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Playing drums with their feet

McKenna's tap class entertains crowds with dance numbers in South Dining Hall

By KAITLYNN RIELY
Associate News Editor

The hall where students normally sit and eat was transformed into a song and dance concert stage Wednesday night, as the 72 members of Professor James McKenna's tap dance class soft-shoed and Shirley Temples to several choreographed numbers.

Dressed in white tops, black pants and tap shoes, the tap dancers showed off the moves they learned during the semester, from the "Bob Hope time step," to an Irish jig and the "reach for the moon" move.

For 40 minutes, they tapped in front of a large crowd that gathered in the east wing of South Dining Hall. They opened and

closed with Michael Jackson's "The Way You Make Me Feel" and performed other numbers in between.

Prior to the first tap dancing class in August, McKenna told the audience, 90 percent of the students had never even seen a pair of tap shoes before, let alone performed a dance.

"It's so funny, every semester at the beginning of the course, I show the students the dances they will learn," he said, sitting in his office a few hours before the recital. "And they all laugh and say, 'Oh right, we're going to learn that.'"

But he reassures them that three months from the start of class, they will know the songs.

"And it's true," he said. "They all learn it."

see RECITAL/page 6



Professor James McKenna leads his tap class in a rendition of Soulja Boy at Wednesday's recital.

JESSICA LEE/The Observer

ND frosh awarded \$100k

By TESS CIVANTOS
News Writer

Freshman Kevin McShane plans to quit his dining hall job, now that he won a \$100,000 scholarship — by throwing footballs into a giant Dr Pepper can.

The scholarship was part of the Dr Pepper half-time football challenge. Six grand-prize-winning college students each received a trip for two to either the ACC championship game, the SEC championship game or the Big XII championship game.

Two of the six Grand Prize winners attended each game, where they competed for the scholarship money at half-time.

McShane chose the Dec. 6 Big XII Championship game, and took his older brother with him.

"We each had an eight-foot-high Dr Pepper can five yards away, and we each had 10 footballs — 10 shots each," McShane said.

"It was pretty nerve-wracking," McShane said. "But it was really cold in Kansas City, so it was hard to get really excited."

He chose the Big XII game because it sounded like the most exciting game out of his options, he said.

"My brother was really mad at me for picking Kansas City over Tampa Bay," McShane said, laughing.

McShane chose to enter the contest on a whim.

"I saw a promotion on the Dr Pepper Web site for the halftime throw. I figured I could use the money, so why not give it a try?"

see MCSHANE/page 6

Holiday lights increase energy usage



QUENTIN STENGER/The Observer

A hallway in Alumni Hall is decorated with strands of white Christmas lights for the holiday season.

By SARAH MERVOSH
News Writer

'Tis the season for the sound of Christmas songs and the smell of Christmas cookies. And 'tis the season for Christmas decorations to adorn campus buildings.

But with strands of lights hanging in dorm hallways, individual dorm rooms and dining halls, it should come as no surprise that the Christmas season is also one of increased energy use.

While in the grand scheme of things Christmas lights are not significantly high-energy users, there are a few ways to decrease the amount of energy

used during the Christmas season, said senior Lourdes Long, president of GreeND and an intern in the Office of Sustainability.

Long suggested two main ways to decrease energy use regarding Christmas lights — unplugging Christmas lights when they are not in use, and using Light-emitting diode (LED) lights, which are much more energy efficient.

"Just like the normal light bulb is no longer efficient, the same is true for Christmas lights. LED lights might be a little more expensive but they are sort of the next wave technology wise," Long said.

see LIGHTS/page 6

Scully receives medal from White House

Observer Staff Report

Fr. Tim Scully, former executive vice president of the University and current director of the Institute for Educational Initiatives received the Presidential Citizens Medal at a ceremony in the Oval Office Wednesday.

The award, according to a University press release, is the second-highest award the president gives to a civilian, behind The Medal of Freedom. Scully was among 24 recipients of this year's award.

Scully, who is a political science professor and a fellow and trustee of the University was given the award for "committing his life to

strengthening communities through faith-based education that prepares individuals for a lifetime of achievement, service and compassion," according to a White House statement quoted in the University release. Scully is also co-founder of Notre Dame's Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) program, which provides Catholic schoolteachers to underserved schools across the country.

Scully focuses his research on political institutions, political parties and democratic governments. Scully served as executive vice president from 2000 to 2003 and was vice president and senior associate provost from 1994 to 2000.

STUDENT SENATE

Committee passes resolution

Group to evaluate Notre Dame sexual assault policies, resources

By JOSEPH McMAHON
Assistant News Editor

The student senate unanimously passed a resolution proposing the creation of a committee to work with the Office of Student Affairs to evaluate the University's policies concerning sexual assault, during their final meeting this semester.

The resolution was the first-ever proposed by the Senate Gender Issues Committee, student body vice president Grant Schmidt said.

see SENATE/page 6



Student body president Bob Reish, left, and vice president Grant Schmidt wear 'Stop the Violence' T-shirts at Wednesday's senate.

TOM LA/The Observer

INSIDE COLUMN

The revised X-mas playlist

On Monday, Analise Lipari published a list of the best Christmas songs. Now, Analise is a really nice person. She's always super positive, and she was the only Observer staffer who voted for my niece for Cleveland's cutest baby. She's also very knowledgeable in all things Scene. However, she really dropped the ball-shaped ornament on this one.

Laura Myers

Sports Writer

Not only did she leave out some serious classics, but her Bing Crosby and Amy Grant choices were positively absurd.

I just couldn't let her version stand as the official list. Plus, I figure a lot more people will see this one than saw hers, because no one really turns to the Scene page. That sounds mean, but it's not because Sports is just way better.

On to the new Top 10 (or however many my word count allows):

10. "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" — I'll give her that one. The "Gloria" part is really fun to sing.

9. "We Wish You A Merry Christmas" by John Denver and the Muppets — "Now bring us some figgy pudding — Piggy pudding?? — No, figgy pudding. It's made with figs. — Oh, sorry. — And bacon." Classic.

8. "Grown Up Christmas List" by Amy Grant — I agree that Grant's Christmas album is a staple, and most of the songs are absolutely beautiful. This one is by far the best for the idealistic college student.

7. "Ho Ho Ho and a Bottle of Rum" by Jimmy Buffett — I don't know about you, but in my family, it's just not Christmas without Jimmy Buffett and alcohol. Actually, it's just not my family without Jimmy Buffett and alcohol.

6. "I'll be Home for Christmas" by Bing Crosby — I don't think this one needs explaining.

5. "The Christmas Song (Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire)" — Appeals to kids from one to 92. This song has been covered well over 100 times, and after some exhaustive Rhapsody-ing, I decided that Nat King Cole's original is still the best.

5a. I did find a version by our very own Regis Philbin, on "The Regis Philbin Christmas album." Didn't see that coming. I listened to the whole thing. It wasn't good.

5b. On my search I also found "The Ann Arbor Chainsaw Massacre Christmas Song" by the Dead Schembechlers. It was excellent.

4. "This Christmas Day" by the Trans-Siberian Orchestra. It's absolutely impossible to pick one TSO song, but I gave it a shot.

I'm already way over my word count, so skipping ahead...

1. "I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas" by Gayla Peevy — It's my mom's favorite, and I haven't bought her a present yet. Merry Christmas, Mom.

Merry Christmas to everyone else as well!

The views expressed in the Inside Column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.

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CORRECTIONS

The Observer regards itself as a professional publication and strives for the highest standards of journalism at all times. We do, however, recognize that we will make mistakes. If we have made a mistake, please contact us at 631-4541 so we can correct our error.

QUESTION OF THE DAY: WHAT IS GOING TO BE THE HIGHLIGHT OF YOUR CHRISTMAS BREAK?



Chris Toups

freshman
Duncan

"Going to the beach."



Keith Hetrick

freshman
Keenan

"Not having to worry about anything."



Laura McCarty

sophomore
McGlinn

"Sleeping."



Paul Hotovy

sophomore
Keenan

"Roasting chestnuts on my open fire hearth."



Soren Palumbo

sophomore
Sorin

"Relief from South Bend weather."



The Celebration Choir sings Christmas songs in Coleman-Morse Lounge Wednesday night as part of its concert for Haiti.

IN BRIEF

The special lecture "What and When was the Christmas Star? An astrophysics perspective" will be given by Grant Mathews, professor of physics, in the Jordan Hall of Science Digital Visualization Theater. The event, held on Friday from 7 to 8:30 p.m. is sponsored by Department of Physics.

Glee Club will perform its annual Christmas Concert Saturday at 6 p.m. at the Leighton Concert Hall of DeBartolo Performing Arts Center. Tickets are \$3 for students and proceeds will benefit the South Bend Center for the Homeless.

The DeBartolo Performing Arts Center will host Cathy Mattea's Christmas concert Sunday at 2 p.m. in Leighton Concert Hall. Come celebrate the holidays with the one and only Kathy Mattea. USA Today described Mattea as "one of Nashville's most spiritual singers, and the songs she sings about love lost and humility are as fine as any she has recorded." Mattea's Christmas performance includes her well-known holiday songs such as "Mary, Did You Know?" among others.

Saint Mary's will host the annual Finals Week Late Night Breakfast Monday from 10 to 11 p.m. in the Noble Family Dining Hall. All Saint Mary's College students are invited. No meal plan is needed to attend and guests are welcome.

To submit information to be included in this section of The Observer, e-mail detailed information about an event to obsnews@nd.edu

OFFBEAT

Calif. KFC workers bathe in sinks

ANDERSON, Calif. — Three employees of a Kentucky Fried Chicken have been suspended for bathing in a deep sink used to clean dishes. The prank was discovered after one of the young women posted photos on a social networking site of the trio posing and cavorting in the steaming water in their underwear and swim wear.

The photos were filed in a gallery called "KFC moments." Captions included "haha KFC

showers!" and "haha we turned on the jets."

A manager of the fast-food restaurant said the three were reprimanded and suspended Tuesday. She said no manager was on duty when the photos were taken as the three had closed the restaurant for the night.

Cat bites Santa during photo shoot at NJ store

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP, N.J. — Santa Claus posed with a very large kitty on his lap — and now, unfortunately, he might need rabies shots. Jonathan Bebbington

was playing the jolly old elf during a Santa Paws photo event at a PetsMart store when he was bitten Sunday on the wrist and hand. The event was to raise money for Penny Angel's Beagle Rescue group.

The cat and owner disappeared after the incident. At least one person thought it was a bobcat, said Joan Kerr, president of Penny Angel's.

"It had absolutely huge paws, like 3 inches around," Kerr said.

Information compiled from the Associated Press.

	TODAY	TONIGHT	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
LOCAL WEATHER						
	HIGH 32	HIGH 28	HIGH 27	HIGH 36	HIGH 43	HIGH 26
	LOW 22	LOW 22	LOW 18	LOW 31	LOW 34	LOW 25

Atlanta 59 / 53 Boston 45 / 42 Chicago 38 / 20 Denver 32 / 23 Houston 73 / 39 Los Angeles 71 / 46 Minneapolis 19 / 2 New York 49 / 46 Philadelphia 50 / 47 Phoenix 67 / 44 Seattle 49 / 43 St. Louis 50 / 26 Tampa 81 / 64 Washington 53 / 48

Jewish club celebrates Hanukkah

Event included traditional foods, teaching of feast's historical roots

By MOLLY MADDEN
News Writer

During the holiday season, it's important to remember that Christmas is not the only celebration that is taking place during this time of year.

For this reason, the Jewish Club of Notre Dame hosted a party that celebrated the Jewish feast of Hanukkah at Welsh Family Hall on Wednesday evening.

"With this event we hope to establish the story of Hanukkah," Jewish Club president Jenna Zigman said. "Part of our mission is to expose Catholics to Jewish tradition and history."

The event included traditional Hanukkah food as well as the teaching of the story of Hanukkah.

The feast of Hanukkah commemorates a rebellion of the Jews in Judea against the Syrian king Antiochus in 175 BC. King Antiochus tried to stifle the Jewish religious practices to such a degree that the Jews, led by the Maccabee family, created a successful revolt that drove the Syrians out of Judea.

After the rebellion, the Jews needed to reconsecrate their Holy Temple, which had been

defiled by the Syrians. Most importantly, the Jews needed to rekindle their everlasting light in the temple. There was only enough oil to burn the flame for one day. However, the flame stayed lit for eight whole days.

Today, the Hanukkah celebration lasts for eight days to commemorate the eight days that the everlasting light remained lit. Attendees at the party on Wednesday learned that on each night of Hanukkah, one candle is lit on a special candelabrum called a menorah.

Despite the importance of Hanukkah, partygoers on Wednesday were told that it is a minor holiday on the Jewish calendar when compared to major feast days such as Passover and Yom Kippur. The holiday increased in importance mainly because it gave Jews something to celebrate at the same time that Christians were celebrating Christmas.

Today, Jews exchange gifts every night of the eight-day feast.

This gift-giving is also mainly a result of the proximity of Hanukkah to Christmas.

"One of the reasons this event is important is because it is right around Christmas time," Zigman said.

The Jewish Club served traditional Hanukkah food such as potato pancakes, known as latkes, and jelly doughnuts. The food for Hanukkah is traditionally items that are cooked in grease to commemorate the miracle of the oil.

The main purpose of the event was to bring greater awareness to a holiday that many students might not know too much about.

"I hope that students will gain a greater appreciation of the Jewish faith," Zigman said. "At a Catholic university, it is important to know about Jewish traditions because Jewish history has such a large impact on Catholicism. I also think it is nice for Catholics to learn about Judaism because learning about another religion can help one strengthen his own religion."

"One of the reasons this event is important is because it is right around Christmas time."

Jenna Zigman
Jewish club president

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Christmas sale to display local artists

By ALICIA SMITH
News Writer

Saint Mary's College will be hosting the Christmas Craft Show and Sale, Dec. 12, in the Reignbeaux Lounge from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Show will host over 40 local artists including some work from Saint Mary's own students.

Carrie Call, director for the Office Civic and Social Engagement (OCSE) at Saint Mary's said the Art Department will have five tables to sell ceramics and other art pieces at the event.

Saint Mary's junior and Art Club President Regan Magee told The Observer she will be selling some pieces from her studio art classes at the sale.

"It is a little nerve-wracking because as a seller you are afraid to name that price," Magee said. "The potential buyers do not always understand why an artist would price what they find to be high, and not necessarily see all the work and money for supplies to make that print or ceramic piece."

The Show will contain a variety of crafts including fiber arts, crochet, woodworking, quilting, gourmet food, jewelry, pottery and photography.

Magee said she is selling "five lithography prints, but multiple copies of each of the prints. Also, [I have] a handmade book made

from a studio last semester."

All of the art is 100 percent handcrafted and designed by the artists, Call said.

"All crafters are required to confirm that their work is 100 percent handcrafted/designed by them, no commercial products or representatives," she said.

Some Saint Mary's students will be selling T-shirts at the sale.

The show will benefit the OCSE's 12 Days of Christmas project, which began Dec. 1. "The artists each pay \$25 to have a table," Call said. "This money goes directly to the 12 Days of Christmas project. The money that the artists make is theirs to keep. We will ask them to make further donation if they wish at the end of the day."

The event is in its second year, and "this year's show is much, much larger," Call said.

Magee added: "I am very excited. It is always fun to see who stops by to look and ends up buying certain pieces that a student may have worked on or worked around all semester, and see it leave the studio for good."

The Christmas Craft Show and Sale is open to everyone.

"A piece of art is always a great gift to give someone for Christmas," Magee said. "It's different than buying something from a general store."

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Lessons and Carols' to be held at Church

By MEGAN LONEY
News Writer

The true meaning behind the Christmas Holiday is not forgotten at Saint Mary's College. The annual Lessons and Carols service will take place in the Church of Loretto Dec. 14 at 7 p.m.

Lessons and Carols is traditionally a Christmas Eve service that originated in the Anglican Church to commemorate the season. Saint Mary's has been hosting an adapted version of this service since 1981.

The Saint Mary's Campus Ministry Department, the Saint Mary's Music Department and the Liturgy Office of the Sisters of the Holy Cross have worked together to co-sponsor the event.

Approximately 500 to 550 people are expected to attend

on Sunday, including students and sisters.

"The Church is full to overflowing with other community members, all of whom participate by their reverent listening and heartfelt singing of the carols of the Advent and Christmas Seasons," said Sister Betty Smoyer, who is working to put the service together.

