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Puppies sniff out student stress

by AMANDA GRAY
News Writer

Wet noses warmed student hearts at the first "Puppy Days" event, held at Notre Dame's Knights of Columbus building Friday.

The event, sponsored by student government's Constituent Services Committee and Circle K, brought five dogs and a rabbit from the Humane Society of St. Joseph County to campus to relieve student stress, event coordinator sophomore Lizzie Helpling said.

"Because we live on a college campus, we're isolated from 'petable' animals," she said. "Talking to my friends, pets are what they miss most at college."

More than 500 students attended the event, five times the number organizers planned for, Helpling said.

"From having a dog at home, I know how relaxing it is to pet an animal," she said. "This gives students a taste of home and shows them the responsibilities of owning a pet just out of col-

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PAT COVENEY/The Observer

Priscilla the chihuahua visits the Knights of Columbus building to snuggle away stress on Friday afternoon. The Humane Society of St. Joseph County brought five dogs and a rabbit to campus.

ND police investigate attempted stabbing

Observer Staff Report

A female student attempted to stab a male student acquaintance in a Siegfried Hall room Sunday night.

The incident occurred around 8:40 p.m., University Spokesman Dennis Brown said. The male student was not injured and Notre Dame Security Police was questioning the female student on Sunday night, he said.

WNDU reported that after a struggle, the male was able to take the knife and locked the girl in the room until officers arrived.

Siegfried rector Fr. John Conley deferred comment to University officials and Brown declined further comment.

At the time of publication, the students' names had not been released and there was no information about potential charges.

Student hits building, flees scene

Observer Staff Report

Police arrested a Notre Dame senior Saturday night when he crashed his truck into a vacant building at a South Bend intersection and then fled the scene of the accident.

Sgt. James Walsh from the South Bend Police Department said the crash occurred around 10 p.m. at the intersection of Eddy Street and South Bend Avenue.

"The driver overcorrected on his turn and drove into the building," Walsh said.

Walsh said none of the evidence points to intoxication as a factor in the accident.

The student left his car and returned home. Walsh said the building was structurally sound before the crash and is now "very unstable and dangerous."

Police arrested the student at

see CRASH/page 4

Project supports cancer patients



MACKENZIE SAIN/The Observer

Students Adaku Ibekwe, left, and Stephanie Doering make blankets in South Dining Hall on Saturday. Circle K and Knott sponsored the Aidan Project, which donates money and blankets to hospitals.

By MEL FLANAGAN
News Writer

Hundreds of students gathered in South Dining Hall Saturday afternoon to make fleece blankets for cancer patients at the annual Aidan Project.

The project, sponsored by Circle K and Knott Hall, began in 2006 when former Knott resident Aidan Fitzgerald, then a sophomore, was diagnosed with

testicular cancer.

Over 400 students attended Saturday's event. Knott service commissioner Mitchell Lopes said participants made 324 blankets and raised \$2,000 from T-shirt sales, both improvements from last year's event.

The money will be donated to the Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis where Fitzgerald was treated. The blankets will be donated to multiple hospitals,

but primarily to Riley.

Lopes said Fitzgerald developed the idea for the project after he went into remission.

"After he beat the cancer he thought it would be great if he could start something in tribute to cancer [treatment], so he came up with this project," Lopes said. "He [had a friend in] Circle K and lived in Knott, so he

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Music duo heads to Uganda

By NICOLE MICHELS
News Writer

This winter break, Notre Dame seniors Nick Gunty and Brian Powers will have the opportunity to combine social justice with their passion for songwriting.

After they finish their final exams, the two will head to Khindu, Uganda, to record an album with the local Barefoot Truth Children's Choir and the group, "Percussion Discussion."

"This project is about producing music with a message," Powers said. "The songs that we write are going to be about what they're going through in Uganda... The great thing about this project is that it has the potential to reach a large amount of people."

The musical duo named itself the "The Frances Luke Accord." Gunty and Powers said they plan to pursue musical careers after graduation.

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Priest speaks on poverty and compassion in cities

By VIENNA WAGNER
News Writer

The first step to aiding the poor is to stand with them, Fr. Fred Kammer said in a lecture to Urban Plunge participants Sunday.

Kammer is the executive director of the Jesuit Social Research Institute and has worked as the president of Catholic Charities USA. The lecture, titled, "Building Justice in the Cities," addressed breaking the cycle of urban poverty.

"Making the invisible visible is the first step to compassion," Kammer said. "Standing with the poor is a touchstone that gives us a wisdom that comes from the poor themselves and leads us to make judgments in favor of the poor."

Kammer said taking a stand with the poor challenges our society's dominant views.

"Standing with those who are poor introduces us to a new way of seeing the world around us," he said. "This insistence on personal contact runs against our culture's proclivity to see the poor as invisible or faceless."

But Kammer said casting

away these views and keeping contact with the poor is crucial.

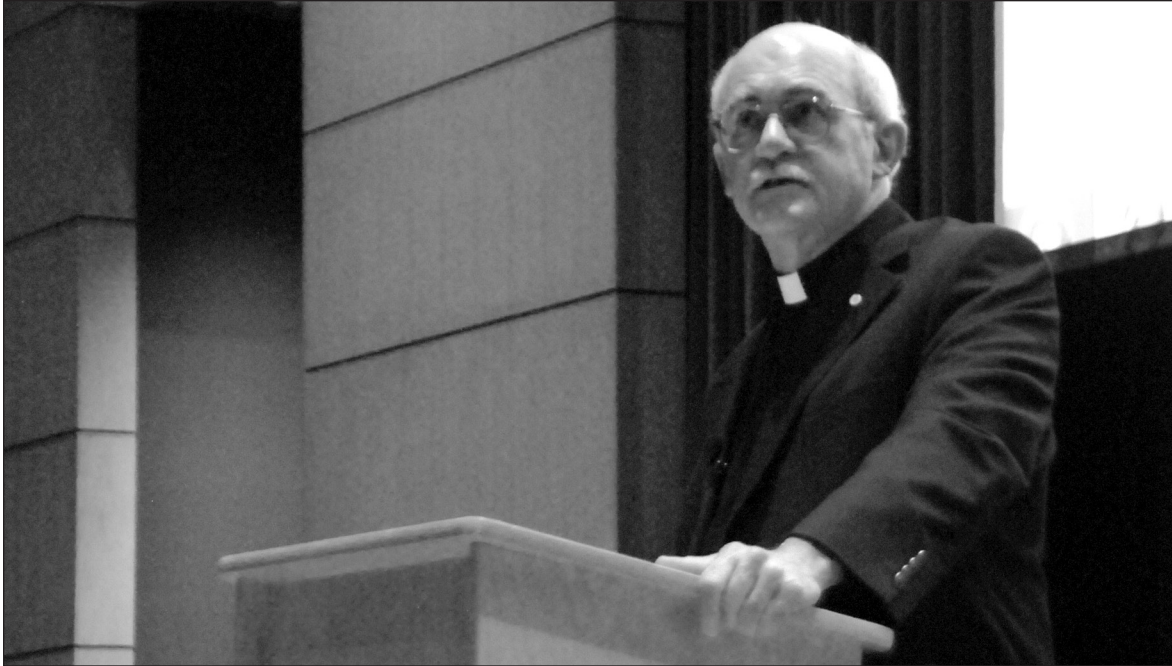
"Think about your life and try to maintain contact with at least one person who is poor or marginalized and support one issue pertaining to the poor," he said. "Connect the face of Christ to the poor."

This practice of seeing God in the poor is a longstanding one, Kammer said. He appealed to students to follow the example of historical Israel and show their faith by helping those in need.

"In biblical Israel ... the poor became a measure of Israel's fidelity to the Lord," Kammer said. "We Christians should ask the question, 'How will this affect the poor?' The fundamental moral criterion for all economic policies is that they must be at the service of all people, especially the poor."

Kammer said once people make an initial commitment to stand with the poor, they might change the way they live their own lives.

"One of the first reactions that people have is to adopt a simpler lifestyle," he said. "This choice is a stance appropriate to students. Individu-



KARLA MORENO/The Observer

Fr. Fred Kammer speaks about breaking the cycle of urban poverty in his lecture on Sunday. He said standing with the poor is the first step to helping them.

als who stand with the poor also stand with them in their career choices whether by choosing to teach in inner-city schools instead of the suburbs or doing social work in place of commercial law.

"The needs of the poor take

priority over the desire of the rich," Kammer said.


Kammer said always maintaining hope is crucial, as he differentiated between hope and optimism.

"Standing with the poor can usher us into their own expe-

rience of failure and marginalization," Kammer said. "It's therefore important for us to maintain a fundamental attitude of hope."

Contact Vienna Wagner at vwagner2@nd.edu

He's on His way




Christmas starts with Christ

Please join us for the monthly Respect Life Mass on December 5th at 5:15 p.m. at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Kevin Rhoades of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

Following Mass, the University Faculty for Life will host a reception in the Coleman-Morse Lounge.

