

Jenkins relates faith, civil discourse

"Pizza, Pop and Politics," sponsored by NDVotes '16, brings together students and University president

By **MEGAN VALLEY**
News Writer

University President Fr. John Jenkins discussed faith, politics and civil discourse at "Pizza, Pop and Politics," a platform for political engagement sponsored by NDVotes '16, Tuesday afternoon in Geddes Hall.

Jenkins' leadership in the topic of civil discourse led him to be elected to the Commission on Presidential Debate's board of directors, a nonpartisan, non-profit organization that sponsors presidential and vice presidential debates.

"They [the commission members] are really fine people," Jenkins said. "What they care about is the country – I have my opinions, I have my beliefs, I have my perspective, but simply advancing my own interest doesn't necessarily help the health of the country. This is a

group that, clearly, their first priority is the health of the body of politics. That's what the discussion is like."

The national discussion is not always on that level, Jenkins said, as there is a "tendency to vilify the opponent" in discussion and especially in debate.

"We are pretty polarized," he said. "There was some recent research that shows people who are liberal tend to assign malicious motives to conservatives and conservatives tend to assign malicious motives to liberals ... that tendency, not simply that we disagree with people, but that we tend to vilify the opposition, I think, is a dangerous tendency. It undermines the real discussion."

Jenkins advised students to avoid this "media trap" of vilifying opposing views by keeping their opinions of a person and

see JENKINS **PAGE 3**



JOY QIAN | The Observer

Students gather in Geddes Hall Coffee House on Tuesday night to hear University President Fr. John Jenkins discuss the relationship between faith, politics and civil discourse.

African Student Association Weekend to celebrate culture, heritage

The African Students Association of Notre Dame
presents: **4th ANNUAL MIDWESTERN AFRICAN STUDENTS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE**

FEB. 5:
Visiting ASA groups check in
Opening mixer

FEB. 6:
Student panel: 9-11 a.m.
#ASATalks: 1-3 p.m.
"Africa Night" Cultural Showcase: 6:30-8:30 p.m.

FEB. 7:
Prayer service: 10 a.m.
Brunch to follow service

"Connecting to Africa: Uniting the Diaspora"
Feb. 5-7, 2016

SUSAN ZHU | The Observer

By **ANDREA VALE**
News Writer

Notre Dame's African Students Association (ASA) will hold its annual Midwestern African Students Association Conference February 5-7.

During the conference, several other African student associations from various Midwestern universities will participate in networking, discussion and a celebration of African culture, Ihuoma Nwaogwugwu, senior and president of Notre Dame's

ASA, said.

The African Students Association is a student organization dedicated to educating and celebrating with the Notre Dame community the rich

see AFRICA **PAGE 4**

Music education students develop professional skills

By **MARTHA REILLY**
News Writer

Saint Mary's membership to the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), which provides professional development opportunities and resources for those intending to teach music, proves that without the fine arts as a part of core curriculum, students would fall flat.

Visiting assistant professor of music Dawn Farmer, who initiated the Saint Mary's chapter during the 2014-2015 school year, said the organization helps students prepare for life after graduation.

"Students gain access to publications, research and teaching materials," Farmer said. "They are also given considerable networking opportunities. We can connect with other music education students all over the country, with practicing music

teachers in multiple fields and with professional musicians."

The club travels to workshops and conferences, where students refine skills from their music and education classes as they learn what exactly their future career entails, according to Farmer. She said traveling to these events benefits not only members of the club, but also the Saint Mary's community, because it gives students the chance to demonstrate leadership qualities.

"I feel that students who intend on being music teachers should start participating in the expectations for the field," Farmer said. "Other local music education programs respect us and know us to be positive, prepared and knowledgeable. At these music events, people may know of Saint Mary's College, but we set the bar for what Saint Mary's is,

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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL **PAGE 12**



MEN'S BASKETBALL **PAGE 12**

THE OBSERVER

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Corrections

In the Feb. 1 issue of The Observer, the story titled "SMC Implements New Study Abroad Program in Jamaica" was incorrectly attributed to Megan Valley. The story was written by Nicole Caratas. The Observer regrets this error.

QUESTION OF THE DAY:

What is your favorite emoji?

Have a question you want answered?

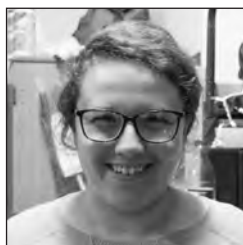
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Emily Heydon
freshman
Breen-Phillips Hall
"Blushing smiley."



Rebecca Wiley
sophomore
Cavanaugh Hall
"Smirk."



Allie Kroehler
junior
Le Mans Hall
"The poop emoji."



Courtney Thompson
junior
Breen-Phillips Hall
"Fire."



Michael Markel
junior
Dillon Hall
"Upside down smiley."



Miranda Reed
junior
Le Mans Hall
"The girl with the X arms."



EMMET FARNAN | The Observer

Junior Christopher Jarocki inspects a bulkhead for the full-scale rocket being built by the Notre Dame Rocketry Team for the NASA Student Launch Competition held in Huntsville, Alabama, this April. The club presented its full design to NASA on Tuesday.

THE NEXT FIVE DAYS:

Want your event included here?

Email news@ndsmcobserver.com

Wednesday

Panel Discussion

Geddes Hall
4:30 p.m.-6 p.m.
Q&A session for students considering graduate school.

Reading Series

O'Shaughnessy Hall
7:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
Notre Dame M.F.A. students will share personal work.

Thursday

Ethics Week Movie Night

Jordan Auditorium
7 p.m.-9 p.m.
Q&A session to follow movie, "Margin Call."

Evening of Traditional Irish Music

Legends of Notre Dame
7 p.m.-9 p.m.
Free music event.

Friday

Welsh Fam Dance Fest

Washington Hall
7 p.m.-10 p.m.
Performances from all ND dance clubs.

Labor Cafe

Geddes Hall
5 p.m.-6 p.m.
All are welcome to join the Higgins Labor Program for coffee.

Saturday

Men's Basketball vs. North Carolina

Purcell Pavilion
7 p.m.-10 p.m.
The Irish take on the Tar Heels.

Edith Stein Project

McKenna Hall
All day
Conference discussing challenges of faith, dignity and identity.

Sunday

La Misa en Español

Dillon Hall
1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.
All are welcome to this Mass celebrated in Spanish.

Men's Tennis vs. Ball State

Eck Tennis Pavilion
6 p.m.-8 p.m.
The Irish take on the Cardinals.

Dublin program incorporates service learning

By AIDAN LEWIS
News Writer

Rosie McDowell, the director of international community-based learning outreach for the Center of Social Concerns (CSC), shared her research regarding the community engagement of Notre Dame students in Dublin on Tuesday morning at the Geddes Hall Coffee House. McDowell discussed how Notre Dame's Dublin program integrates service learning with the study abroad experience.

While students study at host universities like Trinity College and University College Dublin, McDowell said they also have the opportunity to become involved in the community.

"Once in Dublin, the students are placed in a variety of social service organizations, serving at-risk youth in after school

programs, young adult refugees, the elderly, those who are homeless and individuals with special needs," McDowell said.

McDowell said the idea behind this program is supported by research, particularly that of Robbin Crabtree, dean of the Bellarmine College of Liberal Arts at Loyola Marymount University.

