Memorial held for Aher, McGrath
University community fills Basilica to remember students; Jenkins presides over Mass

By CHRIS HINE
News Writer

University President Father John Jenkins called Sunday, the day he learned Timothy Aher and Connor McGrath died, his "worst day as president of Notre Dame.

Jenkins presided over a Mass Tuesday at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart held in memorial of Aher, a 22-year-old junior, and McGrath, a 20-year-old sophomore, who died in unrelated incidents over the weekend.

Students and faculty nearly filled the Basilica and shared laughter and tears listening to stories of Aher and McGrath delivered by law professor Father John Coughlin and theology professor Father Peter McCormick.

Aher, who was from Brookfield, Conn., and received a Bachelor's degree in linguistics from the University of Chicago, died Sunday in the town of Ilford, a suburb of London. He was studying in the Law School's London Programme.

McGrath, from Oklahoma City, died Sunday in Dillon, McGarr was a resident of Siegfried Hall this semester but lived in Dillon his freshman year and had been away from campus for a month, he said.

Despite the efforts of the strikers, Stepakoff said people thought the strike itself was unsuccessful.

"The gains that were made for the writers were not really that far from what was on the table before the strike," he said.

Stepakoff took a different stance from the late '80s, Stepakoff said, result- ing in $500 million worth of damages to the Los Angeles economy and a nine percent decrease in viewers.

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Hollywood writer discusses strikes
Stepakoff, who worked on 'Wonder Years,' 'Dawson's Creek,' shares opinions on industry

By KARA COYLE
News Writer

Jeffrey Stepakoff spoke about the rise, fall and rebirth of scripted entertainment in a speech in Browning Cinema Tuesday night.

Stepakoff, who for 18 years wrote for television programs including "The Wonder Years" and "Dawson's Creek," as well as developing two animated films for Disney, said his career did not begin with success.

"I think both candidates are walking a fine line where you need to pay attention to how they market themselves to the public; they need to be presi- dent," he said.

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"The strike was the beginning of audience erosion," he said.

"America is ready for a black or a woman nominee, Notre Dame political science professors are debating which is more electable."

Professor Darren Davis said while America is not com- pletely ready for either, condi- tions in the country make it possible.

"America is not ready for just any woman or any black person," said Davis, who specializes in public opinion and political psychology. "You can't run just any woman and think they would do as well as [Hillary] Clinton."

"There are unique features about Clinton and [Barack] Obama that make both of them extremely appealing, but I think it would be a mistake to think that just because they're both doing well in the primaries that America is ready for a black president."

Still, the current political climate gives the two candidates a chance, Davis said.

"We're at war, the economy and the particular features of Clinton and Obama makes it right," he said.

Despite the factors working in Clinton and Obama's favor, Christina Wolbrecht, who specializes in American politics and political parties, said she thinks the two candidates need to pay attention to how they market themselves to the public.

"I think both candidates are walking a fine line where you want to appeal to people of all races or genders," Wolbrecht said. "You need to be a presi- dent who is going to represent and serve the entire popula- tion."

Dianne Pinderhughes, whose teaching focuses on racial and ethnic politics in the U.S., as well as voting rights policy and American urban politics, said that may be the case, but the candi-
INSIDE COLUMN

Who we fight for

Every weekday afternoon since the sec-
donday back at Notre Dame from fall break, I have made the long trek from Northern Virginia to the DCJ for Bengal Bouts practice.

Getting into training for the

Bouts, I had absolutely no boxing experi-

ence. Currently, just days before I fight in the preliminary round next Monday night, I've been in the ring six times.

Needless to say, I'm not Muhammad Ali. However, I will say that Bengal Bouts has been one of the best experiences in my two years at Notre Dame. It's taught me a lot about myself and it's given me a really good way to let loose some aggression.

It's also gotten me in pretty good shape, especially compared to last winter's lazy plan to stay in shape by going to the Rock.

Ever since the first practice, the Bengal Bouts captains have insisted that the Bouts are about more than getting in shape. Instead, we fight for something bigger than any one of the approximately 230 individuals in the program, bigger than the 230 individuals put together, and even bigger than Notre Dame.

Bengal Bouts are about raising money and awareness for the Holy Cross Mission in Bangladesh.

The Holy Cross missionaries work with the poorest people of Bangladesh, who are the poorest of the poor in a country in which 45 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, according to the CIA World Factbook.

The missionaries have established medical and educational resources for the people of Bangladesh over the years, with substantial help from the Bengal Bouts program. The Bouts are the largest single supporter of the missions on a yearly basis.

Every year is a rough one for Bangladesh, but 2007 was tough even by Bangladesh standards.

Cyfone Sidr made landfall in Bangladesh on Nov. 15, 2007 as a category 4 storm, stronger than Hurricane Katrina when it devastated New Orleans.

The cyclone was responsible for the deaths of at least 3,113 people. According to UNICEF, 3.2 million people were affected by Sidr, which also destroyed approximately 750,000 homes in Bangladesh.

Moreover, over the people of Bangladesh need the support of the Notre Dame family. In Bangladesh, the money of supporters from Notre Dame can go a long way. $40 can pay one month's salary for a new base that holds about 20 people, and $2,000 is enough money to build a school for 100 children.

So this year, and throughout your time at Notre Dame, make sure to support the Bengal Bouts. Just as importantly, make sure to remember who we fight for.

The Bouts begin with the preliminaries on Friday and the quarterfinals on Saturday. The semifinals and the finals continue the week we return from spring break.

Please buy tickets, and please make donations, even small ones of a couple of dollars. Those small donations add up.

And even one small donation can go a long way in Bangladesh.

The views expressed in the Inside Column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer. Contact John Tierney at john@nd.edu

CORRECTIONS

The Observer regrets any errors in a professional publication and vetted for the highest standards of journalism at all times. We do, however, magnify any errors that we make. If we have made a mistake, please contact us at 631-4541 so we can correct our error.

QUESTION OF THE DAY: WHAT'S THE BEST EXCUSE YOU'VE USED WHEN YOU'VE FORGOTTEN YOUR HOMEWORK?

Trey Mohr
junior

"I couldn't find it in the Charlie Pad."

Carlos Padilla
senior off campus

"It froze and shattered on the ground."

Ashley Cunningham
senior off campus

"I spilled chemical acid on it, but had no base to neutralize it."

Michael Bruns
freshman Stanford

"I was too busy saving the world."

Stacey Gill
sophomore Farley

"Reckers food gave me food poisoning."

NOTRE DAME UNIVERSITY NEWS WIRE

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IN BRIEF

As part of the Fireside chat series "Telling Our History," theology professor Catherine Hilbert will speak today at noon in the Coleman-Morse Center lounge.

Eucharistic Exposition will take place tonight at 9:30 in Holy Spirit Chapel in LeMans Hall at Saint Mary's. Exposition takes place every Wednesday night and Friday at 12:30 p.m. in Regina Chapel.

"The Call of the Entrepreneur" will be shown on Thursday at 6:00 in the Jordan Auditorium, Mendoza College of Business.

The men's basketball team will play against No. 22 Pittsburgh Thursday at 7 p.m. in the Joyce Center.

As part of the Ten Years Hence lecture series, professor Karen Hunt Ahmed from the department of finance at DePaul University will speak at 10:40 a.m. Friday in the Jordan Auditorium of the Mendoza College of Business.

There will be Stations of the Cross Friday at 7:15 p.m. in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. Stations will be held each Friday during Lent.

The 50th Annual Collegiate Jazz Festival will begin Friday at 7 p.m. with a concert featuring at least four different bands. The festival will conclude Saturday with an afternoon concert at 1 p.m. and an evening concert at 7 p.m. All events will be in Washington Hall.

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BOG

Group targets body image
Representatives schedule forum, hope to unite residence halls

By ASHLEY CHARNLEY
News Writer

Body image — and two forums on the subject — was the main focus of Tuesday’s Board of Governance (BOG) meeting.

Residence Hall Association (RHA) president Cassie Quaglia announced that communications professor Terri Russ will be holding a body image forum, “Get it Girl,” sponsored by the RHA today at 7 p.m. in Holy Cross Park.

“Body image at an all-women’s college is definitely a big issue,” Quaglia said. “One of the goals of RHA is unifying the residence halls, and this will help do that.”

The forum will have door prizes and food will be provided.

Two representatives from Notre Dame’s Health and Body Image Conference, Brenna Doyle and Patrick Tighe, came to present the other conference to Saint Mary’s student government. The forum, “Live as You Are,” will be held March 11-13 in McKenna Hall. Doyle and Tighe came to give posters and registration forms to BOG in order to help publicize the conference at the College.

The keynote speaker for the Notre Dame event will be Ann Simonot, a former model who has been on the covers of magazines such as Vegas. She is now an activist who discusses body image and the objectification of women in the media. She also runs the non-profit organization Media Watch International. Tighe said students interested in learning more about Simonot could look at the Web site mediawatch.org.

In other BOG news:

✈ Saint Mary’s will celebrate Women’s Appreciation Week from March 10-13. Student Diversity Board president Abby Bledy said there will be fundraisers and guest speakers throughout the week.

✈ The Board of Trustees will be on campus beginning Thursday evening at the Belles’ home basketball game, student body president Kim Hodges said. The game is in Angela Athletic Facility at 7:30 p.m.

✈ Hodges also announced that the new director for the Center for Career Opportunities, Stacie Jeffers, is working on publicity for the Center. She will be holding two forums open to the student body tonight at 5:30 and Thursday from 2:30 p.m. in Conference Room A in the Student Center basement.

Contact Ashley Charnley at acharn01@saintmarys.edu

Student body president Kim Hodges speaks during the Board of Governance Meeting Tuesday.

Robinson Center to receive $282,000 check

Special to The Observer

A $282,000 appropriations request for Notre Dame’s Robinson Community Learning Center (RCLC) by Rep. Joe Donnelly, D-Ind., and Sen. Evan Bayh, D-Ind., has been funded in a bill that recently became law.

Donnelly will present a ceremonial check at a celebration to mark the seventh anniversary of the RCLC at 5:30 p.m. Friday (Feb. 22) at the center. University President Father John Jenkins also will be in attendance at the event, which will feature an awards ceremony and musical entertainment.

The RCLC will receive the funding to support and develop Robinson Enterprises, a comprehensive training, entrepreneurship and business promotion initiative. The program will specifically promote business success for at-risk youths and young adults (ages 16 to 24) through training, mentoring and start-up incubation for the launch of for-profit enterprises.

“We are grateful to Congressman Donnelly and Sen. Bayh for their leadership in funding this innovative venture,” said Jay Caponigro, director of the RCLC. “Robinson Enterprises will enable the University and community to work together to cultivate entrepreneurial and self-sufficiency.”

“I was happy to learn that the Robinson Community Learning Center will receive the funding it deserves to continue and expand its operations,” Donnelly said. “The outstanding work done at the center contributes to area revitalization and provides employment opportunities for South Bend-area residents.”