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NOTRE DAME FUND TO PROTECT HUMAN LIFE



PAT COVENEY/The Observer
Jack, a male Chow Mix, takes a break from visiting with students on Friday. The Humane Society encourages students to volunteer.

Dogs

continued from page 1

lege.”

The Humane Society welcomed the chance to come to campus, outreach coordinator Genny Carlson said.

“I’m glad there are so many students who love animals,” she said. “We always look for events like this.”

Carlson brought dogs she knew could handle a crowd, such as Jack, a chow mix known affectionately as “Happy Jack.”

Another dog, a yellow lab and Shar Pei mix named Alex, spent the morning at a grade school before visiting Notre Dame.

“I saw him coming in from the school and brought him right here,” Carlson said. “It gets them out of the shelter for an afternoon. They get lots of love and dog treats.”

Many students said they attended the event because they miss their pets from home. Freshman Katie Bascom said she attended because she misses her golden retriever, who lives 600 miles away from campus.

“I actually didn’t come because of stress,” she said. “I miss my dog.”

Bascom said she would love to attend another Puppy Days event featuring another popular pet.

“I would love to see kittens here,” she said. “Everyone loves to play with kittens.”

The Humane Society saw

the event as a chance to promote volunteering opportunities to students, she said.

“For volunteers, we want people who have the time to dedicate to [the animals,]” Carlson said.

Sophomore Lindsay Rojas said the event helped her cope with being away from her pet shih tzu, Gizmo.

“I couldn’t pick a favorite [dog],” she said. “It really helped with stress.”

On-campus service organization Circle K volunteers support at the Humane Society, senior Jessica Choi, leader of that volunteering effort, said.

“It means a lot to me that we got the Humane Society out to campus,” she said Friday. “The project died down, and I’ve been trying to revive it for the last three years. Bringing it back as a project and event, especially with all these people here, is amazing.”

Choi said Circle K is always looking for more volunteers to add to the group, which trains the animals for adoption by walking them and spending time with them.

“In terms of volunteers, we want dedicated people with lots of love for service and animals,” she said. “They have to have a lot of time.”

For more information on the Humane Society and volunteering with Circle K, visit <http://www.humanesocietys-tjc.org>

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Student represents Flex Watches

By ADAM LLORENS
News Writer

When Notre Dame sophomore Steve O’Hara sat down to watch MTV’s, “Real World: San Diego,” over fall break, he did not imagine it would lead to a new job.

But after seeing the company Flex Watches featured on the MTV show, O’Hara said he was hooked by Flex Watches’ philosophy, which is based on the belief that 21st-century businesses can be both profitable and charitable.

O’Hara said this philosophy made him decide to become a campus representative for the San Diego-based company.

“I wanted to buy a watch and eventually become a campus rep to spread awareness for the company,” O’Hara said.

“There are 10 watches to choose from, and each one represents a different charity.”

Steve O’Hara sophomore

will go toward finding a cure for breast cancer.”

The slogan for Flex Watches is “10 colors, 10 charities, 10 percent.”

O’Hara said his campus representative position requires marketing the company’s product in a variety of creative ways.

“I had to get an article in the [campus] newspaper and put up Facebook statuses,” O’Hara said. “The ultimate goal would be to get Flex Watches in a local store or the [Hammes Notre Dame] Bookstore.”

O’Hara, a lacrosse player at Notre Dame, considers his involvement with Flex Watches more of an extracurricular activity than a job.

“My first plan of attack was sending out an email to the entire [lacrosse] team,” O’Hara said. “Networking with friends and trying to explain what Flex Watches

are all about is part of my strategy.”

O’Hara said his time working with Flex Watches proves that a company can still be a force of change in the world.

“A business can be both profitable and can give back to the community,” he said. “It’s not all about making money; it’s about making an impact on the world around you.”

Working for a company based in Southern California has not presented any challenges, O’Hara said.

“When you order a watch, they ask how you found out about the product,” O’Hara said. “People are supposed to use my name as a reference so they know how well I am promoting and advertising the product.”

Interested buyers can purchase a Flex Watch just in time for the holiday season.

“You can go to www.flex-watches.com or email me at sohara4@nd.edu if interested in buying one,” he said.

Contact Adam Llorens at allorems@nd.edu

Crash

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his off-campus home about an hour after the crash for leav-

ing the scene of an accident causing property damage. He spent several hours in the St. Joseph County Jail on Sunday morning.

Walsh predicted the student would face a misdemeanor

charge from the St. Joseph County Prosecutor’s Office in the next few days. The Observer is withholding the student’s identity because he has not yet been formally charged with a crime.



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Write News.

Email observernewseditor.nd@gmail.com



Photo courtesy of Fields of Growth International

Seniors Nick Gunty and Brian Powers, the duo of “The Frances Luke Accord,” will travel to Uganda over winter break to record songs with two musical groups for their next album.

Band

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Kevin Dugan, manager of youth and community programs for the Athletic Department, approached the duo about going to Uganda after its performance at last December’s Stand for Sudan Peace Rally.

Dugan is also the founder and director of Fields of Growth International, an organization that introduces lacrosse and human development to poverty-stricken communities. Fields of Growth helped launch lacrosse in Uganda’s capital, Kampala.

“The goal of this album is that once we start to sell it, all the profits will be sent back to the children to help build schools, [to] better the communities and to fund the projects undertaken by Fields of Growth,” Gunty said.

Gunty said the group plans to go to Khindu with several songs already composed, but intends to write a large portion of the music once there. They will also collaborate with the choir on songs the children already know and perform.

“What we’re writing about is going to be heavily focused on the lives of those children,” Gunty said. “We want this album to be about those children and their lives, the joys and the hardships everything about their experience.”

Powers said he is excited by the challenge of synthesizing two very different styles of music. The Frances Luke Accord typically produces folk music, but will now be working with the styles and beats of African music.

“We’ve never had an African aspect, so that’s going to be the big challenge incorporating our folky kind of music with African musical styles,” Powers said.

Gunty said he is excited and motivated by the idea of working with an African children’s choir.

“It will be artistically engaging to work with these kids and to come up with a project, collaborating with people in such a completely different culture with its own sense of music and art,” he said.

Powers said he expects communication with the children to be a more basic challenge.

“One of the issues will be com-

municating with the kids who will definitely have a very low level of English proficiency,” he said. “I expect that we will be working with them on pronunciation of words in some of our songs.”

While in Uganda, Gunty and Powers will also work with Percussion Discussion, a very prominent Ugandan musical group whose music was featured in the movie, “The Last King of Scotland.”

The Frances Luke Accord will perform with Percussion Discussion at the National Theater in Kampala.

Powers and Gunty said they are excited to make music with both groups and to help get the message out about the social and economic problems prevalent in Uganda.

“This album is about sharing cultures, and intrinsic to that is learning about how they lives their lives, getting to know them personally,” Gunty said. “I see it as an opportunity to learn more about their situation and to spread that awareness.”

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Saint Mary’s hosts Winter Wonderland

By REBECCA O’NEIL
News Writer

South Bend may still be void of snow, but Saint Mary’s students welcomed children from across the community to a Winter Wonderland celebration Saturday.

The Student Activities Board (SAB) held the second annual holiday party in various locations around Saint Mary’s campus for underprivileged children aged five to 12. The children in attendance were mostly from Coquillard Primary Center, a Title I school the College collaborates with through tutoring programs.

In addition to the elementary school, Saint Mary’s extended the invitation this year to South Bend’s Center for the Homeless and Hope Ministries.

Over 20 different St. Mary’s clubs united to help create the seasonal spirit.

Junior Stefanie Schwab, SAB treasurer, said in a College press release that 100 children, mostly from Coquillard, attended Winter Wonderland last year.

“It is exciting because we have 20 clubs participating in the event this year,” Schwab said. “The clubs range from the Student Diversity Board to cheerleading, and all bring something unique to the event. [The event is] a great opportunity for the students to interact with the kids and to give back to the community that

we live in.”

The Around the World Club partnered with the History Club to host a table that created different crafts using candy canes, teaching the kids about how Christmas is celebrated in other countries.

The English Club gathered to read Christmas stories to the children from Coquillard.

Santa Clause sat on the bottom floor of the Student Center listening to children’s, as well as college students’, Christmas lists.

Sophomore Emily Murphy worked a shift with Santa Clause, helping children create picture frames for their photographs with Santa.

“They got their picture right away, which was nice. The [children] made the picture frame while the picture developed,” Murphy said. “I helped out with the glue gun because we didn’t want them to get hurt.”

Junior Megan Woodring, chair of SAB’s Traditional Events Committee, said in the press release that SMC Wonderland is one of the best events of the semester.

“This event stands out because it brings everyone in the Saint Mary’s community together for one specific purpose: to give back during the holiday season,” Woodring said. “It gets everyone in the holiday spirit.”

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http://campusministry.nd.edu/retreats


Campus Ministry

Blanket

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brought the two together.”

Sophomore Mara Stolee, Aidan Project commissioner for Circle K, said the project is so popular with students because of its convenience.