Crabtree's research has shown that "service learning and study abroad get students out of their comfort zone and also get them the support they need to understand their experiences," McDowell said.

McDowell said the research of Barbara Parker additionally emphasizes how service learning can complement any study abroad program.

"Students' effective and cognitive content learning is impacted similarly by study abroad and

service learning, but their connective learning, their personal road to development and solidarity to others is enhanced and more strongly impacted by service learning," McDowell said, summarizing the findings of Parker's research.

Such an integrated program is of particular importance for students studying in Europe, McDowell said, because many Americans' image of Europe is "composed of Disney representations." This program provides students with a more realistic view of European life.

"When a study abroad program is intentionally designed to give students opportunities to encounter the different facets of the community, the students contradict this imagined ideal that they carry with them," she said.

The service opportunities offered by the Dublin program

confront students with the very real social issues present in Ireland, McDowell said.

"They see firsthand the diversity of the immigrant families that are there and in need, the needs of the Irish homeless families, the growing need for after school programs for at-risk youth and the isolation of the elderly whose families may have all emigrated in search of better economic opportunity," she said.

"These encounters and engagements contrast greatly with the mythical, intoxicating images that students may have in mind on arrival," McDowell said.

For this reason, "adequate space is provided for unpacking these dissonances and contrasts" through reflection, she said.

This reflection occurs in the form of six journals spread throughout the semester,

McDowell said. These journals allow McDowell to see the effect this integrated study abroad and service-learning experience has on students.

"Students gain insight into Irish culture and politics, they make comparisons between Ireland and the United States, they develop some compassion and understanding for those that they serve, and they reflect on the importance of developing relationships and understanding people through dialogue," McDowell said. "They experience spiritual growth, they experience feelings of belonging, and they begin to think about their long term aspirations and how they might stay connected to the issue they worked on while they were there."

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Office of Undergraduate Admissions

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Jenkins

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their politics separate.

"You have a political perspective and you should advance that," he said. "But you should be careful about what you think of the opposite view. If you think they're wrong, that's one thing. But if you find yourself thinking that they're evil people, do an examination of conscience. It's a very Catholic idea — it's fine to disagree but are you disparaging them as human beings? There just isn't room for that."

Regarding the role faith plays in politics, Jenkins said values shaped by faith must still make sense in the context of the country's health.

"My views are certainly influenced by my faith and I don't think that disqualifies them," he said. "But obviously, I can't assume them. I have to appeal them — I have to appeal to the person who doesn't have faith, not just the person who does. I have to make them on a basis that doesn't assume my faith. You have to make a case for those values that makes sense in the public domain."

Sophomore Sarah Tomas Morgan, a co-chair of NDVotes '16, said the organization is a nonpartisan campaign sponsored by the Center for Social Concerns and the Rooney Center for the Study of American Democracy to promote "voter education, registration and mobilization."

"Our aim is to foster conscientious engagement in political and civic life amongst students," she said. "NDVotes is grounded in the U.S. bishops' call to political responsibility."

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Africa

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

cultures of Africa, Nwaogwugwu, said.

"The club seeks to establish a home away from home where Africans and those interested in learning more about Africa can come together and share their love for the continent," she said. "Our goal is to promote all aspects of African culture through informational meetings and monthly activities in hopes of bringing light to Africa and its future. We hope to better educate club members in hopes that they, in turn, can educate those around them."

According to Nwaogwugwu, the ASA hosts a variety of activities and fundraisers throughout the year. Notable events this year will include a joint discussion with the Black Student Association about "integral connections within the African Diaspora" in February, as well as a March reading from an African author.

This year marks the fourth Midwestern African Students Association Conference. Nwaogwugwu said the conference grew out of a previously annual "Africa Week" on campus, which inspired ASA leaders to "think it would be awesome to have a conference where we host other Midwest African student

organizations to gather for networking, conversations and entertainment, and thus began ASA weekend."

According to Nwaogwugwu, putting on this year's conference has involved a lot of preparation, including making sure the conference's panel is comprised of a diverse group of students and securing a line-up of performers and food.

The theme of this year's conference, according to the ASA website, is "Connecting to Africa: Uniting the Diaspora."

"The theme of our first conference was 'Africa is Not a Country,'" Nwaogwugwu said, "The 2014 theme was 'Changing the Face of Africa,' and last year our theme was 'This is New Africa.' We started this whole weekend with the intention of educating those around us as we strived to dispel a few of the misconceptions there might be about Africa as a whole, like it being a country. Each year since, we have continued the discussion and the sharing of personal experiences to make it easier to not form a single narrative about the place that many of us call home. This year's theme was selected because we feel the next logical step is to understand ways in which we can all connect back to Africa and use our unique talents to make it better."

According to the ASA website, as well as Nwaogwugwu,

the conference will begin on Friday with an opening mixer in the LaFortune Student Center Ballroom. The first event Saturday will be a panel discussion in the Carey Auditorium of the Hesburgh Library.

"A number of ND students that will share the ways they have and continue to connect with Africa," Nwaogwugwu said. "In the afternoon we will have #ASATalks which are academic, cultural and professional presentations [and] discussions."

"Africa Night" will be held in Stepan Center on Saturday evening and consist of a showcase of African-themed dance performances, songs and fashion and include the groups Troop ND and First Class Steppers. On Sunday the conference will conclude with a praise and worship service in the chapel of the Coleman-Morse Center and brunch in the Oak Room of South Dining Hall. Attendees of the conference include Notre Dame and Saint Mary's students as well as students at Wabash

College, Indiana University and Case Western Reserve University.

"I hope this conference informs more people about Africa, existing engagement opportunities, and about our club as a whole because (the) African Students Association, as well as ASA Weekend, is for Africans, Africa enthusiasts and those curious about Africa, because we would all love to share her with you," Nwaogwugwu said.

Contact Andrea Vale at avale@nd.edu

NAfME

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and we represent with pride."

Junior Allie Kroehler, who serves as treasurer of the club, said she is grateful she can develop her knowledge of her future profession.

"I have access to a lot of different music education journals, which I have used many times for research for my classes," Kroehler said. "Saint Mary's has given us a great opportunity to be able to major in this specific field, so it is important to acknowledge and appreciate that."

Kroehler said this organization gives students studying music education somewhere to belong, as it allows them to interact with like-minded peers who share similar aspirations.

"We are kind of caught between two departments — music and education," Kroehler said. "We are such a small population, and sometimes it can feel like we don't have a place in either department. NAfME has provided us place where we can come together and have any specific music education questions answered."

Kroehler said she enjoys working with others and learning about how to effectively advance and preserve music education's spot in the core curriculum of U.S. schools.

"It is really important for teachers to collaborate and work with others in their field," Kroehler said. "NAfME gives me the opportunity to work with other future music teachers and learn from them. We also have the opportunity to discuss how the music education field is changing and how it impacts us."

Farmer said she is happy this organization became active at Saint Mary's last year because it plays an integral role in catapulting students careers and in promoting a sense of unity among members.

"We continue to look for ways in which to bolster music education and music awareness within the community," Farmer said. "It gives us an opportunity to bring music education into other parts of the Saint Mary's community and beyond."

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By **JOHN DARR**
Scene Writer

Whenever I'm making something I deeply care about, whether a work of writing or music, there's a quiet desperation that hums at the core of my creative process. I think of all the artists who had already accomplished at 16 what I'm yet to do at 21. I think of the dreams I had as a kid and despair that I haven't reached them. Even though I'm still so young, I feel immense pressure to fulfill my potential now. Sometimes it drives me to do great work. Sometimes it leaves me staring at a blank page.