During Lessons and Carols, there will be Scripture readings, community carol singing, choral pieces and liturgical dancing all by the light of candles.

"The purpose of this service is to gather the Saint Mary's College and Convent communities in an ecumenical celebration of the Advent and Christmas seasons," Smoyer said.

Students and Sisters of the Holy Cross come together to participate in this service as

readers, singers, dancers and bell ringers. About 125 students and 35 Sisters and lay Schola members are taking part in Lessons and Carols. The Church of Loretto Schola, the Saint Mary's College Women's Choir, the Collegiate Choir, the Liturgical Choir, the Hand Bell Choir, the Liturgical Dancers and Members of the Scene Shop will all play a role in this annual holiday service.

Smoyer said that Lessons and Carols is an important tradition for Saint Mary's College.

"This is a unique annual opportunity for the College and the Sisters to join in prayer and reflection on the Advent and Christmas call to belief in God's transforming presence and action in our lives," she said.

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BOARD OF GOVERNANCE

Theatre group seeks funding for trip

'Thespians Unplugged' plan to go to American College Theater Festival in Mich.

By LIZ HARTER and
ASHLEY CHARNLEY
News Writers

Thespians Unplugged have been given the chance to display their talents at the American College Theater Festival (ACTF) in Saginaw, Mich., Annaliese Furman, president of the club, said during Wednesday night's Board of Governance (BOG) meeting.

The group was seeking funding for the trip.

"This festival is very helpful. In the past two years, we have seen two productions that we brought back to campus," Furman said. The festival will have competitions, workshops, and productions for students to view.

Nine students will be attending the event, including three seniors who will be presenting their work and two other undergraduates that will be performing.

The festival is also an opportunity for the students to network.

"One student who went in the past has gone on to graduate school because of contacts she made at the festival."

Annaliese Furman
Thespians Unplugged
president

The event will take place over Christmas break.

Student Body President Mickey Gruscinski also addressed the lack of respect during meetings.

"There have been side conversations while other people have been talking and this is disrespectful," Gruscinski said.

She did acknowledge that

during this meeting it was not an issue, however it has been during weeks past.

In other BOG news:

◆ Elections commissioner Francesca Johnson could not be present at the meeting, and secretary Jenny Hoffman presented her proposal in her place. Their proposal will move back the election dates for campaigning and voting on student government positions to the month of February. The proposal was passed unanimously.

◆ The Constitution Board has almost finished drafting the new constitution, student body vice president Sarah Falvey said. She

hopes to present it to BOG by the end of January and then once it passes there; it will be brought to the student body to be voted on.

◆ Women's issues commissioner Becki Faunce announced that the SMC Monologues will be produced for the fifth time on

campus next semester. The SMC Monologues are a collection of anonymous submissions from women on campus. The SMC Monologues will be asking for submissions after Christmas Break.

◆ To-go Mugs are still being sold in the Student Center Atrium during the 12 Days of Christmas craft show on Friday, Falvey said. Mugs will be one for \$8 or two for \$15, and can be used to carry drinks out of the Noble Family Dining Hall.

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Program wins Dept. of Defense award

Executive education team partners with NSWC Corona to design career plan

Associated Press

The Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) in Corona, Calif., employs more than 900 scientists, engineers and support staff, as well as 800-plus contractors, in the critical task of gauging the fighting capabilities of the U.S. Navy's ships and aircraft.

Yet, three years ago, the center's leadership realized that it needed a system in place to identify and train the center's future executive leaders. Promotions had been based primarily on technical, not business, skills. And for the long-term strength of the organization, employees would need a strategic way to achieve their career goals.

Enter the Executive Education Program at the University of Notre Dame. A team from the program partnered with NSWC Corona to design an innovative employee development program that mapped career paths with the requisite skills, knowledge and abilities, and provided for a leadership succession plan, among other goals.

Now, the U.S. Department of Defense has honored the collaborative program with

the Silver Workforce Development Award for 2008. The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Workforce Development Award was established in 2004 for the purpose of recognizing those organizations that are achieving excellence in learning and development for their employees. Additionally, the award program identifies best practices for other organizations

to adopt.

"We're delighted that the Department of Defense is recognizing this important work and we commend the NSWC Corona leadership for its vision and commitment to implementing change," said Sharon E. Keane, director of Executive Programs at Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business. "This collaboration was extraordinary and yielded remarkable results."

The employee development

program was developed "in-house," with Notre Dame's Executive Education team acting as facilitators and offering support to NSWC personnel, who made the policy decisions in the areas of succession planning, performance evaluation, training programs and compensation. This approach, Keane said, engenders ownership because changes originate within the organization itself rather than being suggested by an outside party.

"The Corona competency model provides the organization insight into the specific competencies required within the career paths at the organization," said Bruce Galloway, manager of the employee development program at NSWC Corona. "The partnership with Notre Dame was truly a win-win arrangement where both parties benefited from the experience."

Notre Dame's Corona case study was chosen as one of the six most innovative in executive education worldwide by the International University Consortium for Executive Education in 2007. BusinessWeek ranked Notre Dame's executive custom programs as No. 15 in its 2007 ranking.

"The Corona competency model provides organization insight into specific competencies required within the career paths at the organization."

Bruce Galloway
manager of employee
development program

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WORLD & NATION

Thursday, December 11, 2008

COMPILED FROM THE OBSERVER'S WIRE SERVICES

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Blue diamond sells for \$24.3 million

LONDON — A rare blue diamond handed down through generations of German royalty sold for a record-breaking 16.4 million pounds (\$24.3 million) at auction Wednesday in London, Christie's said.

The Wittelsbach Diamond, a 35.56 carat cushion-shaped gem, has often had its color and clarity compared to the famed Hope Diamond, now on display at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington.

The rare gem was snapped up by billionaire diamond-dealer Laurence Graff for about 16.4 million pounds (\$24.3 million), including buyer's premium, Christie's spokeswoman Alexandra Kindermann said.

Malaysia frees 9/11 accomplice

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — Malaysia released a former army captain accused of helping the Sept. 11 hijackers and six other suspects who had been held without trial after deciding they no longer posed a threat, officials said Wednesday.

Three alleged members of the Southeast Asian terrorist group Jemaah Islamiyah, two suspected Thai separatists and two Malaysians accused of spying for foreign intelligence agencies were released separately between Nov. 24 and Dec. 4, said human rights activist Nalini Elumalai.

The most prominent among them is Yazid Sufaat, an ex-army captain who allegedly let several senior al-Qaida operatives, including two eventual Sept. 11 hijackers, use an apartment he owned for meetings in Malaysia in January 2000.

NATIONAL NEWS

Ariz. shooters caught on wiretap

PHOENIX — As they listened to scratchy recordings and followed along on transcripts, a jury heard two men boasting and laughing about a series of shootings that killed eight people.

Maricopa County prosecutors said the men on the wiretaps are Dale Hausner and Samuel Dieteman.

The recordings, played publicly for the first time Tuesday, allegedly have the two talking almost obsessively about media coverage of the spree that terrorized Phoenix in 2005 and 2006.

"It now brings the total to six," said the man identified as Dieteman, referring to news reports.

"It's higher than that!" said the man identified as Hausner. "What about the guy I (expletive) shot at twice at 27th Avenue in the yard?"

Hausner, 35, is charged with eight counts of first-degree murder and dozens of other charges.

Miss. residents sue over housing funds

JACKSON, Miss. — Housing advocates and low-income residents sued Wednesday to stop Mississippi from spending a half-billion federal dollars to expand a damaged port rather than replace homes destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

The Mississippi State Conference NAACP, Gulf Coast Fair Housing Center and residents sued the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in federal court in Washington, D.C.

Congressional leaders and others slammed HUD when it approved the state's plan to steer money to the Hurricane Katrina-damaged port despite a lingering housing crisis caused by the 2005 storm.

Gov. Haley Barbour maintains expanding the State Port at Gulfport, the third-busiest container port in the Gulf of Mexico, is key to the region's economic recovery.

LOCAL NEWS

Purdue students invent brace for dogs

LAFAYETTE, Ind. — Purdue University students are working on an "exoskeleton" for dogs — a type of brace they hope can help older canines struggling with hip problems.

The students came up with a device that fits over part of a dog's back and helps it put more weight on its back legs while using less pain medicine.

"If we can make a joint on the outside of the body to do the same thing, it can reduce pain. We want to make it marketable for all dogs," said Jim Bergren, a Purdue senior in mechanical engineering working on the device.

Some dogs suffer from hip dysplasia, a condition in which the hips deteriorate, making it difficult for dogs to walk without pain.

Gov. Blagojevich refuses to resign

Illinois governor will not heed President-elect Obama's suggestion to step down

Associated Press

CHICAGO — His career in shreds, Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich clung defiantly to power Wednesday, ignoring a call to step down from President-elect Barack Obama and a warning that Senate Democrats will not let him appoint a new senator from the state.

"Everyone is calling for his head," said Barbara Flynn Currie, a leader in the Illinois Senate and, like the governor, a Democrat.

One day after Blagojevich's arrest, fellow Illinois politicians sought to avoid the taint of scandal-by-association.

Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. said at a news conference in Washington that he was Senate Candidate 5 in the government's criminal complaint — a man Blagojevich was secretly recorded as saying might be willing to pay money to gain appointment to Obama's vacant Senate seat. Jackson said he had been assured by prosecutors he was not a target of the investigation, and he emphatically said he had not engaged "whatsoever in any wrongdoing."

Other Democrats in Washington edged away from calls for a special election to fill Obama's place in the Senate, hoping that Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn would soon become governor and fill the vacancy on his own. That would assure the party of holding the seat, and on a far faster timetable than any balloting would allow.

Ensnared in his downtown office, Blagojevich gave no sign he was contemplating resigning, and dispatched his spokeswoman, Kelley Quinn, to say it was "business as usual" in his 16th-floor suite, situated a few blocks from Obama's transition headquarters.

"At the end of the day, the top priority for our office is to serve the people, and we have not lost sight



Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich leaves his home through a back alley on Wednesday, a day after he was arrested on federal corruption charges.

of that, nor will we lose sight of that," Quinn said.

One day earlier, federal prosecutors released a thick document that included excerpts of wiretapped conversations in which the governor allegedly schemed to enrich himself by offering to sell Obama's Senate seat for campaign cash or a lucrative job inside or outside government.

Blagojevich, whose 52nd birthday was Wednesday, is charged with conspiracy and solicitation to commit bribery, punishable by up to 20 years in prison and 10 years, respectively.

More than 24 hours after the arrest, Obama joined other prominent Democrats from his state in calling for Blagojevich's resignation.

"The president-elect agrees with Lt. Gov. Quinn and many others that under the current circumstances it is difficult for the governor to effectively do his job and serve the people of Illinois," Obama spokesman Robert Gibbs said in response to questions from The Associated Press.

Asked whether Obama supports a special election, Gibbs said Obama believes the Illinois General Assembly should consider how to fill the Senate seat and "put in place a process to select a new senator that will have the trust and confidence of the people of Illinois."

Top Senate Democrats were more pointed in a letter circulated among the

rank and file for signatures.

Blagojevich's resignation, followed by an appointment made by a new governor, would "be the most expeditious way for a new senator to be chosen and seated in a manner that would earn the confidence of the people of Illinois and all Americans," wrote Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada and the party's second-ranking leader, Sen. Richard Durbin of Illinois.

They added that if Blagojevich chose to "ignore the request of the Senate Democratic Caucus and make an appointment we would be forced to exercise our Constitutional authority ... to determine whether such a person should be seated."

GUANTANAMO BAY

Commander predicts Gitmo won't close

Associated Press

GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL BASE, Cuba — Guantanamo's commander believes that the prison on this base won't close anytime soon after President-elect Barack Obama takes office.

Rear Adm. David Thomas said he expects "rigorous debate" in America before the 250 detainees are flown out, pouring cold water on speculation that the military's offshore prison might close within days after Obama is sworn in on Jan. 20.

"The hard part, the important part to get ready is where you're going to put the detainees, and the legal process that you intend to use to con-

tinue any sort of prosecution or resolution of their cases," Thomas told reporters Tuesday night. "The easy part is taking them from JTF-Guantanamo and putting them on an airplane."

"Those are good, important decisions that will be made after, I'm certain, rigorous debate back in the United States."

Thomas, who took command six months ago of the Joint Task Force that runs the prison camps, said no member of Obama's transition team has visited the base or is scheduled to do so.

"When there is an order to close it, we will close it," Thomas said in a discussion with U.S. and foreign reporters

on the base for pretrial hearings for five men charged with carrying out the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

The defendants wrote a letter on Nov. 4 — the day Obama was elected president — saying they wanted to confess, presumably to plead guilty and face the death penalty.

At least two of the men, including the self-described mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, have said they want to be executed by the United States to achieve martyrdom. Many observers at the hearing say the defendants may be rushing toward a death sentence before Obama takes office and shuts down the war-crimes trials, as the president-elect has vowed to do.

Lights

continued from page 1

However, junior Will Staruk, who is in charge of decorating Sorin College for Christmas, said that he wanted to switch to LED lights this year for efficiency reasons, but the cost played a factor.

"I have LED lights in my personal room but they are too expensive to use on a dorm-wide level," said Staruk.

Although he could not purchase LED lights for the dorm, Sorin did reuse the decorations from last year and he said that the residence hall unplugs the Christmas lights during the day.

Carla McDonald, manager at North Dining Hall, estimated that there are slightly under 60 strands of lights that decorate the dining hall, which stay on for about 18 hours a day.

"We turn them on at 5 a.m. and turn them off around 11 p.m. when we leave," said McDonald, who believes the lights are unplugged overnight,

but could not say for sure since she does not work at night.

Director of Utilities Paul Kempf, said he does not normally notice an increase in the electrical bill during the Christmas season.

"I have never noticed any particular increase but the difficulty is: a) I don't think Christmas lights are a significant load and b) they occur at night which is not when our load is at its peak," said Kempf.

"For an operational standpoint, we don't really notice," he said. But he also added, "That doesn't mean there isn't a load."

Other ways to decrease energy use during the Christmas season is to wrap presents in newspaper or recycled paper, Long said.

She also suggested "giving people stuff that they can reuse... gifts like a reusable mug or a reusable water bottle that people can use all year long."

Contact Sarah Mervosh at smervosh@nd.edu

Senate

continued from page 1

Gender Issues Committee co-chair Lauren Cummings said she had been approached by multiple students who had been sexually assaulted but had negative experiences when dealing with the Office of Residence Life and Housing.

"The University's current resources for victims and disciplinary options often do not satisfy the needs of the survivors," according to the resolution. Cummings said these students' complaints prompted her and Committee co-chair Patrick Tighe to begin examining the University's policies on sexual assault.

Tighe said he and Cummings eventually decided student government should create a committee to evaluate the policies. The committee would be composed of a wide variety of students from inside and outside of student government.

"We want it to be really productive," Tighe said.

The resolution also calls for members of Student Affairs, the Office of Residence Life and Housing, the Committee on Sexual Assault Prevention and the Gender Relations Center to "review and evaluate the effectiveness of the University's sexual assault, rape and sexual misconduct policy, resources for victims

of sexual assault and the University's disciplinary options available to victims of sexual assault."

Cummings said the student response to the issue should persuade all of the groups to seriously examine the policies.

"We're saying this is an issue we consider top priority and we're asking them to put it on the same level," she said.

The resolution was passed on the same day as the Stop the

"The University's current resources for victims and disciplinary options often do not satisfy the needs of the survivors."

Senate resolution passed Dec. 10

Violence Campaign. The vast majority of Senators wore T-shirts bearing the statistic that approximately one-in-four college women survive rape or attempted rape.

Cummings said the statistic was first uncovered by a study done in 1987 and was

recently confirmed by a United States Department of Justice study done in 2006. The University also uses the statistic on its Web site.

In other Senate news:

♦ The Senate unanimously passed an amendment redefining the composition of the Club Coordination Council (CCC), which enumerated several positions.

CCC president John Burke said his group had evolved over the past eight years, but the Student Constitution had not been updated. This amendment, Burke said, would simply update the Constitution so that the document would accurately reflect the CCC.

Contact Joseph McMahon at jmcmaho6@nd.edu

McShane

continued from page 1

McShane said. "I entered my application on the Web site, and I got a call in November that I had won the trip."

McShane worked to win by practicing his throwing accuracy.

"I practiced a lot over Thanksgiving break, since I had a lot of time," he said. "We also had a chance to practice on the field the night before."

