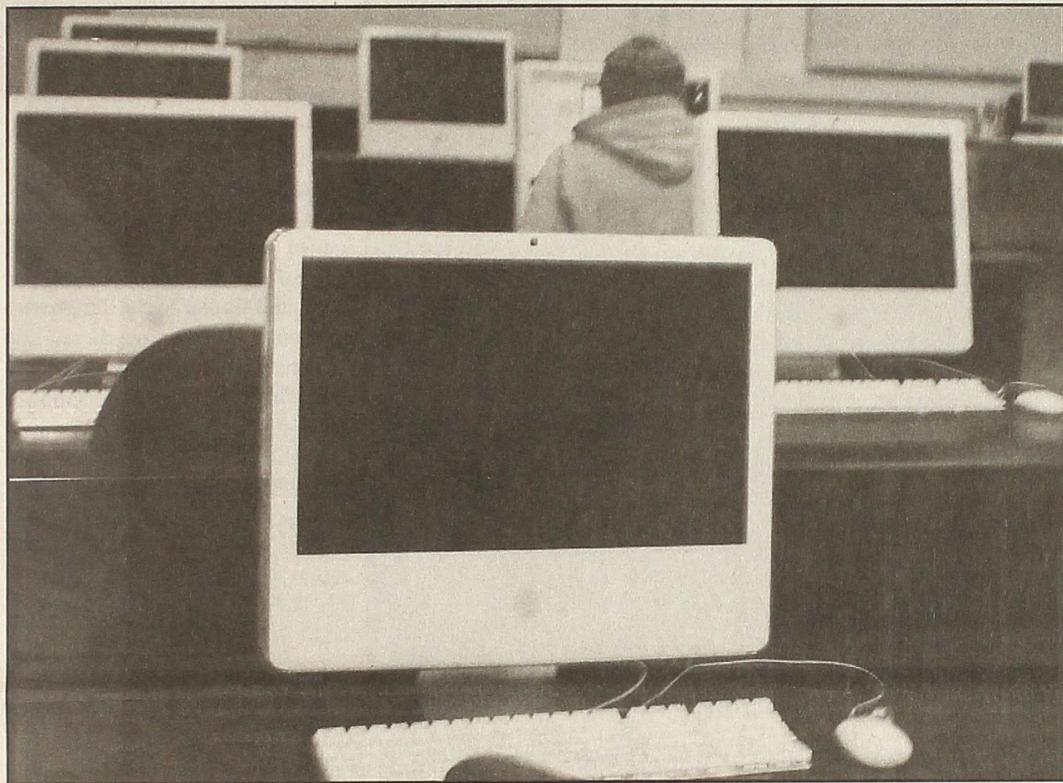


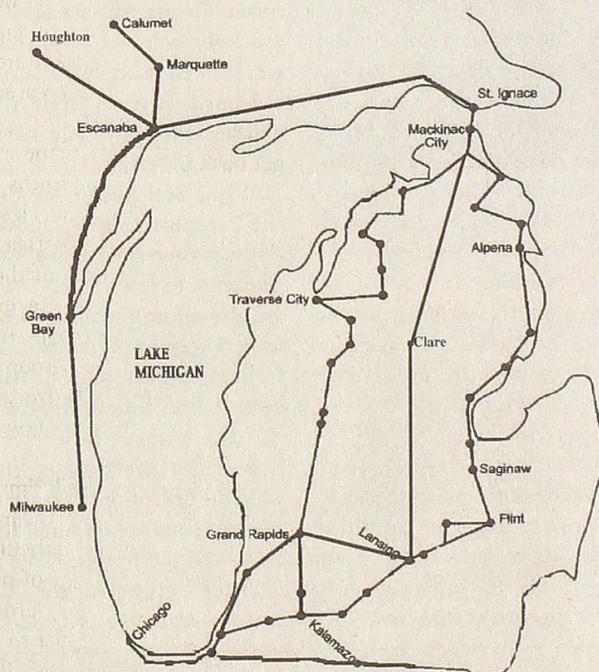
Photo by Danielle Jellison

New English minor plans to incorporate wider use of digital media.

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Two renovation projects on administration's mind

By ANNA ZICHI
STAFF WRITER

Renovations on campus seem to be one of the main things on administrators' minds these days. Currently there are two main projects set to begin next summer. The first and most widely publicized is the renovation to the Hogan facility. Second is the remodel

of the first floor of the Swanson Academic Center (SAC), which has been recently agreed on.

Beginning last year money was granted towards the renovation of the Hogan building. "It is on track and we plan to break ground soon after commencement in April," said Saundra Tracy, President of Alma College.

"The project is a \$12.6 million

project and will be completed over a period of approximately 17 months," said Vice President for Finance and Administration Jerry Scoby. "Because it will span two summers and one academic year, the building will be used while the addition and renovation work is going on."

These renovations include: a new performance gym/arena, a

new lobby area and a new athletic training room. Several other smaller improvements are also included in the renovation.

Because of multiple large renovations the project will be broken up into four different phases.