“We run the event on campus, in South Dining Hall, which makes it extremely easy [for them] to take a few hours of their time and do something nice for others,” she said.

Circle K not only purchases the fleece, but also precuts it, Stolee said, making it feasible for students to stop by only briefly and still complete a blanket.

Lopes agreed that it is easy to contribute to the Aidan project.

“It’s a fairly quick project, so you don’t have to spend hours of time or a full day there,” he said. “You can pop in for 15 minutes, make a blanket, and you’ve done something constructive that helps someone. There’s a sense of accomplishment being able to say, “Hey, I only spent 15 minutes and I helped this great cause.”

Junior Tyler Smith has attended the Aidan Project the past three years because of his close relationship with Fitzgerald.

“I came to know him through my brother, who was his roommate and best friend,” Smith said. “Going to the Aiden Project is not only a way to help those who have

cancer, but to support Aidan.”

Smith said Fitzgerald’s personality helps the project continue to reach high attendance numbers.

“He is very well-liked throughout the Notre Dame community,” he said. “And even though he has graduated, [Fitzgerald] continues to maintain many friendships with people still here.”

Sophomores Cara Curran and Colleen Kerins also participated in the Aidan Project because of personal relationships with Fitzgerald.

“We went last year because Aidan was a Cavanaugh football coach, so a lot of Cavanaugh girls were involved,” Kerins said.

Curran said the project is a simple way to give back to those less fortunate.

“You can just go and relax and hang out with your friends,” she said. “And they make it really easy for you to make the blankets.”

Stolee said the brilliance of the Aidan Project stems from the way it takes a simple idea and applies it on such a large scale.

“Cancer changes the way people live their lives, but with the Aidan Project we hope to change the way that they live with cancer by offering them gifts of love and support,” she said. “Cancer patients fight a hard battle, and it is important that they know each day that people care about them and are cheering them on.”

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INSIDE COLUMN

Sidewalk etiquette

Notre Dame students may be some of the most intelligent kids in America, but frankly, they could use a lesson in sidewalk etiquette. So I have decided to take it upon myself to educate the populace.

First, we have the issue of bikers.

Emma Russ

News Writer

The sidewalk is made for pedestrians. If you're going to ride your bike at a million miles an hour, enter a bike race. Otherwise, ride at a reasonable pace or get off the sidewalk.

I for one have had too many close calls with bikers and have been the victim of a crash which left me bruised and scraped.

Secondly, people here have a tendency to travel in packs, taking up way too much space on the sidewalk and refusing to make room for people walking in the other direction. Freshmen, you know who you are. If you have ever encountered one of these packs, then you have probably been forced into the grass so you did not get trampled.

Then, you ended up stepping in a huge puddle. Come on, people — just make an effort to move over.

Next, we have the issue of sidewalk PDA. Holding hands on the way to class is completely unnecessary, but if you must, at least separate when necessary to make room for other walkers. To all those Notre Dame couples, you can stand to be apart for two seconds in your life. Trust me, you will survive.

On another note, be friendly. Have you ever run into "that one guy" that you met at some party last year? You talked for an entire hour, and you totally recognize him and are about to say "Hi," when you see him look away and pretend he doesn't recognize you.

Don't be that guy. Just say hello, or at least give a friendly smile. Everyone loves a smile on the way to class.

But can you ever be too friendly? Everyone has experienced that awkward moment when you see someone you know from far away, and they see you too because they are walking straight towards you, but you can't say "Hi" yet because you would be yelling down the sidewalk.

So you either awkwardly look away and pretend to be really interested in a squirrel or else whip out your phone and pretend to be texting. I don't have any suggestions for this situation. It's just awkward.

Then we have the hands-free phone talkers — so confusing. Not only do you look like a crazy person talking to yourself, you might also trick other walkers into thinking you are talking to them. I know I am not the only one to have mistakenly started a conversation with a hands-free phone talker only to discover I am actually having a conversation with no one but myself.

Finally, sidewalks follow the rules of general streets. If you have ever driven a car or been a passenger in any type of moving vehicle, you will have noted that people drive on the right side of the road. In turn, you should walk on the right side of the sidewalk in order to avoid collision. This isn't England. Save it for study abroad.

To conclude this little lesson in sidewalk etiquette, I would like to advise everyone to follow these simple rules. If every student did, Notre Dame sidewalks could a much happier and safer place to traverse.

Contact Emma Russ at eruss@nd.edu

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

The majority's role

a lot of work to do.

So far, Notre Dame has made many great efforts to bring diversity to the discussion. Many passionate students, staff and community members come together for the Practicum in Diversity Education to train upperclassmen for freshmen's Contemporary Topic's Diversity Day. Multicultural Student Programs and Services also have great support systems for the student clubs concerning diversity. Difficulties arise in trying to balance providing support for minorities while facilitating the relationship between the majority and minority. Despite the existing programs, we have more to do.

We cannot afford to forgo revealing the actual dynamics that underlay the minority-majority dialogue. The first step to any problem solving should be gauging the starting point.

"Show Some Skin: The Race Monologues" formed itself on exactly this as its base; they want to start from scratch. It's a brand new project sponsored by the Student Government and the Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement (CUSE). The production "aims to provide a platform for sharing experiences on ethnicity and race to enhance our ongoing conversation on diversity in the Notre Dame community."

They want to hear from every angle on "race." Everyone has something to say about race, whether or not you're in a majority or a minority. You may be someone who thinks race doesn't influence your life at all. You may think race carves out a different

space for you in society. You may feel that you don't fall into society's racial categories. However you feel, there is a story underneath it.

Imagine reliving those moments that made you think about race and put it down on paper. Help us to get into your shoes by describing that moment with your five senses, then share your story with "Show Some Skin: The Race Monologues."

The event team is collecting anonymous submissions at s.someskin@gmail.com and at Dr. Lucero's office in 232 Geddes Hall until Jan. 31, 2012.

The collected submissions can be up to 500 words. The donated stories will become the production's property and may be reproduced through performance, publication or other media.

"Show Some Skin: The Race Monologues" will take place in March of 2012. Auditions for story readers (performers) will be held in early February. Those interested in auditioning can email the team at racemonologue@gmail.com

Whatever you think, The Race Monologues team wants to hear from you.

"You" not only implies the minority, but also the majority. Participation from the majority cannot be foregone. What's your story? Show us some of your skin, no matter what color it is.

Edithstein Cho can be reached at echo1@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

"I dream of wayward gulls and all landless lovers, rare moments of winter sun, peace, privacy, for everyone."

William Claire
American poet and essayist

Submit a Letter to the Editor

Email obsviewpoint@gmail.com

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I quit therapy because my analyst was trying to help me behind my back."

Richard Lewis
American comedian

VIEWPOINT

Thou shall not judge

It's funny. There are many stereotypes at Notre Dame about the different majors available in each of the university's colleges.

Engineering and Architecture are probably the most intense. Science is pretty hard, too. Business students have it good. Arts and Letters is a breeze.

In the business school, there is this air of superiority with regards to Arts and Letters. It seems students think, "We are practical, we learn things that we will use in the real world, we are all going to get respectable paying jobs. What on earth are you going to do with a history or classics major?"

I remember sitting in an upper level philosophy class when my professor made a remark about how he was embarrassed that his alma mater had a business

Dee Tian
Confessions of a Christian Party Girl

school. He jokingly said, "There aren't any business students in this class, right?" It then hit me that many departments within Arts and Letters must reciprocate the feeling of superiority toward business majors.

They probably thought they were the intellectuals, searching for the answers to the deeper questions in life. Each side judged the other, thinking themselves better.

How many times a day do we see this? We find a similar situation between people who drink and people who do not. Freshman year, we learned that in college, people are supposedly judged for not drinking; there would be plenty of peer pressure to party.

Although this may be somewhat true, somehow, I've found the opposite. In my personal experiences, it seems that students who drink don't really care if others choose to not. However, some students

who do not drink judge those who do. I'm proud of being able to drink as much as some guys when I'm out on the weekends. But when I go to church or work with community service organizations, I'm ashamed and would rather not admit to it.

While I may feel a bit squeamish when my less religious friends roll their eyes when I turn on KLove (my favorite Christian radio station), I also feel squeamish when my pastor asks to be friends on Facebook for fear of what he might see.

Why do we compartmentalize our lives? Why do we judge those who behave contrary to ourselves?

Now, I'm wary of relativism. While not everything is absolutely black and white, I believe that there are single right answers to many issues; there are correct and incorrect value systems.

However, in the more minor things of life, what right do we have to judge each other?

Jesus condemned hypocrisy and warned us that one day we would be held accountable for our actions and thoughts. Imagine your dad finding out about your darkest and deepest secrets — the times you broke the rules, the times you lied, your sexual life. Our Heavenly Father already knows all of this. Sometimes, I cringe at the thought.

So, regardless of if you think management or sociology is a joke of a major, regardless of whether you choose to drink or not, just remember that we do not answer to each other.

We answer to God.