McShane's favorite part of the game? Spending time with retired Dallas Cowboy Marcellus Wiley, who helped host the challenge.

"He was really funny, joking the

whole time," McShane said of Wiley. "Stuff like, 'Now you know how [Oklahoma quarterback] Sam Bradford feels.'"

As part of the application process, McShane had to submit an essay about his experiences with Dr Pepper.

"There is a group of missionaries in Indianapolis who fast all day on Fridays until dinner," McShane said. "I decided to start doing that too. So, I don't eat anything until dinnertime, but I drink liquids like Dr Pepper to stay hydrated."

McShane wrote his essay on how drinking Dr Pepper helped him keep his energy up as he fasted.

Surprisingly, McShane said the

essay might not have been part of the selection process.

"When we got there, the people from Dr Pepper were talking about how we were picked," McShane said. "We were picked randomly. I don't think they even read the essays."

McShane was not one of the original winners chosen, but he was chosen because the initial winners failed to respond, he said.

Besides allowing him to quit his dining hall job, McShane said, "in the long term I'm hoping this will enable me to come out of college with no debt."

Contact Tess Civantos at tcivanto@nd.edu

Recital

continued from page 1

McKenna, conversely, cannot remember a time when he did not know how to tap dance. He said it seemed innate to him.

"My mother swears this is true, and I guess I've heard it long enough that I've come to believe her, that every time she looked over at me, whether I was in the crib or when I was first learning to walk or just standing, more than walking, if there was music on, I was tap dancing," McKenna said. "Just tap dancing, keeping beat with my feet in whatever capacity I could."

McKenna received his first pair of tap shoes when he was four years old. He said he would watch tap dancing movies, like ones with Fred Astaire, Gene Kelly or Ray Bolger. He'd watch the steps they would do and try to imitate them.

"It just came out of me," he said. "I think of it as a way of playing the drums with your feet."

When he was 10 or 11, his parents decided to get him formal tap dancing lessons. He took the lessons for about five years, he said, and learned a lot of great steps, but did not like tapping in the formalistic way the instructors taught because, for him, tap dancing was an expression of how he was feeling.

He kept dancing after his les-

sons were over, but said he never had any desire to become a professional tap dancer.

"It was already part of my life," he said. "It was just integrated in. And here I am. I just turned 60 years old and I'm still tap dancing."

McKenna came to Notre Dame in 1997 from Pomona College, where he had spent five years teaching in the dance department, as well as performing in formal productions and special events.

Upon arriving at Notre Dame, he saw there was no tap dancing class offered. He decided to start one, and added the class to his regular teaching duties in the anthropology department. Since the fall of 1998, McKenna has taught a class in tap each semester he's been on campus.

The first semester the class was offered, 80 students signed up. It's been popular ever since, McKenna said, and hundreds of Notre Dame students have taken it.

His friends and family in California are always telling him that they meet Notre Dame graduates who have taken his tap dancing class, he said.

Senior Kelly Donley has taken the class, and this year, for the second time, she is a TA for tap. As the teaching assistant, she demonstrates the steps, works with students individually if they need help and helps choreograph the dances. This year, she and

three other students did a special performance of the ABBA song "Mamma Mia" during the recital. She said she thought everyone did a good job.

"I'm thrilled with the performance," she said.

Seniors Katie Palmitier and Erin Fitzpatrick wore white shirts with nicknames printed on the back for the recital. They said 30 or so of their friends had come to South Dining Hall to watch them perform.

"I think we rocked it," Fitzpatrick said.

But the tap recital would not be the end of their tapping days, Fitzpatrick joked.

"We're going to be doing impromptu shows," she said.

McKenna did his own impromptu show Wednesday night — a solo that he said he decided to do at the last minute.

"The neat thing about tap dancing is, no matter how stressed you are, the minute you put your tap shoes on, you just can't be uptight anymore," he told The Observer a few hours before the recital. "There's something very relaxing and emotionally liberating about listening to the music and dancing."

He laughed when asked if he'd ever been compared to Fred Astaire.

"I can hold my own," he said.

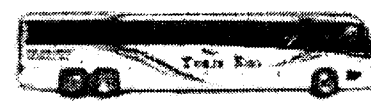
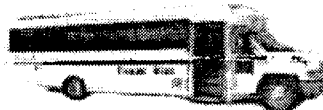
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Composite Volume: 2,198,722,679		
AMEX	1,326.05	+16.65
NASDAQ	1,565.48	+18.14
NYSE	5,631.07	+108.61
S&P 500	899.24	+10.57
NIKKEI (Tokyo)	8,660.24	0.00
FTSE 100 (London)	4,367.28	-13.98

COMPANY	%CHANGE	\$GAIN	PRICE
SPDR S&P 500 (SPY)	+0.68	+0.61	90.11
CITIGROUP INC (C)	-2.81	-0.24	8.30
POWERSHARES (QQQQ)	-0.33	-0.10	29.91
ULTRA FINANCIALS PRO (UYG)	-0.80	-0.05	6.21

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IN BRIEF

FDA deadlocked over asthma drug risks

WASHINGTON — Deadlocked over the risks of long-acting asthma drugs, government health officials Wednesday asked outside advisers if four medications used by millions of patients should remain on the market.

An unusually large panel of some 30 medical and scientific advisers will vote Thursday on whether the risks of the drugs — Advair, Foradil, Serevent and Symbicort — outweigh the benefits. The Food and Drug Administration, whose own scientists are at odds, sought the advice in making a final decision.

Doctors who treat adults and children with asthma strongly urged the FDA not to ban the drugs. It would only trigger a dangerous surge in cases of uncontrolled asthma, they warned.

Some of the FDA advisers expressed frustration Wednesday over a lack of fresh clinical data on medications in use for a decade or longer. "I think this is an impossible task you are asking us to do," said Dr. Judith Kramer, who teaches medicine at Duke University Medical Center in Durham, N.C.

Bush gives up on easing coal restrictions

WASHINGTON — Six weeks before leaving office, the Bush administration is giving up on an eight-year effort to ease restrictions on pollution from coal-burning power plants, a key plank of its original energy agenda and one that put the president at odds with environmentalists his entire tenure in the White House.

President George W. Bush had hoped to make both changes to air pollution regulations final before leaving office on Jan. 20. In the midst of a coal-fired power plant construction boom, the rules would have made it easier for energy companies to expand existing facilities and to erect new power plants in areas of the country that meet air quality standards.

But the Environmental Protection Agency on Wednesday conceded that it didn't have enough time to complete the rules changes, which were undermined by a federal court decision earlier this year that scrapped a signature component of Bush's clean air policies.

Emergency auto bailout in peril

Republicans fight against plan to spend \$14 billion to help struggling automakers

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Emergency aid for the nation's imperiled auto industry was thrown into jeopardy Wednesday, opposed by Republicans who were revolting against a hard-fought deal between Democrats and the Bush White House to speed \$14 billion to ailing carmakers.

The House was on track to vote on the bailout Wednesday night, and Democrats held out hope that it could be enacted by week's end. But a growing number of GOP senators declared they would not go along.

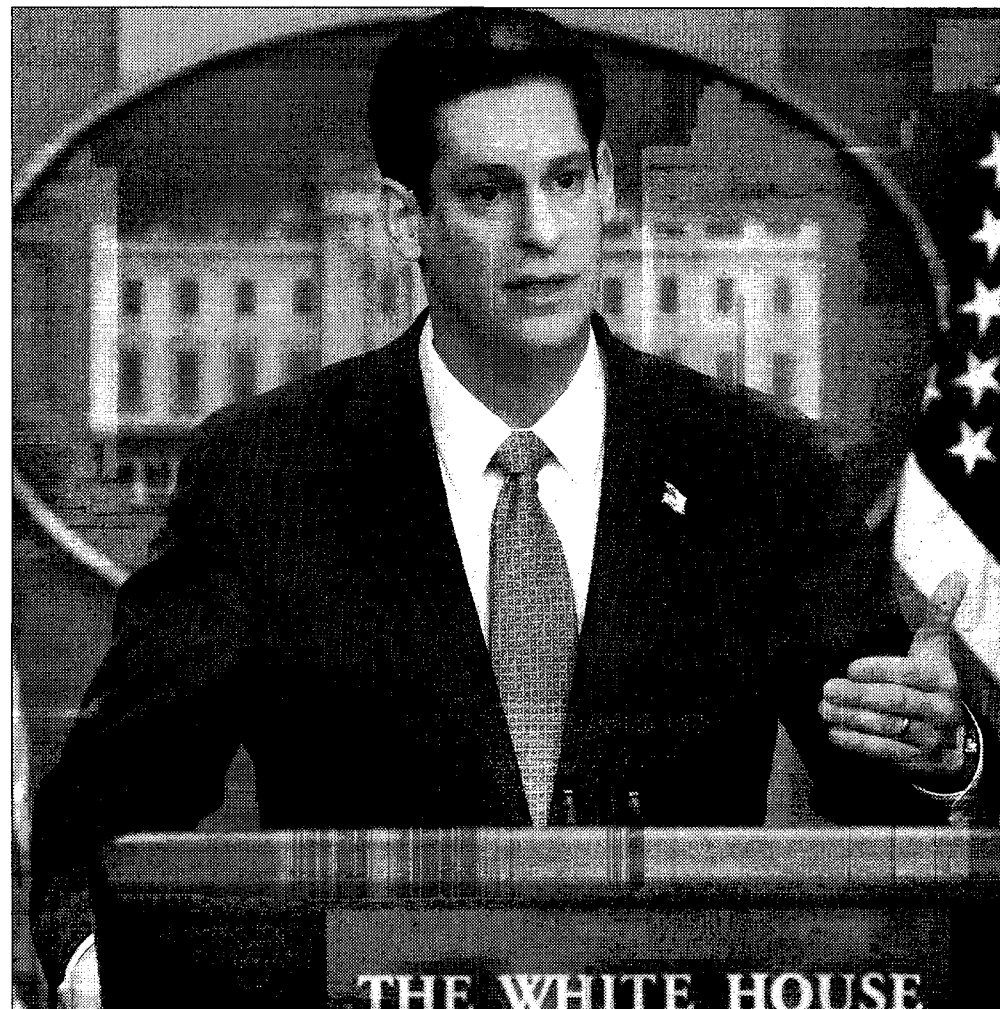
The White House, though not formally endorsing an agreement with congressional Democrats, dispatched administration officials to Capitol Hill to make a case for the rescue package. During a contentious, closed-door luncheon with Senate Republicans, White House Chief of Staff Josh Bolten got an earful of criticism from the rank-and-file, some of whom have already announced plans to block the measure.

"They got a good dose," said opponent Tom Coburn, R-Okla., as he emerged from the session.

Even auto state Republicans who have pushed hard for a bailout said the measure needed work. Sen. Kit Bond, R-Mo., said he wanted to see changes. And Sen. George V. Voinovich, R-Ohio, said the bill didn't have the necessary Republican votes to pass Congress.

The Republicans' revolt came as the House began procedural votes on the package.

It would provide money within days to cash-starved General Motors Corp. and



White House Deputy Chief of Staff Joel Kaplan briefs reporters about negotiations on an auto bailout bill on Wednesday.

Chrysler LLC, while Ford Motor Co. — which has said it has enough liquidity to stay afloat — would be eligible for federal aid as well.

The plan would create a government "car czar," to be named by President George W. Bush to dole out the loans, with the power to force the carmakers into bankruptcy next spring if they didn't cut quick deals with labor unions, creditors and others to restructure their businesses and become viable.

Opposition from congressional Republicans reflected the tricky task of enact-

ing yet another federal rescue in a bailout-weary Congress, with Bush's influence on the wane.

"People realize that this bill is an incredibly weak bill, (and) is the product of an administration that wants to kick the can down the road and let somebody else deal with it," said Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn.

The scene so far has been somewhat reminiscent of the tense atmosphere of early October on Capitol Hill, when lawmakers argued, cajoled, threatened and lobbied one another, ultimately passing a \$700

billion bailout plan that Bush signed into law for Wall Street financial firms.

Debate on the bailout unfolded as a congressional panel reviewing the financial rescue questioned the Bush administration's spending of those funds and challenged its reluctance to use the money to reduce foreclosures. The House was set to add language to the auto aid bill to require that banks that are bailed out by the government report quarterly on how much they have increased or decreased lending.

Deficit on pace to reach record high

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The federal government ran a record budget deficit in November, putting Uncle Sam on track to post an all-time high annual shortfall of \$1 trillion or more.

In just the first two months of the budget year that started Oct. 1, the deficit totaled \$401.6 billion, nearly matching the record gap of \$455 billion posted for all of last year, according to Treasury Department data released Wednesday. If the deficit does top \$1 trillion for the current budget year, it also would be a post-World War II high when measured as a percentage of the economy.

The increased red ink stems from both lower tax revenue and increased spending that is a result of the recessionary economy. The government is receiving less in business and personal income taxes while spending more on programs

such as unemployment insurance and food stamps.

Elsewhere, emergency aid for the nation's imperiled auto industry was thrown into jeopardy Wednesday as some Republicans revolted against a hard-fought deal between Democrats and the Bush White House to speed \$14 billion to the ailing carmakers.

Then there's the \$700 billion bank rescue program. The Treasury report showed that the government spent \$76.5 billion from the program in November and \$191.5 billion over the past two months.

A congressional oversight panel on Wednesday questioned whether Treasury is following a clear strategy in its use of those funds. The panel, which includes academic and labor representatives, also asked in a report whether the rescue effort has helped any homeowners avoid foreclosure.

The 37-page oversight report offers no specific conclusions, but

the questions suggest sharp disagreements with Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson's stewardship of the program and echo some of the criticism raised in a Government Accountability Office audit of the program last week.

Many Democrats in Congress have criticized Treasury for not using the funds to help homeowners.

The department said Wednesday that the gap between the government's revenue collections and what it paid out last month totaled \$164.4 billion, the largest deficit ever recorded for the month of November. The deficit was \$98.2 billion in November 2007.

An annual deficit of \$1 trillion would equal 6.7 percent of the gross domestic product, the economy's total output in a single year. That would surpass the previous postwar record in GDP terms of 6 percent sent in 1983 when Ronald Reagan was president.

UNITED KINGDOM

Assisted suicide televised in Britain

Broadcast shows terminally-ill American during his last moments at Swiss clinic

Associated Press

LONDON — The scene is difficult to watch, even for viewers inured to the subject of dying by a steady diet of violent Hollywood and television fare.

Craig Ewert, a former computer scientist from Chicago, is shown lying in bed with his wife at his side while he takes barbiturates. He asks for a glass of apple juice to mask the bad taste and help him swallow. Then he uses his teeth to turn off his ventilator — and dies on camera.

Britain's obsession with reality television reached new heights — or depths — Wednesday night with the broadcast of the assisted suicide of the 59-year-old terminally ill American at a Swiss clinic.

Showing the final moment of death had long been a final taboo, even for no-holds-barred British TV, where sex and violence are common, and the broadcast unleashed debate on an issue that strongly divides public opinion.

Photographs of Ewert's final moments dominated Britain's newspaper front pages Wednesday — "SUICIDE TV" screamed one tabloid — and prompted a debate in Parliament, where Prime Minister Gordon Brown was quizzed about the propriety of the decision to air the program.

Before he died, Ewert said taking his own life would mean less suffering for himself and his family.

"If I go through with it, I die as I must at some point," he says in the documentary, which chronicles his 2006 decision to take his own life after being diagnosed with degenerative motor neuron disease.

"If I don't go through with it, my choice is essentially to suffer, and to inflict suffering on my family, and then die."

Care Not Killing, an anti-euthanasia group aligned with the Catholic Church and other religious organizations in Britain, denounced the broadcast as "a cynical attempt to boost television ratings" and persuade Parliament to legalize assisted suicide.

"There is a growing appetite from the British public for increasingly bizarre reality shows," said the group's director, Peter Saunders. "We'd see it as a new milestone. It glorifies assisted

dying when there is a very active campaign by the pro-suicide lobby to get the issue back into Parliament."

Mary Ewert wrote in the British press Wednesday that her husband had been enthusiastic about having his final moments televised.

"He was keen to have it shown because when death is hidden and private, people don't face their fears about it," she said, adding that he wanted viewers to understand that assisted suicide allowed him to die comfortably rather than enduring a long, drawn out and painful demise.

The documentary by Oscar-winning director John Zaritsky has previously been shown on Canadian and Swiss TV and at numerous film festivals, where it provoked little controversy. But it struck a raw nerve in Britain, where the divisive debate over assisted suicide remains unresolved.