Founded by Notre Dame in 2001, the RCLC is a community-driven education center. In addition to Robinson Enterprises, the center sponsors a number of programs and activities and hosts others led by local agencies and organizations. These include violence prevention initiatives, health education and screenings, English-as-a-second-language classes, children’s programming, youth tutoring, and after-school programs. It also features a Computer Teaching and Learning Center, which is equipped with 20 computers and provides instruction and Internet and e-mail access.

Some 500 residents and volunteers participate each week in on-site RCLC programming, and as many as 250 Notre Dame students, faculty and staff volunteer with center programs. Some 35 University departments and residence halls are involved in RCLC partnerships.

Looking for solid business and accounting experience to put on your resume?

The Observer is accepting applications for a 2008-09 Business Manager and Controller. Responsibilities include preparing a yearly budget and handling payroll for a 200-person staff.

Since the Controller will take over as the 2009-10 Business Manager, Controller applicants should be sophomores, or juniors staying for a fifth year.

Both positions are salaried, about six to 10 hours a week. Please contact Maddie Hanna at mhanna1@nd.edu or Kyle West at kwest1@nd.edu if interested.
Mass

continued from page 1

attended the University of Central Oklahoma this fall. The University has not released information about the causes of either death, but police investigators said Monday that diabetes may have played a role in McGrath's death.

McCormick, who lived next to McGrath last year when he was an assistant rector in Dillon Hall, said he got to know him well when the two "shared a wall."

"After living in such close proximity to him, I certainly have plenty of stories to tell about Connor," McCormick said. "But only some that would be

pulpit-ready."

One "pulpit-ready" story McCormick did share with those gathered involved a time he asked McGrath if he ever considered entering the priesthood.

"Connor kind of gave me that look and then proceeded to avoid me for the next week," McCormick said. "I figured he had other plans."

McCormick said McGrath was a "fun-loving social young man who took the time to get to know others" and hoped people remember McGrath as a respectful, outgoing person.

Coughlin, who spoke about Aher's death, talked about the law student's accomplishments and mentioned that Aher developed a proficiency in Russian and studied German, French and Uzbek.

"Not only did he enjoy learning to speak a language," Coughlin said, "but he also immersed himself in the study of the culture and society in which the language was spoken.

Aher also had a deep appreciation for music, Coughlin said. Aher served as station manager at WKPF-FM, a student-run radio station at the University of Chicago, and wrote reviews of popular music groups.

"Although I have to acknowledge that I have little appreciation of this repertoire," Coughlin said, "I enjoyed reading Tim's well-written and clearly expert reviews."

After graduating from the University of Chicago in 2002, Aher worked for two years at the Bank of America Securities before applying to law school, where he hoped to keep pursuing his love of language by becoming an international lawyer.

Aher also had a summer internship in New York City where he helped AIDS patients deal with their legal problems.

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"To love deeply is to suffer deeply," Coughlin said. "Tim was no stranger to emotional suffering in his own life, and he struggled mightily to cope with it."

Father Mark Poorman, vice president of student affairs, delivered the homily and said members of the Notre Dame community are "blessed" to have each other to cope with the deaths of Aher and McGrath.

"Tim and Connor's lives have been woven into further expressions of God's love and we are grateful for the time we spent with them," Poorman said.

Contact Chris Hine at chine@nd.edu

Cell

continued from page 1

been a general disarray for having cell towers on or near campus.

OIT installed antennas on various buildings on campus that were painted to blend in, Latimer said. Since then, he said, OIT has worked in conjunction with the service providers to offer the best coverage possible.

The service providers, and not the University, are largely responsible for the quality of coverage on campus, Latimer said. OIT has the job of negotiating contracts with the providers, he said, but it is ultimately up to them to service the campus.

"In date we have been successful in getting both Verizon and AT&T on campus," he said. "Even though the system is capable of handling any operator, those two are the only operators that have developed the business case for investment."

OIT has since made efforts to contract other providers on campus such as T-Mobile, Nextel and Sprint. Latimer said those efforts have not yet been successful.

Students with these service providers "complain very loudly," Latimer said. He did, however, offer a solution.

"If your cellular provider is not on campus, tell them you

would like them to hook up to Notre Dame's distributed antenna system," he said. Verizon is the second largest provider on campus, but has only six antennas, compared to AT&T's 17. OIT is pursuing a new contract with Verizon to install four more antennas. Latimer hopes that those will be installed before the fall semester.

"We are getting close," he said. "Verizon wants it and we want it."

Those antennas will significantly improve the service of Verizon customers on campus, Latimer said.

Contact Madeline Buckley at mbuckley@nd.edu

Hollywood

continued from page 1

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Hollywood

continued from page 1

"What is the value of writers, "Stepanoff said. He said reality television is becoming a popular genre not because people enjoy it, but because the networks in the studios are able to use writers that are "off the guild."

Reality television is used as an immigration device against writers, Stepanoff said.

"A lot of the stuff is being pro- grammed as a threat to writers," he said. "It's cheap to make and it keeps writers in check."

Contact Kara Coyle at kcoyle@nd.edu

Dining With The Stars

February 20
8:00-10:00 pm
Lafortune, BK Lounge
(near Burger King)

Get your friends together and bid on a dinner with campus celebrities including:

Anre Venter
The Undertones
Chuck Lennon
ND Men's Swim Team
ND Leprechauns
Ndc cheerleaders
The Sharpley Brothers
Geoff Price

Breen-Phillips Hall Meal Auction

All proceeds go to Meals on Wheels

Bidding is per plate

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**INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

**Cuba**

**Castro retires after half century of rule**

Dicator’s younger brother Raúl to take over after serving as acting president since July 2006

Associated Press

HAVANA — Now that Fidel Castro has retired, many Cubans are hoping the younger brother to let more people open businesses, own homes and even travel abroad. But the older one always nipped that off at the bud.

And while hoping that Raúl and his likely No. 2, Carlos Lage, will address these issues, they wonder how that will fly with Fidel, who stepped down but isn’t going away.

"There has to be some change, more freedom with Raúl," said Andres, 63, who like many Cubans welcomed the announcement.

The resignation, announced Tuesday in Cuba's state-run news media, would be the first real-world use of this piece of the Pentagon's missile defense network. But that is not the mission for which it was intended. The attempted shootdown, already approved by President Bush, who once said it would be another weapon you can count on. Perhaps my voice will be heard." As the Council of State's first vice president, Raúl Castro has been his brother's self-avowed constitutional designated successor for decades, so the big question is who will take his place as No. 2 on Sunday when the National Assembly selects Cuba's new leader.-ship.

A leading candidate is Lage, the de-facto prime minister, who at 56 is a full generation younger than the Castros. He’s among the most experienced leaders in a power structure dominated by septuagenarian former rebels, and he has built a reputation as a reformer.

A less likely possibility could emerge from a handful of leaders in their 30s and 40s, such as Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque, whose Communist fervor earned him the collective nickname of "Young Talibubs.

While no less loyal to the elder Castro, Lage was the architect of reforms that saved the island from economic collapse in the early 1990s. His moves allowed foreign investment in state enterprises, a measure of self-employment, and legal use of the U.S. dollar.

**Supreme Court turns down wiretapping appeal**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court has decided to let stand civil rights and privacy advocates who oppose the Bush administration's warrantless wiretapping program. The justices, without comment, turned down an appeal from the American Civil Liberties Union to let it pursue a lawsuit brought by lawyers who were monitored shortly after the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

The action underscored the difficulty of mounting a challenge to the eavesdropping, which remains classified and was confirmed by President Bush only after a newspaper article revealed its existence.

"It's very disturbing that the president's actions will go unreviewed and thus could not possibly undo their defiance of the Constitution before the Court," said Janine Juller, director of the ACLU's national security project. "In our view, it shouldn't be left to executive branch officials alone to determine the limits." The Terrorist Surveillance Program no longer exists, although the administration has maintained it was legal. The ACLU sued on behalf of itself, other lawyers, reporters and scholars, arguing that the program was illegal and that they had been forced to alter how they communicate with foreigners who were likely to have been targets of the wiretapping.

A federal judge in Detroit largely agreed, but the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed the suit, saying the plaintiffs could not prove their communications had been monitored and thus could not have been harmed by the program.

The government has refused to turn over information about the closely guarded program that could reveal who has been under surveillance. ACLU officials described the situation as a "Catch-22" because the government says the identity of people whose communications have been intercepted is secret. But only people who know they have been wiretapped can sue over the program.

A lawsuit filed by an Islamic charity met a similar fate. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals last year ruled against the Oregon-based U.S. arm of the Al-Haramain Islamic Foundation, concluding that a key piece of evidence is protected as a state secret.

**Local News**

**Lawmakers sign anti-gay marriage petition**

The AP

At the Indiana Statehouse, almost 200 or more members in the Indiana House have signed a petition calling for a tap program. The justices, without comment, turned down an appeal from the American Civil Liberties Union to let it pursue a lawsuit brought by lawyers who were monitored shortly after the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

"We could demonstrate with our signatures our reaffirmation to those in our districts that we do support it," he said.

Democrats hold a 51-49 majority in the House. Most Republicans and several Democrats signed the petition, which had 55 signatures Tuesday. Buck said more representatives could sign onto the petition later if they chose.

**National News**

New missile to be shot at crippled satellite

WASHINGTON — An attempt to launch a crippled U.S. spy satellite out of the sky using a Navy heat-seeking missile priced at $100 million would be the first real-world use of this piece of the Pentagon's missile defense network. But that is not the mission for which it was intended.

The attempted shootdown, already approved by President Bush, who once said it would be another weapon you can count on. Perhaps my voice will be heard." As the Council of State's first vice president, Raúl Castro has been his brother's self-avowed constitutional designated successor for decades, so the big question is who will take his place as No. 2 on Sunday when the National Assembly selects Cuba's new leader.-ship.

A leading candidate is Lage, the de-facto prime minister, who at 56 is a full generation younger than the Castros. He’s among the most experienced leaders in a power structure dominated by septuagenarian former rebels, and he has built a reputation as a reformer.

A less likely possibility could emerge from a handful of leaders in their 30s and 40s, such as Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque, whose Communist fervor earned him the collective nickname of "Young Talibubs.

While no less loyal to the elder Castro, Lage was the architect of reforms that saved the island from economic collapse in the early 1990s. His moves allowed foreign investment in state enterprises, a measure of self-employment, and legal use of the U.S. dollar.

**Supreme Court turns down wiretapping appeal**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court has decided to let stand civil rights and privacy advocates who oppose the Bush administration's warrantless wiretapping program. The justices, without comment, turned down an appeal from the American Civil Liberties Union to let it pursue a lawsuit brought by lawyers who were monitored shortly after the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

The action underscored the difficulty of mounting a challenge to the eavesdropping, which remains classified and was confirmed by President Bush only after a newspaper article revealed its existence.