Dee Tian is a senior marketing major pursuing minors in philosophy and anthropology. She can be reached at ytian1@nd.edu

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Flat tax just won't work

Nearly every week I read articles in The Observer with columnists claiming a flat tax is the answer, and nearly every week I shake my head with disdain.

Here's why: a flat tax won't solve any problems (and isn't even remotely realistic). Bogus reasoning is constantly used in defense of this issue, so I'm here to set the record straight.

First bad argument: "A flat tax will increase simplicity and efficiency of collection." The common justification is that this will ensure that the half of Americans who do not pay taxes will be forced to do so. Trust me, if that half wasn't paying taxes before, they sure aren't going to under a flat tax. Most who aren't paying taxes are doing so illegally. So under a flat-tax they'll finally pay up? I don't think so.

Second: "A flat tax will stop the rich from cheating the system and start paying what they owe." If you think the rich aren't paying enough taxes now, then wait and see how much they'll pay under a flat tax. Even with the rich using every possible tax break in the book, their effective tax rate could only get as low as possibly 15 to 17 percent. So a flat tax is the answer so the rich will pay less? That just doesn't make any sense.

Third: "A flat-tax system will solve the financial crisis." Really? Why, because then more people would understand it? A flat tax would cause the tax revenue in the U.S. to plummet to a near all-time low. Plus, every proposal so far completely disregards the amount of tax revenue lost that would have gone towards social security and medicare. You think we're in a fix now? Imagine social security and medicare failing, then come talk to me.

So here's the answer: fix the spending side of taxes, not the collecting. Politicians are what got us into this mess in the first place, so they should be the ones to get us out. If they weren't so caught up in getting re-elected, maybe we would actually see some economic progress in the country. Besides, are you really going to listen to Herman Cain?

Chris Martin
grad student
off campus
Dec. 4

Conflicting conclusions

Dear Ms. Koziel ("The cost of death," Dec. 2),

To say life in parole would serve as a more cost effective punishment to the death penalty is to ignore more than half of the framework on which our punitive system is founded.

Punishment is not only looked at through its cost-effectiveness, but also its effectiveness as a deterrent, as necessary retribution for society and a possible process of rehabilitation for the perpetrator (though most would agree rehabilitation for those who have committed capital crimes is unattainable).

Whether the death penalty serves as a deterrent for future crimes is still dubious, there are several conflicting conclusions as to the punishment's effectiveness.

The real question is whether or not capital punishment serves as proper retribution for those who have committed the most heinous crimes — and it is along these lines that most people diverge in opinion.

Retribution depends on personal and state interpretation of the crime and the law.

In the thirty-five states that practice the death penalty, if the crime is defined by the state as an "aggravating circumstance," the perpetrator will face the death penalty.

For these heinous crimes, many people feel that the appropriate punishment is death regardless of cost.

"Aggravating circumstances" vary from state to state. These often divergent and ambiguous understandings of aggravated offenses lead to disparate interpretations of the appropriate use of capital punishment, which indicate clear conflicts of procedural justice at the state level.

Considering, then, the finality and severity of capital punishment, coupled with the right of citizens to equality under law, it must only be carried out in the fairest and most effective way possible.

But one cannot oversimplify the argument as an issue solely of cost effectiveness, especially when one considers the heinous crimes committed and the emotional toll that these devastations take on friends and family members of the victims. The divergence in opinion is derived from moral grounds, which is why this conflict has become so difficult to resolve.

If we wish to address the question of capital punishment, we must not only do so from a practical standpoint, but from an ethical standpoint as well.

Stephanie McKay
sophomore
Welsh Family Hall
Dec. 2

UWIRE

Obama doesn't seem to like being president

President Barack Obama isn't happy. The president seems to have lost his spark, as media have buzzed with speculation over the root of his gloomy demeanor or between coverage of those vying for his job.

Even his biggest cheerleader, MSNBC's Chris Matthews, who said he "felt this thrill going up my leg" when Obama delivered a speech during the primaries in 2008 and compared his meteoric rise to the New Testament, according to the Huffington Post, has sensed that the Obamas don't seem settled into the White House.

"Once having won the office, he seemed to think that that was the end of it in terms of his connection to the American people," Matthews said, according to the Washington Times. "I think everybody feels an absence of communication from

Anastasia Dawson
The Oracle

the time he's been elected. And it's not about being left-wing enough or too left. That's not his problem. It's connection ... I don't sense the gratitude, the happiness level, the thrill of being president."

Matthews isn't the only one to notice the change of heart from the man who, in 2010, was named "one of the best presidents ever" by presidential scholars. According to a Wednesday Gallup poll, he has now surpassed Lyndon B. Johnson as the president seeking re-election with the lowest approval rating.

Perhaps his poor spirits can be attributed to his looming to-do list.

Obama may be hoping to bring troops back from Iraq and Afghanistan in time for Christmas. However, involvement in Libya, which Obama said in March would take "days, not weeks," according to ABC News, is still high. A year after his inauguration, the president pledged to his supporters that he would close Guantana-

mo Bay. Yet the infamous prison remains open, and Obama conceded that he hasn't "been able to make the case right now," according to the Washington Post.

Though war has often been used as a means to boost the economy, the U.S. unemployment rate remains at nine percent, and according to The Associated Press, more than 46 million Americans now live in poverty, the highest numbers recorded since the Census Bureau began tracking poverty levels in 1959.

Even so, government spending is at historically high levels with respect to the nation's declining GDP. Other nations with such high levels of spending, such as Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Portugal and Spain, are all on the verge of collapse, which certainly has done nothing for Obama's nerves.

America has managed to keep its AAA credit rating with Fitch even after losing it with Standard & Poor's, but according

to Fox News, Fitch has downgraded its outlook to negative, a move undoubtedly associated with the failure of the congressional supercommittee to cut \$1.2 trillion in government spending by the end of the year. A drop in the national credit rating will drive up interest rates across the board and make it that much harder for businesses to borrow for capital expenses, which, in turn, affects hiring.

Such news is enough to make anyone, even the president, want to live in a tent in Zuccotti Park. And though Obama has pledged to look out for the interests of the omnipresent Occupy Movement's 99 percent, the polls speak for themselves.

This article originally ran in the Dec. 1 edition of The Oracle, the newspaper serving the University of South Florida.

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



'Tis the season Christmas

Scene Staff Report

Christmas has taken hold of Notre Dame, and the evidence is all around us. There's no snow, but there are more than enough red and green lights to make up for it. From South Dining Hall to dorm rooms, students, faculty and staff have stepped up and decked out campus to spread holiday cheer. Check out some of the best decorations from around campus.



MARY CLAIRE O'DONNELL/Observer Photo

Although there may be no snow dotting Notre Dame's campus yet, Section 4A of McGlinn, left, has managed to turn its hallway into a Winter Wonderland. Right, the fairy lights illuminate the beautifully crafted paper snowflakes, bringing Christmas cheer to all who pass through the hallway.



MACKENZIE SAIN/Observer Photo

Jordan Hall of Science has caught the Christmas bug. Its tree, right, which sits in the main hallway, is topped by a beautiful angel, top left, and decorated with gorgeous ornaments. Although Jordan sits on the far edge of campus, it's worth the trek to check out the decorations.



MARY CLAIRE O'DONNELL/Observer Photo

Left, the Christmas tree decorates the room of juniors Kristen Kelly and Betsy Mastropieri. Right, a stocking hangs outside their door. Their room may be small, but that didn't stop these two girls from getting a full-size Christmas tree to celebrate the holiday season.

Season for decorations



ONYINYECHKWU IGBOANUGO/Observer Photo

Clockwise from the top: a gingerbread house and poinsettia plant dot the inside of South Dining Hall; a wreath garnishes the east exit; presents and garlands decorate the deli station; a present sits on the bench next to the waffle irons; a holiday village adorns the front window; the crèche graces the east exit; a display of presents embellishes an upper ledge. The workers at South Dining Hall have outdone themselves this year. From the traditional crèche above the east exit to a holiday village, even Scrooge would leave full of Christmas cheer.



Photo courtesy of Rachel Sehgal



MACKENZIE SAIN/Observer Photo

From its front hall to its dorm rooms, left, Lewis Hall embodies the fall holiday mood. Its tree, right, lights up the front hallway. The dorm celebrates all the major holidays of the season.

SPORTS AUTHORITY

Injecting some fun into NBA playoffs

If you've been following sports over the past week — and let's be honest, if you're reading this column, you probably have been — you've noticed a peculiar trend. The big story hasn't been the mess atop the BCS standings, nor has it been the Packers' utter domination of every other team in the NFL.



Allan Joseph
Sports Editor

No, sportswriters around the country have been fixated on one thing, and one thing only: The NBA is back. And frankly, I don't care. It's not that I don't enjoy the

NBA at all. The NBA playoffs give us some of the most drama-filled, pressure-packed moments of the year. I love watching a great Christmas Day matchup between the Heat and the Celtics on national television. When professional basketball is at its best, with two immensely talented teams battling for a full game in front of a jam-packed arena, it is among the most thrilling experiences in sports.

The problem, of course, is that professional basketball is rarely at its best.