Zaritsky said it would have been "less than honest" to make the film without showing the actual suicide because it would have left viewers wondering if the death was unpleasant, cruel, or carried out against Ewert's will.

"By putting it out there, and putting it out there in its entirety, people can judge for themselves," he said, adding that the documentary gives viewers an insight into how assisted suicide would work if it is legalized in more places.

Originally called "The Suicide Tourist," the film was renamed "Right to Die?" for its British broadcast on Sky TV's Real Lives digital channel, which draws far fewer viewers than the network's myriad news, sports or movie shows. Still, it generated enormous publicity, with clips shown throughout the day on Sky News and rival channels.

The televised suicide in Britain follows a well-publicized case in Florida, where a teenager killed himself on camera last month and broadcast the chilling images live on an Internet site.

Ewert, who was living in Britain when he became ill, went abroad to end his life because assisted suicide is illegal in Britain.

In the film, he says he wanted to take action before the disease, which destroys cells that control essential muscle activity such as speaking, walking, breathing and swallowing, left him completely incapacitated.

To the Class of 2009

As you are undoubtedly aware, the status of the economy will mean a difficult job market as you approach graduation in May. The Career Center is working closely with students and employers to identify career opportunities to help you move forward during the upcoming months.

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Senators urge probe of fighter jet crash

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — California Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer joined the call for the Marine Corps to review its entire fleet of F/A18-D Hornet jets for possible problems after a fiery crash killed two young girls, their mother and their grandmother.

In a joint letter Wednesday, the two senators asked Gen. James Conway, Marines commandant, to quickly complete the investigation of Monday's crash and make the results public.

"We can all agree that in urban areas like San Diego County, where the military and civilian populations closely coexist, it is absolutely vital that all precautionary steps are taken to ensure the safety of both our civilian and military residents," the letter read.

Marine spokesman Maj. David Nevers had no immediate comment on the request.

Initial reports suggest the jet may have suffered engine failure on a training exercise after takeoff from the carrier USS Abraham Lincoln about 50 miles offshore from San Diego. The jet was returning from an offshore training mission when it clipped a tree and slammed into the neigh-

borhood about two miles from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar.

U.S. Rep. Duncan Hunter, the ranking Republican on the House Armed Services Committee, previously called on the Marine Corps to release the maintenance records of its F/A-18D Hornet fighters.

The crash was probably unrelated to the previous discovery of cracks in hinges on the wings of more than a dozen of the \$57 million aircraft, the San Diego-area congressman said.

Boxer and Feinstein also urged the Marines to assist people affected by the crash, particularly Dong Yun Yoon, a Korean immigrant whose family perished when the plane hit his home near the base.

Yoon had asked for guidance from people who have suffered "more terrible things" at a news conference Tuesday. His appearance at the news conference was interrupted by a military jet flying overhead.

His church had identified the victims as Young Mi Yoon, 36; her daughters Grace, 15 months, and Rachel, 2 months; and her mother, Suk Im Kim, 60. Kim was visiting from South Korea to help her daughter move across town and adjust to the arrival of her second child.

Variation in gene could cause obesity

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Scientists may have figured out one reason some people reach for the french fries instead of an apple.

It could be a gene that's been linked to an increased risk of obesity.

A study of children found those with a common variation of the gene tend to overeat high-calorie foods. They ate 100 extra calories per meal, which over the long term can put on weight, said Colin Palmer, who led the study at the University of Dundee in Scotland.

The findings don't mean that everyone with that version of the gene will eat too much and become obese, he said. They just might have a tendency to eat more fattening foods.

"It's still your choice," he said. "This gene will not make you overweight if you do not overeat."

Palmer said the results support the theory that childhood obesity today could be connected to the widespread availability and low cost of high-calorie foods. The research is published in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine.

Last year, scientists discovered the gene, named FTO, was linked to obesity but they didn't know why. Most of the other genes thought to affect body weight influence appetite.

Palmer and his colleagues wanted to know if the FTO gene also had to do with eating behavior, or whether it involved how the body burns calories. They studied over 2,700 Scottish children ages 4 to 10 and put a group of them through extensive tests.

Nearly two-thirds of the children had at least one copy of the gene variant, about the same proportion found in last year's study of mostly white Europeans. That study found that those with one copy of the gene variant had a 30 percent increased risk of obesity, and carriers of two copies had almost a 70 percent increased risk.

The gene variation is also found in other populations; the frequency in Chinese is about half that of Europeans.

After confirming the obesity link in the larger Scottish group, the researchers examined 97 of the children. They took a number of measurements, including body fat and metabolic rate.

The children were given three meals at school to evaluate their eating behavior. The meal included a mix of fruits and vegetables, ham, cheese, potato chips, chocolate candies and bread rolls.

The researchers found that children with the gene variation showed no difference in metabolic rates, levels of physical activity or the amount of food eaten.

"The only thing we could

find was the fact that they were eating much richer foods," said Palmer.

On average, those with the gene variant ate 100 calories more than those without it.

Dr. Rudolph Leibel, an obesity researcher at Columbia University in New York, said getting good measurements of how much someone eats is difficult, but the Scottish study did it in a closely controlled manner.

He said the overeating may be driven more by the need for calories than a preference for fatty foods. Fat is just a good way to get those extra calories.

"Bite for bite, there are more calories in a Big Mac than there are in an apple," said Leibel, who wrote an editorial that accompanies the study in the journal.

A recent study in the Amish suggested the variant's effects could be blunted with hours of physical activity. The lead author of that study, Evadnie Rampersaud of the University of Miami, noted that only 76 Scottish children completed all three meal tests.

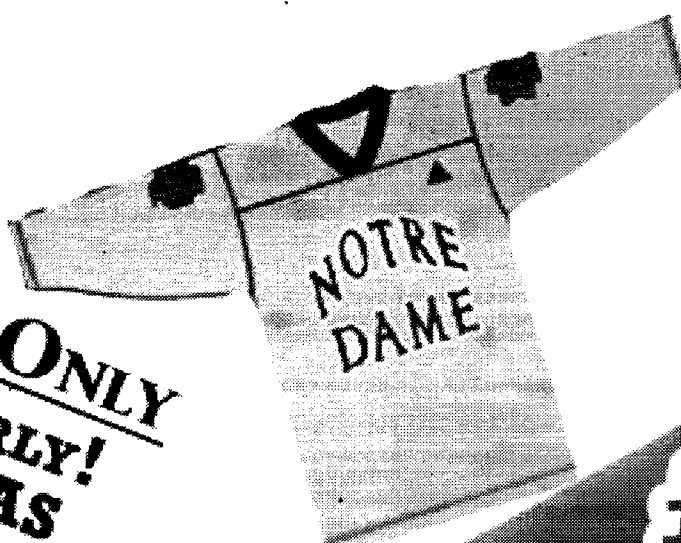
"While the results are intriguing, larger studies are needed to fully explore this hypothesis," she said in an e-mail.

Palmer, the Scottish researcher, said there's no practical reason to screen people for the gene variation; there's likely to be many genes that affect obesity.

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THE OBSERVER VIEWPOINT

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Thursday, December 11, 2008

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The news is reported as accurately and objectively as possible. Unsigned editorials represent the opinion of the majority of the Editor in Chief, Managing Editor, Assistant Managing Editors and department editors. Commentaries, letters and columns present the views of the authors and not necessarily those of The Observer.

Viewpoint space is available to all readers. The free expression of all opinions through letters is encouraged. Letters to the Editor must be signed and must include contact information.

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The greatest gift of all

Twas the night before finals when all thru the JACC,
Not a creature was stirring, not even K-Mac.
The netting was strung from the hoops with great care,
In hopes that the Legion soon would be there.
The freshmen were studying all

quiet in CoMo,

While visions of plane flights started
to grow.

And profs with their coffee, some
with their tea,

Were writing the finals we all
wished to see.

When out at the Gyg there arose
such a clatter,

Coach Weis had just realized that
losses do matter.

Away to the window he limped very
slow,

The swelling on his knee was starting to grow.

Looking out on the fields where they practiced all year,
A loss to the Warriors he started to fear.

He texted his boss, already in bed,

These sleepless nights were going to his head.

At that very moment in the library basement,

Writing feverishly I was not yet complacent.

A Christmas Poem I wanted to write,

To bring joy to all, as well as delight.

My thoughts were still racing about my exam,

And those horrible meals when the DH serves ham.

My focus was gone, my mind had no might,

I realized I needed was a smooth Keystone Light.

So out to my car I moved very quick,

A grin on my face, like the smile of St. Nick.

As I got in my Buick, the ice turned me blue,

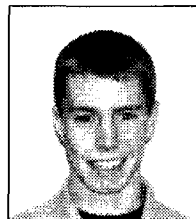
Back home I did go to drink a quick brew.

With the car running smooth I arrived in a flash,

Not Ice nor Snow could make this GM crash.

As I walked up my steps, and turned the bright key,

I couldn't contain my emotional glee.



Bob Kessler

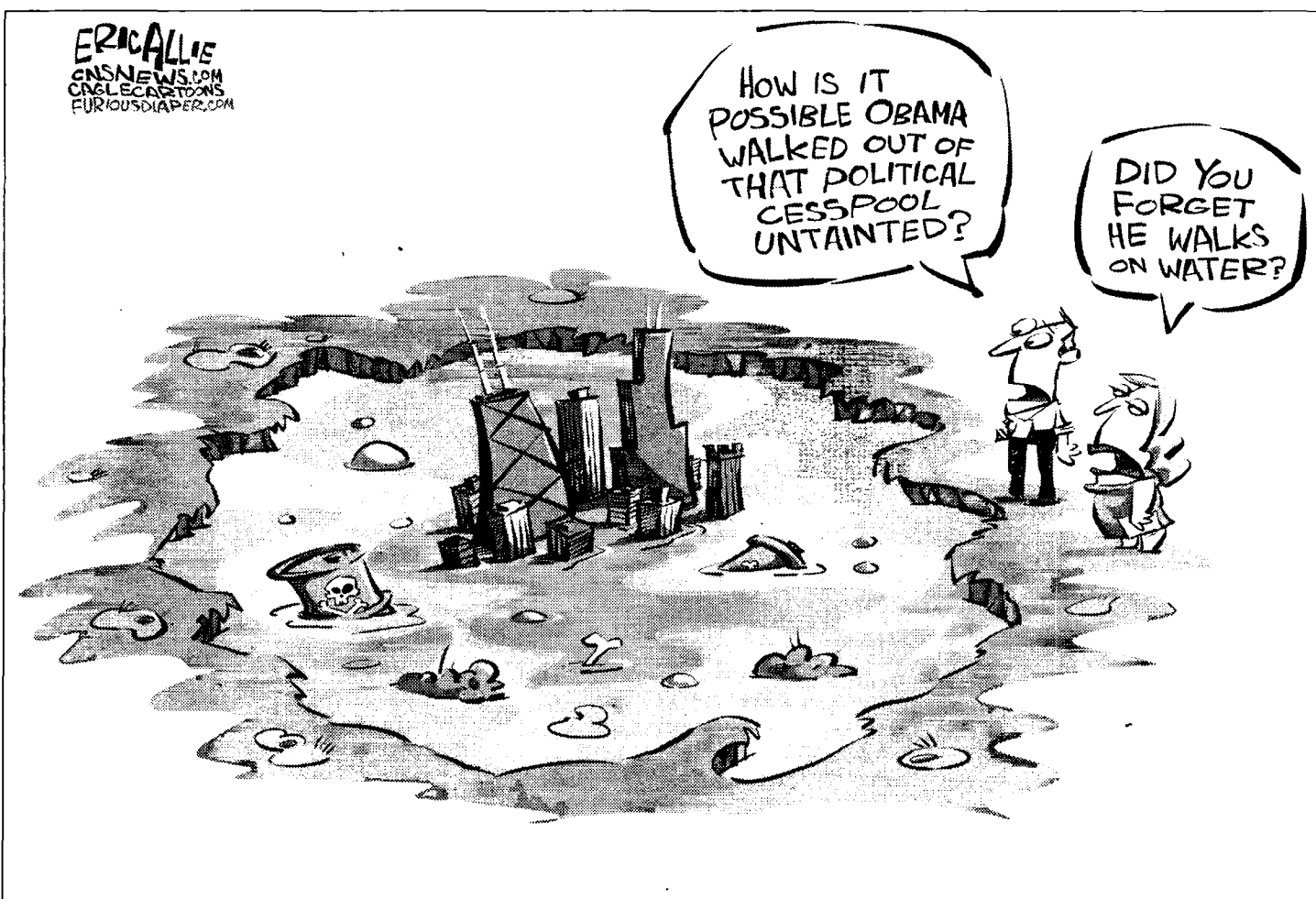
House of Stix

I entered the house while my roommate did say,
"We're dogs to the Warriors on the Eve of Christmas Day?"
Embarrassed I was with the madness of that,
I symbolically threw down my Notre Dame hat.
As I entered the kitchen and found a cookie,
I picked up my phone and called my bookie.
They'll cover the spread, I said almost laughing.
Rhyming is hard, but at least I'm not rapping.
I opened the fridge looking for my tasty stone,
A problem I saw, our fridge was dry to the bone.
I went right outside in the snow to our neighbors,
But they only had Bud, not the smooth Keystone flavors.
To the stores I thought, to buy me a rack,
It's Sunday, I recalled, openness they lack.
With no options left, I drank some hot cocoa,
A house without Keystone is driving me loco.
I retired to my room all ready for bed,
Clouds of disappointment danced through my head.
Finals were coming, and I couldn't quite think,
I desperately needed that light and smooth drink.
In the morning I'd wake and go back to my work,
Because tests and papers continued to lurk.
And in the darkness, yet another clatter,
My roommate entered. What was the matter?
He tossed me a stone with a gleam in his eye,
Speechless I was, I almost did cry.
The blue on the can so bright and magical,
It must have been a Christmas Miracle.
Santa did come, he told me with joy,
With eyes wide open like a nine-year-old boy.
The reindeer I heard, upon the rooftop,
Not even the gunshots could cause them to stop.
As he left the room and walked out of sight,
I said Merry Christmas. Have a good night.

Bob Kessler is a senior majoring in political science and economics. You can contact him at rkessler@nd.edu

The views expressed in this column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.

EDITORIAL CARTOON



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Human beings are the only creatures that allow their children to come back home."

Bill Cosby
U.S. comedian

Submit a Letter
to the Editor at
www.ndsmcobserver.com

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Nobody got anywhere in the world by simply being content."

Louis L'Amour
U.S. novelist

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Give us a day off

Rarely do we have the chance to plan ahead to witness history, the good or the bad, the triumphant or the tragic. History doesn't give us a warning in advance, so we are always paying close attention. It just comes.

However, in just over a month, we will have a chance to witness history, with time to prepare: On Jan. 20, 2009, Barack Obama will be inaugurated as the first African-American president, in a country not far removed from an age when blacks and whites couldn't even drink at the same water fountain or attend the same schools.

Regardless of your political leaning, you must admit, this is an historic event. And the beauty is, we know it's coming and have the chance to watch it unfold. However, we will be — or are

supposed to be at least — in class. This historic event even falls close to a national holiday, which the University does not honor in any real sense.

This is a chance to make things right. There is a movement to make MLK Day not a day off but a "day on," a day to work for the justice and peace that Dr. King died fighting for. What better way to honor Dr. King than to provide students with the chance to witness history, an event that many people our parents' age probably thought they would never see in their life time.

Let's take the day off to witness history.

Andrew Pauwels
senior
off campus
Dec. 10

Dropping the bowl

To whom it may concern,

Thank you so much for choosing to accept a bid to the Hawaii Bowl on Dec. 24, 2008. To quote our outstanding senior receiver and captain David Grimes, "Nice weather, beautiful women," ... sounds great to me.

It is so smart that you chose such a convenient bowl for Notre Dame fans to attend. First of all, airfare to Hawaii is really cheap, the trip takes no time at all, and I know that the hotels there are relatively inexpensive.

Also, I know that hardly anyone at this University celebrates Christmas. I would never expect members of the Notre Dame family to have already made plans for Christmas Eve.

Further, the Band of the Fighting Irish will not be in attendance at this bowl game. I know we love tradition here at Notre Dame, so I totally understand why you, for the first time ever, chose not to send any band members to the bowl. We

all know that the band has never done any service to this University. After already taking away their grades, taking away the highlight of their marching season is also another great idea. I know that none of our school's songs or cheers are important to the Notre Dame fans, and I know the football team hates when the band shows up at away games. Even ask Charlie, he hates the band ...