"The new construction portion of the project is the easier to handle since it does not displace persons and activities as much as the

renovations," said Tracy. "Renovations to the existing Hogan facility will be phased, also beginning this spring. We are working closely with the primary users of the Hogan facility to create the least disruption possible."

"This new construction will generally be going on concurrently with most of the other phases," Scoby said. "The latest phase will be a small amount of work that will occur in the current Cappaert gymnasium, which will become a practice facility."

The second project occurring this summer, which was just recently approved, is the renovation of the first floor of SAC where the Information Technology (IT) office was formerly located. Currently floor plans can be seen in the windows of the old IT office.

"There have been some revisions since then in order to accommodate the server room, but the final design is similar to the design with the angles you can see there," said Michael Selmon, Provost.

"Other renovations slated for this summer include some work on the air handling systems of Dow/Kapp and Clack, and renovations of SAC 110 and on the third floor of SAC in the spaces currently occupied by the Stro-sacker lab and the Communication labs," said Selmon.

All of these renovations will begin shortly after commencement in April, and many will be finished by the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year.

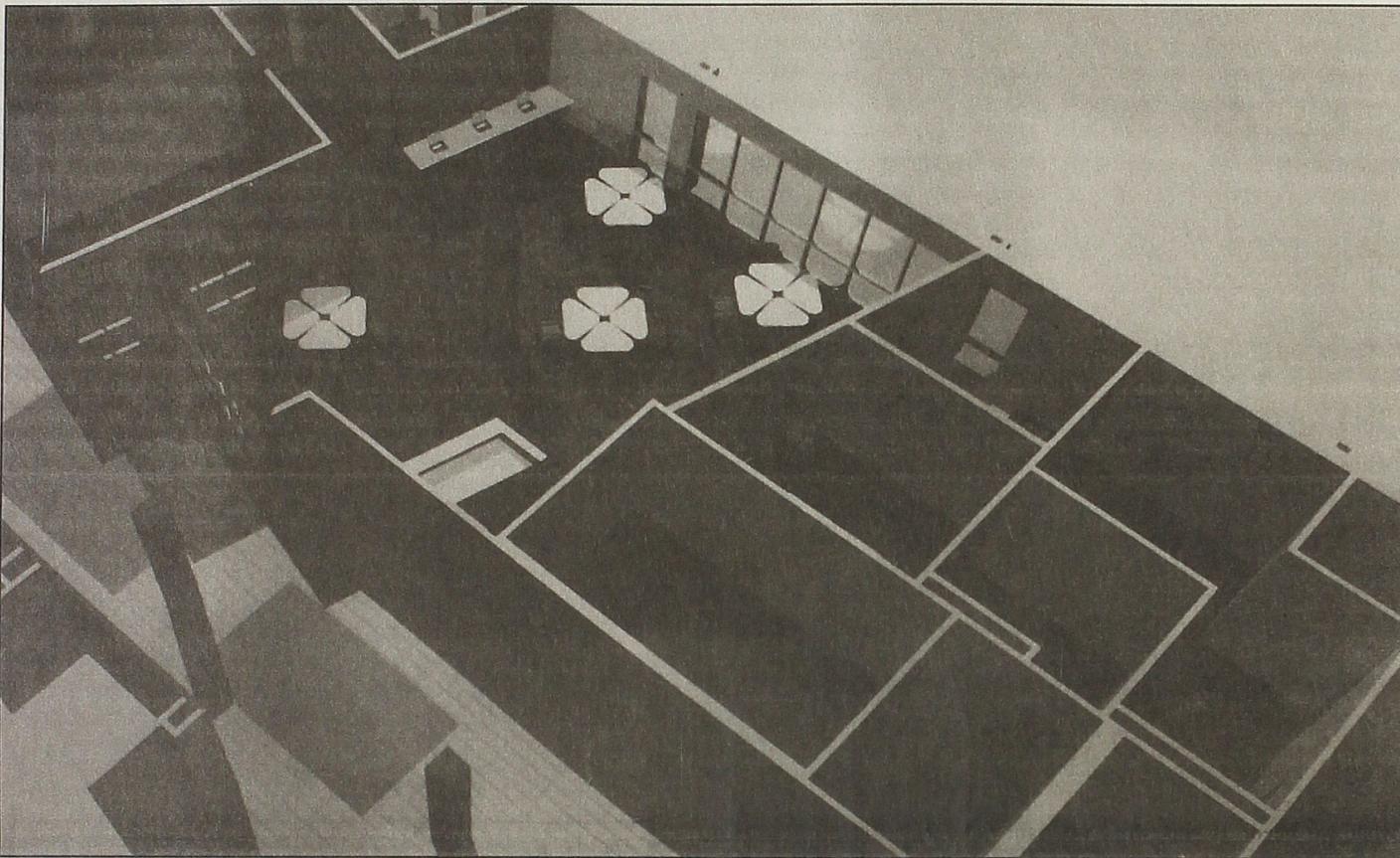


Photo by Danielle Jellison

The \$4.5 million project will include the development of high tech classrooms, new music practice rooms, changes to the office space in the library, as well as other improvements to SAC and DOW.