There are too many regular-season games. There are too many teams. There are too many overpaid, under-talented players. There are not enough meaningful games. There are not enough mar-quee matchups. There are not enough creative ideas to solve these problems. Well, that last part isn't true. There are plenty of creative, outside-the-box ideas to re-inject life into the NBA. For example, we all know that the last third of the season is filled with teams "tanking" to improve their draft position. The NBA tried to fix the situation by instituting a lottery weighted by how poorly a team does. It didn't

solve anything. Bill Simmons of ESPN.com, however, has a simple solution: the "Entertaining as Hell (EAH)" tournament. Simmons would reserve two playoff spots each year for the tournament's top two teams (he would also get rid of conference-based playoffs). How would this tournament work? The top 12 teams in the league would get automatic qualifiers to the playoffs and get two weeks of rest instead of the final two weeks of the regular season. The other teams in the league would play in the EAH tournament — a simple double-elimination tournament in which any team, even the cellar-dwelling Cavaliers, could get hot and pull off a No. 8 seed despite losing 75 percent of their games. Every team would have hope for the playoffs, and no

team would have an excuse to trade away key players to clear cap space because they would still have a shot at the playoffs. In addition to shortening the too-long regular season, that proposal adds more meaningful games, gives viewers more reasons to turn on a

late-season NBA contest and gives the NBA the benefit of having "Cinderella" teams that capture the public's imagination. Sure, Simmons' idea is probably impossible to implement given television contracts, and if anything like it were to be implemented, it certainly wouldn't be called the "Entertaining as Hell" tournament. But it does show that outside-the-box thinking is possible. There are creative ways to draw more fans, cut down on meaningless games and give people more reasons to watch those games. It's just too bad none of those ideas are coming from inside the NBA.

Contact Allan Joseph at ajoseph2@nd.edu
The views expressed in the Sports Authority Column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.

The problem, of course, is that professional basketball is rarely at its best. There are too many regular-season games. There are too many teams. There are too many overpaid, under-talented players. There are not enough meaningful games. There are not enough marquee matchups.

NFL

Gronkowski leads Pats over Colts

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — Rob Gronkowski scored three more touchdowns. Chances are the New England Patriots are thinking more about the three touchdowns they allowed in the fourth quarter. Against the winless Colts, no less. The Patriots needed Deion Branch to recover an onside kick in the final minute to hold off Indianapolis 31-24 on Sunday. Trailing 31-3, the Colts rallied with a touchdown run by Donald Brown and two scoring passes from Dan Orlovsky to Pierre Garcon, the last with 36 seconds to go.

Tom Brady took a knee on the final play to complete the victory.

"We played good for 45 minutes and then didn't do anything offensively," Brady said. "So we'll hear about that."

The Patriots (9-3) have won four straight and are tied for the AFC's best record. Indianapolis (0-12) must beat Baltimore, Tennessee, Houston or Jacksonville to avoid becoming the second NFL team to go 0-16.

"People can say what they want to say about not playing hard, but I think that (comeback) pretty much shut that up right there," Colts tight end Jacob Tamme said.

With two touchdowns passing, both to Gronkowski, Brady overtook Johnny Unitas and tied Warren Moon for sixth place in NFL history with 291 during the regular season. Brady was 29 of 38 for 293 yards.

Gronkowski has 13 touchdown catches, tying San Diego's Antonio Gates in 2004 and San Francisco's Vernon Davis in 2009 for most by a tight end in a regular season. He originally was given another touchdown catch, but that was changed to a lateral on which he ran 2 yards for the 31-3 lead.

Thinking he had set the record, Gronkowski held onto the ball as a souvenir instead of spiking it as he usually does. He even accepted congratulations from his teammates.

"I wasn't thinking about whether it was a pass or a lateral," Gronkowski said. "I'll take the rushing touchdown. It's the first of my whole career."

The Patriots entered the game as three-touchdown favorites with the teams, from different divisions, meeting for the ninth straight season. "Guys played well and did



AP

Patriots quarterback Tom Brady searches downfield for a receiver during New England's 31-24 win over the Colts on Sunday.

some things well," Colts coach Jim Caldwell said, "but, still, we're measured by wins."

Caldwell gave Orlovsky his first start of the season in place of the ineffective Curtis Painter. Orlovsky, a member of the winless Detroit Lions team in 2008, completed 30 of 37 for 353 yards, two touchdowns and one interception.

"We felt confident going into the game that if we stayed patient we could move the ball," Orlovsky said. "We fell short. I wish we had more time on the clock."

Watching from the sideline was Peyton Manning, whose preseason neck surgery forced Caldwell to go with backups.

"We almost had a big win today. It would have been huge for us," Manning said.

The Colts tied the score 3-3 on Adam Vinatieri's 31-yard field goal early in the second quarter. And the Patriots punted on their next series.

Then Brady got the offense rolling as New England scored touchdowns on its next four possessions, taking a 31-3 lead late in the third quarter. Wes Welker caught 11 passes for 114 yards, increasing his NFL-leading total to 93 receptions.

The Colts had a new defensive coordinator, linebackers coach Mike Murphy, after Larry Coyer was fired Tuesday.

The Patriots rarely lose in December, no matter their opponent. They're 38-5 in that month starting in 2001, tops in the NFL. And they're 19-1 at home in December, with wins in their last 18 games, since Gillette Stadium opened in December 2002.

Trailing 3-0, Orlovsky led a 19-play drive lasting 10:19. The Colts had first-and-goal at the 1, but a run for no gain, an incompletion, a false-start penalty and a sack forced them to settle for Vinatieri's

field goal. New England took command by scoring twice in the last three minutes of the first half on Brady's 11-yard pass to Gronkowski and BenJarvus Green-Ellis' 1-yard run for a 17-3 lead.

The Patriots got the ball to start the third quarter and Brady passed on each of the seven plays, completing all of them to drive 77 yards, ending with a 21-yard touchdown to Gronkowski. After a fumble recovery, Gronkowski scored again when he went in motion, took a toss from Brady and ran untouched into the right side of the end zone.

"He is a tough kid and he knows how to run the routes," Colts defensive back Jerraud Powers said. "It also helps when you have one of the greatest quarterbacks."

Gronkowski finished with five catches for 64 yards after entering the game tied for sixth in the NFL with 60 receptions.

The Colts scored in the fourth quarter on Donald Brown's 5-yard run and Orlovsky's passes of 33 and 12 yards to Garcon.

"If we don't play four quarters, we're not going to end up in the situation we want to be in," Welker said.

The Patriots want to win the Super Bowl. The Colts have a more modest goal — winning just one game.

"I thought Dan was patient," Manning said. "I really thought he did a good job. He gave us a chance there at the end."

And Orlovsky gave Patriots coach Bill Belichick something to harp on when he meets with his players.

"We've obviously got to do a better job of finishing the game," Belichick said. "That was disappointing, but we'll work on that."

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.

FOUND

Change purse with cash and no ID found on Twyckenham Friday. If you lost the purse, please contact Katie Kohler at: kathleen.e.kohler@gmail.com

or
610-952-5148

PERSONAL

UNPLANNED PREGNANCY? Don't go it alone. Notre Dame has many resources in place to assist you. If you or someone you love needs confidential support or assistance, please call Sr. Sue Dunn at 1-7819 or Ann Firth at 1-2685. For more information, visit ND's website at: <http://pregnancysupport@nd.edu>

#QUINNING

Nicole McMillan is the best roommate ever! Love, Nicole

It was a wonderful surprise to come home to the best and absurdly large amount of Christmas decorations ever, courtesy of Nicole Gantz. Thanks roomie! Love, Nicole

Congratulations Meghan on your big meet this weekend! You did phenomenally!

Love, Meghan

Today I went to put on my favorite pair of boots and I found a tiny plastic dinosaur in the toe. I'm not sure how it got there, but it made my day. MLIA.

I've decided what I'm doing for all of my friends for Christmas: writing each of them Hogwarts acceptance letters. MLIA.

Today I read this: "Dear J.K. Rowling, Writing a book for muggles describing the magical world in explicit detail is a violation of Section 13 Part C of the International Warlock Convention. We expect you to attend a hearing on February 28. Sincerely, Ministry of Magic." Made my day. MLIA.

Today we were driving on the freeway and my brother was hanging his hand out of the window. Suddenly, some random motorcyclist drove up really close and gave him a high-five. Easily made my day. MLIA

Today I asked my friend 'What's better, a ninja or a pirate?' and she said 'Their child'. My mind was blown. MLIA.

SMC BASKETBALL

Saint Mary's takes down Alma to earn first conference win

By PETER STEINER
Sports Writer

With a convincing 72-50 victory over Alma, the Belles snapped a three-game losing streak and returned to a .500 record in conference play.

The Belles combined a strong offense with an improved defensive effort to garner their first MIAA win this season, Saint Mary's coach Jenn Henley said.

"I was very pleased with today's game. I thought our defense was much improved," she said. "I think offensively we worked the ball a little bit better than what we had in the past and we took better shots within our sets."

