

# The Almanian

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## Absence of formal MLK convocation result of faculty disinterest

JOEL RENDER  
Staff Writer

Last year Martin Luther King Jr. Day was a formal event involving a required convocation, but this past Monday, due to a decision by a majority of the faculty, students found that they had all of their afternoon classes cancelled, and that there was no convocation. Currently, there remains a lot of confusion regarding why the events that took place on Martin Luther King Jr. Day occurred as they did, and this is not surprising considering how divisive some of these issues were for the faculty.

The story began last April 15<sup>th</sup> when the faculty met for its usual staff meeting. One of the major points on the agenda was how the College was going to handle the celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. As a majority of the students are already aware, Martin Luther King Jr. Day in the past has usually involved a mandatory formal convocation. The discussion began when the Educational Policies Committee moved that classes on that date be cancelled from 12:30 to 6:00 P.M. This ignited Dr. Gilbert to ask to have a formal convocation at 1:30 P.M.

In response, Dr. Walter Beagley asked whether a formal convocation was necessary. He proposed that the College have an open convocation where students, faculty, as well as members of the community would be able to sit together and enjoy a speaker related to Martin Luther King Jr. in some way. Several other members of the faculty agreed with him, and pointed out that they believed that requiring students to attend convocation does not align well with King's spirit.

This argument was countered by another group of faculty members that believed the College should have a required convocation on King's day of celebration. Dr. Nicholas Dixon was a member of this group. He said, "If we have other convocations that are required then we should have Martin Luther King Jr. Day be required as well or it does not seem as important as the other days that have required convocations." This was not the entire disagreement between the two groups, but rather just the basic points.

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## Tracy: tuition increase necessary to stay competitive

JENÉ SHAW  
Staff Writer

Rumors have been circulating around campus for the past couple weeks concerning the fear of the inevitable annual tuition increase. Every year, many college students undoubtedly face the fear of tuition increases. Unfortunately, this year Alma College is no exception to the rise of schooling costs, but rational reason backs up the decision to increase the tuition for the upcoming academic year.

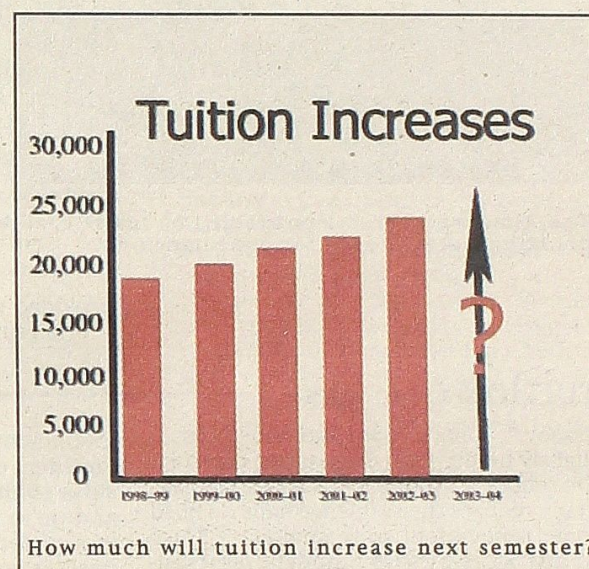
According to President Sandra Tracy, no exact numbers are yet finalized, and will not be until the Board of Trustees' meeting February 10.

"Obviously the board has the authority and certainly the ability to have discussion and decide what the numbers will be," Tracy said. "I can't say for sure what they will be until after that board meeting." Tracy wanted to ensure students that a letter will be sent to parents with all the exact details of the tuition changes shortly after the meeting.

"At this point, the Executive Staff, Board

Committee, and President's Advisory Council (the latter two both have student representation) have discussed an increase larger than last year's tuition," Tracy said, "but within a range comparable to what we believe our peer colleges will do."

Alma's peer colleges, or comparison group, consists of twelve Midwestern private colleges which offer similar quality and profiles. Among them are institutions such as Adrian, Albion and Kalamazoo College. Out of the whole group, Alma offers the lowest tuition for its students, being \$4,000 below other schools. "If we are to stay competitive with programs and facilities and have the ability to do the new things in our strategic plan, we must stay competitive with tuition and fees as well," Tracy commented. "We don't want to be



the cheapest or the most expensive; we do want to offer the most value for the

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## Alma water safe despite student concerns over health risks

SEAN WILSON  
Staff Writer

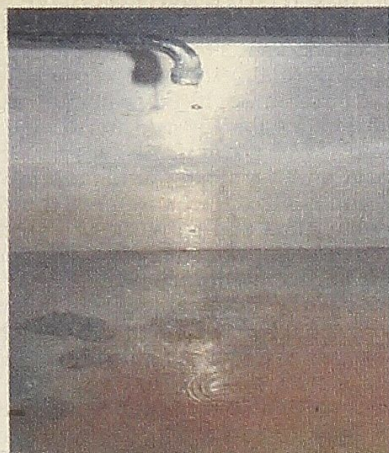


photo by Jason Garvin

Despite the occasional odd taste, City of Alma officials insist that water is safe for human consumption.

Many students of Alma College seem hesitant to drink water provided by the City of Alma. Myths and rumors abound regarding the source of the water itself, and many call its purity and safety into question. This is often exaggerated, as by Michelle Hamilton (06), who claims that water should be filtered to avoid "growing three extra arms."

The water that flows from sinks and drinking fountains here is also used by Sodexo-Mariott during meal preparation and in many beverages, however. This raises the question of why so many people filter water or purchase it themselves; it cannot really be avoided in any event.

According to a fairly unscientific survey conducted at Hamilton Commons on January 20<sup>th</sup>, some sixty-five percent of students either filter water before drinking it or buy purified water "often" or "always." Less than ten percent claimed

not to do this at any time. And yet, it is being consumed every day by hundreds of students who eat food provided by Sodexo-Mariott facilities on campus. Is this water safe? And if so, why are so many students avoiding it when seeking beverages in their dorm rooms?

According to the City of Alma's municipal water department website (<http://www.ci.alma.mi.us/water.htm>), "All drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk . . . . The City operates a Water Treatment Plant to treat this water and reduce the risks of contamination of the public water supply."

The treatment plant in question is located at 200 N. Lincoln Drive, and has been in operation since 1965. It performs over one hundred daily tests of its own output and submits a monthly report to the Michigan Department of

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photo by Melanie Szewczyk

## Run-outs gone mad!

-Multiple groups become involved in interfraternity brawl during run-outs.  
-Continuation of yearly event under question by students.

For more walk-outs & run-outs coverage see page 6

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Womens basketball dominates opponents page 10



# NEWS

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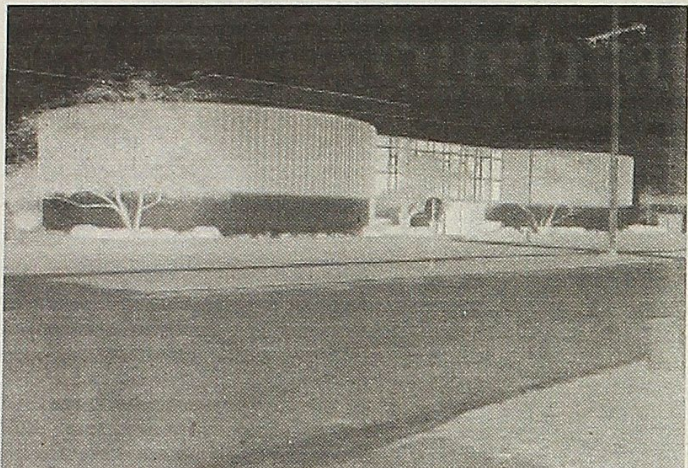


photo courtesy of city of Alma

The Alma water treatment facilities insist that Alma's drinking water is safe for consumption.

Environmental Quality. Its sources include the Pine River and ground wells, but the Pine River contributes between 70 and 80 percent of the total water it processes annually. While this plant is able to meet all current water purity and safety standards, anticipated reforms have necessitated a two hundred thousand dollar hydrogeological study, which is still underway, aimed at eliminating dependence on the Pine River as a source. Instead, all water would be provided via the use of ground wells.

It is fairly well known on campus that

the Pine River has been one of the most contaminated sites in the country, and it may come as a shock to discover that it is a source of drinking water for the city. However, the Velsicol Chemical Corporation site that is responsible for most of the damage to the river (including mass dumping of the pesticide DDT) is actually significantly downstream of the river pumping station; the water here is almost entirely devoid of contamination due to that irresponsible chemical producer.

Water pumped from the river moves through two chemical clarifiers and then two filters before arriving at a clearwall tank where chlorine is added as a disinfectant. Even after all of this, trace amounts of the following contaminants have been detected in the municipal water supply (all well within safe boundaries as defined by the Environmental Protection Agency): Arsenic, Xylenes (commonly discharged from petroleum factories), and nitrates. Additionally, small amounts of lead and copper may be found in some samples due to erosion of pipeline,

although the last test performed by the city also found these to be well within acceptable bounds.

Why all the filtering, then? According to Stuart Bachner (06), "I filter my water because it tastes like crap." This is a by-product of the trace minerals that filtering does not remove or address because they are no threat to public health. It is these minor impurities that cause regional variations in the taste of tapwater, and it is these minerals which Brita filters and other devices like them are designed to remove. The result is a clearer taste, but the water itself is not safer to consume in any meaningful respect.

The city's municipal water service actually does a nearly impeccable job where removing dangerous contaminants are concerned; no one will grow extra arms by drinking the tap water here. Rory Wildner (06) agrees. "It's not really as bad as you think it is. I'm just used to drinking it, and that's all it takes."

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money." Alma's room and board cost is slightly higher than the average comparison school at around \$474 above the rest. Tracy realizes the residence halls do need some renovation, so a smaller Since Grant Kinney (04), student representative on the Finance and Properties Committee, reported back to student congress in mid-January, about three variations have been made to the budget plan. Right now, the Executive Staff is looking at about 16 different variations of how to divide up percentage increases. Tracy said it is still very much up in the air about how exactly to balance the budget.

There are several rationales for next year's increases. "We are making some significant investments to enhance the quality of students' experiences in spite of tight financial times for higher education," Tracy said. For example, the college is in the midst of a \$630,000 investment in a new computer network to be completed this spring. A new e-mail system will be implemented this spring, two new computer labs will be available, and the technology in several classrooms will be upgraded. A new residence hall is being planned, and the renovation of the lower level of the chapel was just completed. Extra funds were also allocated to offer additional spring term courses targeted for first year students.