That desperation screams from the pages of NME's 2015 interview with Zachary Cole-Smith, frontman for Brooklyn guitar-rock band DIIV. Cole-Smith's battles with drug abuse and subsequent writer's block took hold of him after the release of DIIV's excellent first record "Oshin." His struggle to pull his life and music back together eventually

lead to the creation of second LP "Is the Is Are," which Cole-Smith views terrifyingly as his last chance to fulfill his potential. "I know I have to stay alive at least until the album's done," Cole-Smith brooded, "This is one shot at immortality if I ever have one. I know it's by far the most important thing I'll ever do."

When that make-or-break energy manifests itself on "Is the Is Are," DIIV shines brighter than ever before. The record's most propulsive tracks take the reverb-heavy guitar hooks, understated vocal melodies, and driving drums of "Oshin" and craft them into masterworks of the dream-pop genre. The guitar solos and instrumental bridge on upbeat numbers like "Out of Sight" and "Valentine" and the title track flow immaculately out of earworm verses and choruses. They recall the high moments of groups like "Murmur"-era R.E.M. and pre-"The Top" The Cure. The tracks are tight, catchy and in the case of clear highlights "Under the Sun" and "Dopamine,"

something close to transcendent. Paired with haunting lyrics regarding Cole-Smith's recovery — "Shots wringing out / I'm soaking / eardrums shaking and / years start weighing me down" — these tracks are emotionally engaging while still utterly enjoyable.

Where the record is less upbeat, the tracks tend to be slightly weaker. It's not so much that DIIV fails to replace the urgency of faster tracks with other musical elements, but rather that those elements simply aren't as engaging. On "Bent," fuzzy production pushes the track to shoegaze levels and unleashes some gritty guitar riffs. "Blue Boredom" calls back to Sonic Youth's drawled vocals while "Mire" and "Incarnate Devil" adopt the group's chaotic, dissonant riffing. Other tracks, like the repetitive "Take Your Time" and the sleepy "Healthy Moon," fall a bit flatter. However, even in the record's less compelling moments, "Is the Is Are" simultaneously boasts a plethora of different ideas and approaches to

songwriting and production without deviating from a cohesive sound.

It's safe to say that "Is the Is Are" is too inconsistent to be the masterpiece that Zachary Cole-Smith dreamed of making. That being said, it hits higher highs than its predecessor "Oshin" and continues to hint at DIIV's full potential. So long as the band continues to push itself towards greatness, it seems likely that DIIV is destined to create a classic record.

Contact John Darr at jdarr@nd.edu

"Is the Is Are"

DIIV

Label: Captured Tracks

Tracks: "Under the Sun," "Dopamine"

If you like: Wild Nothing, Beach Fossils, Real Estate



By **ADAM RAMOS**
Scene Writer

After the release of Vampire Weekend's 2013 Grammy Award-winning record "Modern Vampires of the City," the New York City indie quartet called it the final component to an album trilogy. While many predicted a musical change of direction, the preppy Africana-beatsters may have been foreshadowing a culmination. Rostam Batmanglij, the mastermind and producer behind the group's eclectic pop-rock sound, recently announced his departure from Vampire Weekend, marking an official end to one of music's freshest collaborations. While lead singer and lyricist Ezra Koenig has insisted the group will continue to make music, it's hard to envision Vampire Weekend without Batmanglij's extensive influence.

The news hit me hard — Vampire Weekend has always had a special place in my heart. I was a naive thirteen-year-old

when "Giving up the Gun," a track off of Vampire Weekend's second record "Contra" somehow found its way to my iPod nano. The dancing bongo beat, the harpsichord melody and the soft-spoken, quirky lyrics all presented something completely new to me. Until that point, my music collection was mostly hand-me-downs, but this song was novel in every sense. Though so different, the band was very approachable. From that point on music became more than a passive activity for me — it became a passion. Even today, that passion continues to drive my search for new music. While my tastes have warped and grown, Vampire Weekend has remained a pillar in my music library.

While the news of Rostam's departure was a tad shocking, all is certainly not lost. Though Rostam may no longer be producing music under Vampire Weekend, we can still expect to hear from him. In fact, Rostam has already released two solo tracks. The first "EOS" was

released shortly before the announcement, while "Wood" was delivered shortly after. Both songs are tremendously expansive productions, shedding the more simplistic structures of past Vampire Weekend tracks. Slow, minimal and pensive, "EOS" flows like hazy dream as Rostam laments, "Everyone of us has felt the lights go down." "Wood" begins with a sitar progression coalescing into a bouncing traditional Middle Eastern melody. Rostam's relaxed vocals reveal his Vampire Weekend roots, as a catchy hook follows with a swinging chant. Both songs emphasize a new direction for Rostam and the potential his newfound independence will provide.

Even beyond solo work, Rostam has announced his plans to release a full-length record with The Walkmen's frontman, Hamilton Leithauser. Speculating that the forthcoming collaboration album "might be one of the best records I make in my whole life" Rostam has already begun to set his sights high.

Remaining Vampire Weekend members have also been making some waves, playing along side Bernie Sanders at his recent Iowa Rally, and announcing work on their upcoming album currently titled "Mitsubishi Macchiato." In terms of future Vampire Weekend music, Rostam has stated he intends to contribute, at least a little bit.

It seems just like my music taste has evolved, so too has Rostam, and the rest of Vampire Weekend for that matter. Rostam told Pitchfork in a recent interview, "It's hard for people to see you as a producer with a musical identity when you're contextualized in a band that performs on a stage" — and he's right. I have always recognized Rostam's novel approach in the context of Vampire Weekend. If isolation is what he needs in order to achieve more, as hard as it is to admit, I really do support him.

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INSIDE COLUMN

Bad delivery of sad news

Katie Galioto

News Writer

I consider myself to be a pretty sentimental person. I like trying new things but I have a hard time letting go of the old ones, which is why I was upset when I first heard I would not be living in Walsh Hall next year.

The news was delivered in a University-wide email from the Division of Student Affairs. Next year, current residents of Pangborn Hall will move to the new women's residence hall. Walsh residents will move to Pangborn for the year while Walsh undergoes extensive renovations.

I have since come to terms with this reality. I will be sad to leave Walsh Hall at the end of this year. I will miss its high ceilings, stellar views, bay windows and unbeatable location. However, my favorite part about Walsh is not the building itself, but its very special community.

Walsh needs these renovations — in fact, they are long overdue. In the past year, part of the ceiling in a resident's private bathroom collapsed. Numerous sinks have backed up and flooded rooms. The heating units seem to be malfunctioning every other week.

I am happy and hopeful for the future of Walsh Hall. However, I was disappointed with the way this whole process was communicated to affected students.

One of our dorm's mantras is "Walsh means family." I have no doubt that we will maintain, and even strengthen, these family bonds throughout our move to Pangborn.

However, we were told, without any prior warning, that our family would not be able to live in our home next year.

I wish the University had informed students of its housing plans as they were being developed. Students' ideas and opinions may have been helpful. Instead of blindsiding people with this information, the University could have at least made the student body aware of the possible changes for planning purposes.