So, I hope that our football team, their families and our administrators have a great time in Hawaii. Enjoy yourselves, wear lots of suntan lotion, and don't get too discouraged by the lack of blue and gold in the stands at the game. I hope Santa finds you all in Hawaii.

Go Irish, and have a Merry Christmas. Happy Holidays,

Matt Babcock
junior
Stanford Hall
Dec. 10

Band missing out on bowl

I would like to start by saying how honored I am to be a part of the Notre Dame Marching Band Tradition. I have faithfully practiced, performed and cheered on the Irish for four years. Not everyone makes the band, so I understand I am entitled to nothing. Being part of a tradition larger than myself is enough.

The most amazing part of this year was our storied trip to USC. It took a lot of donations and a lot of manpower in planning the trip, and I am forever in debt to all those who put effort into it. It was awesome. The band lived up to expectations and beyond: we out-performed and out-classed the USC band without question. After a long weekend, we were exhausted. And the Irish fans, in a foreign stadium, appreciated it.

What, then, am I upset about? How classless our team was. I was embarrassed about the fight before the game even started, and even more embarrassed by the lack of cohesiveness our players demonstrated on the field. But yet, the band never quit. We kept on cheering. The worst part is that I didn't even know this was going to be my last time in uniform; after all, we were bowl eligible, and if the band means so much to Notre Dame Tradition, as I'm constantly told by alumni, I imagine we could scrape some money together to send us to cheer the team.

But we're not going to go. It is the first time in the band's history that it will not follow the team to a bowl game.

A week ago, people were willing to spend \$20 million to fire Weis. We are now sending our team to Hawaii. Sure,

we get a payout for the bowl, so the team can go. But we would get a payout for a game in the continental U.S. too. Father Jenkins wrote in an e-mail to the Notre Dame community on Dec. 1, "I ask our academic and administrative leaders to do more with existing resources in order to reduce expenditures," in order to, "maintain our unwavering commitment to Notre Dame's core mission." We'd have more money from that payout to keep if we weren't flying overseas. But we chose a bowl game that does not do that. They get to go to Hawaii.

And in "cutting costs," we will not spend a large sum to reward the group that never failed on the football field. I don't get the privilege of cheering on the team one last time. I understand. It's a lot of money. It's a failing economy. Fine, I've hung up my uniform. I am a band alumna now. I only ask one last thing:

That the money not spent to reward our band for their devotion with one last game, will go toward something that makes me proud of my University, not towards recruiting cocky players who don't exhibit Irish spirit and pride, not towards sending our players to extravagant bowl game locations and not towards firing coaches because we're about instant gratification, but toward something that might truly reflect "Notre Dame's core mission."

Valerie A. Allen
senior
off campus
Dec. 9

More praise for ND soccer

To the women's soccer team:

"Football" is known as the beautiful game ... I never understood what that meant until I saw the way you played this year. Having attended all but one of your home games and travelled to NC for the College Cup, I can barely express in words how amazing it was to witness your magical season.

When I look back, I remember seemingly endless good times and amazing moments. I remember the countless young soccer players who watched in awe and dreamed of suiting up for the Irish one day. I remember the die-hard local fans who made it out to every game and cheered you by name until their voices were gone. I remember a packed house against Minnesota during the coldest night I can remember, with our students going crazy for all 90-plus minutes of an

overtime thriller.

Most of all, I remember how you brought the same fire to every game, how you played with genuine pride and excitement and how you lived every moment.

I have never seen a team like this before in any sport. The way you carried yourselves can not be paralleled, and the inspiration you generated can not be surpassed. During a time when we all tend to lose sight of what playing for Notre Dame is all about, you showed us that sports can still be pure.

To the coaching staff, the trainers, and the entire team:

Thanks for keeping the magic alive. Go Irish!

Daniel C. Collins
junior
Alumni Hall
Dec. 9

University workers deserve respect

To the supporters of CLAP and others who seek better pay for University workers:

In honor of the holiday season, make an effort on an individual level to affect social change. Leave a small Christmas bonus for the housekeepers, dining hall workers and other University personnel.

Don't complain to the administration on behalf of others if you are not willing to lead by example. People have the power to change the world one goodwill gesture at a time. Brighten someone's Christmas this year (especially this tough year) by cracking your pocket book and being a Christmas angel.

To the Dining Hall staff,

I would like to thank you for the won-

derful Christmas dinner served yesterday. The special dishes were all delicious and deserve proper recognition. The quality prime rib doused in Au Jus and juxtaposed with tangerine-topped salmon and delectable scalloped potatoes was a plate worthy of royalty.

I consumed the best mousse of my life last night and I want to thank the workers of the Dining Halls for their consistent performance in food quality especially in the desserts and baked goods department.

If only we could have these special dinners more often ...

Mark Easley
freshman
Keenan Hall
Dec. 9

Religion and football

I am writing in response to the Viewpoint letter "Comments on Weis" by Peter Hellas. In his letter, Hellas covers such topics as his high school football days, his cable TV show, Weis' obesity, Vince Lombardi and a "dumb spirit called Titan."

I wasn't sure what the point was, but at some stage it seemed like he was saying Weis' failure to become a spiritual role model has something to do with the football team losing.

As much as you'd like it to, Catholicism has nothing to do with winning football games.

Kevin Sullivan
senior
Stanford Hall
Dec. 9

Good luck with exams!

(The pleas for letters will
return next semester)



KANYE SHOWS FLEXIBILITY DESPITE MAINSTREAM CRITICISM

BLAIR CHEMIDLIN | Observer Graphic

By JESS SHAFFER
Assistant Scene Editor

Rap may not be for everyone, though Kanye West seems to be the persistent exception to this rule.

While a lot of listeners are skeptical of rap's "listen-ability," nevertheless, the genre's radio hits blast at parties, dances, and Legend's Hip-Hop Night. Undoubtedly, anyone with media access, ears, or a pulse knows Kanye West. After hits like "Gold Digger" and "Stronger," West's celebrity is ubiquitous in the entertainment business. His most recent release, "808s & Heartbreak," is another excellent addition to his wildly successful discography that

includes "The College Dropout" and "Late Registration."

This new album rises to the daunting challenge of satisfying preexisting fans while also appealing to an even wider selection of music listeners. Focusing more on R&B and hip-hop than his previous releases, "808s & Heartbreak" continues to display West's undeniable musical talent and genius ability to blend what can only be called poetry with an extensive mix of musical influences.

"808s & Heartbreak" displays West's vocal capabilities, which is often overlooked because of his compelling rap. Velvety and secure, West's vocals have a subtle power, complemented by his repetitive use of simple, clean-cut sounds like strings, pong videogame beeping, tribal drumming and airy chorus singing. This combination of reusing similar music and his smooth vocals creates a new sound not typical of Kanye. This artistic growth displays maturity and flexibility that is consistent with his past talent and proof of his potential for continued growth.

West's fourth studio album is aptly titled, focusing mostly on (what else) heartbreak. While heartbreak may typically be indicative of heinous breakups, West handles

the experience of heartbreak with sensitivity and depth. The album naturally unfolds the complexities of emotions and the experience of heartbreak with awareness to textured emotions and experiences. The album also allows a welcome glimpse into West's personality and past, which act as a springboard for his lyrics. His commentary and observations, as always, provide insightful glimpse into celebrity and also a sharp understanding of suffering.

It's exceedingly difficult to select album highlights. In fact, the entire work merits appreciation. "Love Lockdown" and "Heartless" have already become regulars on radio. Both tracks are characterized by their staccato, accented blend of tribal rawness and processed, mechanical beats.

There is something both controlled and passionate in these and other songs on the album. But while the two better-known tracks only show one facet of the album, the other songs highlight other musical elements, such as the drumming and beeping, which persist subtly throughout all the tracks. Additionally, airy chorus chanting and beautiful violin/string instrumental are frequently found in the tracks. "RoboCop" about a "spoiled little LA girl" utilizes the

string backup sublimely. "Paranoid" has a 1980s pop style that is both passé and simultaneously musically relevant and likeable. Overall, the subtle instrumental elements and West's distinctive diction and vocals, unite the varying experiments in sound and emotions.

West's talent is backed up by many mentionable artists, including Young Jeezy, Kid Cudi, and Lil Wayne. Mostly, these artists provide rapping cameos, which allow some break from West's singing. Lil Wayne's and Young Jeezy's gritty twang provide an intriguing

Focusing more on R&B and hip-hop than his previous releases, "808s & Heartbreak" continues to display West's undeniable musical talent and genius ability to blend what can only be called poetry with an extensive mix of musical influences.

contrast to West's usual style. While rap may typically seem abrasive musically, West draws listeners in with his smooth vocals that envelope insightful, poignant lyrics. On the whole, "808s & Heartbreak" is eloquent, simple and rich. It might be a new facet of Kanye West's personality and style, but his compelling style that fans fell in love with is still distinctly present. As usual, West uses his musical genius and flexible talent to take his craft to the next level, to the benefit of the entertainment and music industry and listeners alike.

Contact Jess Shaffer at
jshaffe1@nd.edu

808s & Heartbreak Kanye West

Label: Roc-A-Fella Records

Recommended Tracks: "Love Lockdown," RoboCop and "See You In My Nightmares"



BLAIR CHEMIDLIN | Observer Graphic

By JORDAN GAMBLE
Scene Writer

On Friday, take a break from "studying" (or whatever happens on study days) to check out the winter concert of the Undertones. Notre Dame's men's a cappella group. Scene talked to sophomore Griffen Dassatti about this weekend's concert and other upcoming events for the Undertones.

Scene: What is the Undertones' winter concert like?

Dassatti: The winter concert is one of our favorite events of the year, and we've been preparing for it basically since our last concert in late December. We'll be doing a lot of our traditional stuff, along with a few new numbers and, of course, some Christmas music just in time for the season. So far the response has been

pretty good; I guess a lot of people like the idea of taking a break from studying Friday night.

Scene: What is the process like for arranging a cappella performances?

**Undertones
Winter Concert
Friday, Dec. 10
8 p.m.**

**Washington Hall
Tickets available
at the LaFortune
Box Office**

Dassatti: We arrange all of our own music, and some of the stuff we'll sing on Friday was done by guys currently in the group, while other songs are taken from years past. As for how we arrange, I'd say there are two basic methods we tend to follow. Sometimes we'll get a copy of the sheet music and directly transpose the notes the instruments are playing, meaning we're literally doing the song a cappella. With other songs though, as a basis and then add our own flare to it.

Scene: Who else is in the Undertones?

Dassatti: There are 12 of us in the group, 11 currently here. We have two sophomores (myself and Kyle Neiman),

five juniors (Dominic Go, Mike Flattery, Tom Ronan, Mike Mahoney, and Chris Meister) and four seniors (Brian Green, Tim Cummings, Ben Willis, and Robert Curry). One other junior, Scott Robinson, is in London this semester but he'll switch places with Meister, who leaves in the spring for Cairo.

As for leadership, it kind of depends on what you're looking for. Brian is our musical director, I'm the business manager — I'm in charge of organizing concerts/events/etc. — and Robert is our tour manager.

Scene: What kind of practice or meeting schedule do you have leading up to a concert?

Dassatti: Our practice schedule is usually Monday and Wednesday nights for an hour and a half or so, and we tend to do more practice before a concert, but because Glee Club has been so busy these last few weeks with Christmas obligations it's been interesting trying to get everything together in time. Still, I think we'll be OK.

Scene: What other concerts do you put on during the school year?

Dassatti: Aside from a lot of small University events, we have four major concerts planned for this year. The first one was back in September, when we released our latest album, "Stranded." We'll have our traditional semester concerts — this Friday's and one in the spring — and we've also planned an Undertones Reunion concert for Feb. 28. There will be a lot of 'Tones alums coming back to sing for that one, and it'll be a really great time.

Scene: What is the Undertones winter tour going to be like?

Dassatti: We'll be touring for the second half of Christmas Break. We'll start in Indianapolis and then spend a little over a week down south with stops in Florida, Alabama, Tennessee and Louisiana. Tours in general are a great time because you get to go around the country, meeting a lot of really cool alums and just singing for people, which we love.

Contact Jordan Gamble at
jgamble@nd.edu

Weekend Events Calendar

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

Thurs: Red, 7 p.m., Browning Cinema

When a senseless, cruel act devastates a lonely Korean War veteran, he refuses to accept the outcome and pursues justice. Widowed Avery Allan Ludlow, a man whose closest companion is his 14-year-old ginger-haired dog named Red, loses his best friend at the hands of three thieving teenage boys. The boys escape but the story doesn't end there. Ludlow will settle for nothing less than justice in the name of Red, and is scorned by the community as a result. Will his efforts pay off? Take a study break and head to Browning Cinema to watch this touching film. Tickets are \$6 for the public, \$5 for faculty/staff, \$4 for seniors and \$3 for students.

Fri: Madeline's Christmas, 7:30 p.m., Elco Performing Arts Center

In this sweet performance, which will take you on a trip down memory lane, the story of Madeline's Christmas Adventure is brought to life, recalling the tale so many of us grew up loving. When Madeline's peers come down with a bad bout of the flu just before Christmas, she is faced with the tough decision of sticking around to care for her friends or heading home for the familial holiday. She is overcome with compassion and decides to stay in Paris to comfort her bed-ridden pals. An adventure ensues when a rug merchant with some magical rugs shows up at the "old house in Paris that was covered with vines." The performance will take place at the Elco Performing Arts Center. See www.artseverywhere.com for details.

Sat: Glee Club Concert, 6 p.m. and 8 p.m., Leighton Concert Hall

The fabulous glee club is at it again with its annual Christmas concert, a program that will explore classic carols, contemporary music and traditional works that will appeal to all audiences. Not only will this concert ease the mind, but it will also ease the financial burdens placed on the South Bend Center for the Homeless because all proceeds go to benefit this organization. Be entertained and help out the South Bend community by attending the Glee Club's performance Saturday. Tickets are \$8 for the public, \$6 for faculty/staff, \$5 for seniors and \$3 for students.

Sun: Nature Photography by David Hachen and Pottery by Jane Pellouchoud, Opening Reception 2 - 4 p.m., Jewish Federation of St. Joseph Valley

Explore the opening reception of one of Notre Dame's very own premier photographers, David Hachen, and the pottery of Jane Pellouchoud, an artist and DJ for WRHC radio harbor country. The exhibit will open at the Jewish Federation of St. Joseph Valley and the artists will be available for a meet and greet on Sunday. This free event will help stimulate the right side of your brain, just in time for Monday's finals! The Gallery will be open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Contact Adriana Pratt at apratt@nd.edu

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

Dining Hall Dish

By MICHELLE FORDICE
Assistant Scene Editor

The race is coming to an end! Classes taper off today and we only have finals week left to survive. Soon we'll be home with mom's cooking, or at least a well-stocked pantry, welcoming us back. So look forward to the indulgences of the holiday season and don't forget to take some time to mess around in the kitchen. Until then, here are a couple of recipes to get you through that push to winter break.

This week's recipes:

English muffin pizzas

These are an easy and tasty option whether you're at home, in the dorm or in the dining hall. Pizza on demand. This will let

you skip the long lines at North's pizza bar, while still letting you choose some of your own ingredients.

1. Toast an English muffin until it browns.

2. Ladle some marinara sauce over each half of the English muffin.

3. Top with cheese, vegetables and meats. There are options all over the dining hall. Look to the salad bar for bell peppers, shredded mozzarella and cheddar, red onion, banana peppers and mushrooms. Use the Mexican Bar for black olives and sliced chicken. Try the pasta bar for meatballs you can cut in half. Want to get more creative? Replace the marinara with other choices like barbecue sauce, which is great when paired with chicken and cheddar cheese. You can even make a white pizza,

topping it with a little olive oil, feta, black olives and mushrooms.

4. Heat your entire pizza in the microwave until the cheese melts.

Feta, tomato, and corn bread salad

Corn bread is delicious, but it rarely serves as more than the bread to go with the rest of your meal. This recipe mixes it with other ingredients to make a savory salad. Sadly, corn bread is not offered every day in the dining hall, but it does pop up pretty regularly, so keep an eye out!

1. Pick up a corn bread, feta cheese and diced tomatoes.

2. Pour some honey into a bowl and a couple splashes of balsamic vinegar to thin it out just a bit. Mix.

3. Break up the corn bread into bite-sized pieces and mix together with the tomatoes and crumbled feta cheese.

4. Pour some of the honey mixture over the corn bread, tomatoes and feta to give the salad a touch of sweetness and moisture.

