

## ‘A big step for Notre Dame’

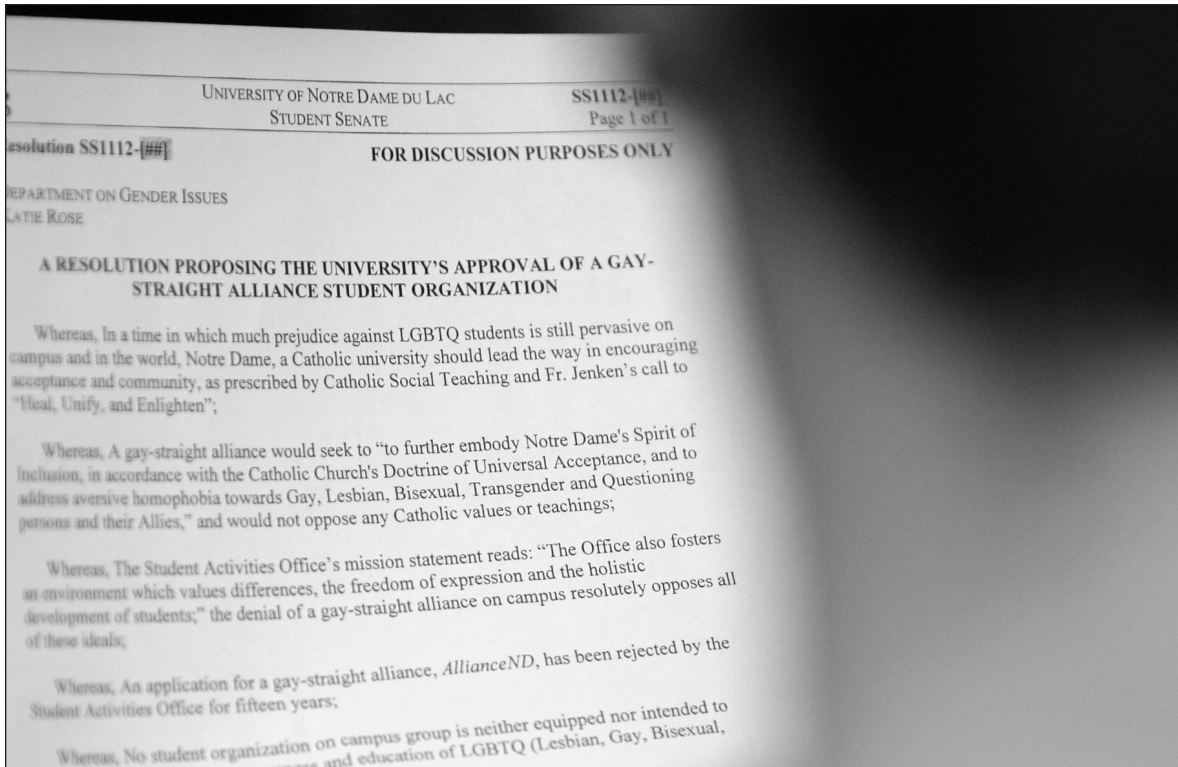
*Students pleased by announcement of plans to improve GLBTQ services*

By **SAM STRYKER**  
Assitant Managing Editor

On Wednesday morning, Notre Dame announced the results of a “comprehensive review” of support services for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning students (GLBTQ), stating in a press release University president Fr. John Jenkins had accepted the suggestion of the Office of Student Affairs to “expand and enhance” these support services, including forming a University-recognized student organization.

As the Progressive Student Alliance (PSA) co-president and 4 to 5 Movement leader who was actively involved in the decision-making process, junior Alex Coccia knew of the decision a few days in advance. After reading some of the documents relating to the study before the information was released to the student body, Coccia said he was excited with the decision.

“That was a pretty cool moment, because we got a sense that yeah, this is happening,” he said.



Observer File Photo

**Student body president Brett Rocheleau looks over last year's Student Senate resolution supporting a Gay-Straight Alliance. The administration announced yesterday efforts to better support GLBTQ students.**

But when the press release was made available to the entire student body Wednesday morning, Coccia, an Observer Viewpoint columnist, said he was “thankful” for the output of support from current and past students, especially over social media.

“I realize how many people have been involved in this for so long,” he said. “This is a big step for Notre

Dame.”

### A mixed reaction

Senior Charlie O'Leary is gay and said he is cautiously optimistic about the University's decision Wednesday. Part of his tempered enthusiasm was due to the fact the University announced the formation of an organization rather than approving a club.

“My initial reaction was excited,” he said. “The more I read, the [more] suspicious I became. I remain excited though.”

He also was not pleased with the timing of the University's statement, as he felt it “minimized” the announcement.

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*Faculty Senate chair expresses approval of University's move*

By **MEGAN DOYLE**  
Managing Editor

In March, the Faculty Senate passed a resolution pushing for improved inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning (GLBTQ) students through the establishment of a gay-straight alliance (GSA).

On Wednesday, the University announced a new plan to form an officially recognized student organization for GLBTQ students. The plan will also establish a new advisory board to replace the Core Council and hire a full-time staff member to act as a liaison between students and administration on matters of inclusion.

While the new organization will not be the exact GSA proposed in the March resolution, Faculty Senate chair Doug Archer said he thought the plan is a “major step forward.”

“It's part of a larger concern,

see FACULTY **PAGE 5**

## Core Council reflects on future

By **KRISTEN DURBIN**  
News Editor

In the wake of the University's announcement of its plans for expanding resources for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning (GLBTQ) students through the creation of a new student organization, professional staff position and advisory board, members of the existing Core Council for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Questioning Students will continue to play an integral role in the transition to the new structures of support.

Sophomore Core Council member Lauren Morisseau said the group, which has been involved in both programming and advising, will effectively translate into the proposed advisory board, which will be

expanded from its current six undergraduate members to include graduate students and faculty members.

“Core Council is already in kind of an attenuated version of itself because it's already gone back to its roots as an advisory council, so we'll continue to be involved in that capacity,” she said. “[The council] is going to remain in place as it is needed because some things still need to be worked out and ... it really is the group of people who have stood as the voice.”

Senior Core Council member Karl Abad said this group of students will bridge the current and future structures of support for GLBTQ students.

“Until [the plan] is fully implemented, we're going to be sort of an

see CORE **PAGE 5**

## SSLP promotes community development

By **ANN MARIE JAKUBOWSKI**  
News Writer

When it comes to making summer plans, many Notre Dame students look for opportunities beyond the pool deck or the basement couch. Each year, about 225 students participate in the spiritually-oriented Summer Service Learning Program (SSLP) sponsored by the Center for Social Concerns (CSC).

The program invites students to interview between November and February, and if accepted, participants choose a site to volunteer at



Photo courtesy of Andrea Smith Shappell

**Sophomore Kathryn Bush served in the Blue Ridge Roanoke Rescue Mission in Roanoke, Va., this summer.**

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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL **PAGE 20**



# THE OBSERVER

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*Questions regarding Observer policies should be directed to Editor-in-Chief Allan Joseph.*

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# QUESTION OF THE DAY:

## What would you like for Christmas?

*Have a question you want answered?*

*Email [obsphoto@gmail.com](mailto:obsphoto@gmail.com)*



### John McMackin

freshman

Keenan Hall

“God in the Dock.”



### Kaitlyn Kennedy

freshman

Ryan Hall

“A Snuggie.”



### Nicolette Bardele

freshman

Ryan Hall

“Fuzzy slippers.”

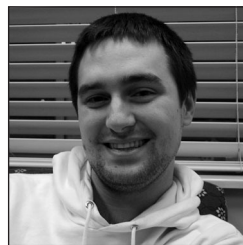


### Austin Collinsworth

junior

Off campus

“A national title.”

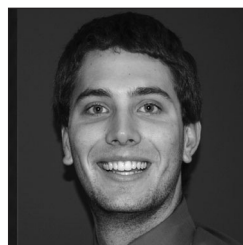


### PJ Gaughan

junior

Stanford Hall

“FIFA 13.”



### Rob Strumillo

junior

O'Neill Hall

“Bacon-flavored candy canes.”



JOHN NING | The Observer

*Lil' Wayne arrived at the Joyce Center during halftime to watch Notre Dame's women's basketball team play against Baylor. The hip-hop artist is one of many who follow Irish point guard Skylar Diggins on Twitter. Notre Dame lost 73-61 in a rematch of last year's national title game.*

# THE NEXT FIVE DAYS:

*Want your event included here?*

*Email [obsnews.nd@gmail.com](mailto:obsnews.nd@gmail.com)*

## Thursday

### Last Lecture Series

Coleman-Morse Center

7 p.m.-8 p.m.

Study break with snacks.

### Iron Sharpens Iron

Coleman-Morse Center

10 p.m.-11 p.m.

Student-led praise and worship.

## Friday

### Vigil Mass

Basilica of the Sacred Heart

5:15 p.m.-6:15 p.m.

Immaculate

Conception Mass.

### Hockey

Compton Family Ice Arena

7:05 p.m.-9:05 p.m.

ND vs. Michigan State  
Tickets \$7-\$25

## Saturday

### Glee Club Christmas Concert

DeBartolo Performing Arts Center

2 p.m.-3 p.m.

\$3 for students.

### Men's Basketball

Joyce Center

7 p.m.-9 p.m.

The Irish attempt to remain undefeated at home vs. Brown

## Sunday

### Basilica Mass

Basilica of the Sacred Heart

10 a.m.-11 a.m.

Music by the Notre Dame Liturgical Choir.

### “What and When was the Christmas Star?”

Jordan Hall of Science

3 p.m.-4 p.m.

Astrophysics lecture by Dr. Grant Matthews.

## Monday

### Mammograms on Campus

Hesburgh Library

8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Call 574-247-5400 to schedule appointment.

### Student Appreciation Days

Hammes Bookstore

8 a.m.-10 p.m.

50-cent coffee and a discount for students.



# Chipotle sales to benefit charity

By SARAH SWIDERSKI  
News Writer

Students will be able to support a great cause while enjoying a tasty burrito Thursday when Saint Mary's Dance Marathon hosts a giveback night at the Chipotle in Eddy Street Commons. From 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., 50 percent of the proceeds generated will benefit the Riley Hospital for Children when patrons bring in a voucher advertising the giveback. Dance Marathon vice president of marketing Kate Kellogg said students should take time out from studying for finals to visit the event.

"It's a good break from studying," Kellogg said. "It's a good way to give back to the community."

Kellogg said Dance Marathon chose to partner with Chipotle because of its close proximity to both the Notre Dame and Saint Mary's campuses.

"It's easy access for students and freshmen who don't have cars," she said. "They can just take the trolley."

Although the Riley Hospital for Children is located in Indianapolis, it helps treat children of local families, and some of them attended the Dance Marathon family dinner last

Friday.

"It's really neat to see that Riley doesn't just treat children from Indianapolis, but children from all over," Kellogg said, "[Riley] is doing great work all over."

Last year SMC Dance Marathon held a similar giveback night and earned \$2,000 for its cause. Kellogg said that Dance Marathon is aiming to match that amount this year.

If students can't make it to the giveback event but still want to help Dance Marathon, Kellogg said the group will host a Buffalo Wild Wings giveback event next semester. Students will also be able to register as a dancer for the Dance Marathon event in the spring during three days in January and three days in February, Kellogg said.

Kellogg said she and the other members of Dance Marathon are passionate about the event because they've met some of the children affected.

"We went to a luncheon at the hospital and [saw] the children treated at Riley and how great the families' experience was," she said. "[We heard] the children's stories of growth and feeling and the way the hospital touches them."

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# Seminar studies Quran

By DAN BROMBACH  
News Writer

In an era of increased misunderstanding of the world's Muslim community, Notre Dame recently launched a Quran Seminar project to encourage constructive new commentary on the Islamic faith's holiest text.

Project co-founder Mehdi Azaiez said the year-long Quran Seminar will draw numerous leading Muslim scholars and intellectuals from around the globe to offer their insight on 50 central Quranic passages.

Azaiez said a main goal of the project is to demonstrate how new commentaries on the Quran's biblical subtext help uncover the richness of its discourse.

"The work of the Quran Seminar is to show that there is no separation between the Quran and the Bible, that

reading the Quran with its biblical legacy helps us understand better the Quran and its message," Azaiez said.

Azaiez said two prominent Muslim intellectuals will give lectures this week as part of the seminar. Nayla Tabbara, director of cross-cultural studies for a Lebanese non-governmental organization dedicated to Muslim-Christian relations, will speak Thursday night about the Quran and the importance of interfaith dialogue at 7:30 p.m. in the Hesburgh Center for International Studies.