"It's very disturbing that the president's actions will go unreviewed and thus could not possibly undo their defiance of the Constitution before the Court," said Janine Juller, director of the ACLU's national security project. "In our view, it shouldn't be left to executive branch officials alone to determine the limits." The Terrorist Surveillance Program no longer exists, although the administration has maintained it was legal. The ACLU sued on behalf of itself, other lawyers, reporters and scholars, arguing that the program was illegal and that they had been forced to alter how they communicate with foreigners who were likely to have been targets of the wiretapping.

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4 killed in school bus crash
Classes cancelled at Minnesota public schools after highway accident

Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) - A school bus and several other vehicles crashed in southwestern Minnesota Tuesday, killing four students and forcing the first-arriving motorists to rush some of the injured to nearby hospitals.

The bus was hit by a van around 3:25 p.m. on a highway north of Cottonwood. The bus then hit a pickup truck and flipped on its side. State Patrol Lt. Mark Peterson said at least 14 people were hurt.

Rescue squads and ambulances from many nearby cities arrived at the crash site. The Marshall Independent reported that the first motorists on the scene were asked to take some children to the hospital.

"I parked my car and called 911, ran to the school bus and the driver was handing kids out the door as fast as I could take them," Karen Mahm said the newspaper. Other motorists also stopped and took kids from the driver. "You just wanted to make sure it wasn't just a school bus," she said. "They were screaming and screaming on the bus. There were so many kids.

Pictures from the scene showed the school bus lying on its side on the hood and cab of a pickup truck. The bus was on its regular route, carrying children from kindergarden through 12th grade. Initial reports said the bus was carrying 40 people, but it actually carried 28 students and a driver.

Minnesota Public Safety spokesman Christine Krueger said.

Parents were asked to gather at Lakeview School to await word on their children. Of the 11 victims taken to Avera Marshall Regional Medical Center, two were in critical condition while one had already been treated and released, spokeswoman Deum Holland said.

Others were being treated for back and neck injuries, fractures, burns and cuts, and 14 people were taken to hospitals with injuries.

The victims were not immediately identified, and their ages weren't immediately given. News of the crash swept through Cottonwood, a small town of about 1,000 people about 121 miles southwest of Minneapolis. About 80 people attended an evening press briefing at Swan Lake Evangelical Free Church.

When Fire Chief Dale Brownke said that the community could do, he said simply, "Pray."

The victims were canceled Wednesday at Lakeview, which was closed and stabilized in the ER, Gerlach said. They were preparing for a funeral.

"There are people in the community who are going to have to talk about race helping him, but race is still an incredible disadvantage within American society."

Clinton and Obama have referred to themselves in different ways throughout the campaign.

"Whereas in several debates, Clinton referred to herself as the first female candidate for a presidential nomination, Obama in his last frame or considers himself to be a candidate for president," Davis said.

Davis said he is unsure how Clinton referring to herself as the first female candidate will impact her campaign, but said Obama would hurt his campaign if he brought up his race.

Pinderhughes pointed out the conflict within Obama's campaign over his race.

"Some of his campaign managers want him to de-emphasize his race, some of his black campaign aids want him to address the black community," she said. "So that is a tension for him, in terms of strategy.

Overall, Pinderhughes said, people are ready for a black president, but not for Clinton.

"It seems as if people are more able to say, 'yes, I think he's ready for an African-American man to be president,' she said. "[American] can handle a black president better than they can handle a female black person. So in this case, gender trumps race."

Contact Lindsay Sena at lsena@nd.edu

Obama increases lead after winning Wisconsin

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Barack Obama cruised past a fading Hillary Rodham Clinton in the Wisconsin primary Tuesday night, gaining the upper hand in a Democratic presidential race for the ages.

It was Obama's ninth straight victory over the past three weeks — with results unknown from the night. But it left the former first lady in desperate need of a comeback in a race she long commanded as frontrunner.

"The change we seek is still more than a mile away," Obama told a boisterous crowd in Houston in a speech in which he also pledged to end the war in Iraq in his first year in office.

"I opposed this war in 2002. I will bring this war to an end in 2009. It is time to bring our troops home," he declared.

Sen. John McCain, the Republican front-runner, won a pair of primaries in Wisconsin and Washington, to continue his march toward certain nomination.

In a race in which the mood is overwhelmingly negative, Obama dug deeply into Clinton's political bedrock in Wisconsin,.upload the support of white women almost evenly with Clinton.

In Wisconsin place interviews, he also ran well among working class voters in the blue collar battleground that was pivotal in 2004.

Obama made no mention of her defeat, and showed no sign of sur­ rendering in an appearance in Youngstown, Ohio.

"We'll come back," Obama said. "The Republicans are out of step with those who need a voice."

In a clear sign of their relative standing in the race, most cable television networks abruptly cut away from coverage of Clinton's campaign when Obama began to speak in Texas.

McCain won the Republican primary with ease, dispatching former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee and New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson.

"I will fight every moment of every day in this campaign to make sure that Americans are not deceived by an eloquent but empty call for change, McCain said.

McCain's nomination has been assured since Super Tuesday three weeks ago, as first one, then another of his former rivals has dropped out and the party establishment has closed ranks behind him.

Now so in the Democratic race, where Obama and Clinton campaign seven days a week, the most recent poll showed Obama 5 points ahead in Wisconsin, the state they both won.

In a scarcely veiled criticism of Obama, Clinton and Edwards campaign nominees agreed, "I will fight every moment of every day in this campaign to make sure that Americans are not deceived by an eloquent but empty call for change, McCain said.

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Bush has no plans to lift Cuban embargo

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration is ruling out any changes in its Cuba policy, including lifting a five-decade trade embargo — defying Fidel Castro’s brother, Raúl, as “dictator lite.”

Despite having openly wished for Castro’s demise to step down on his own terms and leaves little hope for real democratic transition in communist Cuba during Bush’s final year in office, although it may open options for his successor in the White House.

Bush dismissed the idea of US officials expressed hope that Castro’s departure would lead to fundamental changes for the Cuban people. But they also said they doubted that it would happen under Raúl Castro and said there was little chance the nearly 50-year-old US embargo on Cuba would be lifted.

BUSH

The Observer

Wednesday, February 20, 2008

MARKET RECAP

Associated Press

NEW YORK Oil futures shot higher Tuesday, closing above $100 for the first time as investors feared that crude prices will keep climbing despite evidence of plentiful supplies and falling demand. At the pump, gas prices rose further, trading above $3 a gallon.

There was no single driver behind oil's sharp price jump; investors seized on an explosion at a 67,000-barrel-per-day refinery in Texas, the falling dollar, the possibility that OPEC may cut production next month and continuing tensions between the U.S. and Venezuela.

Gasoline and heating oil prices appeared to be leading the advance, rising faster in percentage terms than oil due to the explosion Monday at Alon USA's Big Spring, Texas, refinery, which could be shuttered for two months.

"The refinery fire in Texas is making people a little concerned," said Michael Lynch, president of Strategic Energy & Economic Research Inc. in Amherst, Mass.

Light, sweet crude for March delivery rose $4.51 to settle at a record $100.01 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Prices were rising to $100.10, a new trading record. It was the first time since crude topped that level that oil had been above $100.

March gasoline climbed 10.93 cents to settle at $2.6614 a gallon. A March heating oil rose 11.45 cents to $2.7614 a gallon, also a record.

Oil prices are still with

range of inflation-adjusted highs set in early 1980. Depending on how the adjustment is calculated, $38 a barrel then would be worth $96 to $103 or more today.

The dollar fell Tuesday, giving investors another reason to buy oil. Crude futures offer a hedge against a falling dollar, and oil futures bought and sold in dollars are more attractive to foreign investors when the greenback is falling.

For the moment, investors appear to have put aside concerns about the economy that have sent oil prices down into the mid-$80 range twice since crude peaked above $100 last month. Traders are instead focused on OPEC's potential to meet early next month to map out production plans, and Venezuela, where President Hugo Chavez made conflicting statements this weekend about the country’s legal dispute with Exxon Mobil Corp.

OPEC could move to cut production in the second quarter, tapping into overabundance of low demand, though many analysts feel that's unlikely. In Venezuela, Chavez said he was not serious about an earlier threat to cut oil sales to the U.S. but also threatened to sue Exxon Mobil. The world’s largest oil company is fighting Venezuela’s nationalization of an oil project, and recently convinced several courts to freeze $12 billion in Venezuelian oil assets.

Fires burn after an explosion at an Alon USA oil refinery in Big Springs, Texas, on Monday. The explosion could close the refinery for two months and is one factor in Tuesday’s rise in oil prices.

In Brief

Toshiba ready to abandon HD DVD

TOKYO — Sony's Blu-ray technology is emerging as the likely winner in the format battle for the next generation of DVD players after Toshiba appeared ready to ditch its HD DVD business.

Such a move would help consumers know which system to invest in and would likely boost sales in Blu-ray gadgets, analysts say. But it will disappoint the 1 million people around the world estimated by Toshiba who have already bought HD DVD players.

Toshiba Corp. said Monday no decision has been made, but acknowledged it had started a review of its HD DVD strategy. The comments follow a flurry of weekend Japanese media reports that Toshiba was preparing to pull out of the business.

A company official, speaking on condition of anonymity because she isn’t authorized to speak on the matter, said a board meeting could be held as soon as Tuesday, when a decision is likely.

Supreme Court won’t help Katrina victims

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court refused Tuesday to offer help to Hurricane Katrina victims who want their insurance companies to pay for flood damage to their homes and businesses.

The justices rejected appeals from Xavier University of New Orleans and six other individuals and businesses seeking to allow their lawsuits against the insurers to go forward.

Xavier asked the court to step in after the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the policies don’t cover damage from floods, even those that resulted from man-made failures such as the collapse of levees or flood protection structures.

Other cases working their way through state courts have so far reached differing conclusions. A Louisiana appeals court has said that language excluding water damage from some insurance policies was ambiguous. The Louisiana Supreme Court will hear arguments Tuesday in a case on Feb. 26.

Xavier and the other plaintiffs had asked the federal court to allow the state Supreme Court to rule on their suits as well. The 5th Circuit refused and the U.S. high court upheld that ruling on Tuesday.

The cases are Xavier University of Louisiana v. Travelers Casualty Property Company of
WORLD VIEW IS AN INITIATIVE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT TO PROMOTE CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE ABOUT ISSUES OF RACE, CLASS, ETHNICITY, RELIGION, AND GENDER THROUGH THE ARTS.

In the wake of one of the worst natural and humanitarian disasters ever to visit American shores, nearly 600 African Americans were airlifted to the almost entirely white state of Utah without knowing where they were going. Desert Bayou seeks to examine whether two cultures can come together in a time of utter chaos, or whether their differences prove too great a challenge to overcome. In their own words, evacuees of Hurricane Katrina tell how they survived the storm-of-the-century and out of the rubble ended up at a military installation in the desert of Utah.