Many of my dormmates were enjoying an innocent Wednesday night dinner when they received texts and Snapchats about the news. Before even reading the novel sent out by Student Affairs, friends from other dorms were making jokes about the move via social media.

In today's technological age, news travels quickly. I don't think the University took this into consideration when it sent out its mass email. In my opinion, the University should have sent someone to deliver the news of the housing changes in person, before sending out the email. Walsh and Pangborn residents deserved to hear this news together, in their respective homes.

I will forever be grateful that I was randomly placed in Walsh Hall as a freshman at Notre Dame. In Walsh, I have formed friendships that I know will last long after graduation. Although I am sad this will be my last semester in Walsh, I am thankful that our beloved yellow-brick building will now certainly be around for many years to come.

Contact Katie Galioto at kgalioto@nd.edu

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

The man-faced bug: a fable

Ray Ramirez

The Crooked Path

Native to Southeast Asia and India, the man-faced stink bug, *catacanthus incarnatus*, is a real bug about the size of a thumbprint. On its back it bears a pattern that resembles a man's face.

Our story is set in a small farming village...

The man came home from a day of hard labor. He walked past his wife, who was preparing a meal in the kitchen, and glanced at the children who were playing in the front room. He entered his bedroom, closed the door behind him and fell into an old overstuffed chair.

"I am so tired," he mumbled to himself. He was tired from hard work and tired from haggling with merchants. He was tired of always scrambling to find money to pay for food, rent and the doctor to take care of his wife and children. "If I could just get a break, just get ahead a little, maybe then I could change my luck," he thought.

You see, the man — who had a small but fertile farm, a loving wife and devoted children — thought he was poor and cursed to remain so forever. "Oh God," he pleaded, "You make so many people wealthy who work so little, why can't you change my fortune?"

As he closed his eyes and lowered his head, he felt a tickle on the back of his neck. He knew that swatting at some insects made them bite or sting, so instead he swept at the site with his hand, gently snatching the annoying visitor. He slowly uncoiled his fingers, and was surprised to see a small orange face staring back at him. Initially startled, he recognized the insect in his hands as a man-faced bug.

These bugs were pests, sometimes completely enveloping cashew trees, ruining the crop. They were not common in this area, as he and his neighbors did not raise crops the bugs typically ate. He also knew they were stink bugs, and he would need to handle it gently to avoid triggering its unpleasant smell.

He reached for a tissue and carefully swaddled the bug in it. He studied the face on the back of the bug; it looked like Christ in repose, as on the picture of the Shroud of Turin the village priest kept in his office. "Why would God put his son's face on a bug; could this be a sign that my luck is changing?" he thought.

The bug slipped from the tissue and landed on a newspaper tossed on the bed. The bug walked across the photograph of some soccer players and stopped over the upcoming weekend's dog races. With no hesitation the bug plopped excreta from its hind end on the name of a dog in the first race. The bug then stood off to one side, tilting its man-face towards the name, so that it appeared to nod approval.

The man looked at the marked name then at the

bug, and decided he needed to act on this matter. The man placed the bug in a small box and went to bed that night without eating.

He got up early and told his wife he had business in town. He went directly to the betting parlor, pulled out an envelope that contained rent and medicine money, and placed a generous bet on the dog selected by the bug. His heart pounded as the dogs started the first race.

"This is madness," he thought. "My wife will leave me when she hears I wasted our money gambling, relying on a bug." He hardly heard the call of the race and sat numb as the winner was announced: the selection made by the bug and its poop had won.

As he walked home, the man thought that while he would replace the money, he should not tell his wife about his winnings. "She is very superstitious and will think the bug is evil and the money must be cursed. No, it's better for her if I don't tell her about the money," he thought.

He continued on this way for many months, letting his farm fall into disrepair while the bug selected winners of races, stocks to invest in and politicians to support. He cut himself off from his family, stashing away his money, always fretting that the bug must soon die or its magic would end and he would sink back into poverty. His wife grew concerned, and his children longed for the times when their father played with them or at least had a kind word.

One day the man was not to be found. His wife searched the fields and asked the neighbors for help, but no one had seen him. She went into the bedroom, sat alone on the edge of the bed and wept. She thought maybe it was something she had said or done, but she heard of other men who had disappeared, perhaps to avoid responsibilities of work and family. As she wept, she felt something alight on her arm. It was a bug that had a man's face on its back.

It startled her, and she recalled that these bugs must be handled carefully. She walked slowly to the bathroom, lowered her arm over the commode and brushed the bug into the water. It flailed frantically, trying to spread its wings and escape. She felt sorry for the bug, but she did not want it to stink up her house so she quickly flushed it away to get rid of it.

As she sat back on the bed, another thought came to her: the mattress on her husband's side of the bed felt lumpy, as if it were stuffed with paper.

Moral: Where your heart is, there your treasure will be.

Ray Ramirez is an attorney practicing, yet never perfecting, law in Texas while waiting patiently for a MacArthur Genius Grant. You may contact him at patrayram@sbcglobal.net

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

Join the conversation.
Submit a Letter to the Editor.
viewpoint@ndsmcobserver.com

Playing the blame game in Flint

Elizabeth Hascher

Dignified Response

The water crisis in Flint, Michigan continues to make daily headlines. As more details are released, focus has shifted from determining how lead was introduced to the water source to finding someone to blame the crisis on. There is certainly plenty to go around, and most of it appears to lie with government officials who failed to take notice of or act on complaints from Flint residents.

Gov. Rick Snyder's recently released emails show state government officials knew of possible issues with the Flint water source well before they advised residents to stop drinking the water. Instead of taking complaints seriously, they were brushed aside or left to other departments to handle without much follow-up.

Local government, including the appointed city manager, also played a role in allowing problems with Flint's water to be overlooked. Ignoring citizens' complaints, former mayor Dayne Walling claimed last April that he and his family used Flint water every day. He stressed there was no cause for concern, despite mounting evidence suggesting otherwise.

Even Susan Hedman, an EPA official responsible for the Flint area, has resigned amidst the scandal surrounding the crisis. Flint citizens and the general public are blaming the government and each level of government is pointing its finger at one another.

It is easy for someone seemingly uninvolved in the crisis to blame inept government officials. Accusing them of corruption and lack of concern for Flint residents appears to be relatively straightforward — people at all levels of government chose to ignore what the

residents of Flint were saying because they are poor and the government is beholden to wealthy interests.

Even Hillary Clinton noted that something like this would not happen in an affluent, white neighborhood. Other notable figures like Bernie Sanders and Michael Moore made similar claims that it is unacceptable for government officials to have dismissed the Flint residents' concerns as foolish and that they did so because of their bias against Flint's poor, minority citizens.

For an effective, long-term solution to the Flint water crisis to developed, however, we must consider the broader context of the situation and the systems and structures that allowed such an injustice to take place. The blame cannot entirely be placed on government officials, as tempting as it is. Certainly the indifferent attitudes of officials towards the Flint water crisis are unacceptable, but we cannot pretend that we are all above enabling the spread of discriminatory attitudes against the poor.

As a Michigan resident, it is frustrating to see how the state government mismanaged the situation, but I must also admit that Flint is not a dearly beloved city that people enjoy visiting. Even though it is not always expressed explicitly, there is a pervasive sentiment that Flint is an unpleasant place to drive through and a rather unfortunate city in which to live.