"The list can go on," Tracy said, "but the message is that we are doing a number of things that improve the quality of the campus environment and that help our faculty and staff stay current and offer the best possible learning experiences for our students."

Many other factors tie into the cause for tuition raise, such as the recurring decline in endowment value over the past three years, cuts from funding from the state, reduced gifts, and decreased earnings on

investment funding. Dennis Bergvall, Vice President of Enrollment, said, "We're sensitive to the way we price to our market, and we're trying to measure the increase in a such a way that we can get what we need as an institution, but still be mindful to the fact that it has an impact on students. We not only desire to sustain the level of service right now and make additions and improvements to that, but also to start adding new things that students need, whether it be technology or other budgetary upgrades on campus."

One rumor Tracy wanted to verify as false concerns the cutting of financial aid. The state did reduce one state fund, but Alma is definitely no where near eliminating institutional financial aid. In fact, the college plans on an approximate increase of \$500,000 for financial aid in next year's budget. "Some of these funds will be earmarked for families who find themselves with extreme financial hardship," Tracy said. "With what the students heard, they may have thought it would be a cut, but what we have done, and continue to do, is as our tuition increases, have the need based financial aid increase at the same percentage. If you're saying tuition prices are increasing and student financial aid is going down, it is a pretty scary combination. There are no cuts with financial aid."

Tracy hopes to broadly diversify the students by increasing aid for some who need more financial help. The need-based aid helps attract talented students that would not other be able to attend Alma. The current discount rate (percentage of money given back to students for financial aid) is 47.9%, which ranks the highest in all of the comparison schools. (Note Alma has the lowest tuition but highest discount rate of the group of schools).

Over the next five years, the college is hoping to reduce the percentage, but not reduce anyone's aid. "We are looking for ways to carefully and strategically use the financial aid," Tracy commented. According to Bergvall, although there is a percentage going into the financial aid budget, according to the college policy, all scholarships do not automatically get an increase from it. "Financial aid is targeted for students with extreme need, and that's where that goes," Bergvall said.

Logically, it would seem enrollment would decline once the tuition is raised, but in actuality, the numbers for next year's class are projected even slightly above this year's first year students. Bergvall said the College wants to be sensitive to the fact that what they do does not cause students to be unable to return because of finances. "We don't want it to be harmful; it would be foolish of us to make it impossible for students to return," he said. "We've had many conversations to make sure we allow [tuition cost] to be high enough to do what we need to do to invest in Alma and continue to enhance the quality, but not so big of an increase that it harms retention."

"I've been on three campuses in the past 20 years that I've been involved in higher education," Bergvall commented. "I've never seen a process that has been so thoughtful and so thorough as there has been here the past three months that we've been going through this. There's a tremendous amount of sensitivity and thoughtfulness about the impact on students."

Alma does not want to raise its prices just for the sake of getting more money. If it cripples us because we lose student loyalty. We have to recognize the fact that the tuition hike erodes one of our very

very strong priorities for next year, which is increasing student enrollment and strengthening the institution."

"First let us tell you how we've enhanced and strengthened the institution," Bergvall continued. "Second, let us show students that this will work and give you a process to act; don't panic. If we can funnel students into the financial aid office, we can identify alternatives for students to see some choices out there and invite them to get their parents involved so we can make students' options open up earlier." He mentioned the continuous notification of outside scholarships that are available for students to apply for in the financial aid office.

Bergvall says he is committed to trying every option, and that Alma is still among these top schools in the country who have the lowest amount of student debt upon graduation. (Still in the top 1% for least amount of debt). He wanted to stress the importance of planning ahead when being concerned with how to afford an education. Stopping by the financial aid office this winter rather than waiting until spring or summer allows staff to work with students on a better range of options. "There's all sorts of options in the financial aid office which will be key in our plan to communicate with students so they don't have to say they're going somewhere else," Bergvall said.

In addition to talking to Student Congress, there will be some open forums where students and college administrators can talk about the changes. Bergvall said, "The students need to hear from us the exact numbers on the changes, what's the tuition increase, board increase, rationale for why it is increasing. We are listening to all of the student concerns and being thoughtful with our decision."

## CONVOCATION from page 1

Both sides definitely seem to have valid arguments for holding convocation as they saw fit. In the end a majority of faculty, about 37 of 61, believed that an open and considerably more informal convocation along with canceling afternoon classes was sufficient enough to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Most of the faculty members that were in attendance at this meeting could not remember how they voted. Several of them could not even state which side that they had taken. Nevertheless, this controversy that began a long time ago and culminated last Monday turned out to be a success as the attendance at the speaker was very high despite being voluntary.

## Attention Seniors:

Student Barlow Cup Award invitation letters were sent out to qualifying students on January 27, 2003. Faculty received nomination material on January 27, 2003. If you did not receive a letter and believe you should have, please notify the Provost's Office (x7176). The nomination deadline is February 5, 2003.



# LOCAL/STATE/NATION

## Bush administration becomes involved in affirmative action case against U of M

Whitney Hopkins  
Staff Writer

The University of Michigan's admissions policy has been under scrutiny for several years, following the introduction of lawsuits claiming racial discrimination. However, both President Bush and the Supreme Court are getting involved in the issue, which could make or break modern affirmative action.

Original charges were brought up against the University of Michigan in 1997, and verdicts have gone through multiple appeals, in addition to several interventions led by various student and civil rights groups. The plaintiffs, who are white, contend that they were unfairly denied admission, while black and Hispanic students with lower academic qualifications were admitted in their stead. The Supreme Court will likely hand down a ruling by early summer on whether or not the university's policies are constitutional.

Major precedence in this case has come from the Bakke case, in which the University of California's Medical School admissions policies were deemed unlawful and unconstitutional, especially under Title IV, the civil rights statute. However, the Supreme Court justices involved also decided that the use of race in determining admissions is lawful, provided that its use

does in fact promote diversity, and is required in order to achieve that diversity.

President Bush's administration issued a brief to the Court arguing that Michigan's admissions policies should be considered unconstitutional. In a public address on January 15<sup>th</sup>, President Bush stated, "At their core, the Michigan policies amount to a quota system that unfairly rewards or penalizes perspective students, based solely on their race."

University of Michigan President Mary Sue Coleman issued a statement in response to President Bush, saying, "We do not have, and have never had, quotas or numerical targets in either the undergraduate or Law School admissions programs."

Michigan's admissions policy is based on a point system, where applicants may earn points out of 150 possible, with 110 points based on curriculum, academics, and test scores. Remaining points may be earned based on race, socioeconomic status, and geography. President Coleman stressed that, "In the end our goal is to choose among a pool of well-qualified applicants to enroll a student body that is diverse in a rich variety of ways."

This case has split both the educational and political communities as to the proper use and correct implementation of Affirmative Action. Attorney General Eliot Spitzer of New York supports U of M's

policies, saying "We are trying desperately to create institutions of higher education that are diverse, that bring in and include all people... I'm filing a brief that opposes our president, that opposes what he is saying because we (New York) believe in diversity and we will fight it." Spitzer articulated that states need to be allowed to individualize admissions policies that allow race to be used, in order to achieve adequate diversity.

The highest ranking African-American in the White House, Condoleezza Rice, who is President Bush's national security advisor, stated "I believe that while race-neutral means are preferable, it is appropriate to use race as one factor among others in achieving a diverse student body", while President Bush declined to state whether race should even be a factor.

"We have received an outpouring of support from the nation's educators, the business and labor communities, legal organizations, and many, many others. Their voices will be raised as the cases progress and we anticipate a number of amicus briefs will be filed on our behalf in February," said President Coleman.

For more information on this case and University of Michigan's policies, visit [www.umich.edu](http://www.umich.edu).

### News Briefs

#### Police find toddler chained by neck to bedpost

Chicago, Illinois-

A three year old child was found chained to a bedpost by police when a South Side home was raided for drugs and illegal weapons on Saturday.

The unidentified child was a foster child to Mary Bryant, 64 and Melvin Bond, 49, who were charged with misdemeanor child endangerment. Mary Bryant's daughter, was charged with felony child endangerment and weapons and drugs charges.

The boy and four other children living in the household were removed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and will be relocated to other foster homes. Another older child was left in the home.

Illinois's DCFS is receiving criticism for placing so many children in the household. Five social service agencies were involved in placing the children, with DCFS as the coordinating agency.

#### Powell: Iraq has not complied with U.N. demand to disarm

Washington D.C.-

Secretary of State Colin Powell indicated Monday the resolve of the Bush Administration to begin military action in Iraq is imminent if immediate action is not taken to disarm Iraq; and also reiterated that if the nation's government does not "come clean" over its weapons of mass destruction, a regime change could occur.

"In the days ahead, we believe the [Security Council] and its member governments must face its responsibilities and consider what message council irresolution sends to Iraq and other proliferators,"

"It benefits no one to let [Iraqi President] Saddam [Hussein] think he can wear us down into business as usual, as he has practiced it over the past 12 years, said John Negroponte, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

#### Internet worm causes international economic havoc

An Internet worm damaged hundreds to thousands of computers this weekend, causing bank cash machines and Internet connections to function incorrectly, caused disruptions to business in the United States and Europe.

South Korea, the most internet wired country in the world, it is still struggling to combat the spread of the self-copying computer virus that damages Microsoft SQL Server databases, a commonly used piece of financial software.

Microsoft itself is also drawing alot of blame for refusing to spend additional funding on improving security function for its software commonly used for internet functions.

"The real threat to the Internet is not from hackers. ... The threat is people and businesses connecting to the Internet in insecure ways," said Lawrence Baldwin, of Internet security firm myNetWatchman.com.

Microsoft founder Bill Gates recently released a 1,500 word to over a million Microsoft users stating: "New security risks have emerged on a scale that few in our industry fully anticipated," he wrote. "... Microsoft has a responsibility to help its customers address these concerns, so they no longer have to choose between security and usability."

## Missouri-Columbia student body attempting to reduce penalties for marijuana possession

JENE SHAW  
Staff Writer

A group of students from the University of Missouri-Columbia want the city to go easy on their penalties for possessing small amounts of marijuana.

Missouri's Columbia campus recurrent pro-pot movement this week made its biggest stride in decades, ensuring room for a proposed marijuana ordinance on the city's April 8 ballot. The measure is thought to be the first of its kind in Missouri, and it would allow critically ill patients to use marijuana if a doctor recommended it. If the movement passes, it would significantly reduce the punishment for possession of less than thirty-five grams of the drug.

In the most minor marijuana cases, all fines would be disposed of in municipal court, saving students from criminal prosecution that could put their education in jeopardy.