Iranian professor Maryam Mussharaf will lecture Friday about mystical commentary on the Quran at 5 p.m. in McKenna Hall.

Azaiez said he anticipates the seminar will positively change students' perceptions of the Quran and of the Islamic community.

"It is the possibility to learn from main leaders of Islamic thought today, to maybe be interested and discover more about the Islamic world and its culture," Azaiez said. "I think it will be an occasion to improve the [students'] knowledge and hopefully break false representations of this world."

Moving forward, Azaiez said he hopes the efforts of the Quran Seminar project will encourage more scholars and students to offer their own respectful interpretations of the text, showcasing the pluralism of contemporary Quranic thought.

"We hope this is the beginning of a project that will give ideas for Muslims and non-Muslims to continue in the same way our rich approach to the Quran," Azaiez said.

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# SUB stamps out stress

By NICOLE MICHELS  
News Writer

Students overwhelmed by finals pressure can relax during Stress Relievers next Sunday in the LaFortune Student Center ballroom, sponsored by the

Student Union Board (SUB).

SUB board manager Ashley Markowski said the group has been sponsoring this event, which features relaxing activities for students, for years.

"There will be free Buffalo Wild Wings, Panera, Chipotle, Papa John's, Kilwin's and more," Markowski said. "There will also be massage therapists offering massages in the ballroom."

SUB will only host one event during finals week or reading days because University policy prohibits student organizations from offering programming during that time, Markowski said.

"There is an exception made for Stress Relievers because it is an event grandfathered in from before the rule, and all of the planning and programming for Stress Relievers is completed before reading days begin," Markowski said. "Also, the purpose of the event is to eliminate some of the stress and anxiety that students feel towards upcoming exams."

Markowski said she expects the attendance at this event to match or outrun numbers from previous years.

"Every year this event has outstanding attendance ... we are expecting 750 to 1,000 students this year," Markowski said. "This event is a tradition designed specifically for students to find a place to relax before the hectic finals week begins. It is an opportunity for free food and relaxing massages."

SUB has 13 programs planned for this year, Markowski said.

"Each program chooses its events based on tradition, student feedback, campus surveys and information from the National Association of College Activities," Markowski said.

"Each dorm on campus has a SUB rep that is responsible for collecting feedback at their hall council and gathering responses to a SUB rep question of the week. We also welcome any feedback to the SUB email at sub@nd.edu."

Markowski encouraged students to look for the SUB's events planned for next

***"The purpose of the event is to eliminate some of the stress and anxiety that students feel towards upcoming exams."***

Ashley Markowski  
SUB president

semester.

"The Notre Dame Literary Festival will occur January 22 and 23 with a bestselling author whose novel has been turned into a major motion picture," Markowski said. "Ideas and Issues will have their second speaker of the year in January, after the well-attended appearance of criminal profiler Pat Brown in November ... the SUB is currently working on the spring Movies Line-up and the large-scale spring events such as the concert, Holy Half, Collegiate Jazz Festival and AnTostal."

Contact Nicole Michels at  
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# Belles snag second in CPA case competition

By JILLIAN BARWICK  
Saint Mary's Editor

Four students from Saint Mary's College brought home a second-place finish from the annual Indiana CPA Society (INCPAS) Case Study Competition, which took place in Indianapolis on Nov. 16.

Senior Chelsea Pacconi and juniors Christina Boesler, Christine Czajkowski and Morgan Mlinac made up the team of students, and Mary Ann Merryman, accounting and business professor from the College, held the position of faculty advisor for the competition.

The 2012 competition is the ninth year students from Saint Mary's have participated in the CPA competition, Merryman said. She has been the advisor for the previous years as well.

"I think that I have seen an increased confidence on the part of the student team members. The Saint Mary's team has been in the finals seven of the past eight years," Merryman said. "The students are definitely not cocky, but when you put the time and effort into the competition that they have, you know that you are prepared."

Pacconi, who took on the mentor role for the group, participated in the competition last year as a

junior and stayed on as a senior to help the students new to the competition.

"[Being a mentor] was definitely a transition from my role last year," Pacconi said. "Being the mentor for the team taught me how valuable last year was. I had great mentors who led me in the right direction of how to mentor the team."

Pacconi noticed how much experience in this competition makes a difference from one year to the next for the group.

"Christina, Christine and Morgan really challenged me to be the best I could be and to set the example of how each member should work toward the project," Pacconi said.

As far as selection of team members, Merryman said the process is a contribution of her input as well as the input of the students who participated the year before and would like to join the team again.

"We try to select students who will work well together and who are willing to make the commitment," she said. "I was extremely impressed with and proud of this year's team. They went from knowing virtually nothing about a very technical topic (business acquisitions) to giving a professional presentation on the topic in less than a month's time."

The competition itself presents participants with a case study that required the Indiana college teams to compile a package supporting or rejecting the acquisition of one company by another. The teams were given very little information about either company and were instructed to draft and document any assumptive details necessary.

"The competition was very difficult. In addition to regular work for classes, the case demanded a lot of work in a short amount of time," Pacconi said. "I can relate the case to the Saint Mary's business senior composition, although that is prepared over a semester and this only allows 10 days."

For the topic this year, Pacconi said she and her team felt it was particularly difficult because none of the students had firsthand experience relating to this topic.

"Also, when submitting the paper and preparing the presentation, our team did not know what other teams' approaches would be including their assumptions and even the formation of the teams," Pacconi said.

Overall, Pacconi and Merryman were happy with the results of the competition and the students that participated.

"The competition is an



Photo courtesy of Saint Mary's College website

**Professor Mary Ann Merryman, center, stands with her INCPAS team, which placed second in the all-Indiana CPA case competition.**

enormous amount of work but it is well worth it in terms of the value gained from the experience," Merryman said. "Every year the students amaze me all over again. The competition is truly one of the highlights of the academic year for me."

Pacconi said she felt proud of the accomplishments she and her team members made during the time they worked together and know that the challenges the group faced were a great learning experience.

"It was a little disappointing not to win first place again this year, but I don't think there was anything our team could have done differently to win and that's all I could ask for," Pacconi said. "I compare this year's competition to the movie 'Bring It On.' So many challenges were overcome to make it to the finals and then to get second place was truly rewarding."

Contact Jillian Barwick at [jbarwi01@saintmarys.edu](mailto:jbarwi01@saintmarys.edu)

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## Core

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

active placeholder, a bookmark for the next chapter of our lives," he said.

The creation of the advisory board in conjunction with the student organization will allow for increased delegation and specialization of responsibilities, Morisseau and Abad said, which will help direct the focus of each entity more clearly.

"[The advisory board] will be kind of a spinoff of Core Council, but what they're going to focus on is advising and transferring programming out," Morisseau said. "That's something that will be really healthy for the community this is serving but also for the Notre Dame community in general."

Additionally, Morisseau said Core Council members who are active in student organizations and clubs that have been involved in the conversations about GLBTQ support systems will continue to do so in the future.

"I think the members won't cease to have a voice. Some of us I assume will end up on that advisory council," she said. "I think the transition will be fluid and gradual, but it probably won't be officially completed until around the time the professional is hired."

Morisseau and Abad said while the current timeline for hiring a professional advisor for the unnamed student organization is not definite, both students and administrators hope to have that person in place by next fall.

"If someone perfect comes

around, [the administration] will hire them, but it just depends," Abad said. "Students will have a part in saying whether we agree with [appointing] this person as well, so there's a collaboration between students and administrators ... because we're keeping a close discussion about what we want and need from someone in this position."

That collaboration has been "unprecedented" throughout the five-month long process of formulating a strategic plan for GLBTQ resources at Notre Dame, especially after decades of advocacy on the part of students without achieving concrete results, Morisseau said.

"It's been an extremely collaborative process, and I think that's been extremely powerful in building trust and relationships with the administration and understanding where they're coming from knowing they do have our best interests in mind," she said.

Throughout the process of restructuring GLBTQ resources, Abad and Morisseau said students and administrators engaged in a necessary symbiotic relationship of education and strategic planning, the latter of which came primarily from working with vice president for Student Affairs Erin Hoffmann Harding.

"I think at first our job was very much to educate [administrators] because I feel like from their standpoint there's a burden of knowledge to understand," Abad said. "I feel like Erin's prior position in strategic planning and the dialogue she had with us really pushed our thinking."

"We all needed each other. [The administrators] needed our testimony, and we needed their position and advocacy," Morisseau said. "They can't know what's wrong unless students tell them, so there was a lot of eye-opening. I would say from there it was all about balancing each other's needs."

Although Harding, her chief of staff, Karen Kennedy, and other administrators could identify a range of student needs, Morisseau said students helped the administrators understand

their priorities.

"They could see a whole spread of student needs, but they didn't know which were more important until students told them, 'We prioritize this over this,'" she said. "They were able to stratify needs from there, and that's how things like the 'T' [transgender] got involved."

In some of the monthly meetings between Core Council and administrators, Morisseau said Harding identified the absence of transgender students from the conversation as an issue.

"She picked up on it and we verified it," Morisseau said.

Abad said he felt transparency increased between students and administrators throughout the process.

"All the senior staff we worked with made clear what their purpose was in this," he said. "They really wanted to address the trust issue between administrators and students."

After months of open discussion, Morisseau said her initial ambivalence about the administration has faded away.

"Since this whole process began this fall, that idea of them as an adversary has really just dissolved because you kind of understand we're all part of this community and everybody fills different roles," she said. "We need each other in this."

Although students who submitted a proposal for a gay-straight alliance (GSA) focused primarily on obtaining official club status for that group, Morisseau said that goal changed as a result of collaborating with administrators to determine the most effective solution.

"As a student, I don't think I would have come up with this structure because I'm not a student affairs professional," she said. "I think that was really where the collaboration became really valuable because there were definitely some conversations where it sounded like we made compromises, but when I look at it today, it seems like a huge leap forward."

Engaging in an in-depth analysis of the current structures and the

needs of students gave the proposed structure much more breadth and permanence due to the creation of a student organization, a new advisory board and the new staff position, Morisseau said.

"The breadth we're getting from this broad review far exceeds what we were expecting ... and in that sense, I'm very grateful," she said. "I think the University really decided to commit and did it in a classic Notre Dame style with a lot of integrity. I'm really grateful to [University President] Fr. John Jenkins, Erin, Karen and everyone who ... has treated this with respect and been extremely thoughtful and thorough."

Abad said administrators also took care to ensure the focus of the decision process was confined to conversations between the Notre Dame community and themselves, rather than allowing for influence from outside opinions. "[The administration] really gave their input on why they made these decisions. It was never arbitrary," he said. "We're trying to satiate and weaken the outside forces from affecting us here because if we don't do this right the first time around it's going to be negative for everybody."

Once the new structures are more fully implemented, Morisseau said she and her peers hope to create a peer educator program similar to the Gender Relations Center's FireStarters.

But for now, Abad said the primary focus will be maintaining the general discourse and message of current programs during the transition to more open, effective structures of support for the GLBTQ community and Notre Dame as a whole.

"We want to make it clear that we are excited for the changes, but keeping dialogue going is important because there are still things to be settled," he said. "Past leaders of this movement have kept their vision clear and it's been passed down, and now it's coming to fruition."

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## Faculty

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

just speaking for myself, part of a larger concern for full equity and full access and full equality for all persons on campus," he said. "This was one very concrete step that could be taken."

The Faculty Senate most recently met Tuesday night, before the announcement about the new plan had been made.

"The announcement hadn't come out yet so I can't give you a reaction from the Senate," he said. "I expect that they will be very pleased and appreciative of [University President Fr. John Jenkins's] decision, of the effort that went into it."

The decision is sure to incite criticism from some, Archer said, but he foresaw a fairly positive reception among his colleagues.

"There will always be difference of opinion. ... Fr. Jenkins said this, as quoted in The Observer, that you know some people will think he's gone too far, some will think he won't have gone far enough," Archer said. "I would just say I think it's a major positive step, and some faculty will think we haven't gone far enough yet. I hope it keeps rolling over time."

The change in perspective on GLBTQ issues has been significant even in the last few decades since he joined the faculty in 1978, Archer said.

"It's hard to remember now that this issue, just including [GLBTQ] people, is new in my lifetime," he said. "Growing up in the [1950s,] the atmosphere [on gay and lesbian issues] was certainly repressive and it has continued in that way in many places. But just in society in general, this change of attitude. We're not there yet where it's not an issue, but I see this huge improvement."