The Belles (3-5, 1-1 MIAA) took control of the game early with a 25-4 run three minutes into the first half, but the Scots (1-5, 1-1) countered with a 9-1 run of their own, cutting the Belles' lead to eight going into halftime. According to Henley, the Belles learned from this lapse in defense to pick up the intensity in the second half.

"[The Scots' 9-1 run] really

gave them a lot of momentum heading into halftime," Henley said. "We talked about that a lot at halftime. We are such an offensive-minded team that we need to realize that even when we score, we have to get stops. We can't start trading baskets, and I think we did a much better job of that in the second half."

Coming out of halftime, the Belles proved they could play both offense and defense. Only eight minutes into the second half, the Belles had gained a 25-point lead, limiting the Scots to eight points in that stretch. With points coming from five different Belles players after the 12-minute mark, the Belles' lead never dropped below 17 points.

Yet it was Saint Mary's defense that spurred its offense, leading to 37 points off turnovers and contributing 44 rebounds that helped propel the team to victory. Senior guards Patsy Mahoney and Maggie Ronan also added 19 points and 15 points, respectively, for the Belles.

Overall, Henley said she was



COURTNEY ECKERLE/The Observer

Saint Mary's senior guard Maggie Ronan, left, looks to pass the ball as senior forward Jessica Centa battles for position during the Belles' 66-63 win over Wheaton on Nov. 15.

extremely satisfied with her team's play Saturday.

"They all played well," Henley said Saturday. "They all worked so hard in practice,

and they had a really nice chemistry out on the floor tonight."

The Belles look to continue Saturday's success Wednesday

when they travel to play Hope in another MIAA matchup.

Contact Peter Steiner at psteiner@nd.edu

SMC SWIMMING AND DIVING

Dalrymple excels, but Belles fall to ninth in 10-team field

By VICKY JACOBSEN
Sports Writer

Senior captain Audrey Dalrymple led the way for the Belles again, as they closed out the first half of the season with a ninth-place individual finish at the Calvin Winter Invitational on Saturday.

Dalrymple claimed Saint Mary's highest finish of the meet with a seventh-place

finish in the 100-yard breaststroke, clocking in at 1:07.04. She also placed eighth in the 200-yard breaststroke with a time of 2:25.50 and 15th in the 200-yard individual medley (IM) with a time of 2:18.16.

"[Dalrymple] had a great meet; she just missed the NCAA qualifying time in the [200-yard] breaststroke, and she had a solid swim in her [200-yard] IM as well," Belles

coach Mark Benishek said.

Dalrymple was not the only one who earned points for Saint Mary's (1-3, 0-2 MIAA) over the weekend. Senior captains Katie Donovan and Megan Price and sophomore Sarah Thompson teamed up with Dalrymple for the 800-yard freestyle relay, as the squad finished 16th overall with at time of 2:18.16. Sophomore Genevieve Spittler finished 16th in the 200-yard fly

at 2:33.16, and junior Kristyn Gerbeth took 16th in the 100-yard fly at 1:05.03.

Saint Mary's finished ninth in the 10-team field after racking up 47 points (the top 16 finishers in each event score points for their school). Division III member Grand Valley State led the competition with 980 points, while Indianapolis and Northern Michigan, both Division II programs, took sec-

ond and third with 661 and 466 points, respectively. The Belles did outscore Alma, an MIAA opponent, who went home with just 25 points.

"I think we had a good showing. It was a little bit better than what I was expecting, so that's always good to see," Benishek said. "I think we're definitely going to make some changes with our spring training, try to build a little bit more strength and help with some of the cardio level so we can stretch for a little bit longer and start shooting for the end of the season here."

The Winter Invitational marked the Belles' last meet before heading home for winter break.


"I know we're going to be having the Christmas break coming up, which is always a little bit of a challenge when releasing the team and letting them go home for a while," Benishek said. "It's on them to keep their training while they're at home before they report back and we begin our training at the beginning of January."

Benishek said he's been pleasantly surprised by his squad's performance so far this season.

"We're definitely ahead of where we were last year training-wise and conditioning-wise in all facets and in all individuals, so that's good to see on their part and a great thing to have," Benishek said. "The effort's where it needs to be, and we're starting to see a stronger showing and a competitive season this year."

The Belles will return to campus in time for their training trip to Arizona from Dec. 28 to Jan. 5, before resuming MIAA competition when they visit Olivet at 6 p.m. on Jan. 13.

Contact Vicky Jacobsen at vjacobse@nd.edu



Home for the Holidays: It isn't always easy...


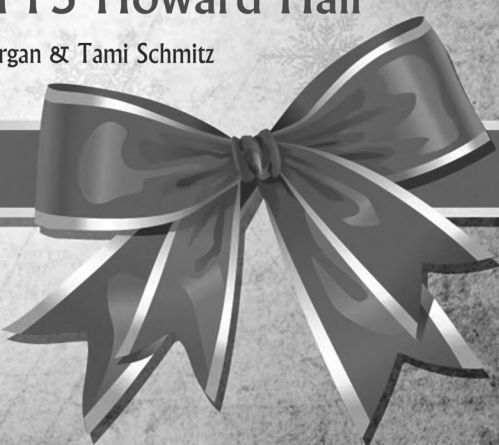
Is this your first holiday at home after the death of a loved one?
Wondering what will happen to the traditions your family usually did this time of year?
Are you pondering what "home" means to you now?

Please join us for some discussion, support and ideas to help you during this time.

Monday, December 5
8:30-9:30pm in 115 Howard Hall

Facilitators: Margaret Morgan & Tami Schmitz

Sponsored by
Campus Ministry



MEN’S SWIMMING AND DIVING

Improved Irish place third behind Michigan, Iowa

By CONOR KELLY
Sports Writer

For most seasons, Irish coach Tim Welsh wants to see evidence of his teams’ times improving by the time the calendar turns to December. After this weekend’s Hawkeye Invitational at the University of Iowa, Welsh has already seen that and then some. In a seven-team field, the Irish placed third behind just No. 1 Michigan and host-team Iowa. “This is faster than I’ve ever had a team at Christmas-time,” Welsh said. “We are looking for improvement. That’s what the fall season is all about.”

Coaching a young team that boasts 16 freshmen, Welsh said he has been pleased to see his charges quickly acclimating to the collegiate level of competition. “If you look at our fastest times going in and coming back from this meet, you see a huge improvement,” Welsh said. “We had a bunch of athletes who put up lifetime bests the last couple of days.” As they have been all season, the Irish were led by sophomore swimmer Frank Dyer. After an average Friday meet during which he posted NCAA B-Cut times in the 50-meter freestyle

and the 500-meter freestyle, placing eighth and third respectively, Dyer exploded on Saturday. The sophomore shattered the meet, school and pool records in the 200-meter freestyle. His time of 1:35.58 shaved just under two-tenths of a second off the previous Irish record set by John Lytle in 2009. “Dyer is obviously our performance leader,” Welsh said. “What he’s been able to do at this level is quite incredible. Just like the rest of our team, he’s putting up better numbers at Christmas-time than he ever has before.” Other top performances for the Irish were turned in by ju-

nior Christopher Johnson (second place in the 100-meter breaststroke) and the third-place 200-meter freestyle relay team of Dyer, Johnson and juniors Kevin Overholt and John McGinley. At one of the fastest meets of the year, the Irish turned in an impressive showing that put them just behind two of the top teams in the country. The invitational marked the third time that Notre Dame raced against Michigan during the fall season. Despite failing to knock off the Wolverines, Welsh said he is confident the experience against the nation’s best will benefit his

young squad. “Michigan is ranked first in the country for a reason,” Welsh said. “We’ve already raced them three times, and looking at their times, there’s no question that they’re faster. But that’s the level at which we want to compete. That’s what we want to do.” The Hawkeye Invitational also marked the last collegiate action the Irish will experience in 2011, as the team will rest and regroup before heading to Costa Rica for the Copa Coqui in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on Jan. 6.