"The current law punishes people too harshly for minor marijuana offenses," said Anthony Johnson, A Missouri University law student who wrote the ordinance. "We also want to send a message that seriously ill patients shouldn't be denied medicine that doctors recommend."

Many Columbia officials doubt that the measure would ever pass. The biggest supporters would be college students and adults in the twenties range, and typically those ages are the least likely to vote.

Columbia Police Chief Randy Boehm said marijuana still carries a serious stigma, even in a college town. "I've heard from a number of people in the community that have concerns about the proposal, particularly parents," said Boehm, who is against the proposal. "As this is discussed in the community more, I do anticipate there will be a great deal of opposition."

Still, the students supporting the ordinance view it as the best opportunity in more than twenty years to tame Columbia's marijuana laws.

After years of unsuccessful efforts, a petition circulated last fall by Johnson's group, the Columbia Alliance for Patients and Education, obtained 2,552 signatures—twice as many as they needed to put the issue before the City Council. A 6-1 vote declined to approve the ordinance to go to a public vote.

Columbia's current marijuana ordinance makes possession of less than thirty grams a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by at most one year in jail and a \$1,000 fine. The proposed ordinance would punish

anyone caught with less than thirty five grams with only municipal fines: at most \$25 for a first offense, \$50 for a second offense, \$100 for a third offense and \$500 for a fourth and consecutive offenses.

The students group's main argument results from a provision of the 1998 federal Higher Education Act, under which students convicted of possessing or selling illegal drugs can lose their eligibility for federal financial aid. Johnson said he was aware of twenty seven Missouri University undergraduates who had been penalized for drug convictions.

According to Nick Choate, editor in chief of The Maneater, Missouri's student newspaper, whose editorial board is endorsing the ordinance, said one simple mistake—if you get caught—is all it takes to have your federal aid stripped away. "The ordinance would make the punishment more fitting to the crime," he said.

Boehm expects that supporters of the ordinance would make the occasional marijuana use out to be a slight offense compared with other crimes. But in his twenty six years with the department, he said, he has seen many marijuana users who used more serious drugs or went on to commit worse crimes.

## U. Minnesota researchers to study schizophrenia

DYLAN THOMAS  
Minnesota Daily (U. Minnesota)

University of Minnesota researchers will participate in two of the largest-ever studies evaluating the effectiveness of a new generation of schizophrenia drugs used to treat an illness that often manifests itself around the transition from adolescence to adulthood.

The studies seek to provide researchers with valuable information about how newer medications are tolerated by patients compared with older-generation drugs whose benefits sometimes come at the cost of debilitating side effects.

Both the old and new drugs have been tested but not against each other on this scale.

The Clinical Anti-psychotic Trials of Intervention Effectiveness trial will enroll patients that have been diagnosed with

schizophrenia or a related disorder.

Those enrolled in the Comparisons for Atypicals for First Episode trial will be in the first stages of a psychosis, having been on schizophrenia drugs — known as antipsychotics — for less than four months.

Elizabeth Lemke, coordinator of the CATIE trial and assistant coordinator of the CAFE trial, said the studies will try to imitate real-world clinical practice and situations. Researchers will not use placebos and there are few restrictions placed on the studies' participants.

For example, participants can be taking other medications, can have hypertension or diabetes, go off their medication or skip appointments. Potential participants will not be excluded even if they are alcoholics or using street drugs, Lemke said.

Study participants will undergo physical and cognitive testing and will be monitored for side effects from the medica-

tions. The studies also provide patients with access to counseling and education in addition to medical and psychiatric care.

Problems in the treatment of schizophrenia often arise when patients go off medication or switch medications frequently.

For example, some patients stop taking their medication once it has relieved their symptoms. However, most of those patients will relapse within two years, some suffering from more severe symptoms.

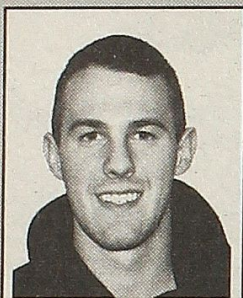
Also, many patients fare better when they stay on one medication for a long time rather than switching medications, Olson said.

Finding which drugs work best for different people might also help avoid the risks associated with taking them. While the older drugs might be more effective for some, their benefits come with the burden of serious side effects.



# OPINION

## Twenty-first century brings America a new problem



**RYAN CANNON**  
Editor-in-Chief

In 1903, W.E.B. Du Bois, in his *The Souls of Black Folk*, wrote that "[t]he problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line, — in America and the islands of the sea." The legacy of the past hundred years, from *Brown v. the Board of Education* to Rosa Parks and to affirmative action policies, has proven his words true.

One hundred years later, many believe that the problem of the twentieth century has yet to be solved. Seventy-six percent of those who answered an America Online poll on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, did not believe that all Americans are treated equally and claim that the civil rights movement is at a standstill, they believe that King would smile should he see the thus far.

Even the nation's president said on January 20, "And even though progress has been made, there is more to do."

This came mere days after Bush enraged many by taking an active role in supporting the a group of white students suing the University of Michigan for allowing race to take an unconstitutional role in the University's admissions process.

Bush's decision also came as a surprise, as his political party garnered much wrath from civil rights activists after some off-color comments by Senate majority leader Trent Lott.

An outcry against the University of Michigan's admissions procedures has been a long time coming. While the spirit of the policy is sound—attempting to bring the racial make-up of the student body on par with or, at least closer to, national demographics—it does so in a way that should be considered insulting to minorities.

News programs spouted the evidence that many prospective U of M students had mused: out of the 150-point admissions criteria, a *perfect* SAT score garnered twelve points, while a minority heritage could reap up to twenty.

This type of bias implies that minority students need a point-boost to keep admissions consistent with national demographics and cannot do so without—which simply is not true.

Less and less is race the divisive force between success and upward mobility. Minority leaders in all realms of society—politics, business, athletics and more—have shattered the idea that a glass ceiling exists in any industry simply because of skin color.

Today's division is economic. Families with lower incomes have more difficulty financing the best college educations; students who much work in the summer to pay for school often pass up internships and work experience that helps land their first jobs.

If past socio-economic status coincided greatly with demarcations in race, those lines will muddy, blur and disappear in the twenty-first century.

Hopefully, colleges and universities that claim to be the most elite and prestigious academic strongholds will find more resistance to archaic policies that evaluate students on such non-academic criteria as race, creed or sex.

Bush is correct; there is more work to do. Part of that work includes restructuring American beliefs and stereotypes that mandate a crutch where one is not necessary.

## Dulce et decorum est: Americas heros leave love behind

**KATIE PERSITZ**  
Staff Writer

*They are Soldiers*

In the past three years I have waved goodbye from an airport window to two of my best friends, Bryan and Caleb, on their way into the Air Force. A few weeks ago, I called my cousin Adam to wish him luck and love on his way into the Army. This Wednesday I say goodbye to Jarod, someone who has been close to me since we met, since the beginning of high school, almost four long years ago.

They are my soldiers. I cannot be a soldier and go fight. I cannot fulfill my dreams by following orders. But my dreams wouldn't exist without my soldiers.

Except—I have cried.

I ask myself, "Why is this so hard? Why does it hurt so much when it's something I thought I believed in?" But no answer comes.

Another cousin, Craig, served in the Gulf War, in Germany and in Iraq.

Both of my grandfathers served in World War II.

My mother's old high school buddies smile down on me and my sister from the mantle of our family room—friends that we never met because they died in Vietnam.

They are soldiers.

Why do we let them go? Why do they go in the first place? I ask myself these questions every day.

But when I talk to my friend Jarod, I know my answer. It's the same answer I have when I sit, alone and quiet. It's not all just in words. My answer is in all about how he sees himself.

"I look at myself in the mirror and I am proud of the progression that is happening within me. When I walk down the street, people look at me and smile, knowing that I am doing something special. School just wasn't it for me. I wanted to make that difference. I can serve and protect. If you think of all the people that have died for our country, it's amazing. They stood for something."

In our daily lives, we take the simple things for granted; the people around us, the freedoms of everyday life, the ordinary things that no one thinks of until they are gone. People across the seas are dying for what they believe in. I could have gone to school and gotten out in four years, not knowing what I wanted, and been back at square one. Or I can be a part of something bigger—I can look inside myself and know that I am doing something amazing."

Jarod is a soldier.

What if we all looked at ourselves in the same way Jarod does; what would the world look like? Knowing that we all have a purpose in life, would there be war? Or racism? Or starvation? Or anything else that stems from hate?

What if people around the United States could band together as a country and support the people we elected to be there to make our decisions?

What if, no matter what you believe, you support our boys and girls in uniform, because they are willing to give their lives to something greater than themselves? They want to leave this country knowing they have made an impact on the people that care about them—and for future generations. As Goarmy.com says, [they] uphold the ideals set forth in the U.S. Constitution and act to support the interests of the United States.

Ultimately does it matter what we believe? YES. It does. Because when there are people willing to give it all, then it matters. But whether you believe in war or not...

They are still our soldiers.

They are there for the people. Americans need to support their military. They are doing something grand and it's to be proud of. The sisters and mothers and friends and wives need to stand up and know that the people in the military today are people willing to sacrifice what it takes. There is no draft. No one is forcing people to join up. The government hasn't taken a stance on the state of the armed forces. This cannot turn into another Vietnam. We need to support our military.

They fight, yes. But more importantly, they live. They live for me and for you—they live for everything we stand for as a country. And it's in the living that makes life worth it. They live to make our lives safer. They live to make our lives worth living because we, as Americans, are the most blessed people on this Earth. We have our Constitution and Bill Of Rights. There are three separate but equal branches of government that we, *the people*, elect.

Americans have something to be proud of. We have something that is worth fighting for—if that's what it takes.

But perhaps it just takes support. A real letter. A phone call. A smile. When was the last time you applauded for something well done? When was the last time, if ever, you wrote to your congressman thanking him or her for doing their job, giving up their lives to serve the community? When was the last time you bit your tongue and congratulated a serviceman because he made his life, all about *your* life? When was the last time you put aside what was good for you and did something that bettered the people around you for no gain to your own interests?

When was the last time you believed in something worth believing in?

Can't think of anything?

I can give you something. Believe in this. Believe in freedom. Believe in your own right to do what you please. Believe in America.

I am not a soldier, but I believe in what they stand for. And they fight for my freedoms and rights, because those freedoms and rights are theirs too.

Because—they are soldiers.

## The Almanian

Serving Alma College since 1907

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### Statement of Purpose

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

### Publication

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Letters are published as layout space allows. Submission of a letter does not guarantee publication. *The Almanian* reserves the right to condense letters for layout purposes. Deadline for publication is 5 p.m. the Friday before requested publication. E-mail letters to the editors at [almanian@alma.edu](mailto:almanian@alma.edu) or address letters to Newberry Hall, Alma College.