A GLBTQ organization for students would be an important avenue for their voice to be heard.

"That's what's happening now, there will be a voice in the system," Archer said. "And they have to determine, in a way, what their next steps will be. ... How do they feel about where they are in this campus and where they would like to see things go?"

Archer said the Faculty Senate has invited Jenkins to speak at one of its next meetings about the GLBTQ issues. Their next meeting is set for February.

While the new organization is primarily for undergraduate and graduate students, Archer said he hopes its inception will help build a more welcoming environment for faculty members who identify as GLBTQ.

"I hope this is a positive thing for them," Archer said. "I feel that if the student population is recognized and affirmed that it's also true, it's got to improve the atmosphere for faculty and staff."

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## SSLP

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

during the summer. A partnership between the CSC and Notre Dame alumni clubs across the country connects students with opportunities in a variety of fields and organizes the logistics of room and board for their summer experiences.

Program director Andrea Smith Shappell said the program began in 1980 to give students opportunities to act upon their social concerns and experience service learning.

"Our sites range from non-profit health clinics to Catholic Worker houses to schools and day camps," Shappell said. "Students earn three theology credits in a course that centers on the immersion experience while also incorporating theological reflection and cultural competence."

The academic requirements for the program include weekly readings and writings throughout the summer, as well as a six-to-eight-page paper at the end to synthesize the different aspects and lessons of the experience. Shappell said students return to campus in the fall and participate in three discussion meetings to close out the program.

"Our goal is to engage students in a service learning project that integrates a community engagement piece with theological readings, particularly social issues as represented in Catholic thought," Shappell said. "We also want students to have the opportunity to engage in meaningful discussion with alumni club members and site officials."

Shappell said the program looks for applicants with previous service experience, either in high school or college.

"We require students to have some understanding of what it means to be in service as a mutual relationship," Shappell said. "It's not that we want students with all the answers to go help the needy, but we want people who

will be open to working together to solve the social problems we face.

"We're looking for students with good interpersonal skills and maturity. It's not a highly competitive program, so if students meet the basic qualifications, they move on to the placement process."

Junior Ben Cooper and senior Linda Scheiber spent a summer on Lopez Island, Wash., just northwest of Seattle, at the Lopez Island Family Resource Center's (LIFRC) Kids' Summer Workshop program. Cooper said the Resource Center's goal was to help underprivileged children in the Lopez community by providing them with a place to spend the day during the summer.

"The program offered day camps and classes on a range of subjects all taught by talented locals, and I helped run some of these classes, including kayaking, swimming, and painting," Cooper said. "Additionally, I helped run the fundraising event for the LIFRC and helped stock their locally grown food bank called 'Lopez Fresh.'"

Scheiber said the experience was "eye-opening," and it changed the way she viewed life back at Notre Dame.

"I would count my SSLP as one of the most significant experiences I have had at Notre Dame," Scheiber said. "I grew personally by doing service for eight weeks on the other side of the country, and I was challenged by the contrast between my expectations and what I actually found at my site, particularly the fact that the poverty and marginalization of the people I was working with often wasn't apparent."

Cooper said his summer on Lopez Island left him with a sense of gratitude, and he would recommend the experience to any student.

"I came away from the summer with an understanding of how fortunate I am to be able to go to a school like Notre Dame and to be afforded all the opportunities I've

had throughout my life," Cooper said. "Lopez has a unique and laid-back culture of simplicity and humility that greatly impacted my life."

Shappell said SSLP exemplifies the Holy Cross approach to educating both the heart and the mind, connecting with the University's mission.

"The opportunity to develop relationships with people who are often on the margins of society can affect students on the emotional, 'heart' level, and then

raise questions for them to take back to campus and address in the academic courses they take," Shappell said. "Service learning is an opportunity for students to learn things they couldn't learn in the classroom, and hopefully the questions raised through the experience can be explored in the required readings of the course and through the people that students work with."

Scheiber said her experience on Lopez Island helped open her eyes to the reality of life on

society's margins, changing the way she views social justice.

"The readings taught me a lot about poverty and helped me think about the ways I can integrate Catholic social justice into my life," Scheiber said. "One of the biggest impacts the experience had on me was helping me discern how I am called to live in solidarity with the poor."

Contact Ann Marie Jakubowski at [ajakub01@nd.edu](mailto:ajakub01@nd.edu)

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## Students

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"No one has a chance to respond in The Observer until after break," he said. "Between now and the next time we are going to be talking about it, there will have been the BCS [National Championship] ... and

students are really busy with finals."

Senior Julia Kohn, who currently identifies as bisexual, said she was not expecting the formation of a student organization but is pleased with the University's decision.

"I was expecting to hear a 'no' eventually, maybe sort of quietly," she said. "I was surprised that it was

a different setup or structure than was under discussion. Overall ... it seems the distinction between a club and an organization is pretty positive in terms of continuity."

One important function of the new GLBTQ student organization is it will allow for the participation of graduate students, something the standing Core Council did not allow for.

Graduate Student Union president Doug Rice said in the past, many graduate students who identified as GLBTQ felt uncomfortable at Notre Dame or even left the University.

"With this now being formed, I think this is going to be a good thing for our community," he said. "For those who want to participate in that, it will just be a more welcoming place for everybody. I know that is something that has been important in the past."

### A longtime coming

Coccia said he and others have been meeting with University administration regularly since fall break and was "impressed" with the level of student input they were seeking. He said conversations with University administration were "very positive, very candid."

"Ultimately, we understood each other," he said. "We were really able to communicate in a way that moved it forward."

Wednesday's decision was several months in the making, with

the unofficial gay-straight alliance (GSA) AllianceND applying for official club status in the spring. The group originally expected a decision May 1, but the University postponed the verdict until early fall 2012.

Coccia said in postponing the decision, it became "very clear" that the University was giving the decision a lot of thought.

"There was this sense of, 'If we're going to do it, we're going to do it right,'" he said.

### A place for all students

Coccia said he most appreciates the fact that the new student organization will be open to anyone who wishes to participate, something he says is especially important considering allies' desire to be involved.

"Any student can join," he said. "You also don't have to go around and say what your orientation is if you're not comfortable. It's a good step for access for not only allies, but also questioning students."

Coccia said he is enthused about the organization for several reasons, not just for the current students it will serve, but in reassuring students who are potential applicants to the University.

"I'm excited for the questioning student who sees this announcement, sees the excitement from students about it and really views this as, 'This is a commitment from my University, to me,' and

hopefully that's the sentiment, because it is," he said. "I'm excited for the prospective student ... that that's going to help them in their decision to come. I think that's a very important component."

### A key cog in the machine

As part of Wednesday's decision, the University will hire a full-time student development staff member who, among other duties, will serve as an advisor of the new GLBTQ student organization. Coccia said he hopes students will continue to have their voices heard in the hiring process for this position.

"That Student Affairs professional is so important," he said. "Really we want to make sure it someone who is really accessible to students, who can relate to students."

Kohn said she believes whoever is eventually hired for the role needs to recognize student interests to ensure the success of the organization.

"I think it is kind of interesting and questionable in a sense that all official meetings and decisions have to be made in concert with the advisor," she said. "Depending on who that advisor is and depending on what their role and involvement with the University is, I think that could maybe not be as positive as a club that is student-organized and student-controlled could be."

Contact Sam Stryker at [sstrykel@nd.edu](mailto:sstrykel@nd.edu)

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## INSIDE COLUMN

## Top five



**Isaac Lorton**  
Sports Writer

Whether you're on Team Ticket or Team No-Ticket, here is the top five greatest animated Christmas films that everyone can watch and be happy about.

5. "The Year Without Santa Claus"

The stop-motion movie is the story of how two brave elves, Jingle and Jangle, must attempt to find people who believe in Santa because Santa feels unappreciated and wants to take a holiday. Jingle and Jangle hit a few bumps along the way and are forced to deal with Heat Miser and Snow Miser, who are brothers at war with each other, and their stern mother, Mother Nature (naturally), in order to make Christmas happen.

4. "How the Grinch Stole Christmas"

When was the last time you said roast beef normally? I always say "roast beast" and it is because of this Dr. Seuss Christmas classic. The grumpy Grinch attempts to ruin the Christmas of Whoville, but eventually has a change of heart. The Grinch details how we should all act generously during the holiday season. The movie is great because Dr. Seuss drops rhymes about Christmas, what could be cooler?

3. "A Charlie Brown Christmas"

Like many of us, Charlie Brown has a problem with the commercialization of Christmas (even in the year 1965) and wants to have a traditional Christmas. We all have holiday traditions with our family and, however small, these traditions are what matter most to our Christmas experience.

2. "The Polar Express"

For all of you non-believers out there, this is the perfect movie for you. Tom Hanks, playing everyone, and a great musical score by Alan Silvestri, entrance the audience into believing in Christmas again. Christmas seemed to lose a bit of its magic when you found out Santa Claus was also the Easter Bunny and was married to the Tooth Fairy. However, the Polar Express takes people back to that great feeling of believing again.

1. "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town"

Say Burgermeister Meisterburger five times fast. Everyone wants to know how Santa got his gig as the greatest person ever, and this movie explains how. The orphan, Kris, is raised by the Kringle family of toymakers and eventually wants to deliver all of these toys to overworked and unhappy children of Sombertown. However, Sombertown is ruled by the alliterative antagonist Burgermeister Meisterburger, who hates fun. So, the movie is about the underdog story of the orphan, Kris, who overcomes overwhelming odds and becomes the most popular, classiest and sharpest dressed man ever. Who doesn't love an underdog story? You just have to put one foot in front of the other . . .

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

## One step at a time

## THE OBSERVER EDITORIAL

One step. One foot in front of the other.

University President Fr. John Jenkins announced Wednesday Notre Dame will create a new student organization to support gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning (GLBTQ) students at Notre Dame. With this step, we are walking in the direction of greater inclusion and a more welcoming climate for GLBTQ students at Notre Dame.

For more than 25 years, Notre Dame students have asked the University to officially recognize a student organization that would address the needs of our GLBTQ population. Each time, the University has rejected the request while affirming its commitment to meet the needs of the GLBTQ population in other ways.

The Spirit of Inclusion, added to the student handbook in 1997, reaffirmed that support.

"We value gay and lesbian members of this community as we value all members of this community," it states. "We condemn harassment of any kind, and University policies proscribe it."

Last spring, students submitted the most recent application for a gay-straight alliance. In response to that application, Jenkins asked the Office of Student Affairs to review the University's support of and services for GLBTQ students.

Wednesday's announcement is a result of that review, an ongoing conversation about homosexuality unlike any before between students and administrators. Vice President for Student Affairs Erin Hoffmann Harding jumped into her first semester on the job with nearly 50 meetings to talk with students and focus groups about GLBTQ life here.

The new plan establishes the student organization and a new advisory board to respond to the real needs identified in those meetings. The Core Council, established as an advisory council for Student Affairs in 2006, has made important strides in training hall staff on GLBTQ issues and programming events, but the group of only eight members

has been stretched too thin in recent years.

The student organization, though loosely defined, will be open to any student, elect its own officers and write its own constitution to be approved by the administration. Like student government or the Student Union Board, this organization will be tied more closely to the administration than a club, but it will also be guaranteed more stability than a club that might ebb and flow over the years.

The plan also calls for a full-time staff member to advise the new organization and address other concerns brought forth by GLBTQ students. This individual will step into an unprecedented role as a specific point person in the administration for GLBTQ students, and the person hired to fill this position will be critical to this new plan's success.

This organization can be built to last, and to make lasting change at Notre Dame.

One step. One foot in front of the other.

This plan is a good one. This plan also requires more steps before it becomes a tangible presence on our campus, and there are still many questions to be answered. We walk forward with cautious optimism, proud to see the University more fully embrace its GLBTQ members and uncertain what the future will hold.

How much influence will the administrative advisor have over the club's activities? How will this group be structured and funded? What type of programming will be allowed — and what will not?

Will students carry on these conversations that have been so productive already to improve our climate of inclusion in the future?

The openness of this semester's review needs to continue as the University begins to implement this new organization. The desire to talk honestly about what it means to be a gay or lesbian student at Notre Dame needs to continue as students pen the group's first constitution.

The conversation needs to continue. We need to keep walking forward together.