Smith given opportunity to teach in Italy; she encourages students to study with her

By ANNA ZICHI
STAFF WRITER

Studying abroad is a major component of a student's life while at Alma. For some, this is done during an actual semester. For others it takes place during Spring Term. And for those lucky professors that are able to take a class on one of these trips, the experience is just as rewarding.

Jamie Smith, Assistant Professor of History, is a rare exception who is allowed the opportunity to teach abroad during the 2010 Winter Term.

"Off-campus studies sends around the notification to faculty yearly that through MCSA [(Midwestern Consortium for Study Abroad)] we have the opportunity to apply to teach on an AHA

International program in Segovia, Spain, Vienna, Austria and Macerata, Italy each year," said Smith. "I was excited to apply because I am a strong believer in Study Abroad, and because I love any excuse to get back to Italy."

While Smith is no stranger to the European culture, this will be the first time she has had the opportunity to teach abroad. "I studied abroad in Freiburg, Germany, when I was a sophomore at Colby College," Smith said. She has also been to Italy four or five times.

Alma strongly believes in the importance of studying abroad, which is one of the many reasons why students are required to take an off campus Spring Term. Most students return to the United States with a greater understand-

ing, but many have their lives changed forever.

"Living in a foreign environment made me face many truths about myself, my assumptions, and my own country," said Smith. "I sincerely believe that I would not be where I am today if I had not taken advantage of this wonderful opportunity. Studying abroad gave me the confidence to seize whatever life threw at me."

Smith credits her teaching career in Alma to her experiences throughout Europe. Because of the confidence she gained, she had the courage to pursue her Ph.D. in Toronto and apply for an opening at Alma. Smith said, "Each experience has enriched my life exponentially."

While in Italy, she will be teach-

ing one class titled: "Making Renaissance Italy."

"We will discuss the changes that happened in the late Middle Ages—rise of trade and cities, as two examples—that facilitated the 'Italian Renaissance' as we understand it today," said Smith.

Smith foresees her experiences in Italy enriching her teaching when she returns to Alma. Many aspects of her classes will become easier to teach because she will have experienced them first hand.

"For starters, I have the opportunity to teach 'on location'," said Smith. "Although I use pictures often in my classes, being there will make a far greater impact. It also makes explaining some particularly Italian phenomenon-

like the importance of the piazza or civic humanism—easier."

"I'm not sure you could find a greater proponent of study abroad," said Smith. "I would be happy to talk about studying in Italy specifically, or study abroad in general, with anyone. It isn't without its difficulties—re-entry is inexplicably hard, for instance, but the rewards far outweigh any hardship. The knowledge you gain of yourself and the world around you alone is worth it—not to mention the bragging rights."

Just as students who return from such a trip enrich the campus, Smith will do the same when she returns. Smith said, "They more students we have studying abroad, the more it will become part of the culture here."

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OPINION

November 24-30, 2008

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Scheduling system leads to lack of credits, credit-hording

By AMANDA LABBY
STAFF WRITER

Like all things at Alma, I had to find out the quirks about scheduling the hard way.

After having no scheduling problem for my first semester of freshman year, I viewed the scheduling idea as fun. It was thrilling to pick out new classes and build a schedule of interesting classes that weren't early in the morning. Registration was a god and I was its humble servant, eager and excited.

At least that's how it was until the second semester of freshman year, until I became a registrar atheist.

Long story short, and probably a similar one since I can only imagine most have gone through the painful process, I turned in my schedule with 17 credits and ended up with less than the 13 required credits to be a student.

As if classes alone weren't stressful enough, I had to run around campus with my drop/add form in hand, begging professors to get me into their classes.

Despite the bad reputation Alma gets for its inane regulations, it does teach you never to forget. If Alma was a mother looking after her child and the kid was going towards the hot stove, I can only imagine she would let him touch the stove. Alma reeks of tough

love and what doesn't kill you always makes you stronger, right?

I somehow survived that time in my life. It was tough, but I saw it through and not only do I have a story to share with others who have gone through similar situations but, because of it, I know enough now to sign up for ridiculous amounts of credits in hopes of being a student with having to add anymore.

For the coming winter semester, I signed up for 28 credits, hoping to end up with at least 16. I lucked out; I ended up with 20 credits.

Maybe that's because the registrar took pity on me, or perhaps it's because I've learned how to manipulate the little arrows on

the side of the scheduling page. Either way, I will never be able to look at registration the same way again.

From using nothing but my keen observation skills, it seems that at least one in two students, if not both, have trouble with their scheduling, either having signed up for too many in order not to get screwed over, then afterwards having to drop the extras, or not getting enough credits to begin with.

Maybe those, like myself, who sign up for an overabundance of credits actually ruin the process for others. Maybe if everyone signed up for their desired schedule with no extra classes, no

one would end up short.

Or maybe if the problem is as large as I think it is, something could be fixed internally, such as a first come first serve basis, where, once a class is filled up, it can no longer be added. Only the first 25 or so people with fast mouse-clicking skills can claim the prize. Gamers would own registration.

That day, if it ever even decides to come, is too far away. Until then, more unknowing freshmen will just have to suffer as we did.