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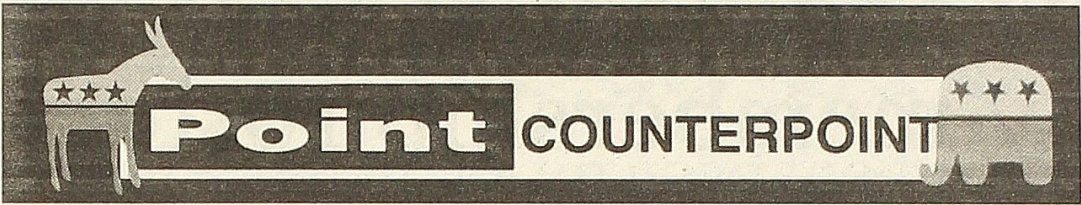
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OPINION



Charisma as important as politicking in national elections

SEAN WILSON  
Staff Writer

In recent months, the Democrats have lost significant support among independents and among the nation's voters as a whole. The legislature and the administration are both controlled by a strong opposing party, and vision among party leaders is either absent or goes unvoiced. The problems the party faces are significant, but not insurmountable. Many Americans question the Bush Administration's obsessive fixation on "dealing with" Iraq. Many also wonder at incredible bias inherent in the distribution of the Republican tax relief programs. In the rank-and-file of the Democratic Party, then, a sense of unity must be re-developed. A period of opposition will always help any political structure to attain this unity. What must be decided is what vision the party should have for itself and for the nation. A victory in the next national election, then, will require a candidate who is able to rally support in both houses of congress for domestic programs, while the administration looks outward. This individual must have a hand in opposing inequitable tax cuts, in protecting important social programs during a time of economic stress, or in reducing that stress itself. Also, a strong stance on abortion during an anticipated period of intense controversy over that issue will speak well for any candidate. A Democrat who sought to defeat Bush in 2004 would need to be charismatic;

many voters saw Gore as a tired old wind-bag, and while this is hardly a good basis for selecting government officials, it is nonetheless a reality of our political system. Despite his many qualifications, Gore was defeated in part by simple bad P.R. Jeniffer Granholm, by contrast, was virtually unknown in the political system of this state until the late 1990s. She served as a powerful beacon and rallying point for those who had grown weary of Engler's administration, and was elected on that strength, among others. America has very little tolerance for extremists of any variety, and in order to defeat Bush, there must be some compromise. What form this will take remains to be seen, but perhaps gun control might be put on a back burner during the campaign, to appease otherwise moderate firearms enthusiasts. Above all else, what Democrats must do in order to overcome opposition in the next national election is to convince Americans that economic well-being is not inexorably tied to tax relief, that embarking on foreign wars during a recession is ill-advised, and that trading privacy rights for security programs is a very risky proposition. The election results from this past fall showed both possible scenarios quite well; charismatic, strong Democrats captured four new Governorships, while a confused and unassertive congressional arm of the party was unable to defend its tenuous hold on the Senate. It is now fairly clear that appeasing the current White House will do very little to aid the Democrats in the eyes of the American people.

Democrats too weak to win a presidency

KYLE WELFARE  
Guest Columnist

Several months ago we began to see the beginnings of the next presidential election take shape when Democrats began jumping on the proverbial bandwagon by creating presidential exploratory committees. Now that 6 Democrats (the latest being the Rev. Al Sharpton) have announced their intentions to run for President the Democratic Party is going to need to make some difficult choices. First of all, who are they going to support? None of these men have been particularly powerful in terms of party politics, but on the other hand they have all been visible in the past year to the public in some form or another. Another question the Democrats are obviously going to be asking themselves is, how can we win the next election? As a Republican I come from a party that has, especially in the past several decades, had very strong leadership and support. The leadership, come election time, has always known which candidate to endorse and has put their full effort into getting that person elected. Democrats need to realize that one candidate is going to need to receive support from all areas of the party. While on the issue of support, I think that Democrats need to choose a candidate who will not back peddle and change opinions every time someone criticizes them. All America wants is someone who will be honest with them when it comes time for elections, and so far Democrats have been trying to find were they collectively stand. Americans have been giving George W. Bush consistently high opinion ratings ever since he has been elected. This tells us that he must be doing something in the White House besides playing solitaire on his computer. During and since the last election the democrats have been running on a platform that consists of criticizing George W,

but maybe if they were to embrace some of his ideas and help to improve upon them they could make some progress. In discussions I have had in the past several months I have heard several people comment that George W. Bush is "just so dumb" or other phrases similar to that. Well I hate to burst their bubble, but it is fairly reasonable to say that George W wouldn't be in his current position if he didn't have some brainpower. Even if he had help from "George Senior & Co." the American people wouldn't have elected him if he was dumb. I think that Democrats need to begin to see this as they move into the election season. One thing the Republicans have done over the past 60 years is to create a broad support system of organizations that are able to help influence policy and help push agendas. These think tanks have been critical to the recent success of the party and will remain a strong arm in party politics in future. Democratic candidates would be wise to strengthen the support network they have. They must remember that there is nothing wrong with taking advice from those who can take the time to analyze issues in more detail. I think it's going to be highly unlikely that our next president is going to be a Democrat. I hate to burst anyone's bubble on this issue but the Democratic Party is weak. Now that they don't have the majority in the Senate they must learn to be the minority. They need to relearn the political game and cater to some of the issues the George W has been pushing. Most importantly Democrats need to loosen up. Al Gore gave the party an image that Democrats are boring, and so far none of the candidates have managed to throw that stigma from their ticket. From a Republican's viewpoint looking into the Democratic party I think these things will help them stand a chance in the upcoming election.

Comix Crusade

by Nick Martin



VOICES

What is your favorite reality TV show?

"Beast vs. Man"—I just saw an episode where this guy from Japan tried to beat this gigantic bear in a hot dog eating contest." **Jeremy Hix (06)**

"Definitely 'The Bachelor.' All the women on the show have great personalities!" **Laura Wasek (05)**

"I don't like reality TV. It's not real if they screen all the members and put them in a manufactured situation." **Jeff Snow (05)**

"I like 'Trading Spaces.' It shows you different ways to design trashy, boring rooms." **Candice Stahl (06)**

"'American Idol' hands down. The thought of one person being the butt of a million jokes is hilarious." **Tristan Wilson (06)**

Hix

Wasek

Snow

Stahl

Wilson



# FEATURE

## 2003 New additions to Sorority and Fraternity membership rosters



**Zeta Sigma**  
Brandon McNally  
Jason Brown  
Dave Barton  
Adam Osborne

**Sigma Alpha Epsilon**  
Bart Housman  
Craig Histed  
Zack Sneider  
Ryan Riley  
Tyler Rummel  
Jeff Sexton

**Sigma Chi**  
Steve Whetstone  
Chad Whelton  
Jon Morris  
Matt Davis  
Bryan Cogswell  
George Champion  
Ed Klonowski  
Will Heyd

**Theta Chi**  
Thomas Conrad Reed  
Shawn Grutsch  
Sean Wilson  
Nathan Oliver  
Dustin Bissell  
Charles Stu Bachner

**Tau Kappa Epsilon**  
Jason Garvin  
Brian Weston  
David Morgan  
Jeff Vrsek  
Jared Bos  
Sean Latterner  
Erik Ryden  
Dan Smelter

**Kappa Iota**  
Jenna Skrine  
Ashley Sawatzke  
Katie Nicholson  
Ashlie Payne  
Rosemary Dutka  
Kate Williams  
Erin Brantley  
Kolorean Kershaw  
Tiffany Balducci

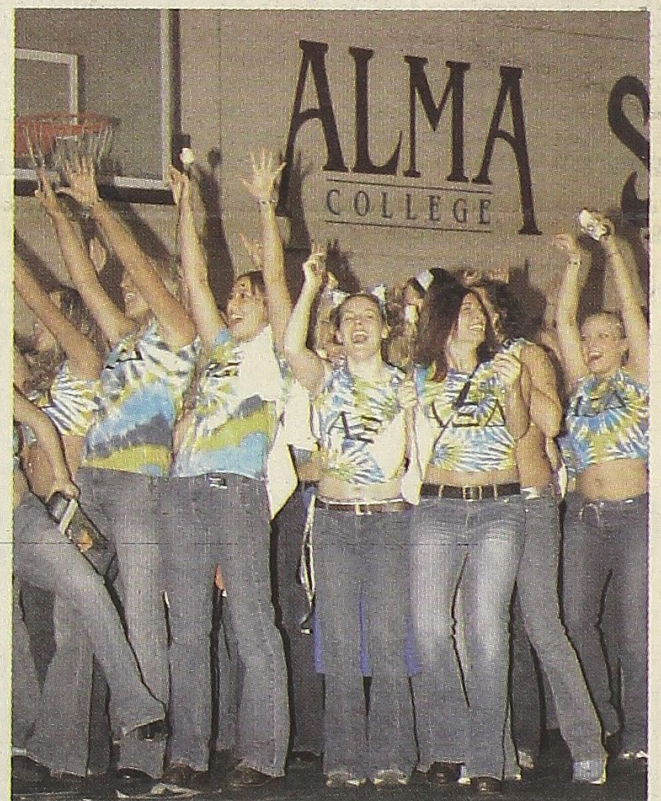


**Alpha Gamma Delta**  
Stacey Fogarty  
Katie Hill  
Katie Stieber  
Kat Lanphear  
Beth Doran  
Gillian Ogilvie  
Rachel Miller  
Amy Baumhoefner

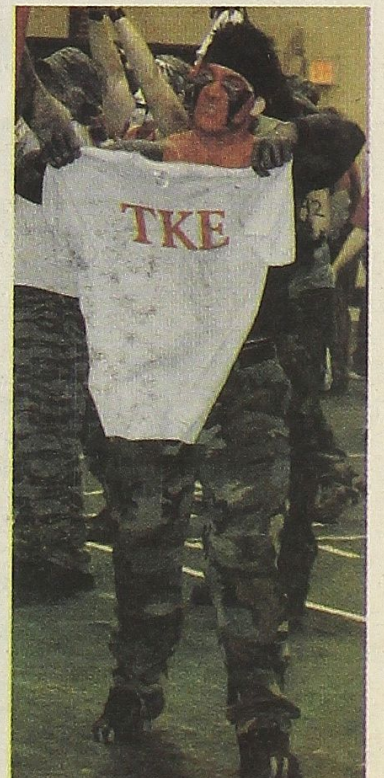
**Phi Sigma Sigma**  
Katie Persitz  
Amanda Leppek  
Samantha Allerding  
Heather Dowding  
Taylor Gamble  
Rachel Eaton  
Meghan Rector  
Jen Wemple  
Nikki Graham  
Kim Graor