One step. One foot in front of the other.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## Our future of inclusion at Notre Dame

In October of 2011, Progressive Student Alliance initiated the 4 to 5 Movement in an effort to address the need for greater inclusion on campus for members of the community who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning (GLTBQ) and their allies. We sparked a legitimate conversation, bringing the topics of sexual orientation and gender identity into the mainstream discourse on campus to foster an environment in which allies are not afraid to express their support. The 4 to 5 Movement has brought together a diverse group of students to address these issues. These efforts would not have been possible without the collaboration and tireless commitment of students, faculty, staff and senior administrators.

In this spirit, we place our full support behind the pastoral plan and initiative that the Office of Student Affairs released yesterday, having completed the broad review initiated May 1, 2012. The University recognized student organization specified in the plan will provide the important peer-to-peer support and service needed on campus, an important resource for questioning students, and an opportunity for student allies to work to create an environment of support, respect and understanding. The student development professional has been a component of this discussion for many years and the initiative to create this new position illustrates the administration's commitment to improving inclusion for the student body in the long

term. The advisory council will be able to gauge campus climate in order to provide the student affairs professional with the best possible information and resources on how to continually improve the environment for GLBTQ students and their allies.

This plan is an enormous accomplishment for the entire Notre Dame family. We would like to thank the students, faculty, staff and administrators who have been an integral part of the 4 to 5 Movement through their involvement and support. Now, as students, we have the responsibility to remain dedicated through the implementation process in order to utilize the full potential of this pastoral plan. Though we remain fully committed to these efforts, today we celebrate this achievement for our community.

**Alex Coccia**  
co-president, PSA  
junior  
Siegfried Hall  
Dec. 6

**Lauren Morisseau**  
co-president, PSA  
sophomore  
Breen-Philips Hall  
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# Homosexuals anonymous

**Christopher Damian**

Ideas of a University

Fr. John Harvey began the Courage Apostolate in 1980. Fr. Harvey was known as a man with great compassion and love for Catholics experiencing “same sex attraction.” Under Fr. Harvey, Courage has reached much of the American Church and has worked as a “spiritual support group” for “Catholic men and women with same-sex attractions who desire to live chaste lives in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.” It has been suggested that Notre Dame start its own chapter. Such a group could perhaps be helpful to some students.

However, Courage must be seen as only one small part of a larger work the Church must undertake for those who are “same-sex attracted.” The work of Courage is necessarily limited. It’s founder’s book, “Homosexuality and the Catholic Church,” seeks to “present the Church’s teaching in an objective and pastorally-sensitive manner.” The book begins with some “basic questions” on homosexuality, including the origin of homosexuality. This section roots itself in the work of the British psychologist Elizabeth Moberly, especially her essay, “Psychogenesis: The Early

Development of Gender Identity.”

Moberly’s essay draws heavily from Freudian psychology. Moberly suggests that homosexuality occurs when “needs for love, dependency and identification which are normally met through the medium of an attachment to a (parental) love-source of the same sex, have remained unmet.” Fr. Harvey adopts this conclusion in affirming that “persons with same-sex attraction” have a “deficit in their relationship with their same-sex parent.” Thus, Fr. Harvey’s account of the psychogenesis of homosexuality begins with a kind of childhood trauma.

This perhaps explains the approach of Courage, a twelve-step program based on the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. The steps include admitting “we were powerless over our homosexuality and our lives had become unmanageable,” and coming “to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.” Linking same-sex attraction with trauma and unnatural development, this solution seems to suggest that same-sex attractions necessarily manifest themselves in self-destructive and anti-relational behaviors.

No doubt, the ends of Courage are ends that all Catholics ought to pursue. Certainly, all Catholics are called to lives of chastity. However, I would like to suggest here that

Courage and “Homosexuality and the Catholic Church” do not present a comprehensive picture of the Church’s understanding of and approach to homosexuality. This model may be subject to Pope John Paul II’s critique of Freud’s interpretation of the sexual urge. He calls this interpretation and other similar interpretations “erroneous, because [they are] onesided and onesidedly exaggerated.” In contrast to Freud, the Catechism states that homosexuality’s “psychological genesis remains largely unexplained” (2357). The claim that homosexuality stems from a relational deficit is not a claim that can be derived directly from official Church teaching.

It is possible that, for some, homosexuality may originate in forms of childhood trauma. However, to posit this as homosexuality’s only or primary psychogenesis is a claim that the Church has resisted to adopt even since Moberly’s article was first published 30 years ago. This claim considers only one aspect of man in a onesided and exaggerated fashion. Therefore, the “support group model” that Courage provides will be helpful to some men and women experiencing same-sex-attraction, but not to all. Thus, if the Church seeks to create structures and institutions for Catholics with same-sex-attraction, new and broader models must be

conceived, and old and narrower models should be reconsidered.

With the recent announcement of Notre Dame’s “comprehensive review of GLBTQ student services and support,” Notre Dame finds itself in a position of great opportunity. Setting aside past prejudices, misunderstandings and misapplications of failed social sciences, this community now has the opportunity to work from a radical commitment to the Church’s understanding of the human person in considering new ways to aid our GLBTQ friends and family in flourishing as individuals and members of this community and, by extension, to aid in our own flourishing.

With such a commitment, we now see an opportunity to create much-needed new models that can serve as an example for the Church and the world. We, once again, see a way in which Notre Dame can seek to serve and love the Church, as any robust Catholic university should. We have not shied away from these issues, and we have thus found ourselves to be a much greater institution than many of our peers.

*Christopher Damian is a senior. He can be reached at [cdamian1@nd.edu](mailto:cdamian1@nd.edu)*

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

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# A step forward for the University

Since 1986, almost every Student Government administration has advocated for expanding inclusion in the Notre Dame Family to better include GLBTQ students. The Rocheleau-Rose Administration is no exception.

Due to the overwhelming student support exhibited over the past several years regarding this issue, Student Government’s May 2012 Board of Trustees Presentation was centered around “Expanding Inclusion in the Notre Dame Family,” specifically requesting that the Board investigate opportunities to make all students feel welcome at Notre Dame.

Upon returning to campus this fall, we were excited to hear about the Office of Student Affairs’ broad review of campus GLBTQ resources.

We have been honored to have had the opportunity to represent student voices throughout this five month review by collaborating extensively with the Office of Student Affairs, 4 to 5 Movement and Core Council to assist in the development of the Pastoral Plan.

Throughout the semester we have seen firsthand the dedication that the Student Affairs staff has put into this review. It is with great appreciation of these efforts that Student Government offers its full support to the Pastoral Plan and Initiative released by the Office of Student Affairs yesterday. The Plan offers a myriad of resources unparalleled by peer institutions. We are pleased that there will be an avenue for GLBTQ students and allies

to come together through a student organization. The advisory council will give the Vice President of Student Affairs an inside look into the campus climate in a way that currently does not exist, and the creation of a student development professional position demonstrates a lasting commitment to this issue.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the students, faculty and administrators that have devoted so much time and energy to developing this Plan. We are proud to witness our University take a momentous step forward, and look forward to continued partnering with the University, 4 to 5 Movement and the Office of Student Affairs as we begin to implement this plan over the next few months.

**Brett Rocheleau**  
student body president  
senior  
Dec. 6

**Katie Rose**  
student body vice president  
senior  
Dec. 6

**Katie Baker**  
chief of staff  
senior  
Dec. 6

**Matt Devine**  
director of gender issues  
sophomore  
Dec. 6

ADDITIONAL COLUMNS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR  
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# 'TAP DOGS' TURNS TAP DANCE ON ITS HEAD

By **TESSA DeMERS**

Scene Writer

This past weekend at the Morris Performing Arts Center, "Tap Dogs" grabbed hold of the stage and refused to let go.

"Tap Dogs" is a tap dance show — unfortunately not featuring literal dogs — created by Australian dancer and choreographer, Dein Perry. The original cast first performed the show in 1995 at the Sydney Festival in Australia. Different variations of the show, each with a cast of eight male dancers, are now performed in major cities around the world. The company even performed at the 2000 Sydney Olympic ceremonies in an enormous group.

Due to the show's unique staging ideas, the Tap Dogs are often recognized within the dance community as having revolutionized the way tap dance is presented to a modern-day audience. Elements such as set design, sound effects, lighting effects and unique uses of these elements — in addition to unique uses of props, all combine to create a fast-paced, otherworldly show.

Part movement and part percussion instrument, and 100 percent American in its original form, traditional tap was probably made most famous by a series of classical movie musicals in the 1940's starring Gene Kelly, most notably "Singin' in the Rain" and "An American in Paris." Kelly was known for his energetic and athletic tap style, yet even this Hollywood legend's moves were not as crazy and athletic as those of the Tap Dogs.

Like Riverdance, which took the formal, stiff traditions of Irish dance and added so much theatricality — such as more dramatic music, interesting sets, creative lighting and exciting plots; the Tap Dogs take traditional tap dancing and turns it on its head.

The show's set at the Morris was absolutely magnificent,



Photo courtesy of the Morris Performing Arts Center

on par with the dancing itself as an important part of its total impact. The dancers maneuvered and manipulated the set, which resembled a construction site, between almost every number. Performers used the set in unexpected ways, such as breaking the stage into two jagged pieces and jumping back and forth across them, climbing railings and creating various angles and levels to dance upon.

However, the most amazing part of "Tap Dogs," was the ridiculous creativity the dancers brought to the world of tap. Every time I thought I had seen the most unique and cool thing that could be done while wearing tap shoes, they would top it with the next dance. They dribbled basketballs to create a rhythm to dance to — while they were dancing!

They placed eight kind of music synthesizers on the stage, each dancing on a different one, to make a wild array of different musical instrument sounds. They used lighting and smoke to achieve cool effects and flashlights to highlight different dancers, effectively filling the stage with a flashing strobe. Other times, they opted for moments of total darkness to force the audience to focus on their sound.

At another point in the performance, these "Tap Dogs" poured water into a long tray and danced through the



Photo courtesy of the Morris Performing Arts Center

water wearing rain boots, even splashing the audience a few times. It was audience participation with a side order of Sea World. They even hoisted one of the guys upside down, letting him tap on the ceiling.

The chemistry among the performers in "Tap Dogs" was great. They were funny, full of personality and it was obvious the entire performance that they were having the time of their lives. Each of the eight dancers brought a different personality and style to the stage. The show had a laid back feel to it, with all of the dancers wearing normal clothing — mostly jeans and T-shirts.

The cast worked well with together, always feeding off each other's energies and trying to top each other in their epic dance moves. They each had little quirks, including one dancer who frequently integrated random disco moves into his pieces. The audience easily felt the cast's playfulness, which brought a light-hearted and fun atmosphere to the show.

"Tap Dogs" has been around for quite some time, and, after catching it at our own Morris, I'm fairly certain it won't be disappearing from the world's stages anytime soon.

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# KE\$HA STILL AWESOME PARTY GIRL ON 'WARRIOR'

By **SAM STRYKER**

Assistant Managing Editor

A disclaimer: I love all things kitsch. In fact, the tackier, the better. Perhaps it should come as no surprise I had incredibly high hopes for the newest album from the queen of trash herself, Ke\$ha, she of the dollar-signed name.

Back when I was a wee little first-semester freshman, I came across a Facebook advertisement for some unknown singer who just released the single "Tik Tok." As a Britney Spears fan, I was apparently supposed to be drawn to this song due to its infectious, electro-driven beat and a certain degree of irreverence that seemingly only 20-something female pop singers can deliver. I clicked the link to listen to the song.

Boy, was I not prepared for what I was about to listen to.

From the infamous opening line — "Wake up in the morning feeling like P. Diddy" — to the heavy beat, to the exceedingly sassy lyrics about Ke\$ha's over-the-top lifestyle (namely, brushing her teeth with a bottle of Jack Daniels), this girl was apparently a force to be reckoned with. For my entire first year at Notre Dame, it wasn't officially a party until "Tik Tok" had been played at least once.

Luckily for us, Ke\$ha was not a one-hit wonder. With such hits as "We R Who We R" and "Your Love is My Drug," it was easy to see the blonde-haired pop vixen knew how to craft the ultimate party jams. With song titles like "Blah Blah Blah" and "Take It Off," we knew she wasn't going for critical prestige. But boy, does Ke\$ha know how to get down. If she were a Greek goddess, she would be the female Dionysus, someone devoted to festivities and general merriment. And I love her for that.

With the release of "Warrior," her sophomore album,

it is clear to see Ke\$ha hasn't lost her dirty magic. The lead single "Die Young" is the de facto party anthem of the fall, thankfully surpassing "Gangnam Style" and "We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together." Just like most of her other songs, it encourages lewd behavior, dancing, drinking and general debauchery. And that's not necessarily a bad thing.