So, I apologize now if my credit-hoarding affected anyone's schedule. I promise I'll drop my extra class once I run around campus with my drop/add form in hand, for old time's sake.

Socialism needs to be practiced in the U.S.

By ALEXANDRA OSWALD
STAFF WRITER

Capitalism runs this nation, effectively dividing classes and driving wedges between the "real" citizens in this country and the rich who unrightfully control them and their lives. The United States, being one, if not the, most influential and powerful nations on this earth, needs to rid itself of capitalism and focus on the people, striving to make this a better place for all people, not just the privileged and wealthy. Our nation needs to convert to socialism, resemble Canada and France, and make living in this country decent and reasonable.

There is an odd fear of socialism in this country which hinders the United States from partaking in of the most humane and best political systems this world has to offer. Socialism is not mere government ownership, a welfare state, or a repressive bureaucracy but a new social and economic order in which workers and consumers control production and community residents control their neighborhoods, homes, and schools. Focusing on humanity, the production of society is used not for the private profit of a few

greedy fat cats in this nation.

Under capitalist states people hold little control over fundamental areas of their lives, which we experience every day of our lives. According to the Socialist Party, "the inevitable product of capitalism is a class society with gross inequality of privileges, a draining of the productive wealth and goods of the society into military purposes, environmental pollution, and war in which workers are compelled to fight other workers". Is this what we need? Is this what we have worked to achieve since Washington became the first President?

The Socialist Party USA strives to establish a radical democracy that places people's lives under their own control - a non-racist, classless, feminist socialist society. Believing that socialism and democracy are one and indivisible, the party believes that the working class is in a key and central position to fight back against the ruling capitalist class and its power. It fights for progressive changes compatible with a socialist future and strives for democratic revolutions, i.e. radical and fundamental changes in the structure and quality of economic, political, and personal relations, to abolish the power

now exercised by the few who control great wealth and the government.

People irrationally fear socialism, more comfortable with the capitalistic direction our nation has taken, and antiquate it wrongly with communism. During the election, many people believed Obama to be socialist, fearing it, but socialism is progressive politics for a new world so the fear was immensely irrational. Socialist International, an organization of social democratic, socialist and labour parties, said that it "recognizes that in many ways the choice of Obama by the American people is also a victory for diversity not only in the United States but throughout the world, as it provides tremendous inspiration for people everywhere who are still struggling to overcome racism and discrimination."

To make this country better and serve the public more than the elite few, we need to convert to socialism and abandon capitalism. People across the world need to cast off the systems which oppress them, and build a new world fit for all humanity. We need freedom of equality and welcomed liberation, not the ongoing oppression most people in this nation has suffered from! End discrimination, promote equality.

PUZZLE CORNER

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

Puzzle courtesy of www.sudoku-puzzles.net

Answer to last week's puzzle

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

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."

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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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Happy Holidays v. Merry Christmas: the debate rages on

BY AMANDA LABBY
STAFF WRITER

It's that time of year again; Wal-Mart is decked out with the holiday decorations, with inflatable reindeer down every aisle and Christmas tunes blasting through the store, and it's not even Thanksgiving yet.

Oh, and little downtown Alma has wreaths up, too.

All of the decorations call for the old debate to resurface again, the bloody feud featuring Happy Holidays vs. Merry Christmas. As much as I hate the debate, I can't help but not stay away. It's like SAGA; as much as I want to stop eating there, I keep going back.

Of course, with my liberal agenda, in-between my plans to turn the entire world socialist or Communist or insert your own understanding here, and wanting to sit around a campfire and sing Kumbaya, I'm also an advocate for Happy Holidays.

Although Christianity is our country's major religion, I understand there is a large minority population who do not celebrate the holiday that seems to revolve around trees and presents.

I could care less what individuals wish each other, but when big corporations, like our good friend Wal-Mart, greet everyone with a cheerful "Merry Christmas" instead of a universal term, I can't help but think tolerance has been

flung to the curb.

To me, a large corporation saying Merry Christmas is saying they only want one religion to shop there. Happy Holidays rings an all-inclusive greeting, wishing someone to have a happy whatever they celebrate, even including Thanksgiving and New Year's.

It is true that Christians all over the world number to be around 2 million, roughly one-third of the population, but that also means that two-thirds have other beliefs. Tens of millions of people in the United States do not practice Christianity or celebrate Christmas.

So, instead of including all people, large corporations would rather cater towards one major religion, such as our good friend

Wal-Mart.

Just a few weeks ago, Wal-Mart announced that, after going Happy Holidays last year, it would return to Merry Christmas. While their reason wasn't specified exactly, it was implied that, since last year The Catholic League boycotted stores such as Wal-Mart for using not using Merry Christmas instead of the generic, all-including phrase. Wal-Mart has gone back to the Christmas phrase because they "learned a lesson."

It may just be me, but I find it strange that a religious organization that should preach goodness and humanity would pitch a fit and boycott a store over using a close-minded term and not because Wal-Mart buys from sweatshops that use child

laborers. I guess Christmas trees are more important than children who live an ocean away.