**Alpha Xi Delta**  
Cailin Wilson  
Katie Baleja  
Tessia Zawilinski  
Janine Karbowski  
Melonie Peebles  
Kim Lung  
Margo Strebeg  
Jené Shaw  
Loren Huggett

**Gamma Phi Beta**  
Erica Sandel  
Naomi Vance  
Sarah Northrop  
Rachel Cummings  
Rachael Cassidy  
Tara Britting  
Jillian Cline  
Jess Odette



Photos by Melanie Szewczyk





## FEATURE

## Cheap Eats does breakfast

Alma's very own Main Café serves up good food at moderate prices

WENDY WOHLFIELL  
Staff Writer

For those students who are stuck on campus without cars, or even those who don't want to move them for fear of losing their beloved parking spot, I have opted to travel only a short distance to this week's restaurant review. "The Main Café", located only a few blocks from campus has shown to be a favorite among students and locals. The actual building

which dates back to 1905 has seen many ownership changes over the years. Originally called "The Sugar Bowl" it housed a confectionary store up front with a small lunchroom in the back. In 1929, the name changed to "The Main Café" when it became a full service restaurant. Today's owners Kathy Mar and Tonya Guajard renovated the Café in 2000, allowing it to seat up to 100 customers and now includes a full service soup and salad bar and a hot buffet.

The atmosphere in the Café is very relaxed. The restaurant holds many similarities to an old style 50's diner. A large bar/service counter extends along one wall while booths of all sizes form rows along the floor. The new addition, which appeared to hold a more modern motif, contained tables instead of booths. At lunch-time the Café was mostly full and seemed to contain a great deal of locals; a very comfortable environment.

Breakfast, which is served all day, seemed to be a favorite among customers during lunch. The breakfast menu had many options including omelets, pancakes, biscuits, and combination plates. Most breakfast prices were in the 5-6 dollar range. The lunch portion of the menu included a huge variety of options. On the lighter side were deli sandwiches, soups and salads. Bigger meals served in baskets included burgers, chicken strips, shrimp and specialty sandwiches and were all under 6 dollars in price. The Dinner menu titled "Main Events" was in the price range of 6-12 dollars and included steak and shrimp, fish, pork chops, Mexican dishes and a variety of others. It's also worth noting that the menu included vegetarian options and senior citizen prices.

Noticing that breakfast seemed to be a favorite, I decided to follow the crowd and try it out. I ordered a combination plate that contained 2 eggs, bacon, sausage, hash browns and toast. All for the great price of \$4.99. When the meal arrived I was very pleased with the portions especially for the price and the homemade bread was a great addition to any meal. The food was very much what you would

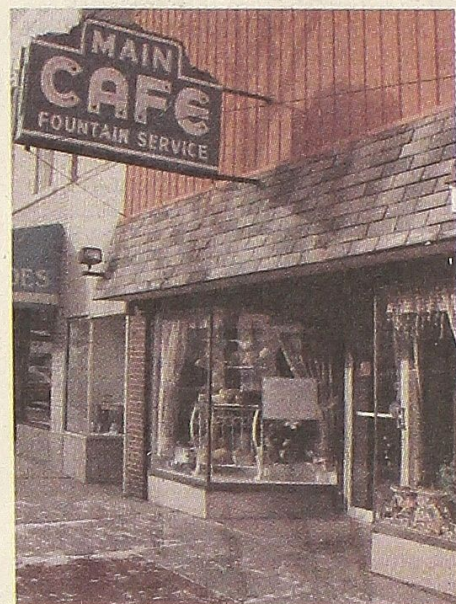


photo by Jason Garvin



The cozy interior of The Main Café helps add to the charm of its home-style cooking and friendly service.

## Dazzling light-themed show comes to Heritage Center on Friday

KATIE PERSITZ  
Staff Writer

Lights flash. Fireworks bang from the back of the theater. The crowd jumps. Figures move in and out of the swirling smoke and brilliant lights. DNA leaps around the stage. Single cells of light multiply to make nimble apparitions. Beams of light float, illuminating and astonishing. "Three-dimensional flights of the imagination come to life in a world where fireflies dance, gods of lightning do battle, moon maidens spin above the clouds and underwater creatures depict the cycle of life and death. The nine-member cast of Luma takes light and fashions it into lively shapes that dance, spin and captivate, bringing viewers to the edge of their imaginations and beyond," says the website, lumatheatre.com.

It's a show of lights, but it's unlike anything anyone has ever conceived before.

"People hear 'light show' and they expect laser lights," states Marlin, the show's creator. "But lasers are machines limited to two dimensions. Luma creates in three dimensions. I've created

a new genre of performance art. I'm painting with light, with darkness as the canvas, light as the brush. This is the first show that is about light."

Luma is a family performance art, combining the new light technologies and

modern dance. Luma illustrates natural, artificial and metaphorical characteristics of light.

The idea for Luma began in the early eighties when Marlin took a friend camping in the Arizona desert. The splendor of the stars had such an impact on them, that he picked up a burning branch from the fire and waved it around sending sparks up to meet the sky. The image became the idea for Luma. In his show, Marlin uses flashlights and gels to illustrate the city's loss of the night sky. The natural light of the stars was being drowned out by the lights of the city.

After making his way around the country as a juggler that didn't get much recognition, Marlin decided to retreat into himself and moved to Hawaii. In 900 sq. ft. tree house he built himself, he began to coordinate his sleeping and eating schedules to the earth's clock, bringing a another view to consider. The light at night came from but the stars, the moon or the glowing volcano illuminating the horizon. Marlin took trips out to watch the lava flow to see the power of the magnificent volcano. He soon realized that others would want to see a show like that.

Soon after he began to realize his dream of performing these wonder-filled things of nature, as

more people became involved in his little troupe.

Since 1997, Luma has traveled all over the country performing in various cities for colleges; on Friday, Jan. 31, it comes to Alma. Admission is free to students.

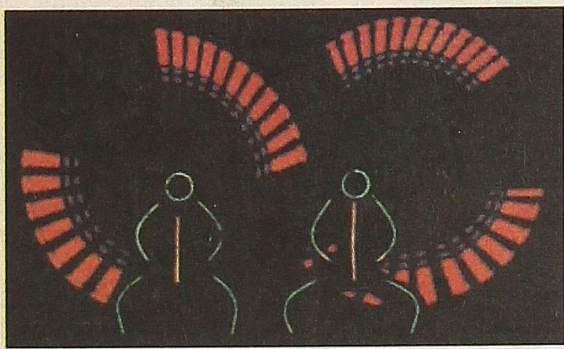


photo courtesy of www.lumatheatre.com

LUMA's dazzling performance of light and dance will play Friday at 8 p.m.

Free Concert!! 8:30pm  
Van Dusen January 31  
TWO STARS BURNING SUN  
todayiwait  
presented by WQAC  
90.9FM

See next week's Almanian  
for a review of  
TWO STARS BURNING SUN  
and todayiwait,  
courtesy of WQAC



# FEATURE

## Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and the Assad Brothers' classical stylings bring Gypsy flavor to Midland

TIM SLADE  
Feature Editor

It is extremely rare that someone can go to a show, have none of their expectations fulfilled, and leave absolutely content with what they experienced. The fact that such was the case with the performance by Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and the Assad brothers (Sérgio and Odair) is a testament to their incredible skill, musicianship, and Ms. Sonnenberg's stage presence. The show took place at 8 p.m. on Sunday evening, at the Midland Center for the Arts; the practical result was that my companion and I comprised fully 40% of the portion of the audience that did not yet qualify for senior discounts at various establishments.

Prior to taking my seat at the concert, what I knew about the show could be summed up in a very simple equation: award-winning stud violinist + Brazilian guitar-playing brothers = gypsy concert = FUN. However, I was suffering under a misconception bred from years of watching TV and reading European literature; the word Gypsy had conjured in my mind fireside scenes full of exotic-featured dancers in brightly colored clothing moving rapidly and sensuously around a firepit to intense, passionate music played by the guitarists and percussionists seated at the edge of the light. I imagined fast beats, intricate fingerings, and highly rhythmic strumming. I basically imagined flamenco music, I guess. As a result, my expectations were left thoroughly unfulfilled.

Since there were no dancers accompanying the trio, I instead had to settle for the lively Ms. Sonnenberg's energetic bowing and fidgeting whenever she really put her back into a song and the brothers' tendency to alternate between resting their bearded chins on

their guitars and dipping, swiveling, and bobbing their heads to the music like a pair of bobble-head dolls.

Musically speaking, the entire show was smooth, but far from subdued. I often felt that whatever the Gypsy equivalent of a ceilidh might be could break out at any moment, that there was a great deal of energy and intensity burning just below the surface.

The opening piece was Sérgio Assad's arrangement of seven classic Gypsy tunes, inspiration for which was accumulated by tracing the migration of the Gypsy people through Eastern Europe. It was outwardly tamer than I'd expected, featuring both simple and teasing violin runs over lilting guitar picking and peaceful, soothing melodies underscored by a feeling of home. In retrospect, given that the titles of the various tunes within the piece were *The Pretty Girl, Coming Home, If I Could Catch the Mouse, Difficult for You, Curd-Porridge, As Many Inns as I Find, and Young Bride*, I should probably have expected simple tunes evoking images of peasant life rather than more intense, fiery, adventurous stuff.

Next was Assad's Fantasy on *Dark Eyes*, which turned out to be a relaxing little piece. It featured a couple of piercingly high violin runs followed by teasing curvy descents interspersed with lots of low-end

guitar, generally producing a feeling of being rocked in a cradle.

Just to show off, I guess, the trio broke from the evening's theme to play J.S. Bach's Sonata in E Major, BWV. 1016 for the violin and harpsichord, as arranged by Sérgio Assad. Simply put, it was

masterful. While the opening adagio was nothing I would necessarily write home about, the following allegro was exciting. The adagio *ma non troppo* that came next felt initially contemplative and thoughtful, becoming increasingly inquisitive and exploratory as the movement

progressed. The final allegro was exactly that – joyous, playful, and culminating in a marvelous little back-and-forth between Ms. Sonnenberg and the brothers.