With interviews from recording artist Master P, celebrity Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, evacuees, political and military leaders, and community and social figures, the questions of race, politics, and religion hurtle toward each other in this truly American story: a story of loss and reunion, sorrow and rebirth, anger and rejoicing, but most of all, a story of hope.

Director Alex LeMay will discuss his film and answer questions from the audience following the first screening. LeMay is an award-winning feature film and broadcast director. Over his 14-year career, he has directed a number of acclaimed feature films, as well as provided commercial media for some of the world's top-tier companies.

Friday, February 22, at 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. in Browning Cinema, DeBartolo Performing Arts Center

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Kosovo

Serbs protest independence

Associated Press

KOSOVSKA MITROVICA — Thousands of Serbs chanting "Kosovo is Serbia" marched Tuesday to a bridge dividing them from ethnic Albanians while others torched U.N. border checkpoints and cars to protest Kosovo's declaration of independence.

NATO troops later closed down the roads leading to the checkpoints, cutting off the only link between northern Kosovo and Serbia, said Besim Hoti, a U.N. spokesman. The move appeared to be due to fears that the reduction of U.N. control of the border could allow Serbian militants to return to fight in Kosovo, a land Serb nationalists consider the cradle of their state and religion.

Smoke billowed from two checkpoints separating Kosovo from Serbia and flames engulfed several U.N. vehicles set ablaze in protest against Kosovo's weekend proclamation of independence and anger over international recognition of the new nation.

For two days, Kosovo's Serbs have shown their determination to stop the declaration by destroying U.N. and NATO property, setting off small bombs and staging noisy rallies through the Serb stronghold of Kosovska Mitrovica. The attacks on U.N. border crossings showed the protesters' willingness to use violence to hold onto Kosovo — and could clear the way for Serbian militants to return to fight in Kosovo, a land Serb nationalists consider the cradle of their state and religion.

In Belgrade, the Serbian government minister for Kosovo, Slobodan Samardzic, hailed the attacks, saying "today's action is in accordance with the general Serbian government policies.

"Belgrade has the intention to take over the customs in northern Kosovo," Samardzic told private B92 television. "The customs points were intended to become part of Kosovo's state border and we are not going to let that happen."

Kosovo has not been under Belgrade's control since 1999, when NATO launched airstrikes to halt a Serbian crackdown on ethnic Albanian separatists. A U.N. mission since has governed Kosovo, with more than 16,000 NATO troops and a multiethnic police force policing the province.

SWITZERLAND

Two stolen paintings found in backseat of car

ZURICH — A frantic search for two stolen Impressionist paintings led to a most unlikely place: the parking lot of a mental hospital just a few hundred yards from the scene of the crime.

There, in the back seat of an unlocked car, a painting by Claude Monet and another by Vincent van Gogh were found Monday in perfect condition, authorities said Tuesday.

The paintings, worth $64 million combined, were still under the display glass used by the private museum from which they were stolen in a Feb. 10 armed robbery, museum director Lukas Gloor said.

"I am incredibly relieved that both the paintings are in absolutely impeccable shape," Gloor said.

The other two paintings taken from the Cologne, Germany, museum — by Paul Cezanne and Edgar Degas — remain missing. Together, the four paintings are worth an estimated $163 million.

Art experts have suggested that the robbers took advantage of the museum's low security mark — a low-security museum that is not protected by video or art or how difficult it can be to sell such well-known works.

The robbers took the first four paintings they came across when they raided the museum shortly before closing on a Sunday afternoon. Although they managed to take the most valuable painting in the collection — Cezanne's "Roy in the Red Waistcoat" — they passed over the second-most valuable picture, another Cezanne.

Gloor said he suspected the robbers abandoned the two paintings, which were the largest of four, because their size complicated transportation.

They were discovered Monday on the back seat of a white sedan in a parking lot in front of the University Psychiatric Clinic. It was not known how long the car had been there, police said.

An employee of the clinic making a routine check of the lot noted the car because it was unlocked. Police immediately sealed off the area, examined the car and hauled it away.

Police had said initially that a white vehicle might have been used by the three robbers when they made their escape. The clinic is about 500 yards from the museum.

The recovered paintings — Monet's "Poppy Field at Vetheuil" and van Gogh's "Blooming Chestnut Braies" — will be returned to the museum in the coming days, Gloor said.

"But we must not forget," he added, "that two more paintings of our collection are still missing, including our collection's landmark "Roy in the Red Waistcoat," that painting alone is worth $91 million. The other missing painting is Degas' "Ludovic Leplé and his Daughter," worth $89 million.

"The most valuable one and the least valuable one are still missing," said Gloor.

Zurich police spokesman Marco Cortesi said the clinic employee who found the paintings would get a part of a $90,000 reward. He said the exact amount has yet to be determined.

Asked whether a ransom had been paid for the paintings, Cortesi said, "It is unknown whether a sum of money has moved." Gloor, standing next to him, said, "I can't give any information on that.

AXA Art Insurance AG, which insures museums, said this robbery and the theft of two Picasso paintings a few days before underscored an increasing threat to museums and they should take steps to improve security.

"Successful robberies are usually characterized by easy access to objects and quick escape routes," the Cologne, Germany-based insurer said.

Authorities have yet to solve the smaller theft of two Picassos from nearby Pfaffikon.
Reason depends on faith

"What is most embarrassing to the world today," said Georgetown professor James Schall, S.J., "is that the most intelligent voice it confronts, or deliberately refuses to confront, is that coming from the pagans." Fr. Schall has a point. He was addressing a meeting on Pope Benedict XVI's second encyclical, "Spe Salvi," which drew its title from its opening words, "SPE SAVTI factum sumus--in hope we were saved." The message is simple: "A world without God is a world without hope." No. 44. Benedict admits that "we need the... hopes that keep us going day by day. But these are not enough without the great hope which... can only be... the God who has a human face and who has loved us to the end, each one of us and humanity in its entirety." No. 31. A secularist culture, he insists, can offer no hope for anything after death. In contrast, their "encounter with Christ" gives Christians their "distinguishing mark" which is "the fact that they have a future: it is not that they know the details... but they know in general terms that their life will not rest in emptiness. Only when the future is certain is a person's identity it becomes possible to live the present as well." No. 44.

A point of interest to a university community is the relation between the lack of hope and what Benedict had described for Regensburg in 2006 as "the self-imposed limitation of reason to the empirically verifiable" so that "questions of religion and ethics no longer concern it." When reason so limited, affirmations of God and objective morality are dismissed as non-rational. No one can know anything about God. And "justice" becomes, in the words of Hans Kübeln, the foremost legal positivist of the last century, "the instrument of God." Benedict describes as "presumptuous and false," the idea that "pilgrimages to no God to create justice... man himself is now called to establish..."

Editor's Note: In his column on page 2, Maddie drama, our very own Notre Dame drama, is entitled "What is 'Spe Salvi' and how is the Pope adhering to it?" The column begins with the text: "... the Pope is adhering to it."

Vote by Thursday at 5 p.m. at www.ndsmcobserver.com

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Quote of the Day
"I was taught that the human brain was the crowning glory of evolution so far, and humans have a very poor scheme for survival."

Frt. Vonneugut author

Wednesday, February 20, 2008
Rethinking unnecessary consumption

Joanne Miranda Mullin

We overlook the virtue of self-restraint. We should start.

As Americans, we have had a long history of idolatrously fighting for values. If we are to insist upon upholding our rights, however, we need to reconcile the excess of our culture with the self-restraint that we simultaneously preach.

I wanted to start out this column by defining the term "amenity." The dictionary.com was, of course, my first and most reliable means to find such a definition (a true product of my generation, I am). The first definition given was as follows: "a material object, service, etc., conducive to sumptuous living, comfort, luxury, convenience, or refinement of living rather than a necessity."

The next five definitions rang a bit more negatively. Definition No. 6 read: "Archaic. lust, lasciviousness: lechery." Three of the four definitions preceding this one included the word indulgence, which takes a negative connotation in our modern dictionary, as it reifies prudence and self-restraint.

Hmm. America. Negative view on self-indulgence should not have been the moniker of luxury. How to mitigate this conflict of values? I decided to turn to my too-reliable source, Dictionary.com. It is understandable that Mr. Dechant did not risk sending the method that we define as the opposite of amenity... especially as we ourselves hire for preferential treatment for female and minority teachers.

Furthermore, the Monologues" have been violated. The degradation of women, and the right to do the same, have been brought up in previous years also. If the "Vagina Monologues" and the discussion of them, isn't that the point? Seeing things from different perspectives? Discussing different perspectives?

First, the administration stresses that preferential treatment for Catholics would only factor in at the end of a selection process. That, after literally dozens of applications have been sorted through, if there are two or three equally qualified candidates and one is Catholic, the religion of the applicant should be taken into consideration.

Second, and crucially, this "other factors" approach is already a standard practice university-wide: we already grant preferential treatment to French students. We often hire applicants in precisely this manner. If the faculty as a whole does indeed believe decisive decisions should be made "solely" on academic merit, solely on academic merit, especially as we otherwise preferential treatment for female and minority teachers.

Furthermore, Arts and Letters Dean Mark Roche has repeatedly and rightly stressed that every faculty member, no matter their faith or lack thereof, has the potential to contribute to our religious mission, by thoughtfully engaging the Catholic tradition. And I myself have been powerfully influenced by Professor David Solomon, director of Notre Dame's Center for Ethics and Culture, who exemplifies the way in which a faculty member can build up the Catholic identity without being Catholic himself.

But all such caveats aside, in the long run, it is unfortunate that we define the meaningful adherence of a university to its religious founding depends on the preponderance of its faculty to said denomination.

In recognizing this and taking measures to promote Catholic hire, the administration is doing no more than seeking to ensure that when we students become alumni with children of our own to send to college, the college will re visits will not be a pale imitation of our secular 'aspirational peers', but a place where it is still the case, that as Father. Hesburgh often says, "the Church does its thinking."

Brian Boyd

Sanford Burtchall, C.S.C. — or to contact the good people at Project Sanctuary for more information. It is understandable that Mr. Dechant would assert that "the core of faith at Notre Dame does not come from the faculty ... or leave her."

In the day-to-day life of a student, dorm masses, Campus Ministry, and the availability of confessor to much more tangibly influential than the religiously inspired opinion of chemistry or accounting professors.

For instance, the "Monologues" are meant to point out that society has made women into one body part that can be objectified through things like rape and sexual assault. The "Monologues" combat this degradation of women, and enable and empower us to find our voices, which have been historically silenced because we were too afraid or too hurt (by some, still are seen) as the "lesser sex."

Furthermore, the "Monologues" are testimonies of women reclaiming their bodies and souls, both of which have been violated. The "Monologues" combat this reclaiming of the part of the feminism. This has been seen as a shameful thing, something which makes women objects and not human beings with souls.