In the end, despite being pro-Holiday, I can't help but feel bad for Christianity, with organizations recognizing Christmas over Holidays. Large businesses like Wal-Mart have commercialized Christmas into a chubby Santa and presents galore. If these businesses did acknowledge Holidays, maybe Boxing would have new marketable phrases and catchy songs.

As for other religious holidays, Merry Christmas is probably best; it means their holiday hasn't yet been skewed into a lucrative business.

Happy Holidays to all. Or, maybe, Merry Christmas.

AWKWARD MISCONCEPTIONS

BY CHRIS SCHNEIDER



Great American Smoke-out nothing more than propoganda

ALEXANDRA OSWALD
STAFF WRITER

Smoking has been around for centuries, acting as a key aspect of our culture, but has been shunned in the recent years due to people's inane, obsessive fear of death. This past Thursday Alma College's organization, Colleges against Cancer, participated in the day, hanging a banner near the library and sticking tiny white flags into the ground to signify those who die of smoking related causes. Anti-smoking activists, such as members within Colleges against Cancer, participate in American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout® every year, on the

third Thursday of November, urging smokers across the nation to take part by smoking less or quitting for the day. The event attempts to challenge people to stop using tobacco and helps make people aware of the consequences but not so sadly, it is all in vain.

According to Cancer.org, the Smokeout has helped bring about dramatic changes in Americans' attitudes about smoking. These so called "attitudes" are merely ignorance to people's free will. It is common knowledge that smoking cigarettes does cause prominent health issues, and smokers are certainly well aware of the facts, but why is it necessary to preach what is common knowledge and shed a bad light on smokers who

choose to bombard their lungs with chemicals? The last time I heard, this was a free country, and so long as there are cigarettes for sale, there will be smokers.

The whole "Hey, cigarettes are bad for you" argument failed and continues to fail, making anti-smokers start concocting health studies on second-hand smoke. The argument became "You don't really want to kill Little Sally, do you?" There may be some logic to the fear of second-hand smoke, since people who receive it are smokers and non-smokers, but the fear of it is absolutely absurd. Standing 100 feet away from someone who is smoking is not as big of a deal as anti-smokers make it seem, nor is merely walking past them or behind them in open-air.

The pollution in our air due to cars emitting pollutants should be more of a concern than the wisps of chemicals emitted from a cigarette.

Yes, I, along with my fellow smokers, understand that smoking is a horrible vice. We do not need a bunch of non-smokers - the apparently "Heaven sent" - to stop the habit of smoking - to tell me that I or anyone else shouldn't smoke. A paternalistic event like this Smokeout comes off as condescending, pretentious, and downright obnoxious. Those without "pink-lungs" do not need to be guilt tripped into feeling bad for a habit they know is unhealthy. We do not live under a rock and we do not live in the 50s; we know what the risks are and we shall

take them.

Guess what? 100% of people on this earth die be it from lung cancer (breaking news: even non-smokers suffer from lung cancer), heart attacks, or walking across the street and being hit by a car. People should be allowed to live they way they please, and do what makes them happy (unless it is unlawful), and if smoking a cigarette brings someone a sense of pleasure then so be it! Nothing can save you from death and nothing can prevent you from dying before you are 99 years old. If you are anti-smoking, please, keep it to yourself and not smoke but allow those of us who enjoy our cigarettes to smoke in peace. The smokers' circle outside of SAC will be thankful.

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Fall season ends, athletes recognized for achievements

By LAUREN SHAW

STAFF WRITER

The football, men's soccer, women's soccer, volleyball, men's cross country, women's cross country, men's golf, and women's golf teams wrapped up their 2008 seasons with varying positions in the MIAA.

The fall sports season closed on Saturday with Alma's final football game of the year against Hope College.

The team finished in third place in the MIAA, tied with Albion, with a conference record of 3-3 and an overall record of 5-5.

The players received several individual honors throughout the season. **Mackenzie McGrady ('10)** was selected as offensive player of the week three times. **Zach Comer ('09)** was selected as defensive player of the week twice, and **Nick Merlo ('09)** was defensive player of the week once. **Corey Wangler ('10)** was named special team's player of the week once.

The men's soccer team played well defensively but struggled to find the back of the net, as they finished in last place in the MIAA with a conference record of 2-10-2 and an overall record of 3-14-2.

"We are good but not good enough," said Coach Nathan Kronewetter. "We have great players on and off the field, but need to add to our depth."

The women's soccer team had

a record-breaking season, hosting an MIAA tournament game for the first time in the program's history. The team advanced to the tournament finals where they lost to Calvin for second place in MIAA, a best-ever finish for Alma. They finished with a conference record of 7-3-1 and an overall record of 12-6-1.

Kelley Walsh ('10) and **Jessica Swan ('11)** were both named to the all MIAA first team. **Morgan Rudd ('11)**, **Carly Reising ('12)**, and **Tara Fitzsimmons ('10)** were named to the all MIAA second team.

Swan was offensive player of the week three times. Rudd was defensive player of the week once.