The final piece of the first half was entitled *Danzas Argentines*, which Ms. Sonnenberg introduced with "This'll be a little Super Bowl – me against the Assads." Featuring a percussive opening movement full of muted strumming, drumming on the guitar and violin bodies and all of the driving rhythms you would ordinarily associate with Latin music, the piece built to an enthralling "Anything you can do, I can do better" climax that left the audience gasping audibly.

The second half opened with a learning experience – Ms. Sonnenberg announced that the upcoming medley had been written by the famous Charlie Chaplin.

Apparently, he was not only a talented comic, but a wonderful songwriter and composer with gypsy heritage. The medley made me feel as though I were in a movie, riding in a gondola along a canal in Venice with someone playing a guitar on the bridge under which I passed.

The next treat was entitled *Four Argentinean Tangos*, by A. Piazzolla. However, the trio prefaced it with a performance of *Invierno*, taken from Piazzolla's version of the *Four Seasons*. While the piece was magnificent, I had to agree with Ms. Sonnenberg, who wryly observed "I don't think it sounds anything like winter, but then he's from Argentina – what the hell does he know about winter?" The subsequent tangos were fun, but I would never have identified them as such if the program hadn't listed them so. The last segment, however, was once again breathtaking. Entitled *Escualo*, it was a showcase for the violin, and was so fiery and intense as to elicit the same audible gasping and astonished murmuring that had ended the first half of the show.

The final piece, Bartok's *Rumanian Folk Dances*, was once again a model of simple beauty, utterly contrary to my expectations. The only portion within the greater song that felt like a dance was the *Rumanian Polka*, but even that excitement was outshone by the final movement. Entitled *Quick Dance*, it culminated in yet another dueling-artists showdown that left Ms. Sonnenberg's bow frayed and shedding hairs.

Overall, the evening was a success. With three talented artists joyfully displaying their mastery of their instruments, Ms. Sonnenberg's always-entertaining commentary between pieces, and the magnificent performance hall, nothing was lacking. Despite having met none of my expectations, the trio somehow surpassed them by an alternate route.



photo courtesy of www.nadjasalerno-sonnenberg.com

## The Phantom of the Opera at Wharton Center: a show for the ages, and all ages

TIM SLADE  
Feature Editor

Lansing's Wharton Center played host on Saturday to one of the greatest performances of musical theater I have ever witnessed. Admittedly, it competed only with four other musicals for that title, but three of the other four are Broadway musicals, so it is certainly in good company. *The Phantom of the Opera*, on the first weekend of its three-and-a-half week run, was a generally marvelous show, the experience of which was hindered only by the Wharton Center's limitations and the depth of my pockets.

Given that the tickets I had in pocket for the show were free, courtesy of my girlfriend's mother, I really have no room to complain. However, the tickets happened to be for seats 7 and 8 in row K of the Grand Tier Right; in other words, the very last row of the performance hall. Since I was too cheap to pay five bucks for a pair of binoculars, this condemned me to watching faceless, colorful shapes moving about onstage to beautiful and moving music. Although that might seem to be relatively big drawback given that *The Phantom of the Opera* is a theatrical production, the show was so thoroughly enjoyable in every other aspect that it turned out to be a minor annoyance.

As I am but a minor fan of Broadway shows and musicals in general, I was aware of Andrew Lloyd Webber's greatness only secondhand; everyone seems to think he is the best, so I always figured he must be, but I didn't realize the extent of his excellence until this show. The only complaint I had with either the lyrics or music was the presence of the song "Masquerade" at the outset of the second act. While I presume it was meant to be

some manner of foreshadowing commenting on the Phantom's habit of hiding his true self behind his mask, the fact that it was sung by the entire company meant that the words were mostly unintelligible. What is more, the song felt repetitive and annoying; as I was watching it, the words "throw-away song" kept running through my head. It felt as though the song was cobbled together and thrown in because the chorus was being underutilized and the writers had some sort of song quota to reach. It occurred to me that the song might seem more at home on a Hanson CD than in one of the greatest musicals ever written.

On the flip side, the soloists were magnificent. The Phantom, played by Brad Little, was magnificent. With a powerful singing voice, a wonderful ability to channel intense emotion, and a speaking voice that often brought chills to the spine, he managed to hold the audience in the same fearful thrall that he exerted upon Christine. Julie Hanson's Christine, on the other hand, was an angelic young woman possessed of an equally angelic voice. The role of Raoul, Christine's love interest, was capably filled by \*\*\*\*\*, who likewise had a wonderful singing voice.

My only disappointment with Raoul had nothing to do with the performer and everything to do with the plot – I could

not for the life of me see why Christine fell madly in love with Raoul instead of with the Phantom. I might not have expected her to fall in love with the Phantom if I had been more familiar with

sabotages a performance at his theater and causes a massive chandelier to fall onto the stage. When the show was done in San Diego's Civic Center, where my companion saw it, the chandelier fell at high speed from directly above the audience and then swung about six feet above their heads before literally crashing to the stage and breaking into many pieces. At the Wharton center, the chandelier was slowly lowered along a trajectory that did not even pretend to imperil the audience, and then gently folded upon itself when it reached the stage. It was not very dramatic at all, and the characters onstage failed to sell me on the idea that they were afraid.

The other special effects were wonderful, though. The candles brought up to float through the mist as the Phantom and Christine poled a boat to his underground lair were masterfully done, and lent an eerie air to the scene. Likewise, every time the Phantom set off his

flashpowder and smoke bombs to make a fancy escape, I was left dazzled and blinking at the unexpected diversion.

In general, however, the show was excellent. It was playing at a beautiful venue, was realized by marvelously talented actors, actresses, singers, and dancers, and was simply a fun story set to beautiful music. If I had enough money, I would go see it again in a heartbeat; I would just be sure to shell out the extra cash to get out of the nosebleed section.



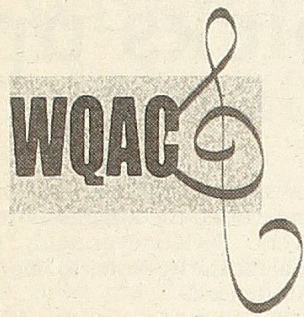
photo courtesy of thephantomoftheopera.com  
Brad Little is the Phantom of the Opera at Lansing's Wharton Center from Jan 22. - Feb. 16

the plot ahead of time, but as it was it just seemed as though that was the logical choice for her to make. I have to admit that I was so ignorant as to think that all those wonderful love songs that you hear about from Phantom were between Christine and the title character, rather than she and Raoul.

The only poorly done part of the show was the chandelier incident. For those who are unfamiliar with the show, the Phantom

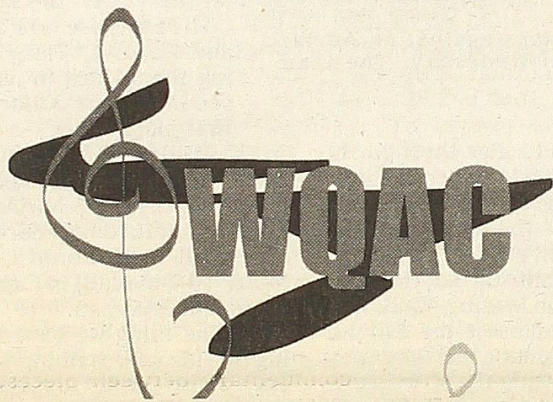


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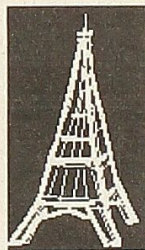
**463-1051**

Two Person, Two Bedroom

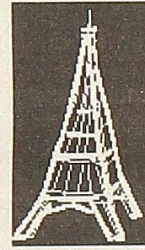
Apartments for Rent

- Only 10 minutes from Alma
  - 1/8 mile off of freeway in Shepherd
  - From \$475 plus ulities/month
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## ACUB's



## Foreign Film



## Festival

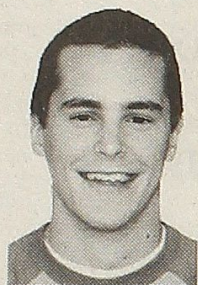
Friday, Jan 31<sup>st</sup>  
9:00 – Midnight  
In the Hole

Foreign Films, Foreign  
Food, and Foreign  
Fun!!!!



# SPORTS

## Best darn sports column ever



**MATT HELMUS**  
Sports Editor

Another week of Winter sports has come and gone on campus. This week saw the Scots go 4-2 in MIAA action. The men's basketball team dropped another two games this weekend while the women's team picked up two victories. The swimming and diving teams also swept their

meet on Saturday.

In women's basketball the Scots defeated Adrian at home during the week before traveling to Grand Rapids and beating an up-and-coming Calvin team 63-55. **Karen Hall (04)** received the MIAA player of the week honor for the second time this year. Against Adrian, Hall scored 17 points and dragged down 9 rebounds. In action against the Knights she had a double-double with 20 points and 15 rebounds.

The men's team struggled this week with a disappointing loss to Adrian on Wednesday followed by a loss to Calvin on Saturday. The Bulldogs beat the Scots with a late run in the second half. The Knights came out early and had a 16 point lead going into halftime. The Scots attempted to make a run in the second half but Calvin was able to maintain a healthy lead.

It is amazing that the team has not been able to win a conference game in over two years. The team seems to be able to compete with most MIAA foes in terms of talent but never in the final score. Sophomores at Alma have never seen the team win a conference game. The team, dominated by freshmen, is beginning to gel and hopefully will get on the right track as the season winds down.

Even though they have struggled this season, the team deserves more respect than what they are currently getting. *Grand Rapids Press* writer Alan Babbitt bashed the Scots in his weekly MIAA article. "It's not difficult to be a commanding presence against the Scots. The Scots field the worst MIAA team in years." Hopefully the team can prove to Mr. Babbitt that they will not be the league doormat for long.

In brighter news the swimming and diving teams celebrated Senior Day in winning fashion. Both the men and women defeated Tri-State in front of a large crowd of parents and fans in the natatorium. Highlights on the day included **Colin McLaughlin (04)** debuting his diving skills for the home crowd on his second day of diving.

On the professional sports front, the Lions pulled their heads out of the sand and fired coach Marty Mornihweg. Rumor has it that recently deposed 49er coach Steve Mariucci will be coming to the Motor City. Lions President Matt Millen has said that he is looking at Mariucci but will also look at other candidates. This could be an exciting season with a new coach, new stadium and a developing quarterback in Joey Harrington. Hopefully the Lions use their #2 draft pick and remaining budget and get some exciting players. Former Michigan State wide receiver Charlie Rogers would look great in Honolulu blue - Just a tip for Matt Millen.