So, with regard to this whole debate about whether the "Monologues" should be allowed on campus, I would like to point out that we show MB movies like Closer, which is rated R for "sequences of graphic sexual dialogue, nudity, sexuality, and language.

In the "Vagina Monologues," we have on campus a play that deals with the sexuality and empowerment of women? Notre Dame wants us to expand our minds and our horizons.

This debate has been running in The Observer forever and has been brought up in previous years also. If "The Vagina Monologues," and the discussion of them, isn't that the point?

The views expressed in this column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.
“Have you heard of the Lemon Law?” If not then “Suit up” because you’re missing “How I Met Your Mother.”

“How I Met Your Mother” has been running for three years but until last month I knew nothing about it. Described by a friend as “Sex&Iff” with younger people who frequent a bar instead of a diner, it piqued my interest, but not enough to start watching the CBS show. However, my friend finally convinced me to sacrifice 20 minutes, and I gave the pilot episode a shot. I have to admit, the first time I heard Neil Patrick Harris’ character, Barney, left his friend Ted to meet up at the bar and “Suit up” I was hooked. I am currently halfway through the first season and my friend has decided to set an ambitious goal for me to watch all 55 episodes in the first two and a half seasons in order to catch up before the show resumes its third season on March 17.

I hope for the sake of my grades that I won’t make it.

The book of the show is simple, Ted Mosby, played by Josh Radnor in the present and voiced-over by Bob Saget in the future, tells a story to his children of how he met his mother. Of course, none of the episodes actually involve Ted meeting his future wife, or at least, not so far.

The show focuses on the lives Ted and his four friends, Marshall, Lily, Barney and Robin, living in New York City back in 2005. Ted and Marshall (Union Segré) live together and although she has her own place, Marshall’s fiancé, Lily (Alyson Hannigan), lives with them too. Marshall and Lily make a humorous couple if for no other reason than their extreme height difference, which turns into hilarity when Lily moves Marshall’s family. Together the three frequently go out to bars, where in the pilot episode Ted meets Robin Scherbatsky (Cobie Smulders), a news reporter who Ted becomes convinced is his future wife. As we find out at the end of the episode, “So I’m in love with the future.” In fact, as future-Ted tells his children, she’s actually their aunt.

But I almost forgot about Barney. Always in a suit and tie, Neil Patrick Harris’ character bumps into Ted one day in the bathroom and decides that they are going to be best friends. This doesn’t bode well for Ted.

Barney’s favorite game to play at the bars is “Have you met Ted?” In this game, he taps the shoulder of the nearest girl, says the tagline, “Have you met Ted?” before scurrying off, leaving Ted in an awkward lurch with the girl.

Later in the first season Barney comes up with a new, revolutionary idea, that he calls the “Lemon Law.” Having nothing to do with lemons, the law simply states that in the first five minutes of a first date, if you decide you’re not into your partner, you can evoke the “Lemon Law” and ditch them. The law appeals the others, but Barney claims it will catch on, saying “It’s gonna be a thing!” And it does catch on. Before the end of the episode one of Barney’s dates uses the law on him. My favorite aspect to the show is that every time Barney and Ted decide to go out, Barney instructs his friend to “Suit up!” Of course, Ted never does and this drives Barney mad.

“How I Met Your Mother” has grown on me in the little time I’ve been watching, and it’s even beginning to influence my ways. During Junior Parents Weekend, my friends and I decided to hit up the bars after dinner on Saturday and, oh yes, we suited up.

Contact Mark Witte at mwitte@nd.edu

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

The cast of CBS’s sitcom series “How I Met Your Mother,” including Alyson Hannigan, second from right, and Neil Patrick Harris, center.

Adult comics have made a huge comeback in America. I don’t know how many people on campus give any attention to comic books and their “adult” counterpart, graphic novels, but comic books are no longer the stuff of adolescent boys.

While Japan has never forgotten the appeal comics have on people of all ages, Americans have delegated comic books to mere kids’ stuff. If you are one of these people, you should be ashamed of what you are missing. I know it’s easy to be caught up in the hip and socially current comics like Marjane Satrapi’s “Persepolis,” but comics dealing in the realm of fantasy still have some great stories to tell. Series like Alan Moore’s “Watchmen” deal with how superheroes would be viewed in the real world. Imagine the scenario from “The Incredibles” in which superheroes are outlawed, but the topic is dealt with in a darker tone that is more politically, serious and adult. Not only that, but Watchmen was published a full 20 years ago.

Neil Gaiman’s “Sandman” series deal with an extended and beautifully-complex mythology following the personalizations of Dream, Death and others, and how they operate in the world we know. But if these two aren’t enough for you, I recommend you give “Watchmen” a try.

Written by Brian K. Vaughan, it finished its 60 issue run last month, and now would be the perfect time to pick up the graphic novel collections if for nothing else than the unbeatable premise. One day, every mammal with a Y-chromosome is killed simultaneously except for an immature young escape artist named Yorick and his pet monkey. What happens from there defies all predictions and blazes a new and exciting path in popuar storytelling. What could have easily devolved into meaningless gender pandering becomes an intelligent conjecture on what the world would be like if run by women. And it’s done fairly, provocatively and entertainingly.

In the first few issues, it deals with the rebuilding of the American government, a fanatical feminist group called the Daughters of the Amazon who seek to destroy every last remider of men (including sperm banks) and an Israeli general seeking to preserve Israel at any cost.

Meanwhile Yorick finds a world-renowned geneticist who seeks to understand Yorick and his monkey survived. They are escorted by a government agent from Washington D.C., to the doctor’s lab in San Francisco, all while being chased by Yorick’s sister — a member of the Daughters of the Amazon.

The story may be complex, but it is paced in a methodical manner, like a good action movie. It’s hard not to become attached to the magnificently-written characters as they grow and mature in the hardships they come to face. It’s about human beings coming face-to-face with the impossible, and how they react to the pressure.

Beyond all the breathtaking twists is a beautifully reserved ending in the aftermath of a complete resolution. It makes the wacky science explanation bearable.

After all, it’s not about bad things happening, but how human beings keep going anyhow.

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The views expressed in this column are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Observer.
By MYCHAL STANLEY
Scene Writer

Stephin Merritt, the frontman for The Magnetic Fields, has an incredible talent in writing pop tunes. It's strange, then, that he writes some of the most melancholy, self-deprecating pop songs out there. Nothing has changed in his new release, "Distortion," where Merritt and co-vocalist Claudia Gonson sing about being rejected, lonely or drunk. But if this all sounds too much like a Notre Dame winter, a lot of the subject matter is handled with some humor. In "Too Drunk to Dream," Merritt sings the benefits of being drunk as opposed to being sober (Sober / nobody wants you / S***faced / they're all undressing), concluding that he needs to get too drunk to dream about a absent lover.

Gonson sings in "The Nun's Litany" as a nun thinking about missed opportunities, paths she could've went down and what it would be like to be a "dominatrix / which isn't like me / but I can dream," among other things. "Mr. Mistletoe" is probably the best song on the album, Merritt laments spending Christmas alone in the form of a hate letter to that dread plant, mistletoe itself. "Mr. Mistletoe" is probably the best song about an emotion a lot of people feel on Christmas, and it's done with a brooding humor that you'd be hard-pressed to find anywhere else.

This album, however, is much more than just the great songwriting that is typical of The Magnetic Fields. The name of the record is very literal, and every song is accompanied by swirling torrents of guitar distortion and noise. It's not enough to be distracting, instead providing a luxurious soundscape to disappear into when you put on your headphones. Other than the layer of distortion, The Magnetic Fields' usual sound has not changed. Merritt is obsessed with pop song structure, especially from the 1960s. He specializes in breaking down the formula to its most basic and catchy components. Underneath the noise, minimalist piano plucking, basic guitar chords and Merritt's deep bass or Gonson's sweet childlike voice don't revolutionize or advance the sound of the band. The distortion may add a new sheen, but really, the band is just doing what it has been doing for years. And that's not a bad thing at all.

The Magnetic Fields provide some of their catchiest tunes on this record, and you will find it difficult not to get swept away by some of their indelible hooks. Merritt has perfected the structure of a good pop song, and he knows how to lay down great tunes and words around them in tidy three-minute portions.

If you've never heard of The Magnetic Fields, you're in for a treat because "Distortion" perfectly accompanies these gloomy winter days. The swirling distortion is the perfect soundtrack to the swirling rain and snow. The distant instruments feel exactly how sound is muffled in the winter air. The Magnetic Fields have put out an album that could very easily become the soundtrack of your life, especially during these sad, cold, lonely days of winter.

Contact Mychal Stanley at wstanley@nd.edu
LeBron's triple-double falls short to Houston

Rockets win ninth in a row behind balanced scoring; Magic rout Pistons, snapping Detroit's 10-game winning streak

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Shane Battier chuckled before revealing Houston's defensive game plan to stop LeBron James.

"Well, we hoped he had a good time in New Orleans," Battier said.

It was the Rockets, though, who had the last laugh.

Rafer Alston scored 22 points, Yao Ming added 16 points and 14 rebounds and Houston sent a team record Tuesday night with its 14th straight road win, 93-85 over the Cleveland Cavaliers, who wasted a triple-double from James.

The Rockets entered the NBA's longest road game in midseason as the Western Conference's hottest team and they didn't cool off, winning their ninth in a row to improve to 1-3 since Jan. 4.

"We don't want to get tired of winning," said Tracy McGrady, who added 17 points on just 6-of-18 shooting. "A lot of people probably thought the break would be bad for us because we had so much momentum, so much swagger. But everybody came back and we said, 'Let's start it off right.'"

And so they did by digging in on defense. Houston last reeled off nine victories in a row on the road in 1993.

LuteScola added 15 points as the Rockets, one of the league's stingiest teams, won for the 12th time in 13 games. The one con­stellation was a defensive mind-set that was missing early this season.

"It just took us for us to figure it out," Battier said.

James, who won his second All-Star MVP in three years on Sunday in New Orleans, finished with 26 points, 13 rebounds and 11 assists. It was his fifth triple-double this season and career No. 15 — the third youngest to reach that mark behind Oscar Robertson and Wilt Chamberlain.

Hounded by Battier, who got help from his teammates, James missed most of his shots, couldn't get many easy looks and, generally, great communication. Every time LeBron turned the corner, one of his big men had some words, and Battier thought twice about going down the lane.\n\nWe got him to settle for some jumpers," and James’ shot didn’t start falling with regularity until the fourth. His 3-pointer with 10:11 left brought the Cavaliers within 70-66.

However, Alston sank a long 3, reserve Carl Landry converted a three-point play and Scola tied it less than a minute to put the Rockets ahead by 13.\n
James tried to rally Cleveland down the stretch, but every time the league's best fourth-quarter scorer made a big basket, the Rockets, Alston in particular.

