

CLASSIC



A publication for Northwestern College alumni & friends • Summer 2004



A New Stage

DeWitt Theatre Arts Center opens



Dr. Bruce Murphy
President

Northwestern's Reformed identity

"What does it mean to be Reformed?"

The question came from a freshman as we walked out of a Sunday school class on the many traditions of Christian spirituality. She liked Northwestern but was not Dutch, and until coming to campus had not heard of the Reformed Church in America. Wondering if she should stay for her sophomore year, she wanted to know how seriously we took our Reformed identity.

Rejecting the temptation to give a patented presidential "Let me tell you what you want to hear" response, I said words to this effect: "We take our Reformed identity very seriously, and that is exactly why you should stay."

Thirty years ago Northwestern had about 700 students, and approximately 400 were from Reformed backgrounds. Today the total number of students has increased to nearly 1,300, but the number of Reformed students has remained the same. We certainly desire to have more students from Reformed churches attend, but we are pleased that so many students from other evangelical and mainline denominations have selected Northwestern.

The reason that all students, regardless of their Christian background, can benefit from a Northwestern education is the character of our Reformed faith. A distinctive of the Reformed tradition has always been an educated clergy and laity seeking to discern the hand of God at work throughout nature and culture, as well as in the church and in individual lives.

Calvin's *Institutes*, written in the heat of war and cultural and religious turmoil, are a model of critical thinking and deep piety. They reveal openness to truth wherever it is to be found, a commitment to the Scriptures as God's authoritative word, and a refusal to view faith as a replacement for rigorous thought. Both faith and reason were gifts from God to be used carefully together in pursuit of knowledge and responsible living.

Most of today's Northwestern students, Reformed and otherwise, come to college with an admirable desire to be effective Christians out in the world. For the most part, these young men and women are passionate and committed. But many of them come with a tendency to be anti-intellectual in their expression of faith.

Our challenge and opportunity is to nurture their zeal by sharpening their minds, deepening their Christian understanding and expanding their vision of God's work—precisely the contribution of the Reformed tradition since the 16th century.

And what happened to the freshman?

She stayed. She became a peer teacher for Northwestern's freshman seminar, Introduction to Christian Liberal Arts, and a teaching assistant in our religion department. She participated in the International and Multicultural Awareness clubs and studied in Costa Rica with the Latin American Studies Program (LASP). She also took a Summer of Service trip to Guatemala, where she worked in a Catholic mission.

At commencement this May, she was given Northwestern's highest honor for excellence in academic achievement, Christian influence, general attitude and participation in worthwhile campus activities. She'll return to Costa Rica as an intern with the LASP in August, and eventually she plans to attend graduate school.

She was raised Catholic and she's still Catholic—but she knows what it means to be Reformed.

▼
"Our challenge and opportunity is to nurture students' zeal by sharpening their minds, deepening their Christian understanding and expanding their vision of God's work."
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CLASSIC

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The *Classic* is published quarterly—in March, June, October and December—for alumni and friends of Northwestern College. So named because it served what was then known as the Northwestern Classical Academy, the *Classic* was the school's first student newspaper, begun in 1891. It has been an alumni publication since 1930.

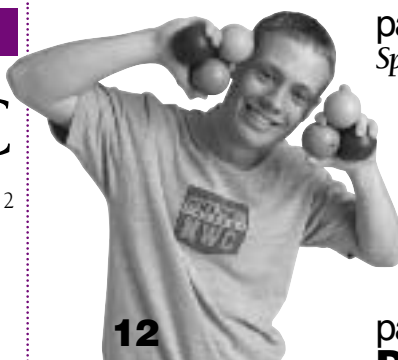
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Cover photo: And God Said, a new musical of Old Testament dramas, officially opened the Marvin and Jerene DeWitt Theatre Arts Center in April. The cover photo is from Act I, "Jephthah's daughter (Judges 11:30-40)." The dancers are (from left) Heidi Friesen, Amherst, N.Y.; Crystal Brown, Elk River, Minn.; and Kelcee Foss, Orange City.

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NCATE reaccredits education program



NCATE evaluators praised the extensive practical experience Northwestern education majors receive, such as tutoring students in local schools.

Northwestern's teacher education program received continuing accreditation from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in April. Only four other colleges' education programs in Iowa (Graceland, Luther, Morningside and Wartburg) are accredited by NCATE. The association currently accredits 575 institutions, which produce two-thirds of the nation's new teacher graduates each year.

NCATE reviewers praised Northwestern's education department for its "high quality teaching" and strong reputation on campus and in area schools. They also cited as

NWC hosts foreign language conference

About 70 professors attended the North American Christian Foreign Language Association conference hosted by Northwestern in late March.

The faculty—most representing schools in the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities—attended sessions on topics ranging from French film and German literature to foreign language pedagogy, study abroad and service learning. Entertainment included performances of *September Bears* and comedy improv by Northwestern theatre students.

Piet Koene, instructor in Spanish at NWC, served as conference chairperson.

strengths the department's extensive field experience requirements and good preparation of student teachers and first-year teachers, as well as the college's commitment to diversity. The pervasiveness of the department's conceptual framework, "Teacher as Servant," and its alignment to Northwestern's mission also were recognized.

NCATE-accredited schools must meet rigorous standards. Teacher candidates must have in-depth knowledge of the subject matter they plan to teach, as well as the skills necessary to convey it so students learn. They must also be prepared to understand and work with diverse student populations. The college must have partnerships with schools that enable candidates to develop the skills necessary to help students learn, faculty who model effective teaching practices, and the resources—including information technology resources—necessary to prepare candidates to meet new standards.

Northwestern's program first received NCATE accreditation in 1971. Its most recent continuation of accreditation was in 1999. Evaluators visited the campus last fall; the next on-site accreditation visit is scheduled for the fall of 2008.

Vice President for Academic Affairs

Northwestern seeks a vice president for academic affairs to begin in the fall of 2005. A senior-level administrator reporting directly to the president, this person is responsible for the college's academic personnel and program.

An earned doctorate is required. Preference will be given to candidates with administrative experience and a strong record as a teacher/scholar.

Northwestern is a thriving, coeducational, undergraduate Christian liberal arts college. We seek a leader who is Reformed and evangelical in theology and committed to the distinctives of a Christian liberal arts education.