What is so refreshing about Ke\$ha is her uninhibited honesty. She drinks. She parties. She loves guys (big, hairy guys especially). She makes no bones about the fact that she likes having fun. And that is so different from other female pop stars out there.

Take Taylor Swift, who also released a new album this fall. Taylor too sings honestly and from the heart. Unfortunately, the emotions she wants to share with the world are bitter, catty and immature. On the other hand, Ke\$ha is the type of girl who lets her hair down and doesn't let anyone's opinion of her get in her way of her pursuit of having a crazy fun time.

Tell me, which girl's music would you rather listen to? For that matter, which girl would you rather hang out with in real life? I thought so.

That isn't to say Ke\$ha is all style, no substance. She brought in Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips to help produce several tracks, and Iggy Pop lends some vocals on "Dirty Love." But face it, if you're listening to Ke\$ha you're probably at a dorm party or on the dance floor at Fever. Thankfully, "Warrior" delivers a slew of party-ready hits.

The second single off the album "C'Mon" starts off with what sounds like a choir of angels and segues into Ke\$ha's signature rap-singing hybrid. Featuring such lyrics as "Feeling like a saber tooth tiger / Sipping on warm Budweiser" and "Feeling like a high schooler / Sipping on warm wine cooler" it is hard to not dance, or chuckle for

that matter.

Other standouts on "Warrior" include "Gold Trans Am," "Crazy Kids" and "Out Alive." All feature thundering beats, catchy lyrics and impressive hooks. Ke\$ha is good at what she does and she knows it. She even delves into more "serious" subject material on "Supernatural" which details a paranormal sexual experience she had. At this point, that type of behavior does not even surprise me.

My one bone to pick is when Ke\$ha slows things down on tracks like "Wonderland." The song isn't bad, per se. Rather, when I listen to Ke\$ha it's not because I am feeling moody or introspective. It's because I want to party. Luckily, these types of tracks are few and far between on "Warrior."

Face it. Ke\$ha is the awesome party girl you may never have the guts to ask out. No matter. On "Warrior," she is here for us all, the goddess of trash, debauchery and fun.

Contact Sam Stryker at  
sstrzykel@nd.edu

## "Warrior"

Ke\$ha

**Label:** RCA

**Tracks:** "Die Young," "C'Mon," "Crazy Kids"

**If you like:** Britney Spears, Lady Gaga





# THE OBSERVER

## Merry Christmas



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## KNOW THY SHELF

LITERATURE IS NOT DEAD



**Meghan Thomassen**  
Scene Writer

My dad said this to me over the phone as I sat alone in the library, the only one studying on a Football Saturday. At that moment, my story didn't look all that exciting.

The novelty of new classes and new people had worn off, and I was even getting used to having an undefeated football team.

Two years done at Notre Dame, I looked back on those semesters and all the adventures I had. Appalachia, Notre Dame Encounter, classes with amazing professors, nights spent watching random movies, spring break in Florida, spring break in Chicago.

"College is going to be the best four years of your life," people say.

Well, I hope not, because that means I'm over half way done with my quota, and when that's done, what am I supposed to do? Spend the rest of my life reminiscing?

And that's what it sounded like to me when my dad said, "Keep writing your own story." Writing your story sounded like reflecting and remembering on the good

times, while staying holed up in my one-room apartment trying to type my way from reality.

The thing is, I always wanted to be a writer. The intoxicating, time-stopping disembodiment I experienced when I wrote was the closest thing to transcendence I ever achieved.

And it's not until after an article is finished that I realize my words achieved that same coherent, fluid authority of wordsmiths, novelists and journalists. Those people craft performative, compelling statements without having to say aloud what has already been implied, "I write, therefore I am."

For me, it has always been, "I am, therefore, I write."

It is the natural response to experience. Even if I go months without so much as a drop of creative impetus, when I see a striking tree loosing its winged leaves into the autumn air or when I lay back on the docks in Maine to question the stars, the floodgates open.

I lose myself in a train of thought that collects treasure from around the pockets and veins of gold lodged deep inside somewhere.

Automatically, rhythmically, I reach for my pen, and dig around for the right sentence. I have to find it — that

word, that thought.

This will be my last column on campus this school year. On Jan. 9 I'll join a flock of other Notre Dame students as we take London by storm. It will be my first time in Europe, and I plan on seeing buildings and art museums and gardens and markets until my eyes pop out. I'm going to walk until my shoes fall apart and take pictures until Facebook revokes my rights to post photos. I am going to enjoy every last second of next semester.

"Study abroad is going to be the best semester of your college experience," people say.

Well, I hope not, because senior year and the years after that still hold possibility. And I realize now I can take my dad's advice a different way.

"Keep writing your own story." That doesn't mean my story is over. Storytelling is performative. The way I write is the way I live. To quote that sage, Natasha Bedingfield, "Today is where your book begins, the rest is still unwritten."

Contact Meghan Thomassen at [mthomass@nd.edu](mailto:mthomass@nd.edu).

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

BRANDON KEELEAN | The Observer



## SPORTS AUTHORITY

# The bowl season is full of nothing



**Brian Hartnett**  
Sports Writer

On Sunday night, months of rampant media-fueled speculation finally came to an end, as the pairings for 35 bowl games were released.

Like most people, I watched mainly to see how the BCS picture shook out, but I also stayed tuned to see the lower-tier bowl matchups. And what I saw was an extravagantly long list of mostly dull, uninspiring games.

Simply put, this season's slate of bowl games carries very few interesting storylines. Of course, the national championship tilt between Notre Dame and Alabama has the potential to be one of the sport's all-time great games. Aside from that, there's an intriguing Fiesta Bowl matchup between Kansas State and Oregon, a promising shootout between former Big 12 rivals Oklahoma and Texas A&M in the Cotton Bowl and a potentially interesting "Battle of the Tigers" between Clemson and LSU on New Year's Eve.

The only problem is that, for every Fiesta Bowl or Cotton Bowl, there are about four Buffalo Wild Wings Bowls or Famous Idaho Potato Bowls.

Overall, there are 35 bowls and 70 teams playing in them, a figure that sounds ridiculous when you consider there are only 120 full-time FBS football programs. 58.3 percent of FBS football programs will be going bowling this season, and, if you take out the four ineligible teams that would have otherwise grabbed bowl slots, that figure rises to greater than 60 percent of programs that are bowl-eligible.

Essentially, the bowl game system is like a recreational soccer league that awards its players participation medals, recognizing that few players have earned an award based on their merits.

In today's football landscape, achieving the magical number of six wins for bowl eligibility is not too difficult. Teams can basically pencil in a win over an FCS opponent, beat up on two or three non-conference cupcakes, defeat one or two teams from the cellar of their conference and maybe even sneak out a win or two against an equal or better conference opponent to hit six wins and guarantee a bowl trip.

Heck, teams can even reach a bowl game with a losing record, as we saw in the case of 6-7 Georgia Tech.

The Yellow Jackets' inclusion brings me to my next point: the ridiculous conference tie-ins that allow for the presence of average teams in college football's "postseason."

Nowhere is this more apparent than the BCS and its provisions to include the champions of the six

BCS conferences, including the Big East and the ACC.

These conferences are ranked sixth and seventh respectively in the Sagarin conference rankings, yet they have a guaranteed spot at the BCS banquet. Hence, we end up with the chance for Georgia Tech to make the Orange Bowl, an underwhelming Louisville squad in the Sugar Bowl and a five-loss Wisconsin in the Rose Bowl, a fact that must thrill the organizers at the "Granddaddy of them all."

In fact, five of the six bowl games on New Year's Day feature Big Ten teams, which is a potential nightmare for college football fans given the conference's struggles this season. The conference has been 20-34 in bowl games since the 2005 season, and its winning percentage doesn't look likely to rise this year, with the aforementioned Badgers battling Pac-12 champion Stanford, a Nebraska team that gave up 70 points in its last game meeting a Georgia team that was a deflected pass away from the national championship and a Northwestern program that hasn't won a bowl game since 1949 facing Mississippi State.

Although these tie-ins foster matchups between historically elite programs, they also largely deprive us of the chance to watch major BCS teams take on top schools from non-automatic qualifying conferences, which has recently been an interesting part of bowl season. Twenty-seven schools from non-AQ conferences (not including Notre Dame) will appear in bowl games, yet only five of them are taking on teams from BCS conferences.

This setup keeps us away from games like the exciting Boise State-Oklahoma or Alabama-Utah showdowns from the last few years and, instead, gives us matchups like Western Kentucky-Central Michigan and San Jose State-Bowling Green, two games that won't be high on anyone's viewing list.

I guess the only fortunate thing about such gluttony of bowls is that there's a good chance one of them is going on at any given moment. Just think, you can celebrate the end of finals by watching the Gildan New Mexico Bowl on Dec. 15 and cap off the 13th day of Christmas by watching Notre Dame-Alabama in the national championship on Jan. 7, giving you a winter break full of football.

After all, you weren't planning to do much on your winter break, were you?

*Contact Brian Hartnett at [bhartnet@nd.edu](mailto:bhartnet@nd.edu). The views expressed in this Sports Authority are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.*

## NFL

# Browns' Thomas rips Hillis

Associated Press

BEREA, Ohio — Browns offensive tackle Joe Thomas once blocked and did all he could to protect Peyton Hillis from harm.

On Wednesday, he steamrolled his former teammate.

With Hillis coming to Cleveland this week as a member of the Kansas City Chiefs, Thomas unloaded on the bruising running back, saying he didn't always play hard and accused Hillis of putting his contract situation ahead of the team.

Thomas felt it was selfish behavior.

"It was a terrible distraction," Thomas said following practice. "He crippled our offense. We were struggling to find anybody who could carry the ball after all the injuries we had. To have Peyton going through a contract dispute and basically refusing to play, it was a big distraction. But more than anything, he was our starting running back that was a good player who was going to help us be a successful offense.

"When he's not there and you don't have anybody to turn to, it makes it hard to win. And that's the distraction, it's not being successful."

Hillis was the toast of Cleveland in 2011. He rushed for 1,177 yards, scored 11 touchdowns and endeared himself to Browns fans with his bull-in-a-china-shop running style. Following the season, Hillis was selected to have his likeness on the cover of the popular Madden video game, a choice that seemed to trigger his undoing.

He wanted a long-term contract with the Browns, and took his campaign public. From the start, his season unraveled as greed seemed to consume him.

"He was everything people knew about him — hard-working, blue-collar, tough, would do anything for anybody on the team," Thomas said. "All he cared about was winning, and then all of a sudden the next year, all he cared about was trying to get his new contract."

Hillis sat out Cleveland's third game with strep throat on



AP

**Former Browns running back Peyton Hillis, left, runs while picking up a block from teammate Joe Thomas on Nov. 21, 2010.**

the advice of his agent, Kennard McGuire. He missed several other games with a hamstring injury, and while he was rehabbing one week, Hillis left the team and missed a treatment to get married in Arkansas. There were other issues, including when Hillis skipped a Halloween charity event for kids — an absence he blamed on a miscommunication.

It was a soap opera.

And to Thomas, it never seemed to end.

"It was kind of one weird thing after another more than anything," Thomas said. "We have guys getting married during the season and it's not a big deal. When you're injured (Thomas used his fingers to make quotations in the air) and you should be getting treatment, to go do your own thing repeatedly was just disrespectful more than anything to his teammates.

"I don't think people would have acted the same way if they were in that situation."

Thomas was one of several veterans who intervened during the season and encouraged Hillis to clean up his act. Thomas said Hillis made things hard on himself, and in turn, on everyone else.

"You see a lot of guys in contract disputes, like Matt Forte," Thomas said. "His solution was 'I'm going to go out and prove they have to have me and they can't play without me.' The

frustrating thing to a lot of teammates was you would try to talk to him and you try to tell him 'That's not the right way to do it if you want to get your big contract.' He just wouldn't listen to anybody.

"People who thought they were very close friends with him, he wouldn't listen to anybody. He thought he knew the right way to do it and it ended up not being the right way and hurting everybody. Not just himself. It was a tough situation."

Hillis never did get that long-term contract with the Browns, who decided to let him hit the free-agent market. He signed a one-year deal with the Chiefs during the offseason. He has rushed for 193 yards on 59 carries with one TD so far this season.

Thomas said he couldn't imagine Hillis still being around.

"I think it was better for both sides (he left)," Thomas said. "At that point, the situation with him here was toxic and he didn't want to be here and players didn't want him here. It was better for a fresh start."