"I missed too many easy shots that I usually make," James said.

Zydrunas Ilgauskas and Larry Hughes had 16 points apiece for the Cavs, who never got untracked offensively and shot just 39 percent as the Rockets swarmed them from the start.

"What we’re developing on this team is a team-like," McGrady said. "Great defensive team, going out there and playing together and not relying on one or two people to score the rock.

"What we really care about is playing great defense and playing together. And it flowed.

Magic 103, Pistons 85

A blowout at the Palace of Auburn Hills is nothing new.

The surpise Tuesday night was that it was the Pistons getting blown out by the Orlando Magic by as many as 26 points and its 10-game winning streak was snapped with a loss.

"I certainly didn't foresee that happening," Magic coach Stan Van Gundy said. "A lot has to go right for us to hit the near the Pistons, like that, especially on a night when Dwight Howard scores eight points and Hedo Turkoglu just had a very good game."

Detroit extended its winning streak to 12 games, which coincided with a victory over Indiana on Feb. 13, but knew it would be tough to keep its intensity through the final All-Star break.

"You hate having a break when you are on a winning streak because it messes with your momentum," said Chauncey Billups. "That’s not an excuse, but we feel like we should have come in here and played better than that. N\n\nlike losing like this.”

The Pistons looked fine early in the game, on the first possessions, Rashard Lewis blocked a dunk attempt by Howard, his All-Star teammate and the new dunk champion.

Detroit, though, couldn’t stop Orlando’s outside game. The Magic shot 65 percent on 3-pointers in the game, hitting 13-19.

"We started the game saying we didn’t want to let Dwight dunk, but you can’t take away dunks and 3-pointers," Billups said. "You’ve got to give up something. They got hot and stayed hot.

The Magic outscored Detroit 32-27 over the second and third quarters, shooting 56 percent and holding the Pistons to 24 percent.

"We played a good second quarter and a great third quarter," Van Gundy said. "We knocked down a lot of shots, but it was our defense that stepped up.

Howard didn’t have a great statistical night, but Van Gundy felt he was the difference in the game, especially in Detroit’s 17-point third quarter.

"Dwight had eight points and eight rebounds, and there’s been other nights when he’s gone 20-20, but this might have been his best game of the season," he said. "In the third quarter, he made it virtually impossible for Detroit to get any offense going inside. He changed every shot."

Howard said that his 2-9 shooting night, starting with Wallace’s blocked dunk in the first 20 seconds, spurred him to a better night defensively.

"I wasn’t able to get anything going offensively, so I know I needed to pick it up on the other end," he said. "I guess it worked.

The Magic had been the last team to beat Detroit, 102-100 at home on Jan. 21. The Pistons averaged the loss four days later, but couldn’t do it again.

"We should have played harder, we did," said Detroit coach Flip Saunders. "We didn’t need to come out and lay an egg like that in the second half.

Even though they are the only team to beat Detroit in the last two years, and they’ve now done it twice, Van Gundy doesn’t think the Magic will have any advantage in a possible postseason matchup.

"This is big for our guys, because we know how good that team is," he said. "But this is only the regular season. Detroit has been through the wars, and we’ll have to play at a much higher level than this to beat them in the playoffs."

Former Piston Maurice Evans added 16 points for the Magic, including eight in a 14-3 run that helped Orlando put the game away in the third quarter. Orlando finished with six players in double figures.

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Mavericks coach Avery Johnson, left, and guard Jason Kidd smile during a news conference announcing the 14-year veteran's trade back to Dallas on Tuesday.

All-Star Jason Kidd returns to the Mavericks

Associated Press

DALLAS — Jason Kidd is a member of the Dallas Mavericks. Again. Finally.

The long-discussed, once-scuttled and ultimately reconfigured deal to bring Kidd from New Jersey back to the team that drafted him is finally sealed Tuesday. He was reintroduced in Dallas 14 years after the Mavericks made him the No. 2 pick.

Back then, Kidd was supposed to help turn around one of the worst franchises in sports. Now, as one of the league's best point guards, he's seen as a crucial piece in the Mavs' pursuit of a championship.

There's no bigger reward than to have that championship trophy in your hand," said Kidd, who lost in the NBA Finals twice with the Nets. "That's why I'm here. Because Dallas has its eye on that prize.

The eight-player deal, in the making since before the All-Star break and talked about a lot longer than that, sends Kidd, forward Malik Allen and guard Antoine Wright to Dallas.

The primary piece headlined to New Jersey is point guard Devin Diop, swingman Maurice Ager, forward Trenton Hassell and retired forward Keith Van Horn.

New Jersey also gets two first-round draft picks and $3 million.

Tin Horn and Hassell replace Jerry Stackhouse and Devean George in an original trade proposal. Stackhouse's presence in the deal was muddled by plans to get him back to Dallas — within the rules, although in a way the league frowned upon — and George used his veto power to block his involvement.

"It's been the most amazing, interesting trade we've ever done, and we've done some doozies here," Mavericks owner Mark Cuban said. "I've never seen anything like it, but all's well that ends well. We got the right guys.

Kidd wasn't the answer in Dallas a decade ago, and he was shipped to Phoenix after 2 seasons. Five years later he was traded to the Nets, who went on back-to-back NBA Finals in 2002-03.

New Jersey hasn't made a long playoff run since, and Kidd started talking a trade year ago, when he almost went to the Los Angeles Lakers. He went public with his latest trade demand last month.

"He's a once-in-a-lifetime guy of type to play with and coach," Nets coach Lawrence Frank said. "He had an unbelievable impact on everyone in this organization and we wish him nothing but the best."

Former MVP Tejada remains silent concerning steroids

KISSIMMEE, Fla. — Houston Astros pitcher Woody Williams walked into the clubhouse and saw a swarm of reporters gathered around Miguel Tejada.

"Leave the guy alone!" Williams said with a smile.

No charges.

Tejada arrived at spring training with his new team on Tuesday, and within minutes faced questions about the Mitchell Report and an FBI investigation looking into his alleged link to performance-enhancing drugs.

Tejada refused to answer any of them, preferring to discuss baseball and his fresh start with the Astros.

"I can't really talk about that situation," he said. "Right now, I just want to talk about baseball, because that's really my focus."

The Astros acquired the four-time All-Star shortstop from Baltimore on Dec. 12, the day before the Mitchell Report was released.

Jason says baseball can survive the controversy

KISSIMMEE, Fla. — He's no longer the home run king, but he's still the Hammer.

Bash Aaron jogged into Atlanta's spring training camp on Tuesday — he needs knee-replacement surgery — with no opinion on whether Barry Bonds and Roger Clemens deserve to be in the Hall of Fame, but saying he's confident baseball is on the way to recovering from the steroids era.

"I think baseball is trying to clean up its act," Aaron said, sitting in the Braves' dugout during batting practice. "It's unfortunate for baseball, but baseball has been through some tough times. It went through the White Sox scandal and survived. It went through a lot of stuff and survived. It's going to survive this, too."

Like many baseball fans, Aaron tuned in when the Mitchell Report was released, and he was in front of the television set again for Roger Clemens' testimony before Congress last week, when the seven-time Cy Young Award winner denied using human growth hormone as alleged by his former trainer.

Potential JRL-Champ Car merger talks heat up

A possible unification of America's two open-wheel series is still on track, with both sides saying Tuesday progress is being made.

David Hedge, Champ Car World Series spokesman, said discussions are "heating up," but no announcement was expected Tuesday. "As long as everyone is still talking, there's hope."

Fred Naion, a spokesman for the Indy Racing League, told The Associated Press "there is no deal yet. He said talks "between the principals from both sides" are continuing and both sides remain "optimistic" an agreement can be reached, possibly as early as Thursday.

Both sides have struggled for fans, sponsors and TV ratings since the IRL, founded by Indianapolis Motor Speedway president Tony George, began competition in 1996, competing against the established CART series.
**NBA**

Suns ready for Suns debut against former team

Associated Press

PHOENIX — Shaquille O'Neal says he is ready to run with the Phoenix Suns. Really.

"I'm going to be looking to get out like Randy Moss and Terrell Owens," he said Tuesday after going through his final workout before making his debut with the Suns on Wednesday night against his old team, the Los Angeles Lakers.

The prospect of the 7-foot-1, 325-pound O'Neal can move, and playmaker Steve Nash was elated with the trade that brought O'Neal from Miami for Shawn Marion and Marcus Banks.

"We're going to have to adjust slightly to his strengths," Nash said, "but you know where he's strong we've been weak, and that's having a big presence in the paint, taking up space and guarding the rim.

O'Neal says he has no desire to be a star with his new team. Those roles belong to Nash and Amar'e Stoudemire, he said.

"He's a jokester, and that's funny, very funny," Shaq said without smiling, "He's a very funny." 

Coaches Mike D'Antoni says people will be surprised about how well a motivated O'Neal can move, and playmaker Steve Nash was elated with the trade that brought O'Neal from Miami for Shawn Marion and Marcus Banks.

"We're going to have to adjust slightly to his strengths," Nash said, "but you know where he's strong we've been weak, and that's having a big presence in the paint, taking up space and guarding the rim.

O'Neal says he has no desire to be a star with his new team. Those roles belong to Nash and Amar'e Stoudemire, he said.

"He's a jokester, and that's funny, very funny," Shaq said without smiling, "He's a very funny." 

Shaq's charisma and humor have energized the Suns franchise since last week's trade, with the anticipation building toward Wednesday night's showdown with Jackson, Kobe Bryant, newcomer Pau Gasol and the rest of the Lakers.

O'Neal insisted there is nothing special about the opponent being the Lakers, other than the fact that it's a tough Pacific Division foe.

"We had more great times than bad times together, but they've moved on. I've moved on," O'Neal said. "I have a new team now and I have a new focus.

Still, Jackson's comments have not been brushed aside.

"I don't take anything personal," O'Neal said. "I just have a certain file in my head, so Earhlings must be careful with what they say.

O'Neal is part of a recent migration of talent to the already-tough Western Conference, with Gasol going to the Lakers from Memphis and, in a trade finalized on Tuesday, Jason Kidd to the Dallas Mavericks from New Jersey.

There will be no time for O'Neal to ease into his new role. After the Lakers, the Suns are home to Boston on Friday night and Detroit on Sunday.

"We don't have three cupcakes to start, but that's all right," Nash said. "We're going to learn a lot about ourselves and where we're going, and maybe that will give us a steeper learning curve to play against terrific teams.

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SMC BASKETBALL
Team looks to improve MIAA mark at home
Belles counting on Newsom against Adrian

By MEAGHAN VESELIK
Sports Writer

The Belles picked up an important victory Saturday afternoon over an MIAA opponent, sparked by a revamped defense anchored by junior captain Erin Newsom.

The 71-39 win over Kalamazoo Saturday gave Saint Mary's the boost it needed to move up in MIAA standings. With a conference record of 6-8, Saint Mary's moved into a tie for fourth place with Adrian, Alma and Olivet.