The volleyball team also had an incredible season, finishing in third place in the conference and advancing to the semi-finals of the MIAA tournament. Their season ended unexpectedly when the norovirus outbreak at Hope College canceled the remainder of the tournament, leaving them with a conference record of 11-5 and an overall record of 22-9.

Kimberly Gillhespy ('09) was named Division III Honorable Mention All-America by the American Volleyball Coaches Association. Gillhespy was one of just 42 Division III players chosen. She was also named to the all MIAA first team and was player of the week twice. **Hannah**



Photo by Catherine Finley

Kelley Walsh ('10) and **Brooke Bereron ('11)** work to block the ball. They wrapped up the season in second place.

Hewitt ('11) was named to the all MIAA second team and was player of the week once.

The men's cross country team finished in sixth place in the conference. They took twentieth place at Division III regionals.

The women's cross country team took seventh place in the conference and took nineteenth place at Division III regionals.

The men's golf team finished in

eighth place in the conference.

Jake Baltimore ('12) shot a hole-in-one for the Scots at the seventh MIAA Jamboree. **Bryan McKenney ('10)** finished in the top ten at the fifth MIAA Jamboree. **Brian Rabedioux ('12)** was a tri-medalist and finished in the top ten at the fourth MIAA Jamboree. **David Moilanen ('11)** also finished in the top ten at the third and fourth

Jamborees. **Kyle Travis ('09)** finished top ten at the second MIAA Jamboree.

The women's golf team finished in seventh place in the conference. The Scots were competitive all season, placing fifth at the fourth MIAA Jamboree.

All the fall sports teams showed improvement throughout their seasons and expectations are high for fall of 2009.

Intramural sports provide fun competition for students

By MARIA CASTANEDA

STAFF WRITER

Intramural sports provide students a way to have fun with friends and competitively stay active. At the Stone Recreation Center, Alma College offers 10 different sports, the majority of which are co-ed.

Over half of the students on campus participate in intramural sports.

"I'd like to see a lot of people participate but next semester are usually the most popular sports volleyball and basketball," Julian Springer said. Springer, director at the Recreation Center organizes all intramural sports. "Last year there were 22 teams for 6v6 volleyball, and that was the record for volleyball teams. This year I hope to beat that record though," Springer said.

Many of these students, varsity and non-varsity athletes, participate in multiple sports.

"It's a great change to get to play these sports competitively that I've never played before," **Kelsey Bailey ('10)** said. Bailey plays volleyball, basketball, and softball.

"It's fun, competitive, and helps keep me in shape," **Jenny Bassett-Payne ('09)** said, who also plays volleyball, basketball, and softball.

"Not only is it physical activity that keeps you in shape but it's great to have everyone get involved in more than just schoolwork," Springer said. "It's a great way to reward yourself for working hard in school," Springer said.

"A bunch of my friends thought it would be fun so we made a team and kept making them because we

had so much fun," Bailey said.

Starting a team is not difficult, and many students just put a team together of random people.

"My friend and I started a team by walking through the dorms and asking if anyone wanted to play," **Kim Gillhespy ('12)** said. "And, it ended up being the best team ever." Their volleyball team is called Twist. Gillhespy also plays volleyball, basketball and softball.

"Some of my teammates from football were making a team, so they asked me to play," **Ruggie Ramirez ('11)** said. "Also, two random girls asked me to be on their volleyball team in my hall one day. They needed another person to make a full roster, so I said yes—and the rest is history." Ramirez, also a tri-sport athlete, plays dodgeball, volleyball, and basketball.

Although intramural sports are a great social activity, losing is often the worst part. "They're a fun thing to do in the off season," **Heath Laugal ('11)** said. "But sometimes it can really get competitive, especially basketball."

"It's great because athletes who played in high school can extend their sports career," Springer said. "No matter how serious they were about it in high school, it can be just fun, or it can be very competitive here."

Intramural sports are not only fun to participate in but also to watch.

"It's great socially," Springer said. "You can watch people play and it gives you and your friends something to do during the week when no other sport is going on. It helps students have a better college experience overall."

Spotlight: Bergeron learns through injury, friendships made on the soccer field

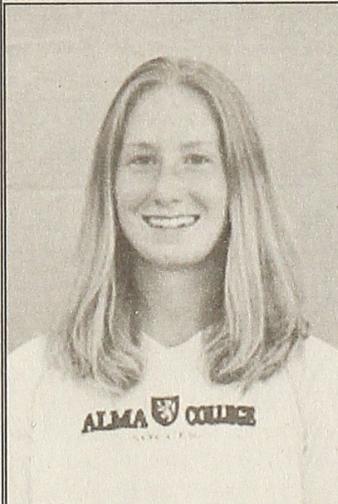


Photo courtesy of www.alma.edu

By MARIA CASTANEDA

STAFF WRITER

Brooke Bergeron ('11) began playing soccer when she was six years old. Beginning with AYSO, or recreational soccer, she now plays soccer for the women's varsity soccer team.

After AYSO, Bergeron played for the Fenton Shooting Stars, a competitive premier team, and then played for Fenton High School for four years.

As a freshman in high school, Bergeron made varsity and started as a forward. During her freshman season, however, she suffered a serious injury to her left knee and tore her ACL.