## Women's basketball picks up two conference wins

**KRISHA LARSON**  
Staff Writer

The Alma College Women's Basketball team picked up two MIAA victories last week. On Wednesday the Scots defeated Adrian College 66-53. Saturday they traveled to Calvin College and brought home another victory, 63-55.

On Wednesday, the Scots took charge of the game, 9-0 as they took the lead and kept it through the remainder of the game. With just over four minutes left in the first half, the Bulldogs were closing in on the Scots' lead at a score of 20-16. However, the Scots went on to score ten of the final twelve shots in the first half to end the half with a 30-18 lead.

In the second half, Adrian again attempted to close in on the Scots, cutting the score to 41-36. Alma went on another scoring run to enlarge the margin and their accurate free throw shooting through the final minutes of the game pulled them to a 66-53 victory.

**Karen Hall (04)** led the Scots with 17 points and 9 rebounds. **Shelly Ulfig (03)** scored 15 points and grabbed 13 rebounds as **Janell Twietmeyer (03)** had 10 points. **Katey Peacock (06)** scored 8 points while **Michelle Dettling (05)** ended with 6 points and 9 rebounds.

On Saturday, the Scots traveled to Calvin College and shut down the Knights for seven minutes in the first half as Alma took over the lead. With 8:29 left in the first half, the Knights

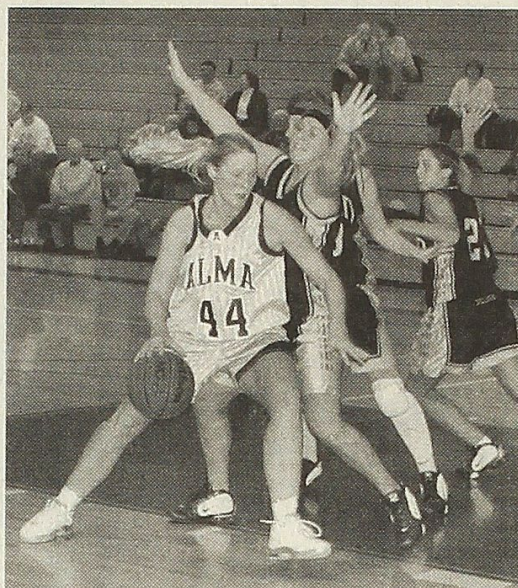


Photo by Jason Garvin

**Shelly Ulfig (03)** drives against an Adrian College defender on Wednesday. The team won the game 66-53.

were ahead 15-11. But through the next seven minutes, the Scots scored 16 points taking the game in their hands, 27-15. At the half, Alma had the lead at 29-22.

As the second half started, the Scots went on a 13-0 run leading 42-22 with 17:42 left. The closest the Knights came was five points after they went on a 14-1 run putting the score at 50-45 with 5:32 left to play. But, the Scots regained the momentum and went on to victory, 63-55.

The Scots focus on their defense this week proved valuable as the Scots shut

down the Knights several times and caused the Knights 17 turnovers. Twietmeyer said, "Our goal for the week was to improve our defense."

Hall led the Scots again with 20 points and 15 rebounds as Ulfig scored 18 and had 15 rebounds. Twietmeyer scored 14 points hitting two three-point goals. The Scots outrebounded the Knights 42-31.

Alma had a 37.3 field goal percentage and 78.6 free throw percentage, while Calvin only had an overall field goal percentage of 33.9 and hit 70 percent of free throws.

"Our goal is to try to keep our opponents score under 60," says Twietmeyer, "we focused on our defense this week and did that." Hall also commented on their defense, "Our defense improved a lot this week," she said.

The Scots are now 10-5 overall and 4-2 in MIAA league play placing them third in league under second-place Kalamazoo and first-place Hope.

On Wednesday, January 29, the Scots will travel to Indiana to face St. Mary's College (1-5 MIAA, 5-12 overall). On Saturday, February 1, the Scots will face Albion College (3-3 MIAA, 10-7 overall) in Cappaert Gymnasium at 3:00 p.m.

"One thing we have been focusing on this year is doing well on both ends of the court," says Hall. "We still need to focus on putting together our offense and defense. Some games we will do well on defense, and others we will do well on offense, we just need to put the two together now."

## ESCAPE the BUBBLE Study Abroad



**Alma College Application Deadline:**  
March 5<sup>th</sup> for Australia, England, New Zealand & Scotland  
March 15<sup>th</sup> for France, Germany, Spain, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador

### Financial Aid

Consult with a financial aid advisor to determine exact amounts of financial aid that will apply. Exact amounts vary by award type and destination.

### Foreign Language Not Required

You would learn more about your own language, your self and open new cognitive boxes by learning a second language. You can, however, learn Aussie, Kiwi, Scottish or the Queen's English.

### Earn Transfer Credits Toward Your Major, Minor

Studying abroad will probably NOT delay your graduation because credits count toward your degree requirements.

### Meet "DR" and "S" Requirements

Studying abroad during a winter semester will fill an S course requirement.

Depending on program dates, enrollment may fulfill one of the two Spring Term requirements.

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# SPORTS

## Swimming and diving teams celebrate Senior Day with wins

WENDY WOHLFEILL  
Staff Writer

Both the Alma Men's and Women's swimming and diving teams gained wins on Saturday January 25th in McClure Natatorium against Tri-State University of Indiana. While celebrating Senior Day, the men recorded a 109-91 victory, and the women a 117-67 win.

The men's team competed hard with six first place finishes. Doubling up on wins were senior Mike Porter and freshman Cole Hughes. Porter won the hundred-meter backstroke with a time of 57.17 and the 200-yard freestyle in 1:54.68. Hughes took control of both diving events scoring 203.85 points on the 3-meter board, and 220.60 points on the 1-meter board.

Erik Johnson (06) also recorded a win in the 1,000-yard freestyle with a time of 12:07.82. The combined team of Porter, Aaron Rycroft (03), Ben McDonald (06) and Johnson swam to a victory in the 200-yard medley with a time of 1:47.34.

The men's team also recorded many second place finishes, which helped them achieve their victory. Colin McLaughlin (04) placed second in the 1,000 freestyle with a time of 12:54.07, and second in the 100-breaststroke (1:10.31). McDonald also recorded two-second place finishes in the individual medley (2:17.98) and the 100-yard butterfly (1:00.79). Rycroft took second in the 100

freestyle with a time of 53.27 and Chris Porter (03) in the 500-yard freestyle (5:36.53).

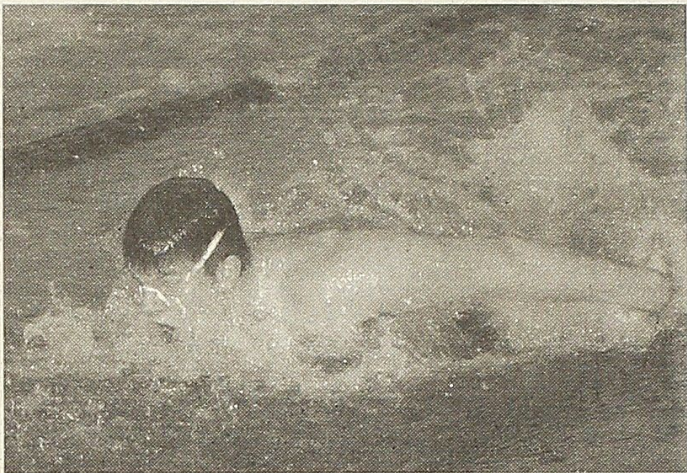
The women's team proved to be more than successful with seven first-place finishes and eight second-place finishes in the meet.

Stephanie Druskinis (05) gained double wins

in the 200-yard freestyle with a time of 2:02.71 and the 500-yard freestyle with a 5:38.35.

Meredith Henry (03) took first place in the 200-yard individual medley (2:20.05) and second in the 100-yard backstroke (1:06.35). Other first place finishers included Erin Wicker (05) in the 100-yard butterfly (1:07.61), Elizabeth Smith (04) in the 100-yard backstroke (1:05.69) and Theresa Thompson (03) in the 1,000-yard freestyle with a time of 12:38.35.

Both of the Alma women's relay teams took second place finishes. Competing in the 200-yard freestyle relay



Ben McDonald (06) swims the butterfly against Tri-State. The men and the women both celebrated Senior Day by winning their meet.

were Thompson, Rebecca Emerson (03), Jennifer Georges (03) and Henry with an overall time of 1:56.47.

In the 200-yard medley, Smith, Rosemary Dutka (06), Druskinis and Johnson recorded a 2:04.38. Other second place finishers included Dutka in both the 1,000-yard freestyle and the 100-yard breast stroke, Kristen Kuzak (04) in the 100-yard butterfly and Julie Fantone (03) in the 100-yard freestyle.

Both the men's and women's teams will continue their season at the Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association (MIAA) Championships on February 13-15th in Holland.

## Morgan Hansen: Sophomore diving sensation

JOEL RENDER  
Staff Writer

The Alma College Swimming and Diving Team do not often receive a lot of the praise and recognition that they deserve, but that mindset is definitely beginning to change due to the amazing skills of Morgan Hansen (05). Hansen, who has been diving since her freshman year in high school, has been astounding her coach, her teammates, and even her opponents. This is not a sudden transformation into an excellent diver either. Last year, she took part in nationals in both the one and three-meter events.

Not surprisingly, Hansen's coach Greg Baadte had only positive praise to add. He said very plainly, "She's just a real solid performer." Not only does Baadte think that the physical skill necessary is present in Hansen, but also the requisite mental acumen is present as well. He said, "Diving is a mental sport, and she has what it takes

no doubt."

Despite all of the praise, Coach Baadte said that Hansen has been working on some new dives as the end of the season approaches. Overall, he stated that her scores have been consistently higher than last year, and still continue to improve.

Just to give an idea how good she is, Baadte pointed out that no freshman had won both the one-meter and the three-meter events in nine years before Hansen accomplished that feat last year. Morgan also currently holds all of the freshman women's diving records as well.

All of the records and praise do not seem to affect her much though. She remains content to just perform at the highest level possible. Hansen, who hails from Kenai, Alaska, was a gymnast for six years before she ever considered diving. Then, when she reached high school she was disappointed to discover that her school did not have a gymnastics team. Undaunted, she decided to try her

hand at diving. Hansen says that she stuck with diving because of its many similarities to gymnastics. She said, "After all, they both involve a lot of jumping and twisting, which was always my favorite part of gymnastics."

At the moment, Hansen is mostly concerned with performing well at the MIAA Championships, which take place February 13-15 at Hope College. If she scores high enough, then she will most likely receive another berth to compete for the national championship. This may not be as easy as it would seem. According to Hansen, "Our conference is pretty good as far as diving is concerned."