We all know a place like Flint — whether it is a street, a city or even an entire region — that is looked down upon due to its high levels of poverty. It is important to recognize that through our words, our jokes and their underlying implications, many of us have likely played a role in furthering these discriminatory attitudes that we are currently blaming the Snyder administration and other government officials for.

Bias against the poor is not a new phenomenon and inaction on their behalf by the government is certainly not new either. Stereotypes that the poor are lazy, do not care about education or are ineffective parents remain common, despite empirical evidence that suggests otherwise. Additionally, studies have demonstrated that senators vote more frequently with the preferences of their wealthier citizens and less often with those of the poorest among their constituents.

It is reasonable to be angry that officials ignored the complaints of residents and that there is a lack of accountability and transparency. However, we cannot all pretend to be above discriminating against the poor. When we joke about people from the South marrying their cousins or make comments about how we would never want to live in “that neighborhood,” we spread the very same prejudice that contributed to government officials ignoring the voices of the constituents they were supposed to protect.

Governor Snyder, the EPA and the Flint government should be held accountable for their inability to provide clean, safe water for constituents, but we must also consider how our own inactions and attitudes of indifference and discrimination toward the poor are just as unacceptable as those of the elected officials we are holding responsible for the Flint water crisis. Perhaps they are not the only ones deserving of blame.

Elizabeth Hascher is a sophomore from Grand Rapids, Michigan. She is a resident of Lewis Hall and studies political science with a minor in international development studies. She can be reached at ehascher@nd.edu

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

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

In defense of new Mendoza policy

I would like to provide our readership some additional insight on the University's undergraduate admissions practices for the Mendoza College of Business.

First, the Mendoza enrollment target was established by University senior leadership in consultation with College Deans and the Enrollment Division in early 2014. Current first-year students are the first class impacted by this policy. Second, the University believes the enrollment target and internal transfer process provides ample opportunity for exploration and, in some cases, creates better opportunities for discernment for all Notre Dame students. I will provide background on both points.

We had more than 4,200 business applicants last year and we were able to offer all but 33 admitted students entry into the first-year program with pre-approval for business as sophomores. The students indicating business as their intent are completing exactly the same application as everyone else. It should also be understood that any student enrolled as a first-year student with a pre-approved admission to Mendoza is free to select any other major at any time, just like they have in the past.

Among the nation's top universities with an undergraduate business program, Notre Dame ranks first in the percentage of degrees conferred to students studying business at over 27 percent. The new enrollment target maintains Notre Dame's ranking in the percentage of degrees conferred and stabilizes enrollment in Mendoza at about 27 percent of the undergraduate student body. While all of the best undergraduate business programs have an admissions cap in one form or another, we believe that our implementation is the fairest to students.

At Notre Dame, we ask that high school seniors indicate an intended course of study. If that course of study is business, we ask them to provide an alternative intended course of study. If there is not room for a student with a primary intent to study business at

Mendoza, we have flexibility to offer students admission at Notre Dame to pursue the alternative intent. Students like this can always attempt to gain admission to Mendoza through our internal transfer process. No other university with a top undergraduate business school provides this freedom. Consequently, students not admitted to another university's business program are denied admission to that university.

Limiting positions in fields of study has been practiced in the past and will continue to be evaluated in other fields in the future if circumstances require. This is part of a normal enrollment management practice that essentially all universities follow. As it relates to Mendoza, growing enrollments in the college were challenging two priorities. First, as one of the top undergraduate business programs, Mendoza needs to protect the quality of its classroom experiences. Mendoza leadership believed that forecasted growth trajectories would have strained the quality of the Mendoza education. This needed to be managed and protected.

Second, there was a desire to ensure that all undergraduates continue to have access to courses offered through Mendoza as part of their entire educational experiences. This directly benefits all students by infusing these courses with a greater diversity of experiences and thoughts. Without an enrollment cap, most opportunities for non-Mendoza students to take classes offered by the college would have had to be eliminated.

It is true that students not pre-approved for Mendoza have to apply for internal transfer instead of just electing to make the change, but we believe there is value added by the formal process. We all know that first-year students learn a great deal during the first semester. They come to better understand their talents and interests as well as the opportunities that exist within different fields of study. Students benefit from the counseling and resources from our staff in the College of First Year of Studies as well as the upperclass

students in residence halls to obtain a more sophisticated understanding of their options.

It is incumbent on the student to think why he or she wishes to major in a business field rather than pursue business as a career while majoring in a broader area of academic interests. Both paths may lead to the same destination after graduation. The internal transfer process requires students to think and articulate, “Why Mendoza?” If selected, the student has until late March to make the decision, just like all other first-year students in the past.

Some of our most successful graduates involved in global business leadership roles were not business majors at Notre Dame. Many current top employers understand this and recruit all majors at Notre Dame. One of our most famous business majors isn't exactly practicing business these days — Nicholas Sparks, a world-renowned author and movie producer. Students should be very excited about the quality of the Mendoza College of Business, but they can be equally excited about the prospect of dynamic careers through other avenues of educational experience at Notre Dame that will still lead them to leadership roles in business.

It is important in the discernment process to actually discern who you are, what really motivates you and what is truly rewarded in the real world that is outside of cliché thinking that is all too dominant in colleges today, even among collections of the brightest students at competitive universities. We should not confuse our desire to make any decision we want with the importance of making more informed choices. The process now requires more discernment and on the same time frame as it has in the past. The limited number of spaces requires all of us to think more and assert that thinking. That in itself is a healthy outcome.

Don Bishop

Associate Vice President of Undergraduate Enrollment
Feb. 2

CROSSWORD | WILL SHORTZ

- Across**
1 Baby docs
4 Replay view, often
9 Plays, as records
14 Org. whose logo features the letter pi with an arrow through it
15 Like wickerwork
16 Comic Cheech
17 Pipe joint
18 Start of a quip by 44-Across
20 1980s Salvadoran president
22 Parliament, e.g., in brief
23 "That's all ____ wrote"
24 Courtier who invites Hamlet to duel with Laertes
25 Key in the middle of the top row
27 "Oh, c'mon!"
28 Quip, part 2
30 Overly assertive
- 31 Nietzsche's "never"
32 Wood used in making some dartboards
33 \$\$\$ for later years
34 Quip, part 3
39 "____ This, Not That! The No-Diet Weight Loss Solution!"
40 "Breaking Bad" network
41 Bagel accompaniment
44 Writer Brendan
47 Quip, part 4
50 ____ -retentive
51 London jazz duo?
52 Greenskeeper's tool
53 Rejections
54 Campaign freebie
55 One of the Beverly Hillbillies
56 End of the quip
60 Awards ceremony rental
- Down**
1 You are here
2 Only person to have the #1 movie, #1 album and #1-rated late-night TV show all in the same week
3 On the payroll
4 Feature of Dr. Frankenstein's lab
5 Come up short
6 Fertility clinic stock
7 Cry over spilled milk, perhaps?
8 Tripping
9 Urban woe
10 Bit of butter
11 Van Gogh masterpiece
12 Recesses
13 Bashful companion
19 Invalidate
21 Detroit rapper ____ -A-Che
25 Peter who played Columbo
26 Data holder on a cellphone
27 "The Ghost of Tom ____" (1995 Bruce Springsteen album)
29 Shipped
- 61 Watches like a wolf
62 Holder for a toilet paper roll
63 Pittsburgh-to-Baltimore dir.
64 Word with cookie or rap
65 Flip over
66 Chemin ____ Dames (W.W. I battle locale)

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

R	I	C	H		G	T	O	S		S	C	A	M	P
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T	I	C		R	O	L	L	E	R	S	K	A	T	E
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D	O	U	B	L	E	T	A	K	E	S		P	I	P
T	O	R	R	E	S		O	R	A		P	S	A	
A	N	T	I	C		J	O	H	N	K	E	A	T	S
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61						62						63		
64						65						66		

Puzzle by Brendan Emmett Quigley

30 It's held up with a hook

33 Resident of the ancient city Choquequirao

35 True

36 Actor McKellen

37 ____ Kitchen (organic frozen food company)

38 Came down

42 Make a cliché

43 Some duplicates

44 Relatives of ukuleles

45 "All right already!"