Quick Tip

Make tortellini in brodo! Head to Italy and you will find that they often serve their tortellini in broth. To simulate it in the dining hall, take a ladle of Chicken in the Pot broth (avoiding the other ingredients) and then toss in some tortellini from the pasta bar. Thanks to Charlie Vogelheim for submitting this recipe.

Have your own dining hall recipe? We would love to feature it! E-mail mfordice@nd.edu.

NCAA FOOTBALL

Tebow goes for second straight Heisman

Oklahoma's Bradford and Texas' McCoy to join Tebow as Heisman Trophy finalists in New York City this weekend

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Tim Tebow will go for two against a pair of talented quarterbacks from the Big 12 when the Heisman Trophy is handed out Saturday night.

Sam Bradford from Oklahoma and Colt McCoy from Texas joined Tebow as Heisman finalists announced Wednesday.

The last time all the Heisman finalists were quarterbacks was 2001, when Nebraska's Eric Crouch won the award and QBs held the first six spots.

Tebow, the rugged and multi-talented junior from Florida, was the first sophomore to win the Heisman last year and is trying to become the second player to win it twice.

Archie Griffin won the Heisman as a junior in 1974 for Ohio State and again in 1975.

Tebow's Gators will play Bradford and the Sooners in the BCS national championship game Jan. 8 in Miami.

"It's a good thing I don't have a vote," Bradford said while attending an event with Tebow and McCoy in Orlando, Fla., where numerous college football awards will be handed out Thursday night. "I couldn't be one of the guys going up to New York."

Tebow became the first college football player with 20

touchdown passes and 20 rushing touchdowns in 2007, carrying a Florida team that finished 9-4.

This season, Tebow's stats were down, but his play has still been stellar. He is fifth in the nation in passer rating (176.7) with 28 touchdown passes and only two interceptions. He hasn't been asked to run as much this season, but still has 564 yards rushing and 12 touchdowns.

Most importantly, the Gators are 12-1 and a victory away from their second national title in three seasons.

"Tim is a winner," Florida coach Urban Meyer said during a news conference in South Florida with Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops to promote the national title game. "He wants to win. He's motivated like all of us are. But he's a team-first guy. That's why statistically he might not have the Star Wars stats like he had a year ago. However, he won 12 games. And if he could have either-or, he's going to take 12 wins and the chance to hold that crystal ball."

Tebow made a strong final case to win another Heisman, leading Florida's 14-point fourth quarter and comeback 31-20 victory in the Southeastern Conference title game against Alabama last Saturday.

As a former winner, he also has a vote.

Tebow said 1996 Heisman winner Danny Wuerffel suggested he not tell people what he did with his vote.

"I'm taking his advice," Tebow said.

Bradford has directed the highest scoring team in major college football history, leading the nation in passer rating (186.3) and TD passes (48) while throwing for 4,464 yards.

The Sooners have scored 702 points and became the first college team in 89 years to reach 60 points in five consecutive games when they won the Big 12 title game 62-21 over Missouri last Saturday.

"Players just follow him because of his commitment to them and how tough he is and how important the team is to him," Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops said.

McCoy, who had the imposing task of following Vince Young as Texas' starting quarterback, has turned out to be a multiple threat much like his predecessor.

McCoy set a major college record with his 77.6 completion percentage, breaking the mark set by Daunte Culpepper for Central Florida, and is the Longhorns' leading rusher with 576 yards and 10 touchdowns. Texas finished 11-1, with a victory against Oklahoma.

"If you're going to play quarterback in our league, you bet-



Florida quarterback Tim Tebow poses after being named the Heisman Trophy winner at a ceremony Dec. 8, 2007 in New York City.

ter be able to put a lot of points on the board," McCoy said. "There are just so many good offenses in this league."

That victory wasn't enough to get McCoy and Texas into the Big 12 or national championship game instead of the Sooners.

Heisman organizers generally invite three to five players, based on vote totals.

Texas Tech quarterback Graham Harrell was surprising-

ly not invited to the ceremony, to be held at the Sports Museum of America in downtown New York for the first time.

Harrell, the latest in a long line of prolific passers to run coach Mike Leach's Air Raid offense, leads the nation with 4,747 yards passing and has thrown 41 touchdown passes. He also led Texas Tech to a school-record 11 victories and a tie for first in the Big 12 South with Texas and Oklahoma.

NFL

Neck injury could sideline Pacman for rest of season

Associated Press

IRVING, Texas — Dallas Cowboys cornerback Adam "Pacman" Jones might miss the rest of the season because of a neck injury.

Coach Wade Phillips said Wednesday that Jones, who was injured early in the 20-13 loss at Pittsburgh, has a "herniated disk, maybe two" and will definitely miss Sunday's game against the New York Giants.

"Our people don't think it's career threatening or anything else that he would have to be operated (on) or anything like that," Phillips said. "But it is something that might put him out this year."

Jones was scheduled to be eval-

uated by another doctor Thursday.

"The prognosis wasn't good for him playing this year, from our people," Phillips said. "They're going to see if maybe they can re-evaluate in a few weeks or they'll say you're not going to play this year. That's what we're looking at."

For the wild-card hopeful Cowboys (8-5), Jones added to an already lengthy injury list. Running back Marion Barber (right pinkie toe, calf), tight end Jason Witten (sprained right ankle), receiver Roy Williams (foot), safety Ken Hamlin (right ankle) and guard Montrae Holland (ankle) were among those who did not practice Wednesday.

Jones was hurt in the first quarter Sunday when he fell on top of

his muffed punt, getting caught in a scramble for the loose ball. After several players fell on him, Jones was pulled from the pile awkwardly by a Pittsburgh player. But Jones played the rest of the game.

It was Jones' first game back after a six-game suspension, the second time he has been banned by commissioner Roger Goodell for off-field issues.

Jones was not in the locker room Wednesday when it was open to reporters and not available for comment.

Phillips said he knew Jones was hurt when the coach was checking on players during the flight home.

"I ask them if they're OK, and he said, 'No, I'm not OK.' He said, 'No, my neck's hurting,'" Phillips said. "Most of them say I'm OK, I'll

be OK, coach, that kind of thing. But he obviously was hurt."

After starting the first six games for the Cowboys, Jones was suspended by Goodell on Oct. 14, a week after the cornerback got into an alcohol-related scuffle with one of his bodyguards during a private party at an upscale Dallas hotel.

The bodyguard was part of a security detail employed by the team to help keep the player out of trouble.

Goodell initially issued an indefinite suspension that he said would last at least four games. Jones was allowed to return to practice Nov. 24, but wasn't cleared to play until the Pittsburgh game.

Jones missed the entire 2007 season because of multiple incidents while with the Tennessee

Titans, who traded him to Dallas during the offseason. Before playing last week, Jones had missed 22 of 28 games since the end of the 2006 season because of suspensions.

Jones had 28 tackles and a team-high 13 pass breakups in his seven games with the Cowboys.

"He did play some. I think that helped some," Phillips said. "We know a lot more about him as far as the player is concerned. It's up to him now. I told him he's being tested. He is."

When asked if Jones' attitude had been different since his return to the team after being away nearly six weeks because of the latest suspension, Phillips said that had never been an issue with the Cowboys.

CLASSIFIEDS

The Observer accepts classifieds every business day from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Notre Dame office, 024 South Dining Hall. Deadline for next-day classifieds is 3 p.m. All classifieds must be prepaid. The charge is 5 cents per character per day, including all spaces. The Observer reserves the right to edit all classifieds for content without issuing refunds.

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If you or someone you care about has been sexually assaulted, visit <http://osa.nd.edu/departments/csap/>

Merry Christmas baby girl!

Love, Mr. Officer

Philly needs Mo' Iverson not Mo' Cheeks!

THURSDAY, DEC. 11, IS THE LAST ISSUE OF THE OBSERVER FOR THE SEMESTER. HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

AROUND THE NATION

Thursday, December 11, 2008

COMPILED FROM THE OBSERVER'S WIRE SERVICES

page 15

Men's Basketball AP Top 25

	team	points	previous
1	North Carolina	1,800	1
2	Connecticut	1,710	2
3	Pittsburgh	1,633	3
4	Gonzaga	1,574	5
5	Oklahoma	1,529	6
6	Texas	1,381	8
7	Duke	1,256	4
8	Tennessee	1,203	10
9	Louisville	1,080	11
10	Xavier	1,041	14
11	Wake Forest	957	15
12	NOTRE DAME	954	7
13	Syracuse	869	16
14	Purdue	718	9
15	Villanova	713	17
16	UCLA	705	12
17	Memphis	579	18
18	Michigan State	536	13
19	Georgetown	475	20
20	Arizona State	462	19
21	Ohio State	435	NR
22	Baylor	351	24
23	Davidson	348	22
24	Marquette	222	25
25	Kansas	206	NR

Women's Basketball AP Top 25

	team	points	previous
1	Connecticut	1,125	1
2	North Carolina	1,076	2
3	Stanford	1,010	4
4	Texas A&M	940	5
5	Oklahoma	878	6
6	Texas	846	9
7	Tennessee	844	7
8	NOTRE DAME	784	11
9	California	763	3
10	Baylor	721	10
11	Duke	685	12
12	Louisville	645	13
13	Auburn	637	14
14	Rutgers	526	15
15	Maryland	514	8
16	Pittsburgh	419	24
17	Virginia	380	20
18	Ohio State	365	18
19	TCU	317	22
20	Vanderbilt	202	16
21	Purdue	164	17
22	Arizona State	161	25
23	Florida	138	NR
24	Oklahoma State	91	19
25	Kansas State	90	NR

MIAA Basketball Conference Standings

	team	conference record
1	Hope	2-0
2	SAINT MARY'S	2-0
3	Adrian	1-0
4	Calvin	1-1
5	Trine	1-1
6	Olivet	0-0
7	Alma	0-1
8	Albion	0-2
9	Kalamazoo	0-2

around the dial

NBA

Celtics at Wizards
8:00 p.m., TNT

Trail Blazers at Jazz
10:30 p.m., TNT

MLB



Milwaukee pitcher CC Sabathia throws during the fifth inning of a Brewers home game. Sabathia and the New York Yankees are closing in on a seven-year, \$161 million contract that would be a record for a pitcher.

Yankees, Sabathia reach agreement

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — There is no recession for the New York Yankees.

Flexing the economic muscle of their new billion-dollar ballpark and ignoring industrywide nervousness over big-money deals, the Yankees landed the top free-agent pitcher when they agreed Wednesday to the framework of a \$161 million, seven-year contract with CC Sabathia.

The amount is a record for a pitcher and the fourth-highest ever in baseball. It signaled a new willingness by the Yankees to spend in an attempt to regain dominance and win

the World Series for the first time since 2000.

"I'm sure every team in baseball would love to have him. He's a guy who's an intimidating factor on the mound," Yankees captain Derek Jeter said at the winter meetings.

Sabathia's contract figure seems quite appropriate — in February the Yankees move across 161st Street in the Bronx to their monumental \$1.3 billion palace, where tickets cost up to \$2,500, fans can watch games at a martini bar and the clubhouse contains a swimming pool, hot tub and every imaginable convenience. The way the schedule lines up,

there's a good chance Sabathia would pitch the opener there April 16 against Cleveland — which traded him to Milwaukee last July.

"It illustrates that baseball is a very different economic model than the real world," said Scott Boras, the agent for Manny Ramirez, Mark Teixeira and other free agents also seeking big deals.

The Yankees and Sabathia's agents still need to work out all the details and the pitcher must pass a physical, a baseball official familiar with the talks told The Associated Press on Wednesday. The person spoke on condition of

anonymity because the deal has not been completed. Sabathia even has the right to opt out after three seasons and become a free agent again.

"I think it's a great deal for him and a great deal for the Yankees," Cincinnati Reds manager Dusty Baker said. "I'm sure he's going to help them win."

The two New York teams have made the biggest splashes in the slow-moving free-agent market. The Mets, moving into \$800 million Citi Field, finalized their \$37 million, three-year contract with closer Francisco Rodriguez on Wednesday.

IN BRIEF

Cassel leaves Patriots after father's death

SAN JOSE, Calif. — New England Patriots quarterback Matt Cassel left the team Wednesday to join his family following the death of his father earlier in the week.

"Our thoughts are with him and his family during this time," Coach Bill Belichick said before practice. "Right now we're just taking it day to day. He's going to take care of what he has to do."

Belichick said that Greg Cassel died Monday night and Matt has left the team to be with his family in Southern California. Belichick said he didn't know when Cassel would rejoin the team or whether he would be able to start Sunday against the Oakland Raiders.

The Patriots are practicing this week in San Jose. They stayed on the West Coast after last Sunday's 24-21 win in Seattle.

Matt Cassel is from Northridge in the Los Angeles area and his father and mother Barbara divorced when he was 14. Greg Cassel was a script writer.

Suns acquire Richardson from Bobcats for Diaw, Bell

PHOENIX — The Phoenix Suns jettisoned two familiar players to Charlotte, and got the Bobcats' leading scorer in exchange.

In the latest move in the their ongoing makeover, the Suns traded Raja Bell and Boris Diaw to the Bobcats on Wednesday as part of a deal for Jason Richardson.

Rookie point guard Sean Singletary also went to Charlotte, while the Suns got small forward Jared Dudley and a 2010 second-round draft pick.

The 6-foot-6 Richardson is a two-time NBA slam dunk champion and an accomplished 3-point shooter who is averaging 18.7 points this season and 18.8 for his pro career.

Bell, a first-team all-defensive team selection in 2006-07 and second team last season, had made it clear he was not happy with the Suns' switch from coach Mike D'Antoni's high-flying style to the more deliberate approach of new coach Terry Porter. He's averaging 9.4 points this season.

Owner says AFL could call off 2009 season

NEW YORK — The Arena Football League is poised to call off its 2009 season, the owner of its Los Angeles franchise told a newspaper.

Avengers owner Casey Wasserman said in a story posted on the Los Angeles Times' Web site Wednesday that the AFL needs to take the time to become more efficient because of the poor economy. Wasserman is a former league chairman and one of the AFL's major power brokers.

Avengers spokesman John Tamanaha confirmed to The Associated Press that the team expects the 2009 season to be canceled. Wasserman told the newspaper the decision was not official, but he expected owners to vote to approve it this week.

The 16-team league has repeatedly delayed the start of free agency and the release of its 2009 schedule after an offseason of uncertainty.

NCAA FOOTBALL

Mullen named next MSU coach

Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. — Florida offensive coordinator Dan Mullen will be the new football coach at Mississippi State, moving from the Southeastern Conference champions to one of the league's perennial cellar dwellers.

Mullen arrived in Starkville on Wednesday afternoon and will be introduced at a news conference Thursday morning. He leaves Gainesville as the top-ranked Gators are preparing to play for their second national title in three years.

"A lot of people get in this profession and when you have head coaching opportunities, they're very rare," Urban Meyer said at news conference in Hollywood, Fla. "Head coaching opportunities in the Southeastern Conference at a young age is a great honor. So (Tim Tebow) had the same exact reaction that I did: Doggone it, but we wish you well."

The 36-year-old has been an assistant coach for 14 years and spent the last eight with Urban Meyer at Bowling Green, Utah and Florida.

Florida won the SEC with a dominant offense and will play No. 2 Oklahoma for the BCS national championship next month. Meyer told reporters he was not sure if Mullen would be staying through the title game.

"It's all too fresh," Meyer said. "The most important thing is whatever gives the University of Florida and our players an opportunity to be successful on that night and I have not had a chance to evaluate that yet."

Mullen replaces coach Sylvester Croom, who resigned last month after going 21-38 in five seasons as the SEC's first black football coach. Since 2001, the Bulldogs have had only one winning season.

Meyer told reporters after the SEC championship game that Mullen was in contact with Mississippi State athletic director Greg Byrne about the job.

The hiring was first reported by the Clarion-Ledger of Jackson and the Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal in Tupelo.

Byrne interviewed other candidates for the job. Chris Peterson of Boise State and Louisiana Tech coach Derek Dooley both denied interest in the job and Byrne also appears to have talked with Oklahoma offensive coordinator Kevin Wilson.

Croom left the program Nov. 29 after the Bulldogs suffered a humiliating 45-0 loss to archrival Mississippi. He said in a recent television interview that he was prepared to make changes to his coaching staff in

order to please fans, boosters and Byrne, but that Byrne wanted to head in a new direction.