To apply, send a letter of application and curriculum vita to:

Chair, VPAA Search Committee
Northwestern College
101 7th St. SW
Orange City, IA 51041
Fax: 712-707-7104
president@nwcioa.edu

Northwestern College complies with federal and state regulations concerning nondiscrimination in employment. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Board approves planning for new learning commons

On the same April day Northwestern dedicated the DeWitt Theatre Arts Center, the Board of Trustees approved hiring an architect to begin working on plans for the next campus addition, a new learning commons.

The proposed learning commons—recommended by the Library Program Task Force, which met throughout the 2003-04 school year—will house a new library and archives, computing services center, writing center, classrooms, auditorium and coffee shop. A library with state-of-the-art technology, but reflecting tradition in its aesthetic character and form, will be the centerpiece of the commons.

“There is really strong support for this project among the trustees,” says President Bruce Murphy. “They see this as a crucial facility for encouraging the power of collaborative learning, fostering the social dimensions of learning, and nurturing undergraduate study and research.”

Plans call for a preliminary blueprint and projected costs for the learning commons to be presented to the board at its October meeting. If the project is approved at that time, the college will interview architectural firms to complete the planning process.

In other business, the board spent a significant amount of time discussing Northwestern's identity as a distinctively Christian liberal arts college in the Reformed tradition; approved the 2004-05 budget of \$21.96 million; heard about the A cappella Choir's tour of Eastern Europe from Dr. Thomas Holm, director; and listened to a panel of faculty members talking about their current scholarly projects.

Recognition was given to eight retiring board members: Bob Hooegeven '57 of Sheldon, Iowa, who served a total of 16 years, including five as board chairperson; Dale Huizenga of Kankakee, Ill., eight years; Ben Jans '69 of Sioux Center, eight years; the Rev. Dr. Mark Kraai '70 of Basking Ridge, N.J., four years; the Rev. Roy Paterik '71 of Ashland, Neb., eight years; Nancy Schoep '80 of Hudson, N.Y., a total of 12 years; Linda Tjeerdsma of Springfield, S.D., five years; and Linda Van Roekel '69 of DeWitt, N.Y., eight years.



Dr. John Brogan

Brogan selected for endowed professorship

Dr. John Brogan, religion, has been appointed to Northwestern's Marvin and Jerene DeWitt Endowed Religion Professorship.

The endowed chair provides annual funds to support the recipient's scholarly work. The funds can be used for summer research, the purchase of equipment and materials, travel to pursue research, or assistance for student researchers.

The endowed professor must be an active member in the Reformed Church in America who has a distinguished record as an outstanding teacher. The recipient must also be someone who is recognized for scholarly and leadership contributions to the religion discipline; has provided exemplary service to the department, Northwestern and the larger community; and has demonstrated a commitment to the college's mission.

Brogan joined Northwestern's faculty in 1997 after teaching at Calvin College and Palm Beach Atlantic College. He received a doctorate in New Testament and Christian origins from Duke University, an M.Div. from Bethel Theological Seminary, and a master's in modern Near Eastern and North African studies from the University of Michigan. Brogan earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Dayton.

Brogan received the Northwestern Teaching Excellence Award in 2000. He has frequently made presentations at conferences of the American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature. He serves on the New Testament Program Committee of the Institute for Biblical Research, a professional society of evangelical biblical scholars.

The endowed chair appointment is for a five-year period beginning with the 2004-05 school year. The first two recipients were Dr. E.W. Kennedy and Dr. Jackie Smallbones.

County Extension honors Northwestern

Northwestern was recognized as the recipient of the 2004 Partner in 4-H Award by the Sioux County Extension Office in April.

“Northwestern has consistently supported the 4-H program by encouraging and recruiting college students to present numerous programs to Sioux County elementary and middle school students,” says Cindy Cleveringa, 4-H school enrichment coordinator. “Children benefit by receiving hands-on teaching about nutrition, personal safety and money management. College students benefit by gaining classroom teaching experi-

ence and opportunities to build relationships with staff in Sioux County schools.”

Cleveringa says numerous NWC students also have been volunteers in Extension programs that teach children about leadership, teamwork and character.

Jolynn Tonsfeldt, Northwestern instructor in education, received the award on behalf of the college. A former youth development specialist for the Plymouth County Extension Office, Tonsfeldt continues to assist 4-H programs and encourages NWC students to become involved.

Self-study first step in reaccreditation process

Occasional times of reflection and self-evaluation are good for the soul. The same could be said for colleges.

Northwestern is in the midst of a self-study prompted by its upcoming North Central Association (NCA) reaccreditation review in 2005. As part of a three-year process, faculty, staff, students and board members spent this past year examining the college's mission and identity.

Task forces were formed to answer questions in four areas:

- **The future-oriented organization.** What is the role of technology in a residential Christian liberal arts college of the future?
- **The learning-focused organization.** What's the appropriate relationship between the liberal arts and professional preparation?
- **The connected organization.** What's the appropriate relationship between the curricular and co-curricular?
- **The distinctive organization.** What does it mean to be a distinctly Christian college? More specifically, what is the relationship between being Reformed, evangelical and ecumenical?

"It's a very good thing for an institution to periodically step back and ask the big questions, and that's what these are," says President Bruce Murphy. "Unfortunately, we don't

do that unless prompted, and that's what these accreditation visits do."

The findings of the task forces affirmed Northwestern's accomplishments in each area and also identified challenges for the future.

"It's a process to see if the college is doing what we say we're doing," Murphy says of the self-study. "We set up, based on our understanding of our mission, what we're attempting to accomplish, and we're evaluated on how well we're achieving that."

Among the things affirmed by the task force report is the role of the Reformed tradition in Christian higher education.

"The Reformed tradition's support of critical thinking in the process of developing lasting convictions remains an important feature of Northwestern College—even as we value the whole of God's church and welcome students from across the Christian perspective," explains Murphy.

Dr. Adrienne Forgette, associate professor of psychology and chair of the self-study committee, will now work on the self-study report summarizing the task forces' findings. The site visit by NCA evaluators is slated to take place in the fall of 2005 or spring of 2006.

Students participate in summer research programs

Two Northwestern students were chosen from applicants across the country to participate in summer research projects.

Michael Holm, a junior mathematics major from Orange City, is pursuing research in numerical analysis and differential equations in an eight-week program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, sponsored by the National Science Foundation and the Tennessee Science Alliance. One of 10 undergraduates selected for the program, Holm was awarded a stipend, free housing and travel expenses. In addition to conducting research, he is

taking two short courses and attending faculty seminars.