46 Give a hard time

47 "Gracias" reply

48 Thing watched while driving through a speed trap

49 Subj. of the 1948 Nobel in Physiology or Medicine

51 Small blemish, in slang

54 "Hey!"

55 Razz

57 Pipe joint

58 62-Across, e.g.

59 Duo

For answers, call 1-900-285-5656, \$1.49 a minute; or, with a credit card, 1-800-814-5554. Annual subscriptions are available for the best of Sunday crosswords from the last 50 years: 1-888-7-ACROSS. AT&T users: Text NYTX to 386 to download puzzles, or visit nytimes.com/mobilexword for more information. Online subscriptions: Today's puzzle and more than 2,000 past puzzles, nytimes.com/crosswords (\$39.95 a year). Share tips: nytimes.com/wordplay. Crosswords for young solvers: nytimes.com/learning/xwords.

JUST ADD WATER | JOHN RODDY & ERIC CARLSON

FLING BY SPRING | RILEY MCCURRIE

SUDOKU | THE MEPHAM GROUP

Level: 1 2 3 4

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

SOLUTION TO TUESDAY'S PUZZLE 8/29/12

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

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

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HOROSCOPE | EUGENIA LAST

Happy Birthday: Your secretive nature will serve you well. Use your intuition to decipher what others are thinking and you will avert problems before they arise. A lifestyle change will be caused by outside influences. Make the most of whatever situation you face, and you will make unexpected gains. Change is good, but risk is not. Protect against injury and loss. Your numbers are 6, 13, 22, 25, 32, 34, 43.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't share your opinion until you know how everyone around you feels about the concerns you have. An impulsive act will be costly. Avoid getting into a debate with someone who can affect your reputation, status or advancement. ★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): An expert will teach you something that allows you to express your talents in a diverse and trendy manner. An opportunity will catch your eye. Plan a trip that will encourage you to spend quality time with someone you love. ★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't reveal how you feel or what you intend to do. Focus on how you can improve your life and future. Someone you work with will be jealous of your ability and could withhold information that will cause you to make a mistake. ★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You'll receive interesting information from an unusual source. Find a way to put what you discover to your advantage. A day trip or partnering with someone you encounter at a networking function will lead to a beneficial enterprise. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Share your concerns with someone who is equipped to help you make a difference. Take on a physical and mental challenge that will enable you to strengthen your body, mind and soul, and show others what you are capable of doing. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Do something that excites you and will allow you to use your skills to improve your life. Friendly encounters will spark your imagination. Share an adventure with someone you love, and you will find common ground that will bring you closer together. ★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): The plans you have will be thwarted by someone who is trying to control your life. Don't discuss what you want to do until you have fully explored your options and can deliver a flawless, well-researched presentation. ★★★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Take on a project that is geared toward helping others or promoting a cause that concerns you. The information you gather will change your mind about what you want to do and how you want to live. A unique lifestyle change looks inviting. ★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Anxiety and frustration will result from a misunderstanding or poor information someone gives you. Stick close to home, where you can work quietly on your own to maximize your efforts of reaching your set goal. ★★★

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Don't let the changes other people make influence your decisions. It's important to be true to yourself and your beliefs. A joint venture with someone who is reliable will lead to bigger and better opportunities. ★★★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Emotional situations will escalate and are best handled diplomatically. An unbiased opinion will help you come to terms with the information you receive. A professional change will turn out to be more favorable than anticipated and could help boost your popularity. ★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Make love a priority. Take on a project that will help improve your lifestyle or contribute to an optimistic attitude. A creative or innovative project will help you look at life differently. Love will enhance your personal life. ★★★★★

Birthday Baby: You are quick-witted, perceptive and competitive. You are loyal and possessive.

JUMBLE | DAVID HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

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

DKVOA


MTEEH

LWIWOL

CTEOKP

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



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

Answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: PRIZE TIGHT DOOMED FUMBLE
Answer: He acted his worst, after his opponent got the — BETTER OF HIM

WORK AREA

CLASSIFIEDS

PERSONAL

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

Call AJ at 574 312-3078 or email ajhughes71@gmail.com

clearly / But never thought I'd be alone to try / Once I was outside Penn Station / Selling red and white carnations / You were still alone/ My wife and I / Before we marry, save my money / Brought my dear wife over / Now I want to bring my family state side

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SPORTS AUTHORITY

Johnson retires at right time



Marek Mazurek
Sports Writer

As a Chicago Bears fan, I know firsthand the feeling of complete and utter helplessness that comes with watching Calvin Johnson play football.

He makes NFL cornerbacks look like high school benchwarmers. He makes defensive coordinators look plain silly, and he gives Matthew Stafford a reason to get up every morning.

Unfortunately for Lions fans, those statements should now be in past tense as Johnson announced his retirement this past week.

Johnson's decision to retire is hard for some to understand. He is only 30 years old, and he has a realistic shot to reach number two on the all-time receiving yards list if stays on pace.

I, however, 100 percent respect Johnson's decision to retire.

Too often in the NFL, and professional sports in general, we see great players stay with the game far too long in pursuit of glory, attention or one last chance to win a championship.

Brett Favre, Kobe Bryant, Donovan McNabb, Michael Jordan, Brian Urlacher. The list of world-class athletes who diminished their legacies, to varying degrees, by not retiring when the time was right goes on and on.

However, the list of athletes who went out on top is long as well. John Elway, Mariano Rivera, Lou Gehrig and Ray Lewis all come to mind. And this is where Calvin Johnson belongs.

Now, it's easy to retire if you've just won a Super Bowl, like Elway and Lewis, or have had one of the greatest careers of all-time like Rivera. But to retire in the peak of one's career without having won a playoff game takes courage and brains. For this, I commend Johnson.

Johnson was in the later stages of his peak. He was the best receiver in the NFL for a number of years and even now, he is still in the top three. By retiring now, Johnson ensures he will be remembered as one of the

best to ever play the game. We will still think of Kobe Bryant as one of the best to ever play the game as well, but there will always be that little asterisk of how poorly he played in his final season.

And to those who say Johnson should have stuck around to get that first playoff win. Have you watched the Detroit Lions play? They are not going to win a playoff game anytime soon.

Then there are some who say Johnson should wait until his contract with Detroit is up and join a playoff contender. This happens fairly often in professional sports, but again, I commend Johnson for staying loyal to the Lions.

Johnson has been with Detroit his whole career and his decision to retire a Lion rather than chase a championship somewhere else will only endear him further to the Detroit faithful.

Even though Johnson is relatively young to retire, he has suffered a number of minor injuries. Even Megatron can get some bumps and bruises and a sprained ankle and a dislocated finger hampered Johnson's production last season.