While Croom was credited with improving the overall talent at Mississippi State despite NCAA sanctions he inherited, the former NFL assistant coach and All-American center at Alabama could never get his complicated and conservative run-first version of the West Coast offense into gear.

The Bulldogs never cracked the top 100 under Croom and finished 113th out of 119 Bowl Subdivision teams with 274.9 yards per game of total offense and 115th in scoring with 15.3 points per game this season.

Byrne said he was looking for a coach who could jazz up that woeful offense and got him. Mullen led the Gators to a team record for points in a season this year and has Tebow in the running for a second Heisman Trophy.

He also helped develop quarterback Alex Smith into a No. 1 overall pick in the NFL draft as quarterbacks coach at Utah.

The Gators led the nation in scoring last year and are third this season with 45.5 points per game. Mullen directs the nation's No. 18 offense (442.4 yards per game) and No. 11 rushing offense (229.7 ypg).

The Gators run a spread option offense, the kind of attack that would match the skills of incoming quarterback Tyler Russell of Meridian, the Bulldogs' top recruit who has left his nonbinding oral commitment to Mississippi State in place despite Croom's departure.

Mullen is expected to begin recruiting immediately in an attempt to hold together the promising class Croom put together before resigning.

Mississippi State's new coach spent two seasons apiece as wide receivers coach at Wagner and Columbia from 1994-97 after graduating from Ursinus College in Collegeville, Pa., where he played tight end.

He then spent three seasons as a graduate assistant at Syracuse and Notre Dame, where he met Meyer and later followed him to Bowling Green.

"He's a great coach," Meyer said. "I made a comment (when) someone wrote an article about us and I said, 'Boy, his resume is pretty good.'" Meyer said. "When you work with a guy, you don't realize it. He's been with me as a graduate assistant at Notre Dame, we went together to Bowling Green, developed Josh Harris, went from there to Alex Smith at Utah, and then came here and Chris Leak and Tim. So the resume is pretty strong and I wish him all the best."



Study Break Lunch at the CoMo

Lunch & Conversation for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Questioning Students at Notre Dame

Friday, December 12

Noon to 1:30 p.m.

316 Coleman Morse

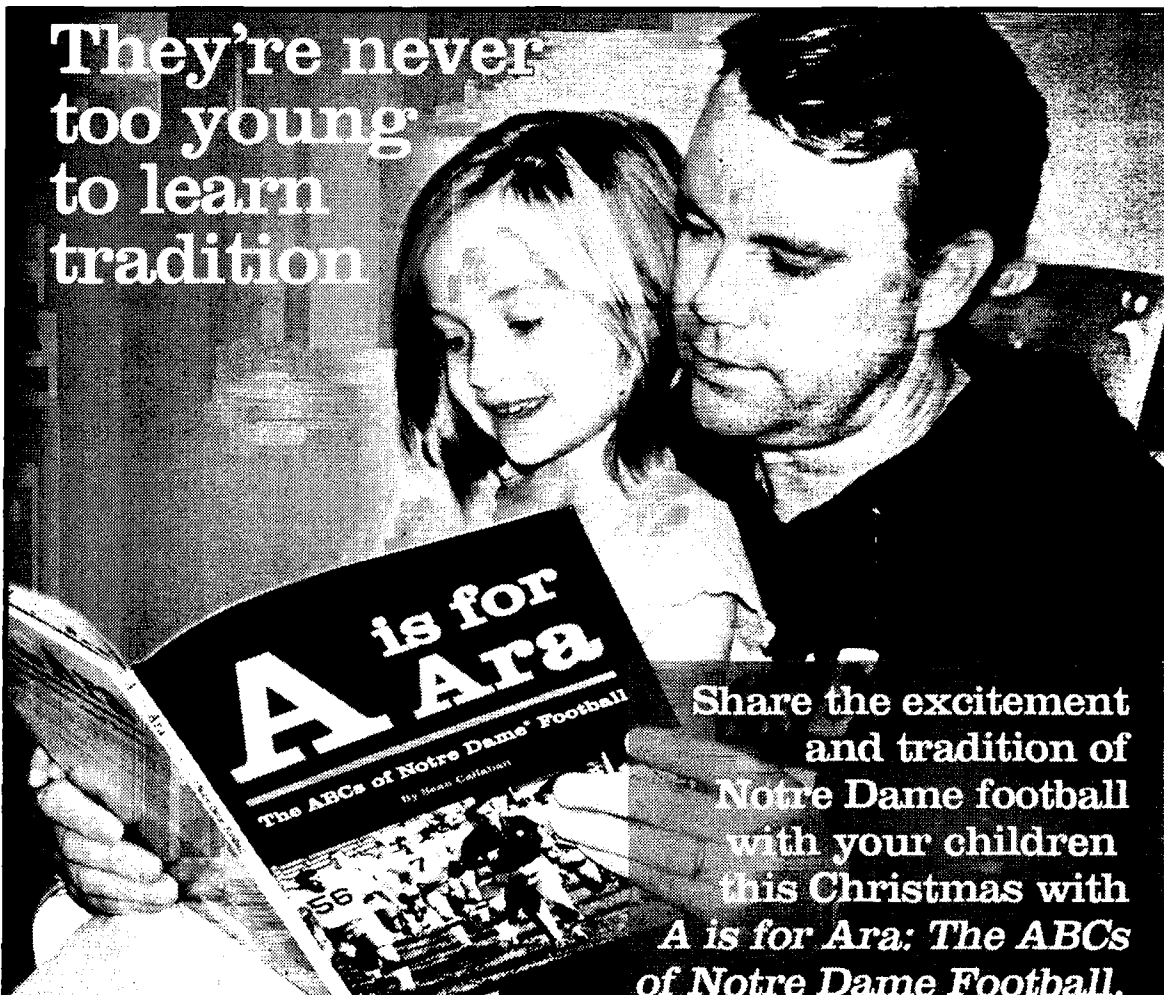
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STUDY TIME



DeBartolo Hall

STUDY DATES AND TIMES:

December 12, 13, 14: 7am to 3:00am Midnight Snacks!

Exam Dates: December 15-18: Rooms available except when scheduled by the Registrar's office.

December 19: DeBartolo Hall closes at 5:30pm.

See Building Support Personnel if you have specific needs: Room 103 or 104.



Coleman-Morse: December 12-18:

Finals Week: Rooms available except when scheduled by the Registrar's office.

December 19: Coleman - Morse closes at 5:30 pm

1st Floor: 7:00am-4:00am

2nd floor: 7:00am-3:00am

3rd Floor: 7:00am-12am

See Building Support Person Room 101 if you have a specific need.

O'Shaughnessy: December 12, 13, 14: 7am to 3:00am

*Finals Week: December 15-18: 7am to 3:00am

204, 206, 207, 208, 209, 242, 338, and 345: Rooms available except when scheduled by the Registrar's office.



Good Luck with Finals



Special thanks to

Auxiliary and Facility Operations, Campus Ministry and the Student Union Board.

NCAA FOOTBALL

UT's Orakpo wins Lombardi Award

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Texas defensive end Brian Orakpo won the Rotary Lombardi Award on Wednesday night, the first Longhorn to take home the trophy in 24 years.

Orakpo is the first Houston native to win the Lombardi, awarded by the city's Rotary Club to the nation's top college lineman or linebacker. He's the third Texas player to win it, and the first since offensive tackle Tony Degrade in 1984. Texas defensive tackle Kenneth Sims won it in 1981.

The 6-foot-4, 260-pound Orakpo already won the Bronko Nagurski Trophy, awarded by the Charlotte Touchdown Club to the nation's top defensive player, and was the Big 12's Defensive Player of the Year. Orakpo finished the regular season with 10.5 sacks, 15.5 tackles for loss and four forced fumbles.

Orakpo beat out Ohio State linebacker James Laurinaitis, Southern Cal linebacker Rey Mauluga and Alabama offensive lineman Andre Smith. At a banquet before the announcement, the other finalists practically conceded the award to Orakpo, who played at nearby Lamar High School.

"They've been saying, 'Give the award to 'Rak' already,'" Orakpo said. "It's just fun to be out here. I started my career here in Houston and for a major collegiate award to be presented in Houston, it's a 1-2 combo. You can't beat that."

The Longhorns (11-1) face the Buckeyes (10-2) in the Fiesta Bowl on Jan. 5, but Orakpo said he's still upset that Texas won't get to play for the national championship three days later. The Longhorns beat Oklahoma earlier in the season, but the Sooners will face Florida for the title because they finished ahead of Texas in the Bowl Championship Series standings.

"It was very unfortunate, but we have to move on," Orakpo said.

Mauluga can relate. An early loss to Oregon State ruined Southern Cal's championship hopes and the Trojans (11-1) will play Penn State (11-1) in the Rose Bowl on Jan. 1.

"We can't show how good we are when we can't play teams like Florida or Alabama or Texas," said Mauluga, the Pac-10's Defensive Player of the Year. "Hopefully, down the line, there's a playoff system. As for now, we're just happy we get to play in the Rose Bowl."

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JAN. 2:

MINNESOTA-DULUTH VS. UMASS-LOWELL (5:05 P.M. CT)

NOTRE DAME VS. UNION (8:05 P.M. CT)

JAN. 3:

UNION VS. UMD OR UMASS-LOWELL (4:05 P.M. CT)

NOTRE DAME VS. UMD OR UMASS-LOWELL

(7:05 P.M. CT)



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NCAA BASKETBALL

Griffin, Sooners overwhelm Maine

Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — Blake Griffin had another double-double and Oklahoma remained undefeated.

The 6-foot-10 sophomore had 22 points and 10 rebounds to lead the fifth-ranked Sooners to a 78-52 victory over Maine on Wednesday night.

Griffin made his first six shots and finished 11-of-13 from the field in recording his seventh double-double of the season. He played 22 minutes and 14 of his points came on dunks.

Oklahoma (9-0) is off to its best start since the 2003-04 team opened with 10 straight wins.

"Hopefully we can keep it going all season," Griffin said. "It goes back to not taking anyone lightly. We can't stop there. We can't be satisfied with what we do in nine or 10 games."

Freshman Willie Warren added 19 points and reserve Ray Willis had 13 points for the Sooners, who shared the spotlight with the Oklahoma football team.

At halftime, the football Sooners were given a rousing ovation as they celebrated their third straight Big 12 championship. No. 2 Oklahoma faces

top-ranked Florida on Jan. 8 in the BCS championship game.

Mark Socoby had 10 points to lead the Black Bears (5-5), who shot 29 percent from the field and had 20 turnovers.

"We knew we had our work cut out coming in here," Maine coach Ted Woodward said. "They have a tremendous player in Blake Griffin. We were a little bit physically over-matched."

Griffin, who has had 15 or more rebounds in a game six times this season, had three blocks, three assists and two steals. He left the game for good with 5:54 to play and the Sooners ahead 71-40.

Oklahoma led by as many as 23 points in the first half and was ahead by as many as 32 in the second. The Sooners had 28 points off turnovers while committing only nine themselves.

Tony Crocker had 10 points for Oklahoma, which shot 45 percent from the field, but was 7-of-28 from 3-point range.

"I'm pleased with the win," Oklahoma coach Jeff Capel said. "Our athleticism overwhelmed them a little bit. There's not a lot of people who can match up with him (Griffin) physically."

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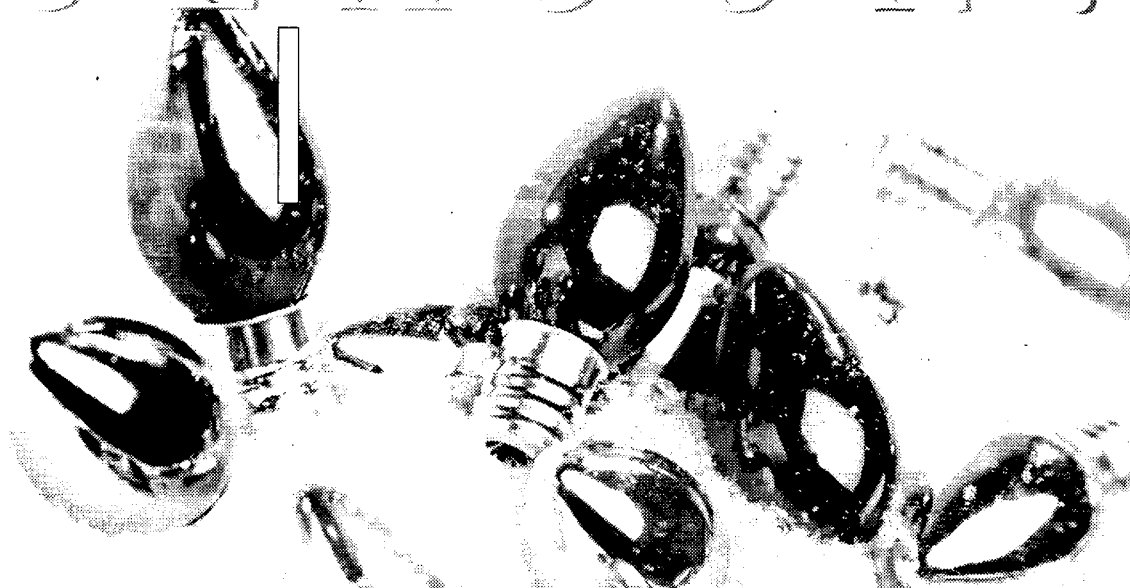
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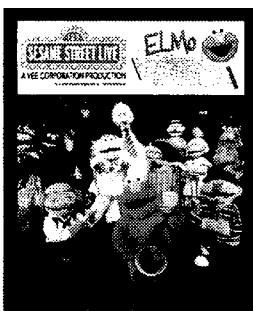
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Upcoming Shows

Saturday-Sunday Dec. 13-14 The Nutcracker Ballet
Southold Dance Theater

Saturday January 24 South Bend Symphony
Orchestra Masterworks
"Beethoven to Brahms"

Friday, Jan. 30 Comedian Paul Aldrich

Saturday, Jan. 31 Comedian Tim Wilson

Palais Royale Event

Wed, Dec. 31 New Year's Eve Gala
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NFL

Plaxico loses one million from NY



Giants wide receiver Plaxico Burress will miss out on \$1 million of his signing bonus after shooting himself in the leg.

Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — The New York Giants have refused to pay suspended receiver Plaxico Burress a \$1 million portion of a signing bonus from a contract signed in September.

NFL Players Association union spokesman Carl Francis confirmed Wednesday evening that the Super Bowl champions decided to not make the payment, which was due Wednesday.

"We will file a claim in the appropriate forum to enforce his right to receive and keep the moneys entitled to him under his player contract," Francis said in an e-mail.

Giants general manager Jerry Reese waved his hands earlier in the day when asked whether the team would make the payment.

The union on Tuesday filed a grievance challenging the Giants' decision to suspend and fine Burress last week, just days after the Super Bowl hero accidentally shot himself in a Manhattan nightclub on Nov. 29.

The union said the team violated the collective bargaining agreement placing Burress on the reserve-non football injury list, suspending him for the final four games of the regular season and fining him an additional week's salary for conduct detrimental to the team.

Placing Burress on the non-football injury list also will keep him out of the playoffs. The Giants (11-2) won the NFC East title last Sunday.

The grievances will be heard

by an arbitrator after the season ends.

Agent Drew Rosenhaus did not return either an e-mail left by The Associated Press seeking comment.

The union filed another grievance on Burress' behalf earlier this year after the Giants suspended him for a game and fined him two weeks pay for missing a team meeting in September. The two sides eventually agreed to cut the fine in half, saving Burress about one game's pay — more than \$200,000.

The shooting was the latest run-in that Burress has had with the Giants since signing as a free agent in 2005. He has admitted to being fined dozens of times for violating team rules. In addition to his suspension in September, he also was fined \$45,000 by the league for abusing an official and throwing a ball into the stands in a game with San Francisco on Nov. 19.

Burress accidentally shot himself at the Latin Quarter nightclub, less than 48 hours before the Giants played the Washington Redskins. The 31-year-old was not going to play in the game because of a hamstring injury.

Burress faces charges of criminal possession of a weapon relating to the shooting. He pleaded not guilty. He is due back in court on March 31.

The focus of the investigation the past week has been on the role of Giants middle linebacker Antonio Pierce. He talked to investigators on Friday about the shooting. Neither Pierce's attorney nor the police would reveal what was said.

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UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

Alumni Association

Skrba

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own basket.