Brennan Van Loo, a junior biology teaching major from Lynden, Wash., is pursuing research in an internship position with the U.S. Forest Service in Montana's Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness, north of Yellowstone National Park. Van Loo and other interns are involved in several research projects, including a study of lynx population/recovery and projects that examine the effects of moose on willows. Van Loo also is helping to maintain 500 miles of backcountry trails with primitive hand tools.

Readership survey results positive

A survey of Northwestern alumni, parents and friends, conducted during the spring 2004 semester, reveals the *Classic* is well read and valued as a source of information about the college.

Seventy-six percent of the respondents said they read every issue, with another 18 percent reporting they read most issues. Seventy-eight percent said they read most or all of the articles, up from 57 percent in the last readership survey, compiled in 1995.

Ninety-seven percent of respondents rated the alumni magazine as either very good or good. In addition, 88 percent said the publication did a good job of keeping them updated and connected with NWC.

The campus news section is the most read, according to survey results, with alumni class notes close behind.

The quality of writing was rated as the *Classic's* greatest attribute, with the quality of photography coming in second. In 1995, the quality of photography was rated lowest.

This year's survey was sent to 594 people selected randomly from the *Classic* mailing list and also was posted on the NWC Web site. Completed surveys were sent in by 218 people.

Joyce (Ubben) Den Hartog '71 of Valley Springs, S.D., and Ryan Ten Pas '99 of Hingham, Wis., were randomly selected to receive Northwestern sweatshirts in a drawing of those who submitted surveys.

Dean of students accepts California position

Dr. Paul Blezien, dean of students since 1988, resigned this summer to become the vice president for student development and dean of students at William Jessup University near Sacramento, Calif.

"I have never had this mix of excitement and enthusiasm with grief and sorrow," says Blezien. "God has placed a very exciting opportunity in front of me, but on the other hand, I have invested 16 years of soul equity here, raised my family here, and been part of something incredibly special at Northwestern."

William Jessup University is the re-creation of San Jose Christian College, which was founded as a Bible college in 1939. This summer, the non-denominational Christian institution is moving from downtown San Jose to a 156-acre campus in Rocklin, 20 miles east of Sacramento. Regionally accredited as a liberal arts college within the last two years, William Jessup had an enrollment of about 350 students last fall.

Blezien will oversee the university's student life, intercollegiate athletics,



Dr. Paul Blezien

campus ministry, admissions and financial aid programs.

"I'm excited to be associated with starting a

Career Development Center to discard old credential files

Beginning January 2005, the Career Development Center will be purging any alumni files that have not been accessed since January 1995. (Documents in the credential file include personal data sheet, unofficial transcripts, student teacher evaluations and references. Your official transcript is not part of your credential file; transcripts and other academic records are maintained in the registrar's office.)

Please contact the Career Development Center (cdc@nwcwiowa.edu) if you do not wish to have your credential file purged and would like to update it instead.

Christian liberal arts institution from the ground up," says Blezien. "They have pooled a great team, of which I'm humbled to be a part."

"Paul has built a strong student life program at Northwestern and devel-

oped an excellent staff," says Dr. Bruce Murphy, Northwestern's president. "We are grateful for his love of students, his deep faith and his wide-ranging administrative skills. He will be greatly missed."



Preparing to march

Kim Kollasch '04 (left) helps Abby Michael '04 prepare for commencement on May 8. Their class of 266 graduates tied with the 2002 class for the largest in school history.

Faculty/staff news

Dr. John Brogan, religion, is the author of an article published in *Evangelicals and Scripture: Tradition, Authority and Hermeneutics*, published by InterVarsity Press in April. The article is entitled "Can I Have Your Autograph? Uses and Abuses of Textual Criticism in Formulating an Evangelical Doctrine of Scripture."

Dr. Sean Cordry, physics, gave a presentation in Lincoln, Neb., in March at the Nebraska section meeting of the American Association of Physics Teachers. He talked about using bouncing rubber balls to introduce some ideas from chaos theory into an introductory physics course.

Dr. Laird Edman, psychology, presented research with three 2004 psychology graduates at the American Psychological Society's national convention in Chicago in May. With Beth Harding, he presented research entitled "Level of Emotional Intelligence Predicts Ability to Elicit Self-Disclosure." "Relationship Between Personality and Coping Responses in ICD Patients" was the topic of his presentation with Kelly Engelkes. He and Andrea Price presented a study entitled "Social Comparison in Metro and Non-Metro Populations and its Relationship With Income and Life Satisfaction." In addition, Edman completed his tenure as president of the Upper Midwest Honors Council at the organization's conference in Fargo, N.D., in April.

Dr. Jennifer Feenstra, psychology, presented her research, "Social Support and Mattering: How Closely Linked?" at February's meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology in Austin, Texas.



Dr. Laura
Heitritter

Laura Heitritter, education, was awarded a Doctor of Education degree in educational leadership from Drake University, Des Moines, in May. Her dissertation is entitled "Iowa Elementary Principals' Perceptions Regarding the Essential Competencies of First-Year Teachers and Their Relationship to the Iowa Teaching Standards and Other Professional Standards for Beginning Teachers."

Dr. Robert Hubbard, theatre, performed his one-man show, *Dancing With Jimmy*, in March at Sioux Center's Central Reformed Church and Dordt College.

Dr. Juyeon Kang, music, presented a solo recital at the Mozart House in Honolulu in March. She also gave a recital and master class at Oklahoma State University in April.

Dr. Ann Lundberg, English, spoke on "Ancient America at the World's Fair" at the 19th Century Studies Association conference in St. Louis in March.

Greg Scheer, director of music ministries, was selected

to participate in "Gather Into One: Praying and Singing With Christians Worldwide," a summer conference in Grand Rapids, Mich., sponsored by the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship with funding by the Henry Luce Foundation. In July, he will present three sessions at another Calvin Institute conference, "The Church Together: Exploring Intergenerational Worship," in Denver. He will speak on congregational songwriting and musical mentoring, and lead a session entitled "Hands Around the World: Percussion for All Ages."

Dr. Joonna Trapp, English, presented a work in progress, "Female Orators in the Antebellum South," at a research forum during the Conference on College Composition and Communication, held in San Antonio in March.

Dr. Don Wacome, philosophy, is the author of "Reductionism's Demise: Cold Comfort," an article published in the June issue of *Zygon*.