I am not Johnson's personal doctor, but I bet more injuries were in Johnson's future considering his high volume of targets.

Lastly, in a league all about money and winning, it is refreshing to see a player of Johnson's caliber acknowledge there's more to life than playoff victories and multimillion-dollar contracts. Johnson did not win when it mattered most, and he is giving up three million dollars by retiring right now. Yet no one can question Johnson's professionalism, or his greatness.

And though he is ending his career earlier than many, I hope Johnson is remembered for what he was: a class act and one of the best receivers the game has ever seen.

Contact Marek Mazurek at mmazurek@nd.edu

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

SMC BASKETBALL

Belles look to even season series against Thunder

By R.J. STEMPAK
Sports Writer

Saint Mary's takes on Trine for the second time this season Wednesday.

In the first contest between the two teams on Dec. 12, the Thunder (12-7, 5-6) came out victorious, 71-40, with the Belles shooting 27 percent to the Thunder's 50 percent.

The Belles (1-19, 1-10 MIAA) currently rank ninth in the conference, while Trine (12-7, 5-6) stands ahead at fifth. The Thunder are averaging 64.5 points, 35.9 rebounds and nearly 12 assists per game. Behind the Thunder's success are sophomores forward Haley Martin and guard Brandi Dawson. The sophomore duo leads the team in points with 15.2 and 13.3 points per game, respectively. Martin leads the team in rebounding with 6.7 per game, while Dawson leads the team in three-point shooting, converting on 36.7 percent of her attempts.

Saint Mary's head coach Jennifer Henley said slowing the pair down will be vital for the Belles.

"We have to have a great team effort on Haley Martin and Brandi Dawson — both former Division I players now playing for Trine this season," Henley said. "Martin does a lot for them in the paint, while Dawson is really quick off the drive."

"They work very well together and lead Trine on the offensive end."

Offensively, the Belles have averaged 61 points per game over their last two games, which puts them above their season average of 55.2. Saint Mary's has not only scored in bulk but also efficiently, posting 43 and 46 percent shooting in their previous two games.

Continuing this trend will put the Belles in a strong position against the Thunder, Henley said.

"Against Trine last time, we got good looks at the basket, just couldn't get them to fall," Henley said. "We have to work hard to get paint points this time around."

Senior forwards Eleni Shea and Krista Knapke are tasked with scoring inside for the Belles. Shea, who has averaged 21.5 points

per game over the last two outings, will continue to be the fulcrum point for the Belles as scoring high-percentage shots from the paint remains critical to the Belles' offense. Another senior captain, guard Maddie Kohler, enters Wednesday's matchup coming off a career-high 17 points against Alma on Sunday. A source of offense from the perimeter, Kohler adds to the Belles' ability to beat the Trine defense, which currently holds opponents to just 36 percent shooting on the season.

The Belles look to even the season series against Trine on Wednesday at Angela Athletic Facility at 7:30 p.m.

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Padanilam

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Sounds like this season is following that all too familiar script as well.

Or is it?

This season's script actually appears to be a little bit different than past. In each of the last three seasons, the Irish have had four players average at least eight points-per-game scoring. This season, however, they have six. And this doesn't include senior guard Michaela Mabrey, who has been a go-to scorer for the Irish in the past.

But that's not to say Mabrey has underperformed this season. In reality, the team is just deeper than it has been in the past. Sophomore forward Brianna Turner and junior guard Lindsay Allen have continued their strong performances from last season. Graduate student guard Madison Cable and sophomore forward Kathryn Westbeld have flourished in the large roles as first-time starters this season.

The difference for this squad is the scoring off the bench they get, particularly from freshmen guards Marina Mabrey and Arike Ogunbowale. Both are averaging double digit points-per-game this season, something the Irish have not had from a single player off their bench the last three seasons. The top of Irish roster has consistently contributed over the years, but this newfound depth has allowed Irish head coach Muffet McGraw to try different lineups and enable the team to overcome early-season injuries and the departure of junior forward

Taya Reimer.

Within context, even the lone blemish on Notre Dame's resume this season can be seen positively. The 10-point win is tied for the narrowest margin of victory the Huskies have had this season, and it was against an Irish squad that was without its top-scorer Turner, who was out with a shoulder injury. Despite lacking its interior offense and defense, the Notre Dame moved the ball effectively and found open shooters, thanks to the depth they possess on the perimeter. They shot 13-20 from beyond the arc in the loss, a marked improvement over the 15-44 total from the three postseason losses they've suffered at the hands of the Huskies.

Even when the 3s have failed to fall for the Irish, they've found generated offense to win games. Westbeld's improvement has given them a player they can run the offense through from the high post against the zone, while Turner's continued inside presence gives them a go-to option when opposing defenses play tighter along the perimeter.

The Irish have been a perennial title-contender season after season. Yet, this could be the best team, top to bottom, that McGraw has had to work with in a while. There's still a long way to go in the season, but so far Notre Dame's performance has left people wondering: Is this the year?

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



GRACE TOURVILLE | The Observer

Irish freshman guard Marina Mabrey prepares to go up for a layup during Notre Dame's 79-66 win over Tennessee on Jan. 18 at Purcell Pavilion. Mabrey is third on the team in scoring with 11.7 points per game.



GRACE TOURVILLE | The Observer

Irish freshman guard Arike Ogunbowale drives towards the lane during Notre Dame's 79-66 win over Tennessee on Jan. 18.

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don't get much easier for Notre Dame. No. 2 North Carolina comes to town Saturday, just before a set of games the following week at Clemson and home to No. 19 Louisville, who beat the Tar Heels earlier this week.

It's why Irish head coach Mike Brey's call to start senior forward A.J. Burgett on Sunday looks so wise right now.

I'll be the first to admit that like most, I was pretty surprised when the Avon, Indiana, native got the nod in the starting five a few days ago. Burgett had played just 41 minutes all season, about exclusively in garbage time, and hadn't really made much of an impact since before he had heart surgery his sophomore year.

On Sunday, at least, Brey looked like a genius, as Burgett gave the Irish 14 points on 5-of-7 shooting in a dominant win.

For a team that has at times struggled to space the floor the way they did last year — sophomore forward Bonzie Colson really isn't the "stretch four" Notre Dame loves to utilize, while freshman forward Matt Ryan's shot has run dry the last couple weeks — Burgett facilitates that brilliantly. He's a good enough shooter and burns opponents who leave him open, while his 6-foot-9 frame allows him to be influential on the boards, something he showed Sunday when he grabbed rebounds on Notre Dame's first two defensive possessions to set the tone.

"With Burg just shooting the shots and the three-ball, he spaces the floor well," junior guard Demetrius Jackson

said Sunday. "He was a great weapon for us, and we want to continue having him in there."

If a prospective lottery pick agrees with my assessment, I think we're good.

But Burgett's impact on the Irish on Sunday went far beyond his on-court play; the senior is one of Notre Dame's four captains for a reason and being able to lead from the court rather than the bench elevated the play of his teammates against the Demon Deacons.

Brey attributed part of senior forward Zach Auguste's strong double-double performance Sunday to having his road-trip roommate with him in the starting five, while Burgett spoke himself of the tight bond he has with the freshmen on Notre Dame's roster this year. If his work ethic can bleed through on the court during games and not just practice, it

allows him to become a more influential leader across the board. And that's something that can only be a positive for this Notre Dame team headed into a crucial stretch.