"I think we're a very poised team at the end of the game, we just weren't tonight," Irish coach Muffet McGraw said.

Michigan's offensive rebounding helped them kill clock on its next possession. The Wolverines (6-4) took three 3-pointers and recovered two of them, running the shot clock down each time. Freshman forward Erica Solomon and senior guard Lindsay Schrader both had chances at layups, but both missed, and Notre Dame and

was forced to foul. Michigan made three of its four foul shots to seal the win.

The offensive rebounds hurt Notre Dame's chances even though they didn't result in points, McGraw said.

"It took time away, even though they didn't score," she said. "It took time we needed at the end."

Irish guard Brittany Mallory landed awkwardly on her leg when jumping to break up a pass and fell to the court in pain. She was

helped off the court. McGraw said she didn't know the extent of the injury and that Mallory will see the doctor tomorrow.

Irish guard Ashley Barlow did not start the game, but scored 14 points on 7-of-13 shooting in 37 minutes off the bench. She had been battling a concussion she suffered against Michigan State on Nov. 29 and

had not played since then. "She played well, she did a lot of good things," McGraw said. "She defended well, she

rebounded well. I thought actually she had the best game of anyone."

Forward Becca Bruszewski finished with 10 points on 4-for-5 shooting. Guard Melissa Lechlitner had nine, and Schrader and Solomon each had eight.

Minnfield finished with 16 points and went 7-for-7 from the foul line.

Wolverines forward Carly Benson had eight points and eight rebounds.

Notre Dame had a 56-54 lead until Wolverines guard Jessica Minnfield sliced into the lane and sank a shot to tie the score. Schrader and Barlow each made jump shots to pull ahead 56-52 with 31 seconds left, but Wolverines guard Veronica Hicks made two free throws to pull within two once again. Then Skrba penetrated the Irish zone defense to tie the game and force overtime.

Barlow and Bruszewski scored to start the second half and Notre Dame went up five, its largest lead of the game, but Minnfield's 3-pointer helped the Wolverines even the

score. The score flip-flopped until 5:35, when Barlow and Solomon sank shots to give Notre Dame a 50-46 lead.

Skrba made a jumper and Minnfield hit two free throws to tie the score, and from there, Minnfield made sure Michigan got the time it needed to win.

In the first half, guard Melissa Lechlitner's 3-pointer put the Irish ahead by four, but they fell behind 10-9 with 15:40 to

go. Mallory hit a 3 to regain a two-point lead, but the score yo-yoed back and forth until Wolverine guard Carmen Reynolds hit a 3-pointer to put Michigan up five with 7:16 left in the first half. Bruszewski made two free throws and a jumper to give Notre Dame the lead, which it held going into the half.

"We had lots of opportunities," McGraw said. "We just didn't take advantage."

The Irish travel to face Valparaiso Saturday at 2:35 p.m.

Contact Bill Brink at wbrink@nd.edu

"I think we're a very poised team at the end of the game, we just weren't tonight."

Muffet McGraw
Irish coach

"[Ashley Barlow] played well, she did a lot of good things. She defended well, she rebounded well. I thought actually she had the best game of anyone."

Muffet McGraw
Irish coach

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osa.nd.edu/departments/pregnant.shtml

Half

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unbeaten streak that includes 10 conference wins (two in shootouts). With a home-and-home series with Bowling Green this weekend — in Ohio Friday, at the Joyce Center at 7 p.m. Saturday — the Irish will have a chance to overtake Miami, who they trail by three points with two games in hand, in the conference standings.

"The standings are pretty

"We have a tough road schedule and even our home games are going to be challenging."

Jeff Jackson
Irish coach

important for us. One of our objectives is to finish in the top four of the standings, so we put a little bit for emphasis on that than the national standings," senior goaltender Jordan Pearce said.

Pearce has been a big part of the Irish streak holding opponents to 1.36 goals per game throughout the past month.

Two of those wins came in impressive fashion against this weekend's opponent, the Falcons. Bowling Green (5-8-3, 4-5-1-0 CCHA) fell to the Irish 5-1 and 9-1 on Nov. 21-22. Bowling Green hasn't won since sweeping a series with struggling Northern Michigan on Nov. 14-15, but that doesn't make the Falcons any less of a formidable opponent, Jackson said.

After this weekend's games, Notre Dame will have a three-week break before starting the daunting second half of their schedule. The Irish face two-game series with Michigan, Nebraska-Omaha and Alaska, all three of whom are in the Top 25.

"Our second half is just like last year. People wonder why we went into a little bit of a slump last year and part of it was our schedule," Jackson said. "We have a tough road schedule and even our home games are going to be challenging."

Notre Dame's power play has been dominant at times — it was against the Falcons, when the Irish went 8-for-18 over the two nights — and has been a major factor in the Irish dominance of late. Special teams were a major concern a year ago, and Jackson said they could separate this team from his last.

Contact Matt Gamber at mgamber@nd.edu

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Terriers

continued from page 24

Then the real fun starts for the Irish — they begin Big East play on New Year's Eve at DePaul before squaring off against four more conference opponents before classes resume.

"Every time this time of year comes around, it's exciting for me and for us as a team because it's all basketball."

McAlarney said. "School, especially around this time of year, can be a big distraction, so having finals over with leading up to Big East season will be good for us."

Eight Big East teams currently sit in the top 25, and McAlarney said it's important for the Irish to pile up wins

before beginning conference play.

"We have to take care of our business. The rest of the Big East is doing their part taking care of their business and we've already been knocked down twice," McAlarney said.

"These games are very important for us to build that resume. I think we know that, we're a mature enough group to realize that. Every game counts."

Irish forward Luke Harangody, who returned after missing two games with pneumonia to lead the Irish with 25 points and 16 rebounds

against Ohio State, said it is natural for the team to look forward to the Big East season. But the reigning Big East player of the year echoed McAlarney's thoughts about the importance of non-conference wins.

"School, especially around this time of year, can be a big distraction, so having finals over with leading up to Big East season will be good for us."

Kyle McAlarney
Irish senior

"I would be lying if I said we're not looking forward to Big East play but you've still got to take these games seriously," Harangody said. "We've still got a lot of things to do, to clean some things up in these games. That's what's nice about these games. And with Boston University coming in — they're a good team and it should be a good challenge for us."

Harangody said the team did not play well on Saturday and deserved to drop in the rankings.

"We didn't deserve that top-10 ranking and we know that," he said. "We realize that rankings don't really mean anything right now so we're not really thinking about that."

Still, Harangody said the Irish are capable of performing much better than they did against Ohio State. They will get their first chance to prove it against Boston University.

"Everyone's hungry to get back on the court and prove we're that top team," Harangody said. "I think we'll be ready Saturday."

Contact Fran Tolan at
ftolan@nd.edu

Frosh

continued from page 24

people want to bring me down."

Fellow Olympian Kelley Hurley and her sister Courtney lead the women's epee division, while Ashley Serrette anchors the women's saber.

After posting very successful individual accomplishments in the fall, the Irish face their first test as a team January 24 and 25 when they compete at St. John's

and New York University. Columbia, Northwestern, and reigning national champion Ohio State will all be at the invitational as well.

"It's very hard for coaches to predict," Bednarski said. "I've been in this business for so long. There are so many factors we can't control, especially on such a young team. But anything can happen if we make it to the Bloody Four."

Contact Chris Masoud at
cmasoud@nd.edu

Belles

continued from page 24

at 30-30 heading into halftime. The Belles would lead most of the second half. However, Manchester shooters got hot down the stretch making over 60 percent of their field goals in the second half.

Erin Newsom continued her strong on-court performance for the Belles finishing with a team high 14 points and 12 rebounds. Murphy added 13 points coming off the bench, including going 7-for-8 from the charity stripe.

"We focus a lot on free throws and try to get better shooting percentages every day in practice," she said.

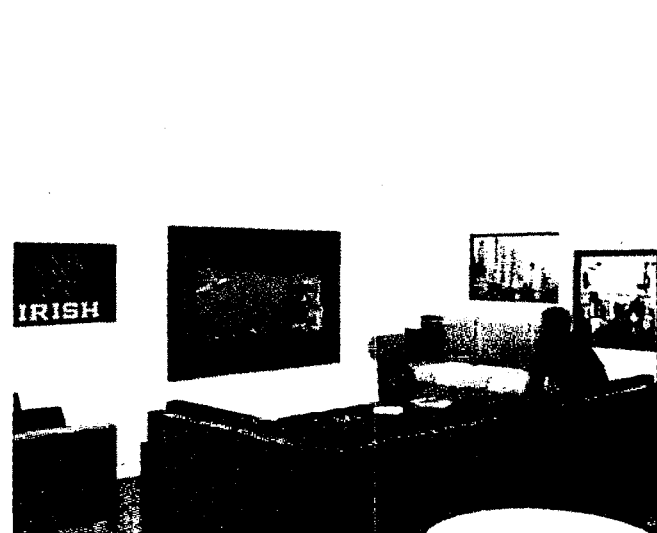
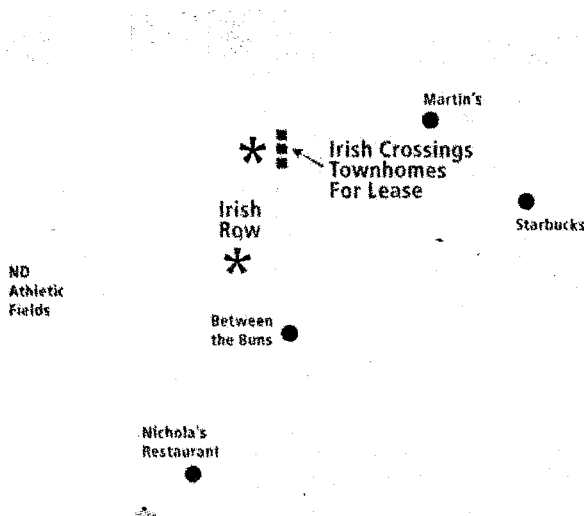
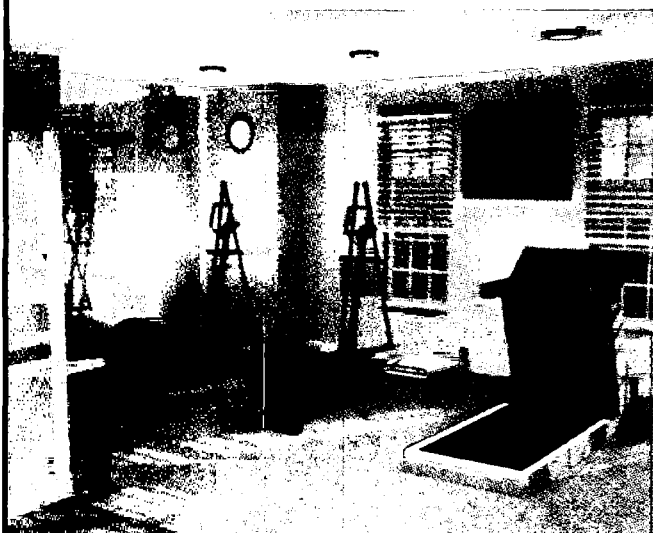
The Belles move back into MIAA conference play this Saturday with a contest at Olivet (4-3). The Belles are tied atop the MIAA with a record of 2-0.

"I think we need to take our frustration of losing this game and put it towards making ourselves better in our next two practices before our conference game against Olivet," Ronan said.

Contact Alex West at
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ND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Down to the wire

Irish suffer overtime loss to the Wolverines

By BILL BRINK
Sports Editor

Once Michigan guard Jessica Minnfield forced overtime, Wolverines forward Stephany Skrba took full advantage of it.

Back-to-back layups from Skrba gave Michigan a one-point lead, and the Wolverines hung on to beat No. 8 Notre Dame 63-59 in overtime in Ann Arbor, Mich. Wednesday night.

The Irish unbeaten streak ends at seven, while Michigan moves to 2-2 against ranked teams.

Skrba lit up Crisler Arena, scoring 20 points on 10-11 shooting. With 3:25 remaining in overtime, Irish freshman forward Kellie Watson hit a 3-pointer to give Notre Dame a 59-56 lead. Skrba, however, drove for a layup, then drove again after Notre Dame (7-1) turned the ball over under its

see SKRBA/page 6



Sophomore guard Brittany Mallory drives to the hoop during Notre Dame's 63-52 win over Purdue on Sunday. Mallory had seven points in a loss to Michigan on the road Wednesday.

TOM LA/The Observer

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Terriers are next, Big East looms

By FRAN TOLAN
Sports Writer

By the time the team takes the court against Boston University Saturday, Notre Dame will have had exactly a week to think about its 67-62 loss to Ohio State. The Irish, who dropped from No. 7 in the AP and ESPN/USA Today polls to No. 12/13, respectively, are eager to get back on the court.

"We had a few days off which we kind of needed to get our energy level back up and we can learn from [the loss] a lot of ways," Irish co-captain Kyle McAlarney said. "But I also think it's important for us to put it in the back of our minds and really move on and bounce back on Saturday."

After the game against the Terriers, Notre Dame will have another week off before taking on Delaware State and Savannah State.

see TERRIERS/page 22

FENCING

Bednarski is confident in potential of very young squad

14 freshmen replace talented senior class

By CHRIS MASOUD
Sports Writer

Led by sixth-year head coach Janusz Bednarski, members of the Irish fencing team are sharpening their blades as they eagerly await the start of intercolle-

giate play. Following a season that saw the Irish achieve second place at the NCAA Fencing Championships, the fighters have high hopes for the 2009 season.

"We have a very strong team," Bednarski said. "Maybe not the strongest in the nation, but we can fight anybody."

Bednarski is the only coach in Notre Dame's history to win a national title in his first season and win multiple national titles

in fewer than five seasons.

Although laden with talent, the team features 14 freshmen and will miss the support of a very strong senior cast from 2008. Bednarski believes the experience of Olympians Gerek Meinhardt and Kelley Hurley will play an important role in the team's success.

"Experience in the Olympic games shows two things," Bednarski said. "First, it shows

that you are a good defender who can play at the highest level of professional fencing. Second, it shows that you can fight on the big stage in front of all the cameras. This will bring calm to a young team that can easily get nervous."

Meinhardt, a freshman foil and the youngest male U.S. Olympian in Beijing, agrees with his coach.

"Beijing will help in getting

used to pressure situations," Meinhardt said. "It's the highest level of competition, so I'll better be able to deal with nerves that come with playing in the NCAA."

Meinhardt also understands that an Olympic background comes with a price tag.

"I have to focus hard against every competitor," Meinhardt said. "Because I'm at the top,

see FROSH/page 22

HOCKEY

ND learns from last year

By MATT GAMBER
Associate Sports Editor

If ever a top-ranked team were to know that with 18 games remaining on its regular season schedule, it is far from reaching the proverbial promised land — it's the Irish.

After a 15-4 start and a nine-game win streak a year ago, Notre Dame went 6-8-4 after final exams, plummeting in the polls and barely reaching the NCAA tournament.

"There are a lot of similarities right now. It's a little concerning to me if anything," Irish coach Jeff Jackson said.

After losing its first two CCHA games at home to Miami (Ohio), Notre Dame (12-3-2, 8-2-2-2 CCHA) has reeled off a 12-game

see HALF/page 21



Irish wing Christiaan Minella looks up ice during Notre Dame's 5-1 win over Bowling Green on Nov. 21 at the JACC.

YUE WU/The Observer

SMC BASKETBALL

Belles finish just short in loss to Manchester

By ALEX WEST
Sports Writer

Saint Mary's came up just short Wednesday afternoon, losing to cross-state rival Manchester 70-66. The Belles (4-4) watched an eight-point lead with 3:50 to play in the game disappear as they failed to make a field goal for the rest of the game.

"Any loss is hard to swallow but it was especially tough because we know we should have come out with the win," freshman Maggie Ronan said. "We had a good lead down the stretch of the game and let them come back in the end."

Kelly Meiklejohn who finished with 16 points for Manchester

made the go-ahead jump shot to make the score 67-66 with just 21 seconds left on the clock.

"Crucial possessions were lost because of turnovers and a lack of rebounding. We didn't score in the last three minutes of the game and they did," freshman Kelley Murphy said.

Manchester got the ball back and hit two foul shots to stretch their lead. Ronan had a chance to tie the game in the final moments but her shot came up just short.

Manchester's Kristen Lancaster tacked on a free throw to put the game at 70-66 with 1 second to play.

The game was neck-and-neck throughout with the score tied

see BELLES/page 22