Contact Conor Kelly at
ckelly17@nd.edu

ND WOMEN’S SWIMMING AND DIVING

Reaney breaks school record as Notre Dame finishes fourth

By CORY BERNARD
Sports Writer

After completing their last competition of 2011, the Irish head into winter break with a solid 3-3 start and a potential superstar in the making. Despite finishing fourth out of five teams at the Ohio State Invitational in Columbus, Ohio, over the weekend, the Irish saw stand-out freshman swimmer Emma Reaney break a school record. Reaney took first in the 200-meter individual medley final Friday by clocking in at 1:57.67, shattering 2007 graduate Katie Carroll’s program record. Reaney nearly broke another Irish record Saturday with her

victory in the 400-meter individual medley final. Her time of 4:12.19 was just .12 seconds off the program best, held by Carroll. “I’m just very happy for Emma,” Irish coach Brian Barnes said. “We want everyone on our team to get what they deserve, and she got what she deserved. She has been working hard and she has been incredibly consistent. Emma is very diligent with her preparation, and it’s good that those characteristics are in her. We learned a lot about Emma this weekend. She’s a first semester freshman at Notre Dame and, like our entire team, we all need to get better.” Sophomore swimmer Kelly

Ryan and junior diver Jenny Chiang also stood out for the Irish. Ryan turned in a score of 53.60 in the 100-meter back prelims to break the meet record before finishing second in the 100-meter back finals. Chiang missed out on first place in the three-meter dive by less than eight points, finishing second with a score of 310.35. With a roster far smaller than the other four competitors — Ohio State, Purdue, Michigan State and Penn State — Notre Dame could not enter enough athletes in every event to score enough points to win the invitational. Knowing beforehand that the meet was to be in championship

format, Barnes said the Irish did not focus as much on the results as they did on self-improvement. “We didn’t approach it as from an individual point of view,” he said. “Our team was pretty centered on what’s going on on our team. We didn’t approach the meet from a wins and loses point of view, but rather a, ‘How well are we doing, how are we improving and competing’ view?” The final results were a little misleading because there was no cap on the number of entries and we were the smallest team there.” Though still in season, Notre Dame now takes a month off from competition before traveling to Hawaii for a dual meet

with the Warriors on Jan. 4. Barnes said he made sure his team knew its opportunities to improve this year would be limited in number. “We are still in season and we have a good team,” Barnes said. “We are off to a great start and we’re going to make whatever we make. We’re setting the table for a good season, and I made sure everyone realizes the limited number of opportunities we have to get better. We have to make the most of every opportunity moving forward to build on our early success. Every dive, every stroke — make it count.”

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Brey

continued from page 16

of injuries and inexperience, he is looking for small victories from his team. “For us, I was very interested to see what we’d be like for 40 minutes, and we were competing and trying and doing our thing,” he said. “I told them, ‘We are in a mode of very little steps with this team. I just want to come back and have a really good practice on Tuesday, a really good practice on Wednesday. We need to have two good days and let’s see how we play on Thursday. That’s all we can bite off right now.’” The Irish shot 52 percent from the floor in the second half, but Brey said in the end, the difference was hustle. “But I think the big thing was that we didn’t get loose balls,

and that’s where we’ve got to get better,” he said. “If you get enough loose balls, you’re going to have a chance to win it. But when you’re hoping it’s coming to you, then it’s just not tough enough. Maryland was tougher than us with loose balls, and they really deserved to win the game.” The Irish return to the Purcell Pavilion for a two-game home stand. They will take the court Friday against Maine before facing Dartmouth on Sunday, both at 7:30 p.m. “We have a lot of things to work on as we get back home for two games,” Brey said. “For us, for this group, it’s good for us to come back and play at home twice. That home court has always been a good kind of medicine for us when we go back there.”

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Huskies

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puck, turning pucks over,” Jackson said. “They caused us to give up pucks in our own end, especially. But through the neutral zone, that was the first turnover that led to the first goal, not being strong with the puck ... We were soft tonight. We played soft.”

When freshman defenseman Dan Cornell scored the first goal of his career from near the blueline to put Northeastern up 3-0 on just three shots, Johnson was removed from the game for sophomore Steven Summerhays.

“The way the team was playing in front of [Johnson], it’s better to pull him than than have him give up four more [or]

three more because of mistakes in front of him,” Jackson said. “I have a lot of confidence in him and his character. And I know he’ll be back.”

Summerhays did not fare much better though, allowing four goals on 12 shots before making way for fellow sophomore Joe Rogers to see his first action of the season in the game’s final 15:24.

The Irish did not score their first goal of the game until they were down 6-0 with 12 seconds left in the second period, when sophomore center T.J. Tynan’s powerplay slapshot beat Huskies junior goaltender Chris Rawlings. Junior left wing Nick Larson added a third period goal when he deflected a shot from sophomore defenseman Kevin Lind, but both goals ultimately proved to matter little.

“That was a disgrace to the

jersey and I can’t remember the last time we gave up nine goals like that,” senior co-captain and defenseman Sean Lorenz said. “We’ve got to be better. Plain and simple.”

The Irish came out with a much stronger physical effort Saturday night and broke through early in the second period with the game’s first goal by junior center Riley Sheahan. The Huskies managed to tie the game when Pimm scored his third goal of the series at the 13:02 mark of the second. Huskies junior left wing Steve Quailer tallied his fifth goal of the season 5:19 into the third period on the powerplay, and that would be all Northeastern would need to hold on to a 2-1 victory.

Despite the result, Jackson was pleased with the effort from the Irish on Saturday compared

to the previous night’s defeat.

“It’s always tougher on the second night of a series, but we had to play with more grit, there’s no question about that, and I thought we did a better job for the most part,” Jackson said. “And the difference in the game was four-on-four and special teams, bottom line.”

Johnson was inserted back into the lineup for Saturday’s contest and performed well, tallying 13 saves and yielding just two goals against Northeastern.

“I knew he’d come back,” Jackson said of Johnson. “That’s the kind of kid he is. He is our guy. He’s the guy that I have all the confidence in. He had a couple tough games, but he responded and I expected him to.”

Despite strong goaltending and defensive play, the Irish had difficulty getting quality scoring opportunities. When the

Irish did get chances, they had trouble getting the puck past Rawlings, who finished Saturday with 22 saves.

Despite scuffling to a three-game losing streak, the Sheahan said there is plenty of confidence in the locker room.

“We can’t panic too much. We’re on a little bit of a losing streak, but we’ve got to come back and practice hard and stay positive and enthusiastic,” Sheahan said. “We’re a close-knit team, and I don’t think we should let this affect us, and I don’t think we’re going to. We just have to stay positive and stay together.”

The Irish take the ice next Friday when they travel to Ferris State for a two-game series against the Bulldogs.

Contact Sam Gans at sgans@nd.edu

Bowl

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“They’re a very good defense. We’ve just got to come prepared,” Floyd said. “Florida State ... is probably the best defense we’ll play this year. They’re very athletic and fast and big, too.”

Despite watching sophomore quarterback Andrew Hendrix lead the Irish offense in the second half of its loss to Stanford on Nov. 26, Kelly named sophomore quarterback Tommy Rees the starting quarterback against the Seminoles.

“Tommy Rees is our starter,” Kelly said. “He’ll start the bowl game, and Andrew will get an op-

portunity to play as well, but Tommy’s our starter.”

Notre Dame’s season-opening starting quarterback, senior Dayne Crist, may or may not be with the team in Orlando. Crist sought and received a release to explore transfer to other schools under the NCAA’s one-time exception for graduate students. Players who have graduated with eligibility remaining may transfer to other schools without losing eligibility.

“I was not surprised,” Kelly said. “Dayne’s been professional all year. He’s worked hard, but he knew he wanted to continue to play, and he was going to get that opportunity probably somewhere else.”

“We want to do everything to help Dayne make sure he gets that

opportunity.”

Senior captain Harrison Smith said he wishes Crist well wherever he goes.

“You’re never going to meet a better guy than Dayne,” Smith said. “I hope he’s successful wherever he ends up going.”

While a four-loss season does not meet Notre Dame expectations, Kelly said the team was excited for its bowl game.

“[It’s] a nice way to finish the season, to be part of the Champs Sports Bowl.”

The Irish will face the Seminoles on Dec. 29 at 5:30 p.m. in Orlando’s Citrus Bowl Stadium. The game will be televised on ESPN.

Contact Allan Joseph at ajoseph2@nd.edu



TOM LA/The Observer

Irish junior running back Cierre Wood dodges a defender during Notre Dame’s 28-14 loss to Stanford on Nov. 26.

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Barber

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in terms of point scoring, that is for sure,” Piane said.

For Barber, though, her success came despite first-race jitters.

“I didn’t think I would be able to hurdle and long jump as well as I did,” Barber said. “It all came together at the right time. I was super nervous. For long jump I was okay, but for hurdles and the [400-meter] I was freaking out before the race.”

Irish sophomore sprinter Aijah Urssery also captured multiple wins on the women’s side by winning the 60-meter and 200-meter dashes.

On the men’s side, freshman Christopher Giesting took the top spot in Notre Dame’s one-two-three finish in the 400-meter dash, in front of sophomore Patrick Feeney and junior Brendan Dougherty. Led by first-place finisher junior Jeff Macmillan, the Irish also swept the podium and took seven of the top eight positions in the 5,000-meter run.

Overall, Notre Dame took first place in 20 of the day’s 33 events — 11 on the women’s side and

nine on the men’s side. By qualifying 25 female athletes and 35 male athletes for the Big East championships, the Irish enjoyed a promising start to their season, Piane said.

“Normally, we look to try to get 40 to 45 [qualifiers], and we ended up with 60,” Piane said. “So that’s a really good performance, a great start. It really is.

“Just to put in into perspective ... Both Marquette and DePaul combined had 17 [qualifiers]. We are in pretty good shape already. There are other people that have qualified in the past that didn’t make it [on Friday], so we are going to get more qualifiers, there is no doubt.”

The Irish achieved high finishes across the board on Friday, due in part to their dedication during practice, Barber said.