The Belles play tonight against Adrian at 7:30 in Angela Athletic Center.

"At the Kalamazoo game we communicated and worked well together as a team on defense, and it enabled us to pick up easy steals, which led to a stronger offense," Newsom said.

On Saturday, the Belles knocked down 44.8 percent of their field goals and 57.1 percent of their free throws while grabbing 46 rebounds.

The Belles' chief focus this season has been improving their inconsistent defense and low rebounding numbers.

Newsom, the Belles' captain, is central to their effort on the boards. Newsom not only leads the team with 186 rebounds this season, but also is second in scoring with 242 points.

"We have really been working with Erin on her post defense this season and have seen great improvements to this point," Henley said. "I think she has presented some defensive problems for opponents because of her shooting range and how well she runs the floor."

Belles junior guard Katie Rashid credits Newsom with being reliable under the basket.

"Erin has always been one of the leading rebounders for us," Rashid said. "It is nice to know that if we take a shot from the perimeter we will have somebody inside fighting for the rebound."

This season isn't the first in which Newsom has been a key contributor for Saint Mary's. In her freshman season, she grabbed 161 rebounds and scored 240 points. She proved herself again last season when she ended the year with 212 rebounds and 281 points. Newsom was named to the MIAA second team last season.

"I don't know how I have improved this season, if I even have at all, but I do know that with each new season I have to learn and adapt to a new team, just like any other player does," Newsom said. "So I don't know if I am a better player each year, but my role has changed depending on what our team needs each new season."

This season, Newsom has had the opportunity to play with her sister, freshman forward Becky Newsom.

"Coming in as a freshman and having Erin here has made it a much easier transition to college, both with basketball and school," Becky Newsom said. "As teammates we push each other to do better in practice. She is a great leader for our team. She knows when to be serious and when to have fun."

To take down Adrian, Saint Mary's will need Erin Newsom's rebounding and newly polished defensive presence.

"Our focus is still on team defense and rebounds," Henley said. "Both Adrian and Olivet are solid teams that present a challenge for us. The last time we played Adrian, we did not have a great performance in the first half."

Rashid agreed that the Belles must concentrate on defense to beat Adrian.

"At times we have played great team defense and other times we have struggled," Rashid said. "We have been working on our communication on defense in order to improve as a team. I think our game on Saturday was a good indication of how well we are capable of playing on defense if we communicate with each other."

But Newsom is not satisfied, saying the squad still needs to improve at getting stops.

"To be honest we have been playing inconsistently as a team, especially on the defensive end," Newsom said. "I don't doubt that our team is capable of heating any team we come up against, we have the players to do it, we just need to really focus on our team defense and have the same intensity as we did on Saturday versus Kalamazoo."

The conference showdown against the Bulldogs tonight is the Belles' penultimate MIAA matchup.

"I hope that we build off of Saturday's win and use it to win our last two conference games this week," Newsom said. "These next two games against Adrian and Olivet are crucial to the conference rankings, and we'd really like to host the first round on our home court."
**NBA**

**Suns, Nuggets to play outdoor game**

Associated Press

INDIAN WELLS, Calif. — The Phoenix Suns and Denver Nuggets will play the first outdoor game in more than 35 years during the 2008-09 preseason.

The exhibition game on Oct. 11 at the 16,000-seat Indian Wells Tennis Garden will be televised by TNT.

The game follows the NHL’s successful outdoor game on New Year’s Day in Buffalo, N.Y.

“What will happen here will be historic,” Rick Welts, the Suns’ president and chief operating officer, said Tuesday. “More importantly, I think this will be a lot of fun. Most of us learned how to play basketball outdoors. This had the perfect circumstances to do it in the NBA.”

It won’t be the first NBA game to be played outdoors. The Suns defeated the Milwaukee Bucks in a preseason game on Sept. 24, 1972, at a baseball stadium in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Welts said the ideal weather in October and the fact it was possible to hold the event. The tennis stadium is home to the Pacific Life Open, one of the major events on the men’s and women’s pro tours.

Because the seating is built around the parameters of a tennis court, rather than a hockey rink like most NBA arenas, Welts said the game will offer a more intimate setting.

“It’s an NBA-quality facility with no roof on it,” Welts said.

Nuggets center Marcus Camby said he may have to work on his jumper to make it more wind resistant.

“I have a high release — it’s probably not too good outdoors,” Camby said. “It will be fun. I’ve seen hockey have a couple of outdoor games, so it will definitely be interesting. I hope the weather’s nice.”

In the unlikely event the game is rained out, Welts said it would be played the next day.

Denver coach George Karl liked the concept of an outdoor game.

“I grew up playing outdoors and loved it,” he said.

Karl was asked if chain-link nets would be a natural fit for the outdoor game.

“Or lopsided balls,” Karl said with a laugh. “One of the biggest decisions was finding a ball that wasn’t lopsided.”

The Suns feature megastars Steve Nash, Amar’e Stoudemire and Shaquille O’Neal. The team picked the Nuggets because of their marquee players, Allen Iverson and Carmelo Anthony, and because there are direct flights from Denver to Palm Springs.

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**The Observer • SPORTS**

Wednesday, February 20, 2008
No. 15 Indiana bests Hoosier-state rival Purdue

White excels despite sprained left knee, picking up 19 points, 15 boards to end Boilermakers' 11-game winning streak

Associated Press

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — Kelvin Sampson couldn't understand why he was still being asked if his problems over possible NCAA violations were a distraction for his team.

Eric Gordon scored 22 points to lead No. 15 Indiana to a 77-68 victory over No. 14 Purdue on Tuesday night in the Hoosiers' last game before the completion of the school's investigation into accusations Sampson committed major rules violations.

"I think the way our team is playing answers all the questions," he said. "I think our play speaks for itself."

Purdue's Armon Bassett added 16 points and eight rebounds for the Boilermakers, while Scott Martin added 12.

University president Michael McRobbie said last Friday that the school would conduct a new investigation into Sampson's future holds.

"When we're on the court, that's all we're focused on," he said. "Right now, we're just trying to win games."

The latest win snapped Purdue's 11-game winning streak and brought Indiana within one-half game of the Big Ten standings.

Indiana's fans seemed to move on after a sprained left knee, said the Hoosiers (22-4, 11-2 Big Ten) aren't thinking about what Sampson's problems are.

"We're on the court, we're just trying to win games," he said.

"Sometimes you have to bring them into the huddle and remind them what color jersey they're wearing," he said. "Painted said there was no answer for Gordon and White. "Those guys have got to be the best 1-2 punch in the country, the best inside-outside combination," he said.

The Boilermakers shot 31 percent (11-of-36) in the first half but stayed in the game by forcing 12 turnovers.

White had 10 points and six rebounds in the first half, which featured five lead changes and ended with Indiana leading 32-29.

The Hoosiers opened the second half on a 13-6 run capped by a long 3-pointer by Gordon that gave Indiana a 45-35 lead with 12:28 left.

Indiana led by 12 points before Purdue went on a 7-0 run, including a 3-pointer and a layup by Hummel, that made it 53-48 and forced the Hoosiers to call a timeout. Martin's 3-pointer with just under 7 minutes to go cut Indiana's lead to 57-55 but the Hoosiers went 17-of-30 from the free throw line the rest of the way.

Indiana guard Eric Gordon tracks down a loose ball in front of Purdue guard Tarrance Crump in a 77-68 Hoosier win Tuesday. Gordon scored a game-high 22 points to lead the charge in the win.
League
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University enters the meet as the only Big East squad with a national ranking and boasts a team that has been steadily gathering momentum throughout the season. The Cardinals hold the top conference times in 10 events, including all five relays.

Pittsburgh is a 19-time conference champion, and the Panthers placed fourth in last year’s meet. The Panthers are likely to challenge Notre Dame for the top positions in the diving events. Junior Alex VoloviHski holds the Big East top score in the 1-meter dive, while senior Jeremy Welsh is the top conference diver in the 3-meter event.

VoloviHski and Michael Bulfin hold the fastest 1-meter dive, while Michael Sullivan holds the fastest 3-meter dive. Irish junior diver Joseph Sullivan swam the no. 2 position on the 3-meter board when junior center Kia Prince led the conference, scoring 22. Michael Bulfin holds the conference, scoring 22.

Both Notre Dame and Rutgers struggled to perform in the paint in the first half, continually missing shots and combining for 19 turnovers.

The Scarlet Knights look to turn things around 12 minutes into the game with a 9-0 run to cruise to a 22-14 lead with 6:21 left in the half. But that spurt ended Rutgers output in the opening period. The Irish rallied to score the next eight points, with the final two coming on a buzzer-beater by guard Chanel Allen to tie the game at 22.

Notre Dame continued to play tough defense in the second half, holding Rutgers scoreless in the first few minutes after halftime.

The Scarlet Knights finally managed to put points on the board when junior center Kia Prince led the Panthers in scoring down only two. Vaughn's basket sparked a 17-5 run over Notre Dame to give Rutgers a 41-33 lead. The Irish did not regain the lead and never managed to get closer than four points for the rest of the game.

McGraw was happy with Notre Dame's ability to shut down Rutgers, but said she would have liked to see more from her offense. "I thought we did a great job defensively to hold them to 57," McGraw said. "That was our goal, we wanted to keep the game in the 50s and I felt we did a really good job of that, so we were really pleased with our defense. They're an excellent defensive team as well, and we just really missed a lot of shots that we probably could have made."

Sophomore guard Epiphanny Prince led the Scarlet Knights in scoring with 18 points and senior guard MaTeo Ajavon added 15. Allen matched Prince with 18 points for the Irish and guard Lindsay Schrader chipped in 10.

Despite the production from Allen and Schrader, the Irish struggled to score in the paint. "We missed shots, we just missed too many shots," McGraw said. "We had a lot of opportunities to win the game, and we didn't rebound and we missed shots, and that was the game."

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Rutgers
continued from page 24
court we gave them a great game, but I thought we could have won. We missed some easy shots and we didn't do a good job rebounding."

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Wednesday, February 20th
4:15 PM Hesburgh Center Auditorium

Presented by
David Lloyd
University of Southern California
University of Notre Dame

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PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS, AND ECONOMICS

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PPE INFORMATION MEETING
Wednesday February 20
204 DeBartolo 5:00-6:00

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NCAA Men’s Basketball
Williams responds to Coach K’s words

Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski diagrams a play for two Blue Devils during the team’s 86-73 loss to Wake Forest on Sunday.

Associated Press

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — North Carolina coach Roy Williams apparently doesn’t think too highly of Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski’s views on injury reports.

In a small riff that has added the latest spice to college basketball’s most intense rivalry, Williams took exception to a comment made by Krzyzewski on Sunday that the Blue Devils don’t discuss injuries “unlike other schools.”