Coach Baadte has faith that she will try her best no matter what. Making it to the national championships is not of supreme importance to Hansen though. She does not plan on discontinuing diving anytime soon, so she still would have two more chances at the national title. Coach Baadte did an excellent job summing up Morgan when he said, "She works really hard."



Photo by Jason Garvin

Left: Morgan Hansen, Alma College's all-conference diver. Last year she won both the one and three meter diving events in the MIAA. Right: Hansen showing why she is one of the top divers in Division III. She hopes to return to the National Championships again this year as a sophomore.

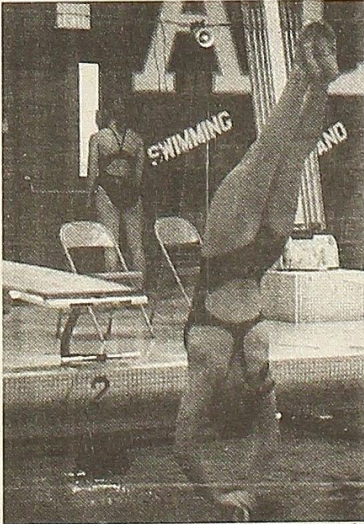


Photo by Jason Garvin

## MIAA Standings

### Women's Basketball

	Conference W-L	Overall W-L
Hope	6-0	17-0
K'zoo	5-1	11-5
Alma	4-2	10-5
Albion	3-3	10-7
Adrian	2-4	9-8
Calvin	2-4	11-6
Olivet	1-5	6-11
St. Mary's	1-5	5-12

### Men's Basketball

	Conference W-L	Overall W-L
Calvin	4-1	4-1
Hope	4-1	4-1
Albion	3-2	3-2
K'zoo	3-2	3-2
Adrian	2-3	2-3
Olivet	2-3	2-3
Alma	0-6	0-6

## MIAA Scores

Men's Basketball:  
Adrian 68, Alma 60  
Calvin 87, Alma 57

Women's Basketball:  
Alma 66, Adrian 53  
Alma 63, Calvin 55

Men's Swimming/  
Diving:  
Alma 109, Tri-State  
University 91

Women's Swim-  
ming/Diving:  
Alma 117, Tri-State  
University 67



# SPORTS

## Bucs defense comes out ahead in Super Bowl

MATT HELMUS  
Sports Editor

In one of the most anticipated Super Bowls in recent history the Tampa Bay Buccaneers prove the adage "offense wins games, but defense wins championships." The Oakland Raiders are the winningest team of the young millennium but do not have any Super Bowl rings to show for it. The Buccaneers beat the Raiders 48-21 in the latest showdown between NFC and AFC champions.

The Bucs relied on their vaunted defense to hold the high-flying Raiders and their MVP quarterback Rich Gannon to 21 points. Oakland's point total was matched by Tampa Bay's defense with 3 Gannon passes being returned for touchdowns. The Bucs had two other picks on the day while their offense only turned the ball over once. The Tampa Bay defense also had five sacks on the day while their opponents never got to quarterback Brad Johnson.

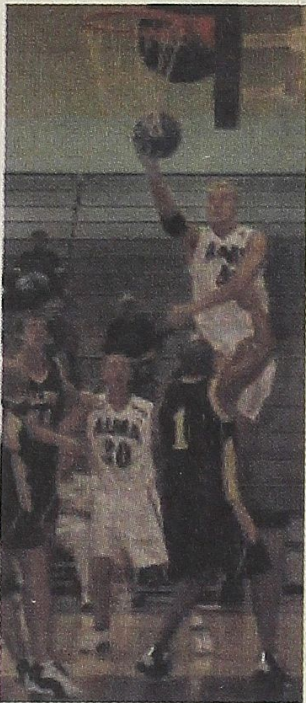
Buccaneers coach Jon Gruden was elated after the game, as he had defeated the team he coached until last season. Gruden was traded to Tampa Bay by Oakland owner Al Davis for \$8 million and an assortment of future draft picks. He proceeded to lead the Bucs to their most successful season ever and first Super Bowl appearance. Many analysts believe that Gruden's success is only beginning as he has not had time to build an offense of his liking in Tampa. It could be very scary once he does.

In another sidebar to the game both of the Raiders future Hall of Fame receivers said they would return for next season. Jerry Rice and Tim Brown are two of the most prolific receivers in NFL history. They make up two-thirds of the 1,000 reception club. Rice is 40 years old while Brown is 37. The only thing keeping them from wearing Raiders uniforms next year may be the salary cap. Having several big-name players on the team hits the team hard in the checkbook. They may have to trim several players from this year's team to make the salary cap for next season.

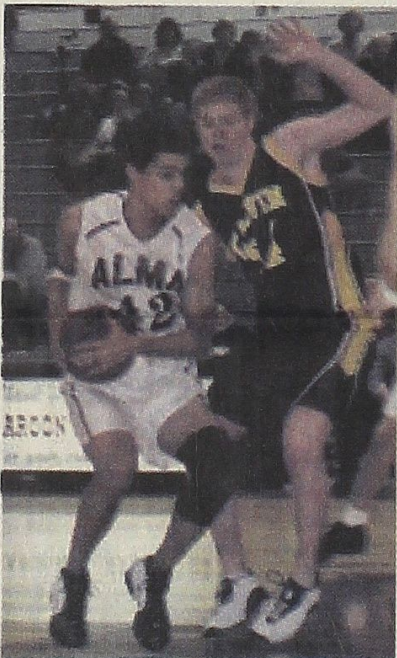
According to the Associated Press more people watched Super Bowl XXXVII than almost any other Super Bowl in history. Only the '96 game featuring the Dallas Cowboys and Pittsburgh Steelers saw more fans tune in. Overall, 137.65 million people watched the game. This means that at any time around 40 percent of televisions in the country were tuned into the Super Bowl.

Those millions of fans were also treated to the usual display of expensive commercials between play. Sponsors spent over \$2 millions for 30 second spots during the game. It seemed that Anheuser-Busch shareholders will be a little lighter in the pocket after Budweiser had numerous ads throughout the Super Bowl.

Students on Alma's campus gathered around TVs everywhere from the TKE house to the Nugent game room in Mitchell Hall. Pizza deliverers were in and out of campus parking lots all night. Many other students probably caught the game in stereo as seemingly every room had the game blaring. Even Dr. Liping Bu caught a bit of the halftime show, which she found quite interesting. (For more on that you'll have to talk to Dr. Bu.)



Top: Joe Baysdell (05) lays a shot in over a Knight defender in Saturday's loss.  
Bottom: Calvin's Jeremy Veenstra defends Alma's Carlton Hill (06).

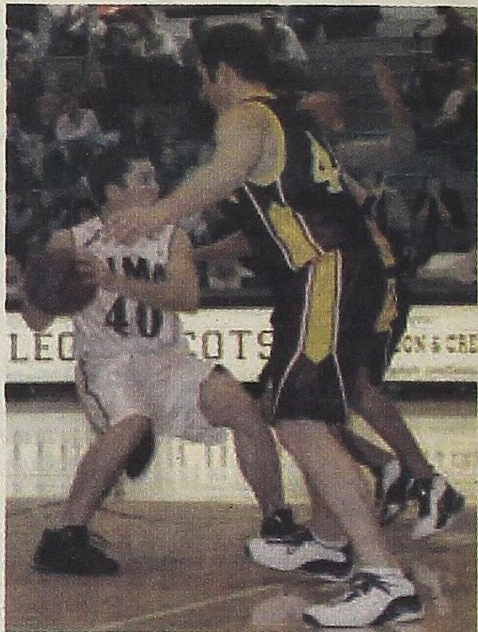
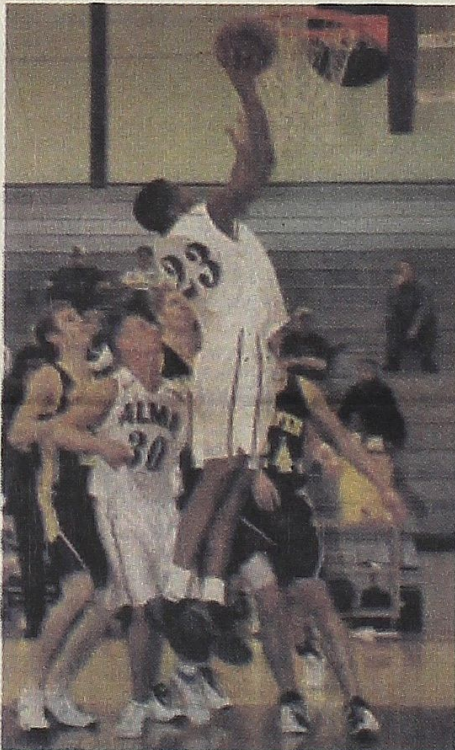


On Saturday the Scots lost to Calvin College 87-57. The loss drops Alma to 0-6 in the conference and 1-17 overall. The Knights' win keeps them in contention for their 5th straight MIAA crown. They are now 4-1 in the conference and 11-6 overall.

The Scots were led by Rob Taylor (03) with 16 points and 9 rebounds. Joe Baysdell (05) had 12 points and Carlton Hill (06) chipped in 10. For the Knights Joel Hoekstra netted 19 points, while shooting 3-4 from 3-point range. Jeremy Veenstra had 15 points and 13 rebounds for the Knights while Chris Prins had 16 points.

-Photoessay by Melanie Szewczyk

Below: Scot forward Marcus Staten (06) goes up over a group of defenders.



Top: Alma's Charlie Gross (06) tries to keep the ball away from two Knight defenders.  
Bottom: Mike Borgert (05) pushed the ball up the court against Calvin in the Scots' loss.



## CAMPUS CALENDAR

### Wednesday, Jan. 29

7:30 p.m. - Women's Basketball  
@ St. Mary's

7:30 p.m. - Black Student Union  
Meeting (Newberry Lobby)

8 p.m. - Catholic Student Orga-  
nization (Fireside Lounge)

9 p.m. - Trinity Bible Fellowship  
(Jones Auditorium)

### Friday, Jan. 31

Last Day to Drop a 1st 7-week  
Class

8 p.m. - LUMA - Theatre of Light  
(Heritage Center - Presbyterian  
Hall)

### Saturday, Feb. 1

3 p.m. - Men's Basketball @  
Albion

3 p.m. - Women's Basketball  
Home v. Albion

### Sunday, Feb. 2

9 p.m. - Chapel

### Monday, Feb. 3

8 p.m. - Naomi Shihab Nye -  
Poet (Heritage Center - Pres-  
byterian Hall)