"When I tore my ACL, it was all on me," Bergeron said. "My mom told me I should just stop playing soccer."

Bergeron had to have reconstructive surgery and it was six months before she could run again.

Despite this setback, Bergeron recovered completely and continued to play, earning several awards during her high school career, including Most Valuable Offensive player her sophomore year. Among other awards, Bergeron earned the Flint Metro Honorable Mention and the Scholar Athlete Award her junior and senior year.

On Alma's varsity soccer team, Bergeron started as a defender her freshman year.

"I always played forward but Coach [Hosler] switched me to defense," Bergeron said. "I like both. On defense you can be more aggressive, but on offense people look at you more."

Bergeron became a key defender for the Scots and started every game in the fall of 2008, until she suffered another knee injury. In a game against U of M at Dearborn, Bergeron tore her MCL, again in her left knee.

"Dr. Shingles told me that more than likely I was done for the season."

She proved everyone wrong though and missed only three games of the season.

"I'm stubborn and I wanted to play," Bergeron said. "It was a really good season and we'd been doing really well so I didn't want to let that go."

Bergeron returned to the field full strength only two weeks after undergoing knee surgery, and was able to finish the season off in the MIAA finals against Calvin College.

As for what helped her get through injuries and setbacks, Bergeron said it was her love for

soccer.

"This year the team really helped me stay positive, too," Bergeron said.

For Bergeron being part of a team is the best part about soccer.

"You have all your friends and you know you can count on them," she said.

Soccer has brought more to her life than just friendships.

"It teaches me how to be more understanding of people's different personalities because you have to deal with so many different types of people," Bergeron said.

Some of her favorite memories of this year's soccer season include beating Albion and playing "cage" at practice.

"We lost to Albion twice in the last seconds of both games last year," Bergeron said. "So it was definitely a goal to beat them this year."

Another moment this season she will never forget is scoring against Trine.

"That's definitely my most surprising memory," Bergeron said. "My goal against Trine where the goalie scored on herself. I'll never forget that."

Outside of soccer, Bergeron is a member of the Center for Responsible Leadership. She plans on majoring in Exercise and Health Science and earning a minor in math.

In the future, Bergeron is unsure of her career choice, but hopes to continue to involve soccer in her life.

"I really want to coach or even have an assistant coaching job," Bergeron said. "That would be really sweet."

Exercise classes provided

By MARIA CASTANEDA
STAFF WRITER

From Hip Hop to Zumba, different classes are offered daily at the Stone Recreation Center. Open to anyone, these classes bring a variety of people together to exercise. Several of these classes are also taught by Alma College students.

For the fall semester classes include Hip Hop Dance, Strength Training and Conditioning, Pilates and Yoga, Kickboxing, Step Aerobics, and Zumba, but classes change from semester to semester and new ones are constantly added.

Paula Starring ('10) received certification to teach Zumba in August, and now teaches a class at the Stone Recreation Center two times a week.

"We usually have anywhere from four to 20 people," Starring said. "It's a very diverse group. It's open to anyone. Ladies from the business office or professor's wives and families often come."

Zumba is a relatively new form of dance that combines Latin music with cardiovascular exercise.

"Zumba is a different form of exercise," Starring said. "It's more fun than a grueling workout."

"It's really fun and good exercise," **Trisha Reynolds ('12)** said. Reynolds attends the Zumba class weekly. "We get to make fools of ourselves and break a sweat."

Aside from having fun, Zumba allows participants to receive an intense workout.

"You can burn up to 700 calories in an hour," Starring said.

Zumba has an international program that sends choreographed dances to Starring, but she

also includes some of her own choreography.

"I try to make it fun and mix music into it like the 'Cupid Shuffle,'" Starring said. "It's planned out to not overwhelm anyone."

Another class offered at the Stone Recreation Center is the Senior Fitness class taught by **Allison Doran ('09)**.

Doran, an Exercise and Health Science major, began teaching exercise classes at the Stone Recreation Center to fulfill one of the requirements for her major.

This class is specified towards senior citizens around the area, but most of the participants are women.

"These women are very active outside of the class," Doran said. "When they come, they get to focus on their bodies and making sure they are using their muscles so, in the near future, they still have the function."

Doran keeps the class interesting by providing variety in the lessons.

"We try to do different exercises and activities each day," Doran said. "After every session they are so excited and thrilled of what we have just done. The women are very involved in their churches and communities and come when they can, but when they do come they are thrilled to be there."

Other instructors include Patty Herblet who teaches Yoga and Pilates and has been an instructor for over nine years, Ricky Clarkson who teaches a hip-hop class, and Cindy Austin who teaches strength and fitness training, kickboxing, and step aerobics.

Basketball starts season with tough non-league opponents

By CHELSEA CLARK
SPORTS EDITOR

Men's basketball just finished its second week of play with a record of 0-4 with 7 of the 14 players playing their first collegiate games.

The Scots welcomed Manchester to the Cappaert Gymnasium for the season opener. With 10:12 left in the game they were down by 15 points with a score of 55-40. Within one minute freshman **Julius Porter** was fouled three times and made all six free throws, for a total of 14 points.