Browns coach Pat Shurmur refused to address the turbulence caused by Hillis last season.

"I'm going to talk about Peyton Hillis the 2012 version," Shurmur said. "I'd be happy to answer any questions there. No, I won't put it into words."

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NFL

# Packers sign Grant to bolster running game

Associated Press

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Ryan Grant didn't want his return to the Green Bay Packers to be a distraction, so he figured he'd say a few quick hellos and get right to work.

His teammates were having none of that plan.

They gave the veteran running back a standing ovation when he arrived Wednesday, thrilled he'd found his way back to Green Bay.

"It's great to see him back, back in the green and gold. I've missed him," Aaron Rodgers said. "He's done a lot of great things for this organization, he's a great teammate. We're excited to have him back."

Grant is fifth on Green Bay's all-time rushing list, running for 4,016 yards and 25 touchdowns from 2007-11. But he missed most of the 2010 season after hurting his ankle in the season opener, and split time with James Starks last year. The Packers opted not to re-sign Grant last summer, betting that Starks, Cedric Benson and Alex Green would be enough to carry the load.

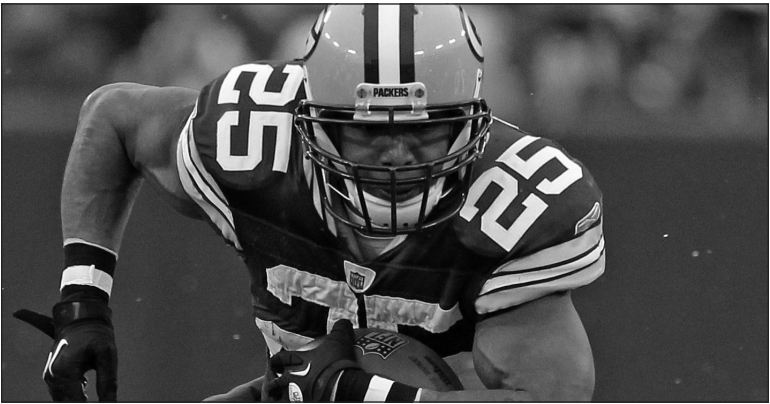
But Benson hasn't played since spraining his foot Oct. 7, and the Packers announced last week that he will stay on injured reserve the rest of the season. Starks will miss "multiple weeks" with a knee injury, coach Mike McCarthy said Wednesday. Green is getting

better, playing one of his better games of the year Sunday against the Vikings, but he can't be Green Bay's only option.

Grant provides the perfect solution. Not only does he give the Packers badly needed depth, there's no adjustment period. He was with Washington from Sept. 26 to Oct. 23, and has kept himself in shape since the Redskins released him.

Better yet, he knows Green Bay's offense — "Wrinkles here and there" are the only changes Grant noticed — and McCarthy fully expects Grant will be able to play in Sunday night's game against Detroit.

"Ryan has great history with us, can kind of step right in," McCarthy said. "I don't see



Running back Ryan Grant runs the ball last season in a game against the Detroit Lions on Jan. 1.

him having any issues getting ready."

Even his lack of a locker was quickly solved.

All of the lockers in the Packers' main room have been taken, so Grant commandeered four in the auxiliary room.

"That's kind of cool," he said. "I've probably got the most lockers in here. ... I can spread all my stuff around."

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NFL

# Chiefs pay their respects

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Heads bowed, somber past and present Kansas City Chiefs players turned out Wednesday for a memorial service for teammate Jovan Belcher, who killed his girlfriend and then himself over the weekend.

Belcher fatally shot 22-year-old Kasandra Perkins on

Saturday at the Kansas City home they shared with their 3-month-old daughter, Zoey. He then drove to the Chiefs practice facility at Arrowhead Stadium, where coach Romeo Crennel, general manager Scott Pioli and defensive assistant Gary Gibbs witnessed Belcher commit suicide.

The team moved up its practice schedule so that players could attend Wednesday afternoon's service at the nearby Landmark International Deliverance and Worship Center, where Belcher and Perkins worshipped. The media wasn't allowed inside.

Afterward, a coffin was wheeled from the building and driven away in a hearse.

Retired Chiefs Hall of Famer Bobby Bell said Pioli and an uncle of Belcher's spoke during the service.

"It's done and over with and people need to get on with their lives, and the team needed to try to get forward," Bell said. "It's tough on them. When you see somebody and play with them you're buddies, friends."

Many of the players boarded coach buses after the service, but a few walked to their own vehicles with their wives and girlfriends.

"It was good," running back Peyton Hillis said of the service. He wouldn't comment further.

Defensive end Ropatis Pitoitua, kicker Ryan Succop, and linebacker Derrick Johnson said they didn't want to be interviewed.

Before the service, veteran offensive lineman Ryan Lilja said he hoped the memorial would provide some closure for the Chiefs, who will try to win their second straight game Sunday at Cleveland.

"You got to try to deal with it however you deal with it, and grieve the best way for

the individual," he said, "and I think this is the best way for us as a team to get closure and move on and focus on football."

Lilja said some players have taken advantage of counseling services that have been provided by the Chiefs and the NFL and that there's been a change in the atmosphere around the team building.

"There definitely is more, 'How you doing? How you feeling? How you coping?'" Lilja said. "There's definitely more of that, and people leaning on each other, and be an ear when they need it. Guys are going to deal with this on an individual basis."

Pastor Sylvarena Funderburke, who serves at Repairers of the Breach Christian Center in Kansas City, said she was at the service to sing "I Won't Complain," a song the Belcher family requested.

"It is an honor. We don't always understand why things happen," she said before the service. "That's when you have to rely on your faith and just trust God to give you strength to make it through tough times."

Karen Young, who belongs to the Landmark church and serves as an usher, said Belcher and Perkins went to the church "practically" every week until the baby was born but hadn't been seen much since then.

Larry Brown, who also attends the Landmark church, said Belcher was "gentle" and "caring" and Perkins "a real nice person."

"I believed that they were made for each other," said Brown, whose brother is the church's leader, Bishop John L. Brown. "They didn't appear to be the type of people who just put on facades. They were very happy. She was very genuine. Every time I saw them, they were always laughing."



## NFL

# Vikings place Harvin on IR



Vikings receiver Percy Harvin, right, and quarterback Christian Ponder walk near the sideline during a 30-20 loss to Seattle on Nov. 4.

## Associated Press

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — The Minnesota Vikings placed ailing wide receiver Percy Harvin on injured reserve Wednesday, abruptly ending a season that began so well for one of the NFL's most versatile players.

Coach Leslie Frazier answered questions about Harvin's status cryptically and vaguely at his regular news conference, when he ruled Harvin out of practice again because of the severely sprained ankle that has kept him out of the last three games. Then about six hours later, the Vikings announced the move that declared their top pass-catcher done for the year.

During an outstanding first half that put him in the conversation for the league's Most Valuable Player award, Harvin's season sure deteriorated quickly. He was hurt one month ago. Now this.

"We'll see what happens," quarterback Christian Ponder said before the news came out. "I don't know what or when he'll be back. We're just focused on who's going to be out there, who's going to be practicing today."

Even bad sprains don't normally take more than four to six weeks to fully heal, so it's possible the injury is worse than originally revealed, perhaps requiring surgery. Neither team officials nor players were available for comment on the decision.

Harvin wasn't on the indoor field at Winter Park as the Vikings went through drills in preparation for another critical NFC North game, this one at

home against division co-leader Chicago. He wasn't in the locker room when it was open to reporters, either.

Harvin was injured Nov. 4 at Seattle, leaving briefly in the third quarter of that game but returning with an obvious limp. He has missed three games since and only taken part in practice once since the injury, a week ago as a limited participant.

Harvin was favoring his right foot running routes that afternoon during the portion of the workout that was open to the media, looking far less than full strength when pushing off or planting to change direction. Ponder has struggled at times even with Harvin, by far his favorite target, so this certainly won't help the team's lagging passing attack.

In nine games, Harvin finished with 677 yards and three touchdowns on 62 receptions, 22 rushes for 96 yards and one score and one kickoff return for a touchdown. Now he's headed for the final year of his rookie contract, without any promise of an extension offer from the team.

"I know that he wants to win like we do, and I'm sure he's going to do everything he can do to help our football team. We'll see where it goes," Frazier said when asked if there were issues with Harvin beyond the injury. The coach said he couldn't go into greater detail about Harvin's condition but said the former first-round draft pick has "done pretty much the things that the trainers have asked him to do" in his rehabilitation.

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## HOCKEY

# Irish prepare for home games against Spartans

By **CONOR KELLY**  
Sports Writer

Coming off a sweep of Lake Superior State, the Irish will remain at home and take on CCHA rival Michigan State on Friday and Saturday at the Compton Family Ice Arena. Notre Dame (11-4-0, 7-1-0-0 CCHA), which sits one point behind Miami in the conference standings, will try to avoid its first conference loss since Nov. 2 when it takes the ice against a young but talented Spartans team Friday night.

Michigan State (4-8-2, 3-6-1-0) has struggled in CCHA play through the first half of the year, but Irish coach Jeff Jackson acknowledged that no game is an easy one.

"Friday night will be probably as tough a game as we've had all season. It wouldn't surprise me in the least," Jackson said. "They're a dangerous team, especially coming off losses in three of their last four games."

The Spartans have struggled to find the back of the net this year, mustering only one goal in their past three games, but the team has talented young forwards in sophomore Matt Berry (seven goals, six assists) and freshman Matt DeBlouw (four goals, seven assists) and a freshman goaltender in Jake Hildebrand who has accumulated a phenomenal .942 save percentage through the first half of the season.

"I look at their roster, and

they're just a little young in some places, because they've really got some talent," Jackson said. "We know how tough it can be to score goals. We've been there. It's hard to score in our league. You've got to work for it, but you also get breaks once in a while. I think they're a pretty good team."

One asset the Spartans do have is a potent power play, a unit that is converting at a 22 percent clip. Though the special teams battle shapes up to be a contest between the league's top power play and Notre Dame's conference-leading penalty kill, Jackson said he hopes that it does not reach that point.

"The best way to do well on special teams is to stay out of



SUZANNA PRATT | The Observer

**Junior right winger Michael Voran skates up the ice during Notre Dame's 6-1 victory over Lake Superior State on Dec. 1.**

the penalty box," Jackson said. "I think our guys can sometimes get too emotional playing at home and trying to get

the fans involved, but they're figuring it out.

"The power play is starting to come around a little bit. The penalty killing has been pretty consistent. We have to work on what we do, and the biggest thing is that the power play gets rolling here."

The series comes at a busy time of the year for the Irish, with the prospect of the end of the semester and finals next week. Jackson stressed the importance of remaining focused, especially during a time of the year when last year's season-ending slide seemed to begin.

"We've got three games left, and we've got to be focused on Friday night," Jackson said. "This is a really tough time of year for our guys as they're in the midst of numerous papers, exams and projects. Hopefully they'll have the chance to refocus on Friday."

Of particular note for Jackson has been the play of the team's second line, centered by junior T.J. Tynan, the team's leading scorer last season and a reigning CCHA First Team selection. Tynan is flanked by freshman Mario Lucia, recently named to the preliminary roster of the 2013 U.S. Junior National Team, and junior Mike Voran. The unit emerged last weekend as a potent scoring threat, as Jackson has tried to find the best way to match wingers with his talented center.

"I think T.J. is developing some chemistry with Mario, which is a good thing," Jackson said. "He's getting pucks to the net and shooting the puck and getting to the interior of the defense, not the exterior."

The Irish will need a strong effort from the unit in order to crack Hildebrand on Friday night. His conference goals against average of 1.70 is good for third in the CCHA, behind Notre Dame junior Steven Summerhays and Ohio State's Brady Hjelle.

The Irish face off at 7:05 p.m. on Friday and Saturday against the Spartans at the Compton Family Ice Arena.

Contact Conor Kelly at [ckelly17@nd.edu](mailto:ckelly17@nd.edu)

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## TRACK AND FIELD

# Irish to begin indoor season with home meet

By LAURA COLETTI  
Sports Writer

The Irish will kick off their indoor season Friday when they host the Blue & Gold Invitational.

Notre Dame senior pole vaulter and captain Chrissy Finkel said the meet is a good test for the Irish as they come out of months of fall training. She also said the meet is a good starting point for both the men's and women's squads and that it will be used as a measuring stick for where the athletes need to improve, rather than as a meet where they will be looking to be in top form.