Cornie Wassink, director of planned giving, gave an all-day presentation on planned giving to the Siouxland Non-Profit Management Academy in Sioux City in April.

Mary Lou Wielenga and **Richard Bogenrief**, music, presented a faculty recital at Northwestern on Palm Sunday. The concert included organ and trumpet music for Lent and Easter, as well as other pieces.

Dr. Marc Wooldridge, music, gave a demonstration of how technology can be utilized in music performance at the Technology and Education Summer Workshop at Buena Vista University in June. He also served as artist-in-residence for 12 days in April at Plymouth Manor Care Center in Le Mars, working with residents and community members to create and perform their own compositions, and presented his "Journeys: Multimedia Percussion" recital at Iowa State University in April.

Dan Young, political science, presented a paper, "Two Schools of Classical Realism," at the Henry Institute's Symposium on Religion and Politics at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich., in April.

The Northwestern College Board of Trustees has awarded tenure to **Michael Andres**, religion; **Dr. Ralph Davis**, biology; **Dr. Thomas Holm**, music; and **Dr. Michael Kensak**, English. In addition, Holm and Kensak were promoted to the associate professor rank, as was **Dr. Tim Huffman**, mathematics. **John Paul**, theatre, was promoted to assistant professor.

Sabbaticals for 2004-05 have been granted to **Dr. John Brogan**, religion; **Dr. Carl Vandermeulen**, English and communication studies; and **Dr. Don Wacome**, philosophy.

Brogan plans to work on a book developing a doctrine of the Bible that considers all aspects of its origin, writing and

Faculty/staff news

transmission through the centuries. He also will serve as a scholar-in-residence at Regent College in Vancouver, British Columbia, during the spring semester.

Vandermeulen will be working on a book or set of articles with a working title of *Negotiating the Personal in the Creative Writing Workshop*. He also will live in South Africa for several months.

Wacome plans to complete a book on philosophical anthropology from the perspective of the Christian faith, tentatively titled *The Material Image*.

Four employees received 25-year service awards at the Spring Recognition Banquet in April: **Loretta Hegeman**, bookstore; **Elaine Hofland**, mailroom; **Dr. Dick Van Holland**, business and economics; and **Cornie Wassink**, planned giving. Twenty-year awards were given to **Dr. Paul Bartlett**, kinesiology, and **Jim Burmakow**, maintenance. Ten-year awards were presented to **Dr. Tim Huffman**, mathematics, and **Dr. Michael Kugler**, history.

media professionalism and popular culture. Musa was invited to contribute to a proposed book, *Opposite Forces: Issues and Conflicts in American Journalism*. His article will appear as a chapter entitled "News, Entertainment and the Mass Media."

Faculty awarded mini-grants for summer research

Nine faculty members have received institutional funding to conduct summer research and scholarship.

Mini-grants of up to \$2,250 were awarded to seven professors. Another two were the recipients of grants for collaborative research with students.

Dr. Michael Avery, business and economics, is continuing to research and compile information for a book on free trade. Included in his book will be an index tool he developed to help suppliers and investors determine potential markets in areas surrounding foreign trade zones.

Dr. Sean Cordry is exploring the best way to teach the concept of a system in the field of physics. He started by developing a core diagram to help students visualize a system and think about how it's defined. He then will construct various activities and exercises to give students experience with

a system in different contexts, with the goal to publish his teaching strategies in various physics journals.

Dr. Laird Edman, psychology, is working on two articles about the properties for measuring mental activity contained in the Minnesota Test of Critical Thinking (MTCT), an inventory he created with another researcher. He also is exploring the relationship between emotional intelligence and honors program participation and working on a revision of the MTCT.

Dr. Jennifer Feenstra, psychology, is studying the links and influences between an undergraduate student's attachment style, social support and success in college. In another project, she is examining the differences people show when writing of themselves as support providers versus support recipients. In addition, Feenstra is examining how closely linked support levels

and a sense of well-being are to individuals' beliefs that they matter to others.

Dr. Ann Lundberg, English, is preparing for publication an article on how Southwestern archeology has been interpreted in diverse ways both by Native American inhabitants and by Euro-American explorers and "discoverers."

Dr. Jim Mead, religion, is writing a textbook on biblical theology, introducing its issues, methods and themes. His grant supports further research, as well as preparation of chapter summaries and an introductory chapter to add to his book proposal.

Dr. Bala Musa, communication studies, is writing an analysis of the increasing trend in "infotainment"—the blurring of the lines between information and entertainment—and industry and audience perspectives on "reality shows." He also is evaluating the ethical implications of this trend for

Collaborative projects with students are planned by **Jamey Durham** and **Dr. Keith Fynaardt**.

Durham, communication studies, is writing four short scripts and producing dramatic videos for churches. Such a storytelling device, he says, is particularly appropriate for communicating the gospel given our visual- and media-oriented society. A student is assisting with the video shoot and the editing.

Fynaardt, English, is working with communication studies major Jeannine Lovas '04 of Hillsboro, N.D., to map, photograph and describe abandoned farm sites in Iowa's Sioux County. The portrait that emerges will be the first stage in a documentary of Sioux County agriculture and material for a manuscript on modern agriculture, *Middle Ground*.

Vandermeulen receives competitive research grant



Dr. Carl Vandermeulen

Dr. Carl Vandermeulen, English and communication studies, has been selected to receive Northwestern's first \$10,000 Competitive Summer Research Grant. He was selected by the Faculty Development Committee after an external review process.

The Competitive Summer Research Grant is intended to fund substantive summer research that contributes meaningfully to the faculty member's discipline. The \$10,000 award is provided through the generosity of an anonymous donor and may be used for stipend, travel, equipment, books, supplies and student assistants.

Vandermeulen plans to conduct in-depth interviews with poetry workshop teachers, especially in smaller colleges, to determine how they negotiate relationships with students. He hopes his research, presented in the form of a book or set of articles, can help teachers of creative writing workshops perceive and avoid destructive breakdowns in pedagogical relationships.

A member of Northwestern's full-time faculty since 1985, Vandermeulen earned a doctorate in rhetoric and composition from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a master's degree in English from the University of South Dakota. He did his undergraduate work at Calvin College.

The Competitive Summer Research Grant is open to tenure-track faculty who have earned their terminal degree, completed two years of teaching at NWC, and will continue to teach for at least another year. A faculty member may receive the grant only once in a six-year period.