Starting Burgett allowed Brey to roll out five upperclassmen to open the game against Wake Forest — a pair of juniors, guard Steve Vasturia and forward V.J. Beachem joined Auguste, Jackson and Burgett in the starting five — and that's something Irish fans have to like seeing, especially after a young team struggled mightily on the road at Syracuse last Thursday.

The next four games are key for the Irish. Failure to win any of them would sling Notre Dame to seven conference losses, putting them in a position where they'd likely need to win out to make the NCAA field in March. With a weak ACC schedule — the Irish

have played Boston College twice and have second games with Georgia Tech and Wake Forest coming — 11-7 may well be the floor for making the tournament.

But split it 2-2 and Notre Dame will stay right on track for a 12-6 league record, a top-five seed in the ACC tournament and a spot in the NCAA tournament come March.

And now that we've turned the calendar to February, the time's right for Brey to rely on his veteran leadership to step up and lead this team away from the bubble in the next 11 days. Not toward it.

Now it's time for the elders to deliver.

Contact Alex Carson at acarson1@nd.edu

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even-keeled.

"Bounce back mode will truly be tested," Brey said. "I think for us, we can't get too high or too low after great wins or tough losses, keep plugging. The biggest thing I have to do is make sure I pace them physically. Especially this stretch we're in right now, we just need to be fresh and ready to compete on game day and not over practice."

The Hurricanes are also struggling to find consistency, as they stand in seventh place in the conference despite being ranked No. 17 in the Associated Press. Brey praised Miami's athleticism and said his team must be prepared to defend come Wednesday night.

"[Miami is] older, athletic as heck," Brey said. "I think

they can contest us and deny us with their physicality. They have the ability to take you one on one. They have a lot of guys that can drive the ball at your throat and with the new rule, it's hard to guard them without fouling.

"So you've got to move your feet, and I thought we did a good job [against Wake Forest] of moving our feet on some real physical drivers ..."

Who exactly will match up against the Hurricanes for the Irish will be a point of interest. Brey has shown his willingness to mix and match lineups as the season progresses. Freshmen forward Matt Ryan and guard Rex Pflueger and senior forward Austin Burgett have all made appearances in the recent Irish starting lineups. After the Wake Forest game Sunday, Brey said he plans to keep Burgett in the starting lineup against Miami. The Irish took down

Wake Forest, 85-62.

Junior forward V.J. Beachem said the addition of Burgett to the starting lineup improves the team's communication.

"One thing that we noticed right away, especially in practice, is our communication," Beachem said. "I think we have better communication when all five veteran voices are out there talking. It really helps us out defensively and even offensively we had a better flow at the beginning of the game than we do some other nights."

Junior guard Steve Vasturia echoed Beachem's statements and said the wealth of options the team has can be difficult for opponents to handle.

"We've got weapons people might not have on the scouting report, they might not know much about," Vasturia said. "And if they can make an impact on the game whether it's scoring or defending, that's going to really help us."

Though Jackson and Burgett stole the headlines against the Demon Deacons, Brey credited Vasturia and his offensive contribution as a reason the team currently ranks third in the conference.

"He was a spot up shooter for the most part last year," Brey said. "We do ball screen for him more so he is getting into the lane to make plays. One thing about Steve that you're so impressed with is whatever new thing you give him to do, he is so gifted and so smart in a basketball sense, he picks it up so quickly ... [Former Irish guard] Jerian [Grant] and Demetrius attacked last year off the ball screens. Steve gets to do it this year, and I think he's really grown and gotten confident in that role."

The Irish and Hurricanes are slated to tip-off at 7:10 p.m. at United Center. The game will be aired on ESPN2.

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MEN'S BASKETBALL

Time to shine

Burgett provides spacing, leadership for ND on the floor



Alex Carson
Associate Sports Editor

After Sunday's win against Wake Forest, Notre Dame is halfway home.

Heading into Wednesday's contest at No. 17 Miami (Fla.), the Irish (15-6, 6-3 ACC) have hit the midway point of their ACC schedule doing exactly what they've needed to: only falling once at home, stealing a win at Duke and taking care of business in four games against the conference's weaker teams.

But the challenge to do what's required to make the NCAA tournament in March becomes a lot tougher in the second half of the season as the Irish prepare for a four-game, 11-day stretch that's set to be the toughest this team will face all season.

After Wednesday's visit to South Florida to take on the Hurricanes (16-4, 5-3), things

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KATHRYNE ROBINSON | The Observer

Irish junior guard Demetrius Jackson drives towards the baseline during Notre Dame's 83-81 win over Virginia Tech on Jan. 20 at Purcell Pavilion. Jackson had 14 points and eight assists in Sunday's win.

Irish set to take on Hurricanes in pivotal ACC game

By MAREK MAZUREK
Sports Writer

Armed with the return of junior guard Demetrius Jackson, Notre Dame returns to action against No. 17 Miami on Wednesday night in Coral Gables, Florida.

After a roller-coaster series of games last week, the Irish (15-6, 6-3 ACC) are trying to stabilize the ship against the Hurricanes (16-4, 5-3).

The Irish entered last week on a four-game winning streak before Thursday when Syracuse defeated the Irish, 81-66, with Jackson on the bench due to an ankle injury. Jackson returned on Sunday, and Notre Dame in turn trampled Wake Forest off Jackson's 14 points and eight assists.

Now, with the team facing two ranked opponents in a row and sitting tied for third in the ACC, Irish head coach Mike Brey emphasized the importance of staying

see M BBALL **PAGE 11**

ND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Depth sets Irish apart from previous seasons



Ben Padanilam
Sports Writer

Is this the year?

Is this the season that the Irish finally break through and cut down the nets for the second time in program history? They did it in 2001 but have found themselves just short on several occasions since. In the last five seasons, they've worked their way to the championship four times, only to end the game on the wrong side of the scoreboard.

This season, No. 3 Notre Dame has been a well-oiled offensive machine. The Irish (21-1, 9-0 ACC) are eighth in scoring offense, sixth in scoring margin, seventh in assists-per-game, fourth in field-goal percentage and first in 3-point field-goal percentage amongst Division I teams.

Yet, this has been the same script the Irish have followed so often before. They've found themselves in the top-10 in each of these categories over the last four seasons, often ranking higher than

they do this season. Despite this track record, it has not been enough for the Irish to clear that final hurdle. In each of the last three seasons, they have fallen to that familiar foe who continues to be a thorn in their side: the reigning champion for three years running, No. 1 Connecticut.

And the Huskies (20-0, 10-0 AAC) appear to be the top contender for this year's title as well. They currently lead all Division 1 teams in scoring offense and scoring margin, winning games by an average of nearly 41 points and displaying a dominance that has come to be expected of them. Additionally, the Huskies already beat the Irish earlier this season, 91-81, on Dec. 5.

Oh, and the Huskies are not the only team that continues to breeze through the competition this season. No. 2 South Carolina is also currently undefeated, sitting at an equally impressive mark of 21-0, and winning games by an average of nearly 20 points.

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GRACE TOURVILLE | The Observer

Irish sophomore forward Brianna Turner surveys the floor during Notre Dame's 79-66 win over Tennessee on Jan. 18 at Purcell Pavilion. Turner leads the team with 13.9 points and 7.2 rebounds per game.