"Porter gives us quickness and leadership at the point. And better ball handling than we had last season," said Head Coach Terry Smith. The game ended with the Scots on the losing side 79-65.

"We really need to work on scoring on the inside. We're not just young, we're also at the beginning of the season," said Smith after the game, "Over all I think we did pretty well. They were all coachable mistakes, but we have a tough schedule for the next 4-5 games. There are a couple of really strong programs and two division II schools early on."

Tough was exactly what it was for the next 3 games. After Manchester, the Maroon and Cream went on the road against Anderson.

They were down 47-27 at half and while the second half was about even the Scots could not make up the ground from the first half losing 92-73.

Alma then traveled north to Michigan Tech and Northern Michigan where **Jordan Redditt ('11)** was the top points earner for the Scots in both games, 11 and 7 points respectively.

In the Michigan Tech game Alma was only down by one point at half time, but lost ground in the second losing 66-46.



Photo by Catherine Finley

Jordan Redditt ('11) goes for the lay up against Manchester, something Coach Smith thinks the team needs to work on. Redditt scored 19 points in the game.

They returned home from the Upper Peninsula trip after losing to Northern Michigan 80-48. Alma's shooting percentage for the game was 30 percent compared to Northern Michigan's 40 percent. On the positive side **Isaac**

Thaler ('10) went 8 in 8 on his free throws for the game.

The Scots return to the Cappaert Gymnasium this Tuesday to face Concordia at 5 p.m. League play will commence after winter break.

Scots stumble with first games

By LAUREN SHAW
STAFF WRITER

The women's basketball team began their season last week with three tough losses to Aquinas College, Defiance College, and Concordia of Minnesota.

The Scots lost to Aquinas with a final score of 77-50. They held Defiance much closer, losing the game by only two points with a final score of 70-68. The Scots lost to Concordia with a final score of 72-44.

Since official league play has not yet begun, last week's games will not affect conference standings.

The season opener against Aquinas was played on Wednesday, one day later than scheduled, due to a power outage at Aquinas on Tuesday.

The Scots were led in scoring by forward **Kathryn Bigelow ('10)**, forward and center **Meagan Hoblet ('10)**, and guard **Heather Keenan ('09)**, who each added eight points.

Bigelow also led the team in rebounds, adding seven to the Scots' total of 33.

The game against Defiance on Friday was an extremely close game, with the Scots leading the scoring 36-29 at the end of the first half. Defiance took the lead with 15 seconds remaining in the game and was able to hold on for the win.

Hoblet was a key offensive and defensive player for the Scots against Defiance with 17 points and 11 rebounds.

Guard **Lacey Best-Rowden ('10)** added 14 points and five rebounds.

Keenan had 11 points and two assists.

The games against Defiance and Concordia were part of the Tipoff Tournament hosted by Hope College.

This year's team is comprised of one freshman, two sophomores, six juniors, and one senior.

Last year, Alma finished the season ranked seventh in the conference, with an in-league record of 6-10 and an overall record of 9-15.

The Scots are disadvantaged in both height and experience in the MIAA.

The Scots average only 5'8". However, they have some new height this year in 6'1" center **Aubrey Maxa ('12)**.

Keenan is the lone senior on the Scots' roster, but the Scots are used to being a young team, having had only two seniors last year.

Hoblet, who plays forward and center, is the leading returning scorer for the Scots, having averaged 13.7 points per game and 6.7 rebounds a game in the 07-08 season.

Best-Rowden, a guard who started 18 of 24 games last season for the Scots, also brings experience to the roster.

The roster is completed by guard **Stephanie Bradshaw ('10)**, guard **Hannah Hewitt ('11)**, guard **Lauren Hasler ('10)**, forward **Sidney Beckwith ('11)**, and forward **Kerri Yarber ('10)**.

With nine of the ten players returning from last year, the Scots are used to playing together and have built-in chemistry.

The Scots also gain considerable experience from Head Coach Charlie Goffnett. In his years as head coach, Goffnett has coached the team to three MIAA titles, five NCAA Tournament berths and one national championship—Alma's first in the 1991-92 season. He is one of 36 active Division III coaches with 200 career wins and a winning percentage of over 65 percent.

With the combined efforts of a seasoned coach and a dedicated group of players, the Scots will likely have a good season despite their rough start.

The Scots' next game is November 29 at Siena Heights. Their next home game is a conference game on January 3 during winter break against Calvin College. Their first home game during the second semester is on January 7 against Olivet College at 7:30 p.m.

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THIS WEEK IN SPORTS

Tuesday, November 25

-Men's basketball vs. Concordia
at Alma @ 7 p.m.

Saturday, November 29

-Women's basketball at Siena Heights

Wednesday, December 3

-Women's basketball at Concordia

Friday, December 5

- Men's basketball vs. Michigan Dearborn
at Alma @ 8 p.m.
- Men's and women's Swimming at
Depaw Invite
- Men's and women's Diving at
Eastren Michigan Invite

Saturday, December 6

-Men's basketball vs. Madonna at Alma
@ 8
-Women's basketball at Hope