Lilly Grant funds semester in Lithuania for Burch

Lithuania Christian College (LCC) is a true international community. Its 540 students from Eastern Europe and around the world come from different walks of life, cultures and faith backgrounds. Even more unusual is the makeup of its faculty and staff: nearly two-thirds are North American professionals who serve as volunteers.

This spring, one of those professionals was Lisa Burch, Northwestern's director of student programs and community life adviser. In late February, she left for Klaipeda, Lithuania, with seven NWC students as part of a Spring Service Project trip. Working with a group of LCC students and the college's director of leadership, the team planned and led a leadership conference.

When the Northwestern

students returned to America the following week, Burch stayed. For the rest of the semester, she worked in LCC's student life office, helping implement StrengthsQuest and a four-week curriculum plan into the college's Freshman Life Groups. The groups consist of approximately 10 students, a faculty adviser and student leader. StrengthsQuest is an assessment tool that helps students discover their natural talents and develop those talents into strengths.

Burch's work was fitting, considering her experience was funded, in part, by Northwestern's \$2 million grant from the Lilly Endowment. The grant is designed to help Northwestern better assist students in identifying God's call for their lives. In addition to supporting an exploratory trip to



Lisa Burch, left, poses with Julianna, a Latvian attending Lithuania Christian College, during the school's Russian Cultural Night celebration.

Lithuania in 2003 to set up the service project, the grant also paid a large portion of Burch's expenses during what was the first staff vocational development leave connected with the grant.

Burch first heard about Lithuania Christian College three years ago. LCC was

founded in 1991 at the request of the Lithuanian Ministry of Education. Its goal is to create a generation of leaders for Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union who think critically, promote democratic ideals, develop a market economy and contribute to rebuilding the network of civil society within the context of a Christian worldview.

Burch, who hopes to return to LCC soon, learned college students are the same no matter what side of the world they are on: "They have the same fears, anxieties, excitement and dreams for the future as the students at Northwestern have."

She also learned something about herself.

"Loving and serving students," she says, "is what I am called to do."

In Mozart's Steps

A cappella Choir performs in Eastern Europe



Choir members said singing in Austria's Salzburg Cathedral, where Mozart had been music director in the 18th century, was a highlight of the tour.

"It was awe-inspiring to sing in buildings that were built centuries before the United States even existed. The acoustics [were] incredible—as if these cathedrals were built to be filled with praise to God."

Nathan Willems '05, Polk City, Iowa

"I learned there are many differences between our cultures, but people still are searching for the same things in their lives that we are: love, hope for the future, a reason to live. I saw that kindness and love can be exchanged despite language barriers."

Toni Gilliam '04, North Fond du Lac, Wis.

The A cappella Choir's first international tour took the 70 members and Director Thomas Holm through the Czech Republic, Austria and Poland Feb. 27 through March 9. The ensemble presented five full concerts; gave a Mass performance at the renowned Salzburg Cathedral; and served at children's homes, a nursing home and a refugee camp. Senior Aaron Willems said, "What a ministry is possible among people who love music so much."



"We were told that the average Czech person needs to hear the gospel story about 20 times or so before he or she even will think about the possibility of God being real. I'm just glad we had the opportunity to be one of those times."

Andrea Ackerman '05, Glendale, Ariz.



Junior Beth Hibma's airplane ride gets a smile at a children's home in Pardubice in the Czech Republic.

Juggling Life

by Emily Hennager '06

Though he can already juggle balls, rings, knives and flaming clubs—both by himself and with a partner—Daniel Berntson has bigger goals in mind.

“I want to be able to pass nine clubs by the end of college,” the English and philosophy major says. “Right now I’m working on passing seven.”

Berntson, a junior from Paullina, Iowa, knows how to meet his goals. Coming into college, he knew he wanted to start a juggling club. Less than a year later, he teamed up with another juggler, Erick Whigham '06, and the Northwestern College Juggling Club was born.

“Juggling for me is something you have to do with other people. It isn’t fun otherwise,” says Berntson. “Originally the club was just us meeting to juggle together. Then other people stopped by to see what we were doing, and we taught them to juggle too.”

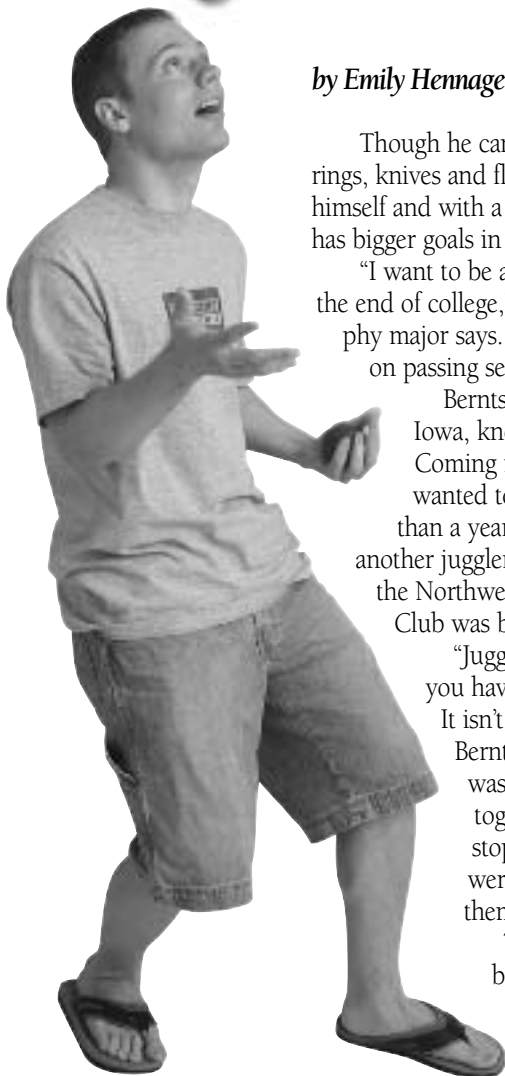
This year the group became an official Northwestern club with about 10 regulars plus

more who come occasionally, including Chaplain Harlan VanOort; Greg Scheer, director of music ministries; and Don Keith, director of Sodexo food service. Their club’s key verse is Hebrews 13:2, “Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing, some people have entertained angels without knowing it.”