"It's definitely more of a measure of where we are after a semester of training," Finkel said. "The majority of the really hard work that we put in happens over the last three or four months once we get into season. [The Blue & Gold Invitational] kind of gives us a really good foundation and basis to judge where we are," she said. "Once you put on that uniform, it's a little different than in practice, so it's different in a meet atmosphere and it's good to see how you do for the first time."

On the women's side, distance will be a strong point. Senior Rebecca Tracy will be looking to carry momentum from a successful spring season. Senior Jeremy Rae will return for the men's side. He will look to repeat a stellar 2011-2012 indoor season when he won the Big East mile.

The men also have talented sprinters in junior Patrick Feeney and sophomore Chris Giesting, who was part of the Indoor National Championship distance medley relay team last year and was named the Big East's Most Outstanding Track Performer. On the women's side, junior sprinter Michelle Brown will look to build on a successful spring season with the Irish.

Junior jumper Logan Renwick will also be a key component for the men after winning the triple jump in the outdoor season.

As for the squad's long-term goals, Finkel said both sides are aiming high.

"We're really hoping to win four Big East Championships — indoors and outdoors for both the men and women," she said. "We had a great season to end on outdoor,



Observer File Photo

Senior Jeremy Rae runs the mile in the Mayo Invitational on Feb. 4. The Irish will open their indoor season this weekend with the Blue & Gold Invitational at the Loftus Center.

the men won the Big East Championships and the women's team came in second. On the women's side, everyone who scored points is returning this year.

Because we didn't graduate any points, we're very, very excited. I've never looked forward to a season from a team standpoint as much as I am this year."

The Blue & Gold Invitational begins at 5 p.m. Friday at the Loftus Center.

Contact Laura Coletti at  
lcoletti@nd.edu

## SMC BASKETBALL | BELLES 66, KALAMAZOO 57

## Belles pick up road victory

### Observer Staff Report

Saint Mary's earned its first conference win Wednesday night with a 66-57 victory over Kalamazoo College.

The Belles (3-5, 1-2 MIAA) came out of the gate fast, compiling a 16-6 lead over the Hornets (0-5, 0-3), before a Kalamazoo run gave the Hornets a 23-18 lead. The Belles then scored 11 unanswered points to take a 29-23 lead into halftime.

In the second half, Saint Mary's continued right where it left off, and with 12:27 remaining in the second half, the Belles extended their lead to 17 points. Similarly to the first half, Kalamazoo did not give in to the double-digit points deficit and cut the Saint Mary's lead to five with 34 seconds remaining. The late push was not enough for the Hornets, though, as they were forced to foul the Belles in order to get the ball back. Saint Mary's converted on four straight free throw attempts to seal the victory.

Saint Mary's and Kalamazoo both shot around 35 percent from the floor, but the difference in scoring came from the Belles having 18 more field goal attempts.

The Belles were led by a pair of freshmen forwards Wednesday night, as Eleni Shea and Krista Knapke were able to provide a post presence and score 13 points each for Saint Mary's. Senior guard Kayla Wolter scored nine points off the bench for the Belles in only 10 minutes of play.

For the Hornets, sophomore guard Querubin Dubois led the way with a career-high 16 points, along with six rebounds and three steals, but it was not enough to come from behind.

The Belles will look to continue their success Saturday at home versus Alma College. The Scots (1-4, 1-1) are coming off a tough 41-point loss to Calvin College. Saint Mary's will work towards establishing a win streak Saturday at the Angela Athletic Facility, with tip-off at 3 p.m.

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## MEN'S BASKETBALL

# No. 22 Irish to battle Brown after layoff

By MIKE MONACO  
Sports Writer

Nine days after downing then-No. 8 Kentucky, the No. 22 Irish return to action when they take on Brown on Saturday at Purcell Pavilion.

Notre Dame (7-1) defeated the Wildcats 64-50 on Nov. 29 to stretch its winning streak to five games. The eight days in between games will be the second-longest idle stretch of the season for the Irish. And after playing its fourth game in nine days against Kentucky, Irish coach Mike Brey said his team welcomed the break and he doesn't believe there will be any negative effects.

"If we were younger, I'd be concerned about that," Brey said of the layoff. "But because of the experience of this group, I think, number one, getting some rest mentally and physically was very much key because we had a real tough stretch. And we do have some guys that play long minutes for us and [graduate student guard Scott] Martin is always going to have some issues with that knee that we've got to rest it."

Brey also said the Irish players have had a chance to focus on their classes with finals week looming.

"The other thing ... what I've found is we've really been able to concentrate academically," Brey said. "We've done some things with study hall because the last

week of classes sometimes is more important than the exam week next week. And so basketball up until [Wednesday's] practice, has kind of been a backburner issue since the Kentucky game."

When the Irish finally do take to the hardwood again, they will go up against a Brown squad coming off a 63-50 loss to New Hampshire on Saturday. Through seven games, the Bears (3-4) are shooting just 31.6 percent from three-point range and 40.3 percent from the field.

Notre Dame's defense, meanwhile, has held opponents to 37.6 percent shooting from the field and 31.0 percent on threes.

The Irish defensive unit will be tasked with shutting down a pair of Chicago-area natives returning to the Midwest for the first time this season. Senior guard Matt Sullivan, from Wilmette, Ill., and junior guard Sean McGonagill, from Brookfield, Ill., lead the Bears with 15.7 points and 14.9 points per game, respectively. Brey, who returned late Tuesday night from a recruiting trip, said though the Irish have yet to fully dissect the Bears, he knows their guards can score.

"I've been doing recruiting stuff and we'll get some film, we'll watch them," Brey said of Brown. "It looks like their guards — I glanced at the stats coming back from a recruiting trip — are scoring the ball for them. We'll



SARAH O'CONNOR | The Observer

**Irish junior guard Jerian Grant looks to drive past a Chicago State defender during Notre Dame's 92-65 win over the Cougars on Nov. 26 at Purcell Pavilion. Grant matched a career high with 22 points in the victory.**

digest them. [Wednesday and Thursday] will be 'us' practices, and then Friday is a good prep day [for Brown]."

In the Irish backcourt, junior guard Eric Atkins will be looking to build on last week's performance for which he was named to the Big East Weekly Honor

Roll. The tri-captain averaged 14.5 points, 7.5 rebounds and 2.5 steals in wins against Chicago State and the Wildcats. Against Kentucky, Atkins played 38 minutes and propelled the Irish with 13 first-half points.

"When he's playing like that, it kind of gives us another element offensively, especially to start the game," Brey said. "I think Eric in the past has started a game being his efficient self, running the team, not turning it over, trying to get other guys going and then if we stall, he kind of says, 'Okay, I need to do something.' I kind of like that he is looking for his stuff as well as getting people involved to start the game. I think that's something to build on last week in the Kentucky game for him to hone his offense."

Even after the signature win

against Kentucky, Brey said he doesn't believe the Irish have reached their potential.

"Well I don't know about [being] a finished product because I still think with [freshman forward] Cameron [Biedscheid] and [senior center Garrick] Sherman, they're going to still be developing maybe even through January as far as what they give us. I do feel we are finding our identity. We are still in the process of finding our identity, and I think up until Dec. 21 [the final nonconference game against Niagara] is a key time for us to keep doing that."

The Irish resume the road to improvement when they battle Brown on Saturday at 7 p.m. at Purcell Pavilion.

**Contact Mike Monaco at**  
[jmonaco@nd.edu](mailto:jmonaco@nd.edu)

## Coaches

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

the same time in making sure we're progressing as a football program."

The first quote was from Saban, the second from Kelly — but would you have been surprised if it had been the other way around?

Of course, the similarity extends to the recruiting trail. Both know how to recruit given their institutions' unique identities. For the Irish, academic success and Catholic character permeate everything.

In Tuscaloosa, Southern and Alabamian pride matter, especially when discussing Auburn.

This season has been Kelly's breakout year, and he's won using Saban's blueprint: suffocating defense, a rushing-centric

offense and a stranglehold on the turnover battle. He's kept his squad focused on the week-to-week, and he's kept them playing mistake-free football.

Of course, Kelly has a long way to go before he's matched Saban's track record. All of the characteristics are there, but he hasn't matched Saban's consistency yet. Until the Irish compete for the national title year in and year out, Kelly won't have reached that plane.

But there's one more similarity: Both Kelly and Saban win, and they win a lot — and they'll both be at their respective programs for a long, long time.

**Contact Allan Joseph at**  
[ajoseph2@nd.edu](mailto:ajoseph2@nd.edu)

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

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JOHN NING | The Observer

**Irish senior guard Kaila Turner attempts to dribble past Baylor freshman guard Niya Johnson during Notre Dame's 73-61 loss to the Bears on Wednesday at Purcell Pavilion.**

## Baylor

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

averages 14 points per game, was held to just 4-for-19 shooting from the field.

As a team, the Irish shot just 35.7 percent from the field. Baylor, on the other hand, shot 49.2 percent.

Notre Dame did, however, force 20 turnovers.

"Sky led us as she always does, defensively," McGraw said.

In her first game back after an injury that kept her out of four games, including a loss to No.

1 Stanford, Baylor senior guard Odyssey Sims scored 16 points, going 10-for-10 from the free throw line.

Griner was a force offensively, defensively and on the glass. She finished with 24 points, 14 rebounds and three blocks.

Notre Dame jumped out to an early 11-5 lead off a quick six points from junior guard Kayla McBride. It led by as many as nine in the first half, but poor transition defense and a series of rushed field goal attempts as the shot clock expired by Notre Dame allowed Baylor to establish a 20-5 run near the end of

the half.

Irish junior forwards Ariel Braker and Natalie Achonwa often double-teamed Griner as soon as she caught the ball, in an attempt to force someone else to beat them offensively. Baylor freshman guard Alexis Prince hit her first two shots, which were wide open as a result of the double team.

Griner didn't get her first field goal attempt until 13:21 remained in the first half, as she hit a soft jump hook over Achonwa.

In the second half, the turnovers started to pile up for Notre

## Problems

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

over eight times. Hardly the numbers befitting a three-time All-American. The Bruins also outrebounded the Irish.

In its loss to Baylor on Wednesday, the armor showed more than chinks. It revealed outright holes.

Diggins forced up contested shots and attempted myriad ill-advised passes, trying to generate scoring in the second half as the Irish played from behind. She finished

the lowest percentage of her career and is on pace to shatter her high mark for turnovers in a season. In her team's first true test against a star post player, the Irish had no answers.

Granted, not every team Notre Dame will face this year will have a center the caliber of Griner. However, the elite teams in NCAA women's basketball rely on significant post threats. A pair of 6-foot-3 forwards — senior Joslyn Tinkle and junior Chiney Ogumike — leads No. 1 Stanford in scoring. Likewise, 6-foot-4 freshman forward

need to occur.

First, Notre Dame will need to drastically improve its post defense. Barring an unexpected growth spurt, 6-foot-3 junior forward Natalie Achonwa will be the tallest player in an Irish uniform all season. This means help defense is paramount. In the first 12 minutes of Wednesday's game, Notre Dame forced nine turnovers. Its guards constantly disrupted entry passes to Griner and turned the turnovers into points. This team model is the only way Notre Dame will be able to defeat top teams with talent in the paint.

Second, freshman guard Jewell Loyd and junior guard Kayla McBride will have to perform their best Natalie Novosel and Brittney Mallory impressions. The two backcourt players need to take some pressure off Diggins and make defenses think twice before devoting a second defender to the talented senior.

Again, Notre Dame need not worry just yet. The season is long and the inexperienced squad will continue to grow. But this loss was a wake-up call. McGraw and the Irish have work to do if they want to remain among the nation's best.

Contact Cory Bernard at [cbernard@nd.edu](mailto:cbernard@nd.edu)

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

**McGraw and the Irish have work to do if they want to remain among the nation's best.**

with eight points on 4-for-19 shooting.

Baylor senior center Brittney Griner gashed the Irish frontcourt with her post moves, dominated the defensive glass and altered layup after layup.

At 5-1, Notre Dame is far from the panic button. The season is still young, and the Irish have an opportunity at home Saturday against an outmatched Utah State squad to right the ship.

However, Irish coach Muffet McGraw has to be concerned with some of her team's trends early in the year.

Her star guard is shooting

Even though Baylor had a size advantage, McGraw expected her team to rebound better than it did. The Lady Bears outrebounded the Irish 44-35.

"That was probably one of the most disappointing things was the lack of rebounding for the most part," McGraw said.