“I think we were successful because of all the hard work we put in before,” she said. “Practices are not easy at all, and everybody works hard at practice and does what they are supposed to do, and that’s why it worked out.”

The next event on Notre Dame’s schedule is the Grand Valley State University Holiday Open in Allendale, Mich., on Dec. 16 and 17, an event in

which only a small number of Irish athletes will participate. After opening their season with a strong showing, the Irish face a long layoff before returning to action.

“A vast majority of the team

will not compete now until January,” Piane said. “This really gives everyone an idea of where they are at in terms of conditioning, whether it be what kind of shape they are in for running a distance race, or are they

ready to do [throws], or jump, or sprints or hurdle well. And I think we found a lot out this past Friday.”

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KIRBY McKENNA/The Observer

Irish graduate student forward Devereaux Peters shoots over a defender during Notre Dame’s 69-38 win over Pennsylvania on Friday.

Novosel

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the paint, but made just one of 12 shots from behind the arc.

“I thought Natalie was really ready to play when she came out and just took over offensively, and then she found [Devereaux] a couple times. I thought [Devereaux] had a really good game too — no fouls, rebounded and scored ... I thought those two pretty much carried us. I don’t think any of the other starters played well in the first half.”

McGraw attributed the team’s 38 percent shooting to two days off from practice leading up to the matchup, as well as a willingness to “settle” for the three-ball.

“I think settled is the perfect word,” she said. “I think we do that all the time. We always settle for the three. We are not shooting it well, we have not really shot it well more than one game this year, and yet we continue to settle for it.

“You have to be willing to drive the ball. If you stay in the game, why should you change what you’re doing if you’re not coming out of the game for it.”

Sophomore forward Natalie

Achonwa powered Notre Dame’s improved play Sunday, scoring a career-high 20 points and reasserting Notre Dame’s presence in the post. The Irish led the Bluejays (4-3) 30-3 at one point in the first half, holding Creighton scoreless for the first eight minutes and 24 seconds of the game.

“With players like Natalie and [junior guard] Skylar [Diggins] and even [Devereaux] being such a presence, they have to guard them,” Achonwa said. “So as soon as I touch the ball, it’s almost like a golden light telling me to go to the basket. It’s really easy.”

Although Notre Dame committed 15 turnovers, the squad forced 25, leading to 32 points off those turnovers while shooting 55 percent for the game.

“We talked about energy,” McGraw said Sunday. “We had a lot of good positive energy today. We were into the game more. I think we were really flat [Friday] and we needed to make up for it.”

Notre Dame looks to extend its four-game win streak when it takes the court Wednesday at the Purcell Pavilion at 7 p.m.

Contact Chris Masoud at cmasoud@nd.edu

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PAT COVENEY/The Observer

Irish senior receiver Mike Floyd makes a catch during Notre Dame's 28-14 loss to Stanford on Nov. 26. Notre Dame accepted an invitation Sunday to play Florida State in the Champs Sports Bowl.

By ALLAN JOSEPH
Sports Editor

After two early-season losses dashed Notre Dame's early-season BCS bowl hopes, the Irish found the next best thing at the end of their season, accepting an invitation Sunday to play Florida State in the Champs Sports Bowl in Orlando, Fla., on Dec. 29.

While it might not be a New Year's Day game, Irish coach Brian Kelly said he was excited to see a matchup of two of college football's most storied programs.

"I think having two teams like Notre Dame and Florida State, who have overcome some adversity earlier in the year but have come back to be playing really good football, makes for a marquee matchup," Kelly said.

While Notre Dame (8-4) did not attain its BCS aspirations, Kelly said he is nevertheless proud of his squad.

"Anytime you open up the season you always have high expectations, and our football team had high expectations coming in. When some of the things don't go your way, you look towards your senior leaders and how they're going to respond," Kelly said. "We're really proud of this football team and the way they responded after an 0-2 start."

The Seminoles (8-4, 5-3 ACC) won their first two games of the season before dropping three straight games against Oklahoma, Clemson and Wake Forest. Florida State rebounded to finish out the season 6-1, with the lone blemish coming in a 14-13 loss to Virginia

on Nov. 19. Second-year coach Jimbo Fisher leads the Seminoles, who boast an athletic defense that gave opposing offenses fits all year long.

"[They're] obviously very talented defensively," Kelly said. "It's going to be a great challenge for us, but one that I know we'll be prepared for. Last year going into the Sun Bowl against Miami we had a great defense to prepare for, and we think we've seen some really good teams this year."

"When you play a bowl game, these are the kind of challenges that you want."

Senior receiver Michael Floyd said preparation will be the key to Notre Dame's success against the Seminoles.

see BOWL/page 13

ND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Peters, Achonwa lead Irish to pair of wins

By CHRIS MASOUD
Assistant Managing Editor

Heading into its first conference matchup of the season against Marquette this Wednesday, Notre Dame needed a pair of weekend blowouts to iron out its early-season kinks. The No. 3 Irish blew past Pennsylvania 69-38 at the Purcell Pavilion on Friday before handling Creighton 76-48 on the road Sunday.

Despite the 31-point margin of victory, Irish coach Muffet McGraw said her squad looked

flat as it took the court against the Quakers.

"I was really disappointed in our lack of energy," McGraw said Friday. "I'm really disappointed with the offensive execution and the scoring. We're just not making shots."

Led by double-digit scoring from graduate student forward Devereaux Peters (16), senior guard Natalie Novosel (14) and sophomore guard Kalya McBride (10), Notre Dame (7-1) outscored Penn (4-2) 42-22 in

see NOVOSEL/page 14

ND TRACK AND FIELD

ND qualifies 60 for Big East championships

By JOSEPH MONARDO
Sports Writer

It began with the bang of a gun and, when it was over, Notre Dame had begun its 2011-2012 season with a bang of its own.

The Irish qualified 60 athletes for February's Big East championships at Friday's season opening meet, the Blue and Gold Invitational at the Loftus Sports Center. The invitational brought competitors from DePaul, Marquette, Bethel College, Butler and Detroit

to South Bend.

In a day filled with victories for the Irish, freshman Kaila Barber captured first place in the 60-meter hurdles, the 400-meter dash and the long jump and was part of Notre Dame's winning 4x400-meter relay team.

Although she was competing in her first ever college meet, Barber's impressive debut came as no surprise to Irish coach Joe Piane.

"She is going to be a leader

see BARBER/page 14

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Grant's 20 points not enough for win in D.C.

By ERIC PRISTER
Senior Sports Writer

Sophomore guards Eric Atkins and Jerian Grant, both from the Washington, D.C. area, combined for 36 points in their return to the nation's capital.

But their efforts were not enough for the Irish, who dropped their second straight road game Sunday to Maryland 78-71.

Grant led the Irish with 20 points, to go along with four rebounds and three assists, while Atkins chipped in 16 points in 40 minutes of play.

"I think for them, that's a little bit of what we've always envisioned with these two," Irish coach Mike Brey said to UND.com. "Coming back home, I was worried about them being distracted, but they played their hearts out. They really wanted to win and they wanted to beat Maryland. But those guys re-

ally competed, and that's something to build on for us too for down the road ... Hopefully we can keep that going."

The Irish started out quickly, taking an 8-1 lead to start the game, but Maryland stormed back, taking a 26-25 lead with six minutes left in the first half, a lead it never relinquished.

"Well, we're disappointed that we couldn't get the win," Brey said. "For this group, after [the loss at Gonzaga], getting pushed around out there, I felt we had something to build on. We battled and tried to give ourselves a chance to win. Some young guys made some big plays, and we made some boneheaded plays too, like young guys without experience will do."

The Irish took the court without junior forward Jack Cooley, who stayed in South Bend with a virus. Brey said that because

see BREY/page 12

HOCKEY

Irish drop first games at home

By SAM GANS
Sports Writer

For five games, smooth skating graced the Compton Family Ice Arena as the Irish opened up their brand-new facility with a 5-0 home record. That took a drastic turn Friday and Saturday, as the No. 2 Irish dropped their first pair of contests in the Compton Arena to Northeastern this weekend.

The Irish (10-5-3, 7-2-3-0 CCHA) got off to an embarrassing start against the Huskies (6-7-2, 3-7-2 Hockey East) on Friday, giving up three goals within 4:13 of the opening faceoff on the way to a 9-2 blow-out loss.

"I think this may be the worst loss that I've experienced since I've been here," Irish coach Jeff Jackson said after Friday's game. "I wasn't very fond of the effort, but I have to take responsibility. I didn't have these guys ready to play tonight."

The scoring opened just 30 seconds into the game after a Notre Dame turnover when Northeastern sophomore cen-



GRANT TOBIN/The Observer

Irish junior center Riley Sheahan watches the puck after scoring Notre Dame's lone goal in its loss to Northeastern on Saturday.

ter Braden Pimm received a pass near the top of the crease from sophomore right wing Cody Ferriero and beat Irish junior goaltender Mike John-

son. The turnover was the first sign of things to come.

"We were mishandling the

see HUSKIES/page 13