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“Daniel’s got this kooky, joyful personality that’s perfect for a juggler. A juggler has to be willing to look like a dork so the audience will laugh.”
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With this in mind, the Juggling Club set out to “entertain strangers” on campus by performing at Morning on the Green, Kids’ Carnival, Ethnic Fair, Hispanic ministries events and for 800 elementary students on campus for Young Authors’ Day.

The group has an increasing number of invitations to perform off campus as well.



This year they juggled at a nursing home, church meeting, hospital luncheon, wedding reception and elementary school.

"Our first semester was focused mostly on teaching, but now we're doing a lot more service types of things," Berntson says.

His interest in juggling started about six years ago on a winter afternoon.

"I was moping around the house, and my mom

gave me a juggling book she bought at a garage sale," he remembers.

Using three tennis balls, Berntson followed the book's instructions and, after a solid afternoon of practice, he could juggle for about a minute straight. Eventually, Berntson showed his new skill to a friend and taught him to juggle as well.

"I think it is a hobby that would have died if I wouldn't have found a friend who enjoyed it too,"

harmed," he says.

According to Whigham, Berntson's willingness to try new things is what makes him an interesting performer.

"Daniel's got this kooky, joyful personality that's perfect for a juggler," says Whigham. "A juggler has to be willing to look like a dork so the audience will laugh."

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"Daniel's interested in so many different things; he's the kind of student a liberal arts college wants to have."
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Though Berntson's been known to don a rainbow-colored wig and polka-dot clown suit for some performances, his goal is more than just laughter. The Juggling Club developed a routine that allows them to use juggling as an analogy to relate key points of the gospel.

Juggling isn't the first talent Berntson has used for ministry, either. As a worship intern on the Campus Ministries Team, he combines interests in multimedia and music to incorporate the fine arts into chapel. This year he created several short videos, including a meditative one concentrating on the suffering of Christ and another focusing on the names of God.

"Daniel is a true Renaissance man," says Greg

Scheer, who serves as Juggling Club adviser. "He's interested in so many different things; he's the kind of student a liberal arts college wants to have."

Berntson also is a talented musician, playing both piano and organ. He is an accompanist for the music department and plays piano in the Jazz Band. He's also played organ in chapel and for a church near his home. Though he's experimented with arranging and composing music, Berntson says music is mostly a form of stress relief.

"If I'm stressed, I go to a piano and bang on it for awhile," he says.

Besides extracurricular activities, Berntson concentrates on academics as well. This spring, the Peale Scholar was voted by faculty into Sigma Tau, the senior honor society.

Berntson, who envisions attending graduate school and becoming a college professor, also was selected as one of next year's Junior Scholars. He will be assisting Dr. Don Wacome with research and proofreading drafts of Wacome's book, which explores the relationship between philosophy and the Christian faith.

After a school year filled with juggling, music and academics, Berntson's summer schedule was hardly a break. He took a study abroad trip to Germany and then backpacked through Europe with his dad. Though luggage space was tight, one item couldn't be left at home: his juggling balls, of course.

Berntson says. "We're both very competitive, so we'd each learn new tricks and try to outdo the other."

In his search for new ideas, he once attempted to juggle a cat. "It sort of worked. The cat didn't like it too well, but it wasn't



From Pulpit to Lectern



Students describe Dr. Jim Mead, who received the Northwestern Teaching Excellence Award in April, as a great encourager.

by Amy Scheer

Growing up in West Palm Beach, Fla., Jim Mead had free reign of the church where his mother was secretary. He tagged along on errands with the church janitor; he helped himself to leftovers in the kitchen. One day, he poured himself a glass of iced tea and stood behind the pulpit, waving

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"My calling as a teacher of the Bible will begin to bear fruit when students learn to make the study of the Bible their own."
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arms and tea wildly in the air. His pastor walked in and was disappointed with the boy—mostly because of the tea.

Mead speculates that the story of his vocation begins in that pulpit, and after a few more chapters in churches and seminaries, finds him today in the classroom. The assistant professor of religion at Northwestern had his call-

ing confirmed this past April when he received the Northwestern Teaching Excellence Award.

"I'm grateful; it's a great encouragement," says Mead, who received a \$1,500 check and a plaque at the college's Honors Convocation.

Students who nominated Mead for the award spoke of his care for students. "He is a great encourager," wrote one. "Through his teaching methods, Professor Mead draws the best out of his students."

The student might be referring to Mead's way of opening a class by writing a provocative question on the board ("When I hear the word 'predestination,' the first thing that comes to my mind is ...") and allowing time for student reflection.

"All of us in the religion department try to make students feel this is a safe space for them to ask the hard questions about the Bible and their beliefs without anyone judging them for that," Mead says, then adds, "but also that it's going to be a safe place for them to have to deal with the hard questions."

After extensive high school experience in speech and debate, Mead initially considered a career in government or law while at Georgetown University; however, he knew he'd miss having a distinctly Christian component to his work.

"I realized my personality didn't match with the real-life, nitty-gritty work you have to do to make positive

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“All of us in the religion department try to make students feel this is a safe space for them to ask the hard questions about the Bible and their beliefs without anyone judging them for that.”
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changes in government or law,” he says. “Had I only known that to make positive changes in the church was just as hard!”

With a bachelor’s degree in theology and a minor in philosophy, Mead went immediately to seminary, thinking he’d still pursue teaching at some point. At Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Miss., Mead met Anne, who would become his wife. They wanted to settle down as a family, so in 1984, after graduation and ordination, he became pastor of a small Presbyterian church in Vidalia, La.

Four years later, Mead accepted a call to a larger church in Magnolia, Ark. Two days after moving there, a representative from the Welcome Wagon paid them a visit. She walked them through information about their community, eventually naming, with commentary, every church in the area—except First Presbyterian, where he had just become pastor. Mead asked innocently about the church. “Oh, it’s

not a very friendly church,” the woman replied. “You don’t want to go there.”

Nonetheless, the Meads stayed seven years at the church, expanding its staff and enjoying the benefits of life in a college town. “Once again, there I was, amidst the connection of church and college, and I was reminded of how much I like the rhythm of the academic year.”

He decided it was the right time to pursue teaching. By 1999, he completed a doctorate in Old Testament

studies from Princeton Theological Seminary. And in May of 2000, after a whirlwind two-week process of application and interview, Mead joined the religion department of NWC.

Mead is thankful for his experience as a pastor, and he continues to preach in local churches once a month. “I can’t imagine doing what I’m doing, the way I’m doing it, without those 12 years of ministry in a church context,” he says.