McBride was the second-leading scorer for the Irish on Wednesday, adding 18 points and five rebounds. But only four Irish players scored, and Baylor's bench outscored Notre Dame's 14-0.

Baylor senior guard Jordan Madden had 12 points and graduate student forward Brooklyn Pope had 14 points for the Lady Bears. Pope accounted for all of Baylor's bench points.

Notre Dame's next test is Saturday against Utah State at 12 p.m. in Purcell Pavilion.

Contact Matthew Robison at [mrobison@nd.edu](mailto:mrobison@nd.edu)

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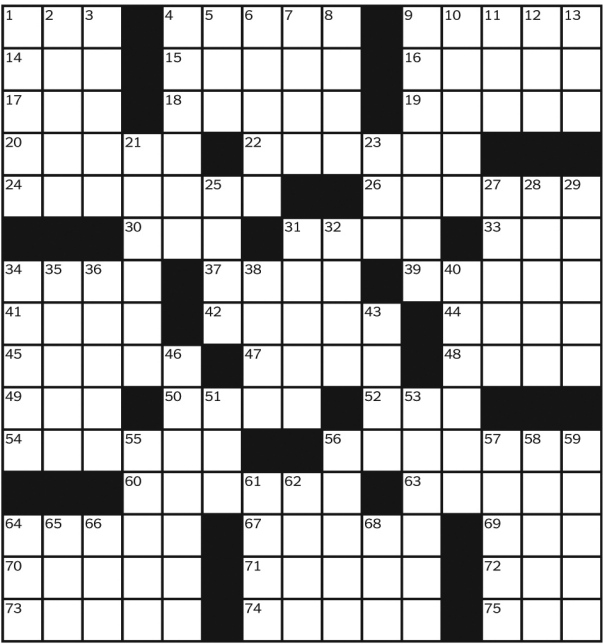


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- ACROSS**  
1, 4 & 9 Sports news of 1919  
14 Part of E.N.T.  
15 Stand for a sitting  
16 Part of a waste reduction strategy  
17, 18 & 19 Toys “R” Us department  
20 Figure in Raphael’s “The School of Athens”  
22 Painter’s aid  
24 Drawer at a doctor’s office?  
26 Not moved from the original location  
30 Lib \_\_\_\_ (U.K. party member)  
31 Times or Century  
33 Some French?  
34, 37 & 39 Fredric March’s last film  
41 \_\_\_\_ Gallimard, protagonist of “M. Butterfly”  
42 Something to contemplate
- 44 Tributary of the High Rhine  
45, 47 & 48 Like some student activities  
49 Third of November?  
50 Like bright red cardinals  
52 Egyptian headdress feature  
54 Children of \_\_\_\_ (descendants of Jacob)  
56 Goldsmith, for one  
60 Like “Wedding Crashers” or “Bridesmaids”  
63 A current flows into it  
64, 67 & 69 Role that garnered 12 consecutive unsuccessful Emmy nominations, 1985-96  
70 Brother of Moses  
71 Beauty pageant judging criterion
- DOWN**  
1 Urban cacophony  
2 \_\_\_\_ column (construction piece)  
3 Toward the back  
4 Organic compound with a double-bonded oxygen  
5 Isl. south of Corsica  
6 “ \_\_\_\_ mio”  
7 Princess known as the Defender of the Elijans  
8 Declined, as stocks  
9 Composer Dominick whose name means “silver” in Italian  
10 Almost reaches  
11 Musical syllable before and after “da”  
12 Enzyme suffix  
13 “ \_\_\_\_ Miz”  
21 Comparatively neat  
23 Racket  
25 Feds  
27 Model  
28 Aquarium fish  
29 Program presenter  
31 N.F.L. record-holder for consecutive starts
- 72 Iraq war danger, for short  
73, 74 & 75 “Invisible” part of a distribution list ... or a hint to this puzzle’s theme

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

E	S	P	R	I	T	Z	A	N	E	T	A	O		
A	T	R	I	S	K	O	D	I	N	A	D	Z		
T	O	O	T	H	O	F	W	O	L	F	N	R	A	
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I	T	T		W	I	T	C	H	E	S	B	R	E	W
V	E	E		I	D	E	O		L	O	L	I	T	A
E	S	C		N	O	R	A		B	R	E	C	H	T



Puzzle by George Barany and Victor Barocas

32 Embarrassing spelling mistake?

46 Ute or Cree

59 Uncool

34 Fountain name

51 What's put before the carte?

61 Spanish appetizer

35 Spells

53 New York's \_\_\_\_ Island

62 Get an \_\_\_\_ effort

36 Sign with an arrow

55 “Backdraft” crime

64 Get one's point across?

38 Mangle

56 Wing it

65 Suffix with arbor or ether

40 “Tales of the City” novelist

57 Bygone gas brand

66 \_\_\_\_ Lanka

43 Make-up person?

58 “Take \_\_\_\_ breath”

68 “ \_\_\_\_ Beso”

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

SOLUTION TO WEDNESDAY'S PUZZLE 12/6/12

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

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit [www.sudoku.org.uk](http://www.sudoku.org.uk)

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HOROSCOPE | EUGENIA LAST

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Frankie Muniz, 27; Keri Hilson, 30; Margaret Cho, 44; Little Richard, 80.

**Happy Birthday:** Secrets will lead to a vulnerable position where you will be faced with decisions that transform your current lifestyle. Don't ruin a chance to get ahead because you are too involved in rumors. State facts and move forward with your plans tucked neatly away until you are ready to present something spectacular. Timing will be crucial. Your numbers are 7, 16, 21, 23, 32, 40, 46.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Actions within reason will bring suitable results. Avoid anyone trying to pressure you into spending or indulging in something you don't want to pursue. Disperse anger by putting more energy into getting stellar professional results. ★★★

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Don't wait for someone else to make a move. Watch how others respond and make your choices based on popular demand. A partnership can be advantageous if you spell out what you want and what you are willing to offer. ★★★★★

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Don't allow a personal involvement cause you to make a poor choice. An older colleague or friend may cause problems or added responsibilities if there is a misunderstanding due to technological devices. ★★

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** You are in control and should be moving forward with your plans with enthusiasm. Socializing and networking will lead to new acquaintances and business prospects. Love is on the rise, and spending quality time with someone will pay off. ★★★★★

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Someone will hold you back or try to control you. Make sure you have your plans thought out and ready to initiate. A problem with a child, lover or older family member will lead to added responsibilities. Make changes that ensure your safety. ★★★

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Information will be key to getting what you want and when. Discussing plans with family, friends or people in your community will help pave the way to turning a dream into a reality. Love is on the rise, and socializing will bring you joy. ★★★★★

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Big ideas are fine if they are reasonable. Do your fact-finding before you instigate something you may not be able to finish. Baby steps will help you reach a destination that is doable and can lead you to bigger and better opportunities. ★★★★★

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** A last-minute alteration must not ruin your plans. Juggle whatever is required to finish what you start. Taking hold of a situation will allow you the freedom to do as you please. Hide your emotions and you'll gain respect and support. ★★

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Problems with authority will set in if you don't honor rules and regulations. Caution while traveling will be necessary to avoid underhanded or unorthodox procedures being used to dominate a situation. Stick close to home. ★★

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Timing will be the key to your success. Watch what everyone else is doing and you will instinctively know when to make your move. A deal in the making will bend in your favor if you are patient, authoritative and show self-confidence. ★★★★★

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Not everyone will be looking out for your best interests. Let your intuition and innovative ideas guide you in a direction that will help you build a strong base that allows you to utilize your strengths. Adaptability and diversity equal success. ★★★★★

**PISCES (Feb. 19- March 20):** Keep things simple, to the point and within your budget. You'll come up with a plan that will help you please the ones you love. A positive turn of events will get you back on track financially, physically and emotionally. ★★★★★

**Birthday Baby:** You are willful and welcome a challenge. You are proud and unique.

JUMBLE | DAVID HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ADDEZ

ROYIV

ORPCEP

MUSOFA

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Find us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/jumble>

And one day I hope to have my own fleet of repair trucks.

HIS DESIRE TO OWN THE BIGGEST PLUMBING COMPANY IN TOWN WAS ----

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: EAGLE CRAMP STEREO POISON  
Answer: The rock climber saw these when he went to buy new climbing equipment — STEEP PRICES

THE OBSERVER

Published Monday through Friday, The Observer is a vital source of information on people and events in the Notre Dame and Saint Mary's Community.

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## FOOTBALL

COACHES DISPLAY  
UNEXPECTED SIMILARITYAllan Joseph  
Editor-in-Chief

Alabama coach Nick Saban is something of a mythic figure on the college football landscape. The best coach in the game not named after a Catholic pope, Saban has become a lightning rod for controversy — but he's indisputably one of the most feared coaches to prowl the opposing sidelines in the nation.

With a win Jan. 7, Irish coach Brian Kelly can prove to the nation he's a Saban-level coach. But in many ways, he already has.

It starts with the similarities in the coaches' resumes.

After restoring a languishing Michigan State program in the late 1990s, Saban transformed a sluggish LSU program, winning the Tigers' first national title in nearly 50 years and reshaping the program into one of the nation's elite. After coaching

in the NFL, Saban returned to Alabama to restore a once-great program into the unquestioned powerhouse of college football. At every stop he made, he took a struggling program and turned it around — not just with his brand of defensive football, but by instilling a winning mentality that demanded nothing less than excellence from his players.

Irish fans are by now well aware of Kelly's path. From Grand Valley State to Central Michigan, from Cincinnati to Notre Dame, he's proven he can win — and fast. And sure, until he arrived in South Bend, he won with offense. But what phrases have you heard time and time again from him? That's right: "Finding ways to win" and "unconscious competence."



AP

**Irish coach Brian Kelly and Alabama coach Nick Saban pose together in New York's Times Square. Kelly was named the Home Depot Coach of the Year on Wednesday. Saban won the award in 2008.**

The similarities don't end there.

Both coaches hire the best coordinators in the country, since they know they can't get the level of meticulous detail they need without a crack assistant coach. It's no surprise defensive coordinators Bob Diaco and Kirby Smart are among the hottest names to fill head coaching vacancies every offseason.

One might be a former political operative and the other notoriously grumpy with the media, but both know how to control their message to the outside world while keeping their players focused on the task at hand. It's uncanny, actually. On a media call Sunday, Kelly and Saban sounded like they were simply parroting each other. Witness:

"We're not going to be

thinking about anything but ... how [our players] worked hard and dedicated themselves to and what their goals and aspirations are in what they want to accomplish and how we can help them accomplish it as coaches."

"As coaches, we're so focused on getting our players prepared and developing our players at

see COACHES **PAGE 17**

## ND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL | BAYLOR 73, ND 61

## Different season, same result

Irish fall to Baylor  
in championship  
game rematch

By **MATTHEW ROBISON**  
Sports Writer

Despite 24 points and seven rebounds from freshman guard Jewell Loyd, No. 5 Notre Dame succumbed to defending national champion No. 3 Baylor 73-61 in Purcell Pavilion on Wednesday.

"We're just going to get so much better," Irish coach Muffet McGraw said. "We didn't shoot the ball as well as we could have. But Jewell, I thought, was outstanding. She really, really played well."

The Irish shut down Baylor senior All-American center Brittney Griner for the first several minutes of the game, limiting her touches by fronting and doubling down on her. But at the end of the first half, the Lady Bears caught fire, hitting their last nine shots of the period from the field and taking a 33-27 lead into halftime.

Loyd was 4-for-5 from behind the arc, but the rest of the Irish struggled offensively. Senior guard Skylar Diggins, who



JOHN NING | The Observer

**Irish senior guard Skylar Diggins goes up for a shot with Baylor senior center Brittney Griner defending her during Notre Dame's 73-61 loss to the Bears on Wednesday at Purcell Pavilion.**

Notre Dame has  
definitive holes in  
its armorCory Bernard  
Sports Writer

Despite boasting a pre-season top-10 ranking and the nation's best point guard, questions surrounded Notre Dame before the season began.

Would the loss of forward Devereaux Peters and her shot-blocking, rebounding prowess degrade the Irish defense?

Could senior guard Skylar Diggins shoulder even more of the offensive load with the graduation of backcourt running mates Natalie Novosel and Brittany Mallory?

In their last two games, wins over UCLA on Nov. 23 and Central Michigan on Nov. 29, Notre Dame showed chinks in its armor. Diggins struggled from the floor in both games. Though she totaled double figures in both contests, she shot a combined 11-for-32 and turned the ball over eight times. Hardly the numbers

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see PROBLEMS **PAGE 18**