While Krzyzewski never mentioned the third-ranked Tar Heels specifically, Williams felt the statement was a subtle jab at his team, which has had a much-publicized run of injuries and ailments in the past two weeks.

It was enough to have Williams, in a comment on his weekly radio show Monday, telling an unspecified person to “coach their own damn team. I’ll coach my team.”

On Tuesday, Williams found himself discussing the comments again instead of focusing on the Tar Heels’ game at North Carolina State on Wednesday.

“It’s not like I’m getting a drum plane and flying it around to say, ‘Roy fell against a wall and banged his nose’ or anything,” Williams said in a news conference. “We have to do those things (talk about injuries) and everybody’s hurt. But there’s different stages of being hurt.

If you’re hurt and missing games, that’s not exactly like having a hangnail. And so we do have some people that are getting hurt and missing games. I don’t think that somebody should say we’re putting it in front of the public.

When a reporter attempted to ask a follow-up question, Williams said he didn’t want to discuss the comments further and have “battles through the media.” But when the news conference ended, Williams came back to the topic once more.

“I said before we played Duke it’s impossible to have any more respect than I do for Mike,” Williams said, “but I felt like that comment was aimed towards us.”

Duke team spokesman Jon Jackson declined to comment Tuesday, one day before the Blue Devils (No. 4 ESPN/USA Today, No. 5 AP) travel to Miami.

Krzyzewski’s comment came in a radio interview after Duke’s loss to Wake Forest. While noting that freshman Nolan Smith had been playing through a knee injury for a few weeks, Krzyzewski added, “unlike other schools we don’t release our injuries,” according to the Web site for radio station WRBZ-AM in Raleigh.

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204 DeBartolo 5:00-6:00

Write Sports. Call 631-4543.
The Observer - SPORTS

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recruiting," White said. "We have a great school and some great facilities that allow us to bring in some of the best swimmers out there."

But White said the most important reason for the squad's success is the development of swimmers that maximize their potential. "It is really important to just make people faster," White said. "And that is a product of mental preparation, training, environment, coaching, support and first-rate facilities. And we have all of that here at Notre Dame."

The Big East championship runs from today to Saturday at the Nassau County Aquatics Center. The preceding morning heats of the individual rounds will be followed by afternoon sessions with the finals and the relays taking place during those sessions. The Irish will look to maximize their scores by only swimming in their best events, as each participant can compete in a limited amount of events. "We hope to qualify for the NCAA Championship with as many places possible," White said.

The Irish have fared well thus far against Big East foes, taking a 2-1 conference record into the championship. Their only Big East dual-meet loss was to Pittsburgh in a 155-148 nail-biter. They dominated Louisville 188-111 and West Virginia 249-116 in dual-meet competition this season. This event is the culmination of a season of hard work for many of the swimmers. All the training, early-morning swimming, dry workouts and the daily grind lead up to the next four days of swimming. "The secret to success is just putting in the entire four days," White said. "It takes a lot of focus. The girls just have to make it one event at a time."

The wildcard for the Irish is the 25-day layoff since their last meet. But the Irish traditionally come out of the break very strong. "The girls feel really good," White said. "I have never seen them looking so fast."

Rutgers, West Virginia and Pittsburgh have the best chances to upset Notre Dame in the championship, but the Irish are confident they will add another trophy to their case. "If we just stay focused, we will do very well," White said.

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the only sub-par score of the tournament, a four-under 212. Her pair of 70s on Monday were the lowest two scores for the week. Monday afternoon's respectable team score of 300 indicated that the Irish could rebound from their slow start, but a final round 314 on Tuesday dashed any hopes of matching the team's earlier success.

"We put ourselves in a good position... but we couldn't continue that momentum." Susan Holt Irish coach

Notre Dame junior Lisa Maunu led the Irish scoring for the third time this season, shooting a 12-over 229, tied for 15th overall. Her Monday afternoon 74 was the low round of the week for the Irish.

Freshman standout So-Ryuan Park trailed Maunu by one stroke, finishing up with a 13-over-par 229, tied for 16th overall. Follow-up stokes over No. 2 UCLA. The two teams were the favorites coming into a highly competitive weekend with 10 of the top 50 teams in the nation.

No. 5 Charlotte was the biggest disappointment of the tournament, finishing in fifth place, 16 strokes out of the lead. Host North Florida ended the final round at 13-over par and took third place overall in the tournament.

The winner on the individual side of the tournament was Georgia State's Joel Sjoholm, who led his team to a ninth-place finish.

The tournament also featured some solid individual performances by the Irish. Sophomore Doug Dortinger finished the tournament with a combined score of 224, which left him in a tie for 29th. Dortinger's score was 8-over par on the weekend, but was still impressive considering only six players finished below par for the weekend. Irish captain and No. 1 golfer Josh Sandman finished in a tie with Dortinger.

The par-72, 6,895-yard Sawgrass Country Club is considered one of the hardest courses on the college tour.

The tournament allowed the Irish to shake off some of the rust that has built up over the long break since the fall season. The team improved its score every day of the tournament. The Irish will be in action again March 3-4 at the USC Collegiate Invitational in Westlake Village, Calif.

Contact Peter Reisenauer at preisen@nd.edu

Announcing the Year 2008 Annual Awards of the Albert Ravarino Italian Studies Travel Scholarship

Thanks to a generous gift from the Albert Ravarino family, the Italian Studies Program is pleased to announce the year 2008 annual competition for travel in support of summer research and foreign study in Italy. Grants will be made in amounts not to exceed $3,000, and will not normally cover all expenses. Notre Dame graduate and undergraduate students who are planning to pursue research or a formal program of summer study in Italy are invited to apply. Students must have completed at least one year of Italian language. The course work will normally be in Italian; will involve the study of Italian language, literature, and culture; and must be applicable to a student's degree program at the University of Notre Dame.

Recommended programs for foreign study include, but are not limited to: Loyola University in Rome, Boston University in Padua, UCLA in Pisa, Miami University in Urbino, Columbia University in Scandiano. Interested students are encouraged to consult the materials on Italian foreign study in the Department of Romance Languages, 343 O'Shaughnessy Hall.

Students are invited to submit a letter which should include:

1) an explanation of how the proposed research or foreign study will enhance their degree program at Notre Dame;
2) a personal statement indicating their background, interests, and long-term goals;
3) a description of the research project or the program they intend to follow;
4) a budget indicating the costs involved;
5) two letters of recommendation;
6) a transcript showing all grades and courses completed;
7) a list of other sources of funding (being sought or confirmed) for the same project (i.e. Office of International Studies, Nanovic Institute, etc.)

Application Deadline: Wednesday, February 27, 2008
Albert Ravarino Italian Studies Travel Scholarship Program in Italian Studies 343 O'Shaughnessy Hall University of Notre Dame

Recycle
The Observer.
**ND Women's Basketball**

**Scarlet Blood**

**Defense not enough in loss to Rutgers in N.J.**

By DEIRDRE KRASULA
Sport Writer

It was a night about defense from an Irish team known more for its high-scoring offense.

No. 14 Notre Dame — averaging 80 points per game — was held below the 60-point mark for only the third time this season in its 57-51 loss to No. 5 Rutgers in Piscataway, N.J., Tuesday night.

But it wasn’t just the Scarlet Knights defense that performed well. The Irish kept Rutgers scoreless for 11 minutes throughout the second half of the game.

“I felt that we really improved since the last time we played a top-five team,” Irish coach Mattet McGraw said. “And on their home court the Irish struggle, come with unit’s effort, but they were dethroned by West Virginia 219-150. In that event, as well as a victory in its final regular season conference competition up close.

The defending champion No. 25 Texas A&M made a revenge on the Mountaineers last year’s fifth place - are expected to battle it out for the top spot Saturday, the final day of competition.

The defending champion Mountaineers will compete without many of last year’s key performers, but seniors Nick Keller and Kevin Donohue have shown quality leadership in their last two years. The coach hoped to catch Florida, one of the top five, rounded out by No. 14 Kent State (912), No. 37 Ohio State (913), and No. 31 Texas (914).

Michigan State’s Sara Brown took home most valuable honors, finishing the tournament with a wake-up call.”

Host No. 23 Michigan State cruised to a comfortable 10-stroke victory, shooting 303 in the final round to lead the field with an overall 942.

No. 25 Texas A&M made a final-round push, shooting a 298, to climb to second overall with all of a 902. Only two strokes separated the rest of the top five.

**ND Women’s Golf**

**Irish struggle, come in 10th in first competition of spring**

**Coach disappointed with unit’s effort**

By MICHAEL BLASCO
Sport Writer

No. 19 Notre Dame stumbled out of the gate in its opening tournament of the spring schedule, finishing 10th in a field of 15 at the Central District Invitational in Parrish, Fla.

The Irish carded a 314 in the final round en route to a season-worst total score of 929, ending up at 65-over-par in 34 holes at the River Wilderness Golf Club.

Notre Dame coach Susan Holt said she was disappointed with the Irish squad.

“We beat ourselves,” Holt said. “I was shocked with how we played. I think we lacked focus and discipline and that hurt us. We didn’t pay attention to detail and hopefully it’s a wake-up call.”

**ND finishes strong, falls short**

**Team improves every day of tournament**

By PETER REISENAUER
Sport Writer

Notre Dame got the score it was hoping for, but it was just not enough.

The Irish finished last in a field of 15 Tuesday at the John Hayt Invitational in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

Going into Tuesday’s action, Irish coach Jim Kubinski said he hoped the team might be able to put up scores in the 290s. The Irish met that goal, finishing the day with a score of 296, 8-over par. The final-round score was an improvement on the 301 they shot Monday.

Kubinski thought the score might give his team a chance to climb out of eighth place. The coach hoped to catch Florida, one of the top five.

**ND Women’s Swimming**

**Squad aims for Big East championship**

By CHRIS DOYEN
Sport Writer

After a 24-day layoff filled with physical and mental preparation, the Irish enter the pool in competitive action today when the Big East championships start at the Nassau County Aquatic Center in East Meadow, N.Y.

“It’s been quite a long layoff,” Irish coach Tim Welsh said. “But the focus has been wonderful. I think as we’ve tried to get everything sharpened up, we’ve made a lot of progress. We’re very optimistic.”

The Irish will seek their third conference title in four years. At last year’s meet, they were defeated by West Virginia — who won by only 4.5 points.

Notre Dame exacted some revenge on the Mountaineers in its final regular season meet, the Shamrock Invitational, when it defeated West Virginia 219-150. In that event, as well as a victory over Pittsburgh in November and a loss to Louisville in January, Notre Dame got a chance to see its top conference competition up close.

Those three schools, along with Notre Dame and Cincinnati — last year’s fifth-place team — are expected to battle it out for the top spot Saturday, the final day of competition.

The defending champion Mountaineers will compete without many of last year’s key performers, but seniors Nick Keller and Kevin Donohue have shown quality leadership in their last two years.