Even so, the transition to teaching was difficult at first,

especially in the area of granting grades. Mead jokes that pastors aren’t required to tell parishioners, “That was about a D for your worship today.”

Co-director of Northwestern’s Honors Program, Mead has contributed entries to the forthcoming *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books* (InterVarsity Press) and is published in a number of journals. This summer, with the assistance of a Northwestern mini-grant, he began work on an introductory textbook for biblical theology.

Author of “The Divine Vocation: Reformed Theology’s Conversation With the Call of God in the Biblical Traditions,” a paper for Northwestern’s Lilly Grant project, Mead reflects on his own calling: “I don’t want students to leave just with the content. I want them to have some fun actually opening up to the passages themselves, getting excited about seeing how the stories work as stories, or the psalms work as poetry and music, or the gospels work as the good news.

“My calling as a teacher of the Bible will begin to bear fruit when students learn to make the study of the Bible their own.”



After a dozen years as a pastor in the South, Jim Mead pursued a doctorate in Old Testament studies at Princeton.

How do we rate?

Express your opinion about this issue of the *Classic*. Take a short online survey at <http://surveys.nwciowa.edu/classic> to let us know your thoughts about this magazine and what you’d like to see in the future.



Beth De Leeuw, administrative assistant to the president, is this year's recipient of the Staff Recognition for Inspirational Service Award.

A Constant Among Change

by Sherrie Barber Willson '98

No one who works with Beth De Leeuw was surprised when she was named the 2004 recipient of Northwestern's Staff Recognition for Inspirational Service Award—except De Leeuw herself.

The award, created in 2003, is given to staff who personify a strong Christian commitment, distinguish themselves as an inspiration

to the campus community, and consistently provide outstanding contributions by going above and beyond what is expected. Northwestern employees nominate candidates, and a selection committee—including four staff members, one student and a faculty member—select the winner.

"It was a total shock," De Leeuw says of her reac-

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"Beth inspires the community by her model of integrity, perseverance, confidentiality and servant leadership. She makes our office a haven for any who come by."
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tion when her name was announced at the Faculty/Staff Recognition Banquet in April. "I never anticipated anything like this."

Providing inspiration

According to her colleagues, though, De Leeuw has provided plenty of inspiration during her 27 years as

administrative assistant to the president at NWC.

"Beth is always very humble and puts others before herself," says Marietta Vandersall, who worked alongside her as administrative assistant to the vice president for academic affairs before retiring in 2001. "She is usually the first one to receive phone calls from

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"I've been very fortunate. I've worked for such wonderful people who taught me a lot."
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unhappy parents, students, faculty and people in the community. She always handles those with a loving, caring spirit."

"Beth inspires the community by her model of integrity, perseverance, confidentiality and servant leadership," says President Bruce Murphy. "She makes our office a haven for any who come by."

Having served under five different presidents, De Leeuw also has been a constant among much change, especially after James Bultman left in 1999, when Northwestern was searching for a new president. The administrative assistant was "the glue that held the president's office together," says Doug Beukelman, vice presi-

dent for financial affairs.

Adds John Greller, vice president for development: "We all joke about who the 'real' president is. Yes, it really is Beth!"

On-the-job training

Perhaps the reason De Leeuw is known for her willingness to share her knowledge and help others is because she has received so much help herself throughout her career. She has the unique achievement of never having applied for any of the four full-time positions she has held.

She was offered her first—at an insurance agency—right after graduating from high school, then was offered a job at an attorney's office a few years later. She worked there for 17 years before being approached again—this time by the administrator of a boys' home, who wanted her to be the home's business manager. She stayed there for two years until the president of Northwestern, Virg Rowenhorst, called her in 1977.

"I've been very fortunate," De Leeuw says. "I've worked for such wonderful people who taught me a lot."

Growing into the role

Looking back, De Leeuw is a little amazed that she went to work for a college president with no more formal education or training than she had. "But in those

years, Northwestern wasn't the college we know today," she notes. "It was smaller, not as complex. I was able to grow into the position."

De Leeuw's ability to learn on the job has served her well during her time at Northwestern, which has seen the college double in size and her job change right along with it. The first computer at NWC was in her office, and the only training she received was one day in Sioux City.

"One day of training, and then I was expected to come back home and start using that machine!" she

number of one of the trainers, and she would walk me through things over the phone."

A true lifelong learner, De Leeuw has continued to pick up new skills as needed, mastering computers, then e-mail, and, with the arrival of Dr. Murphy, e-calendar. "It's been somewhat of a struggle to learn things at times, but it makes the job challenging and keeps it fun," she says.

While De Leeuw has seen a lot of change, one thing has not changed: her enjoyment of her job, especially the interaction with people.



Dr. Bruce Murphy is the fifth Northwestern president Beth De Leeuw has served.

recalls. "I came home with a whole boxful of manuals. I didn't even know where to begin looking for answers in all those books. And there was no one to ask on campus. Luckily, I had the phone

"I've gotten to know so many good people here and made such a lot of friends," she says. "And they were probably people I wouldn't have rubbed shoulders with otherwise."

Spring sports

Baseball

- Finished 10-34 overall and 3-17 in Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC) play.
- Third baseman Dietrich Jache earned first team all-conference honors. Catcher David Booth was named to the all-GPAC second team, while pitcher Kelly Kleinhesselink earned honorable mention.

Men's Golf

- Placed fourth at both the conference and regional meets.
- At least one NWC golfer finished in the top 10 in all but one meet.

Softball

- Tied with Nebraska Wesleyan for second place

in the conference with a 15-7 league mark. Compiled a 30-21 record overall.

- Stacy Friedrichsen earned conference pitcher of the week honors.
- Friedrichsen and Megan McHugh gained first team all-GPAC honors. Lisa Taylor was recognized as second team all-conference catcher, and Cristin Vander Weerd and Alison Waggle were honorable mention selections.
- McHugh was the only freshman named to the all-Region IV team.

Track and Field

- Nick Fynaardt and Phil Brinks placed third and fourth, respectively, in the shot put at nationals with

throws of 51-05.50 and 51-03.00. Fynaardt also placed 11th in the discus and Brinks was 14th. The women's 4x800, comprised of Mikyla Dittman, Beth Harding, Ashley Ruppert and Nancy Koskamp, placed ninth with a time of 9:24.06.

- The women's team finished fifth in the conference meet;

the men placed eighth.

- Mary Kummerfeld won the 3000-meter steeplechase at the Sioux City Relays. Kummerfeld was just one of seven Raiders to capture a first-place finish throughout the outdoor season.

Women's Golf

- Placed sixth or better in every meet.



Nate Wolf

Wolf named new track coach

Nate Wolf '03 has been hired as co-head track and field coach and assistant cross country coach for the 2004-05 school year. Wolf, an admissions counselor this past year, joins Dale Thompson to lead the track and field program.

"We are very excited to have Nate help with this transition year," says Barry Brandt, athletic director. "Nate is an excellent recruiter and has a passion for the sports of track and field and cross country. He will be a strong asset in our commitment to develop a quality track and field program at Northwestern."

Mike Reed, head track coach since 2002, resigned to further pursue his doctoral studies.

Athletes receive national honors

Several Red Raiders received national honors this spring.

Jaime Woudstra was named to the NAIA All-America first team in basketball for the third straight year. She also was one of only two Div. II players selected for the elite Kodak/WBCA All-America team.

At the outdoor track national meet, Nick Fynaardt and Phil Brinks garnered All-America recognition after placing third and fourth, respectively, in the shot put.

In men's basketball, Marcus Leloux earned NAIA All-America honorable mention recognition.

Woudstra and three of her teammates were accorded Scholar-Athlete honors for excellence in the classroom and on the court. Also receiving that honor were Carli Blom, Mary Kummerfeld and Carrie Stromley.

Other Raiders named Scholar-Athletes this spring included Nick Harthoorn in baseball and basketball; golfers Ryan Anema and Paul Clemens; Lisa Taylor and Cristin Vander Weerd in softball; and Mikyla Dittman, Beth Harding, Stacy Kanis, Ashley Ruppert and Angela Schuiteman in track.



Freshman Nick Fynaardt unfurled the best toss in the shot put at April's Northwestern Invitational. He later earned All-American status at the NAIA national outdoor meet.

Athletic field gains new name and improvements

For thousands of Red Raider fans, Larry Korver's name is synonymous with Northwestern football. A decision by NWC officials this spring ensured that the former head football coach's legacy will continue whenever people attend Raider games.

In March, Northwestern unveiled plans to make major improvements to its outdoor athletic facilities and to name the playing field in honor of Korver and his wife, Betty.

Partnering with the MOC-Floyd Valley School District and the city of Orange City, Northwestern is replacing the current football field at De Valois Stadium with a new artificial playing surface, FieldTurf™, this summer. The durable surface will allow the scheduling of more football games, soccer games, early spring baseball and softball practices, band contests, and additional college and community activities.

A considerable portion of the total project cost for the new playing surface will be funded by the MOC-Floyd Valley School District, using funds—restricted for building projects and site improve-

ments—from the one percent local-option sales tax implemented in Sioux County this year. Northwestern is involved in a campaign to raise a little over \$400,000 to complete the project.

"Larry and Betty Korver have always projected the best of Northwestern—commitment and caring for young people," says Athletic Director Barry Brandt. "Not only did they impact these young people's lives, they also impacted Northwestern by developing a program that became recognized nationally. It's a great privilege for us to have the opportunity to put the Korvers' name on this facility. There's no better place on this campus it could go."

Korver, a 1954 Northwestern alumnus, was head coach from 1967 until retiring in 1994, compiling a 212-77-6 record. A member of the NAIA Hall of Fame, Korver led his teams to national titles in 1973 and 1983. The Raiders finished as runners-up in 1972, 1979 and 1984; advanced to the national semifinals in 1982, 1985 and 1994; and qualified for the playoffs three other seasons.

The new surface features



Paul Janssen '83 congratulates Larry Korver after a news conference about the naming of Northwestern's playing surface as Korver Field.

polyethylene "grass" fibers surrounded and stabilized by a special infill blend of smooth, rounded silica sand, rubber granules and re-ground athletic shoe material. FieldTurf™ is used by 18 NFL teams and many NCAA Div. I universities, including Nebraska and Michigan. Three Great Plains Athletic Conference schools—Doane, Hastings and Nebraska Wesleyan—already have FieldTurf™ surfaces, and two others are considering installing it.

"Playing on a surface such as this has been shown to significantly decrease injuries to the head and spine and to cut down on injuries to knees and ankles as well," says Brandt.

"In addition, this will greatly reduce our expenses for maintaining the field. We currently spend from \$15,000 to \$20,000 a year on maintenance. With FieldTurf™, the lines are painted and there's no grass

to grow. The company will do all the maintenance for the first five years of this agreement. Afterward, our maintenance costs will be no more than \$1,000 a year."

While Korver Field will not serve as the football team's primary practice field, Head Coach Orv Otten said the all-weather surface will be great for practice settings when needed at three distinct times of the year.

"In the fall, we're going to be able to practice later in the evening under the lights and avoid practicing in the heat of the day. Late in the season—when the snow, rain and cold get to be a concern for us in practice—we're going to have a much drier surface. And in the spring, when the snow is melting, we'll be able to get out on the dry surface at the game field and practice in good conditions there."

Korver Field is part of the De Valois Stadium complex that includes a football/track locker room and concession building and an eight-lane polyurethane track constructed a year ago. Northwestern is finalizing plans to renovate the existing home bleachers and expand the press box; any additional funds raised in the field campaign will be directed to those improvements. A secondary phase calls for fully enclosing the west bleachers.

For more information about the fund-raising project, visit www.nwciowa.edu/korverfield.

A New Stage

Northwestern theatre moves into state-of-the-art facility

by Tamara Fynaardt

President Bruce Murphy remembers one of the first times he met Dr. Theora England Willcox. He was a new faculty member at Northwestern playing noon basketball in the Multi-Purpose Auditorium—a facility shared by athletics, music and theatre—when he noticed her in animated con-

versation near the stage. Willcox was explaining to a coach—who towered over her—that practicing athletes were *not* to remove the theatre set from the Auditorium stage, he said.

She was formidable, fierce—and passionate about having a space for theatre, Murphy remembers. “I’m standing right about where she stood,” Murphy said from the proscenium theatre stage at the April 20 dedication of the Marvin and Jerene DeWitt Theatre Arts Center, an adaptation and expansion of the former Auditorium. Then, glancing up, he added, “Theora, you won.”

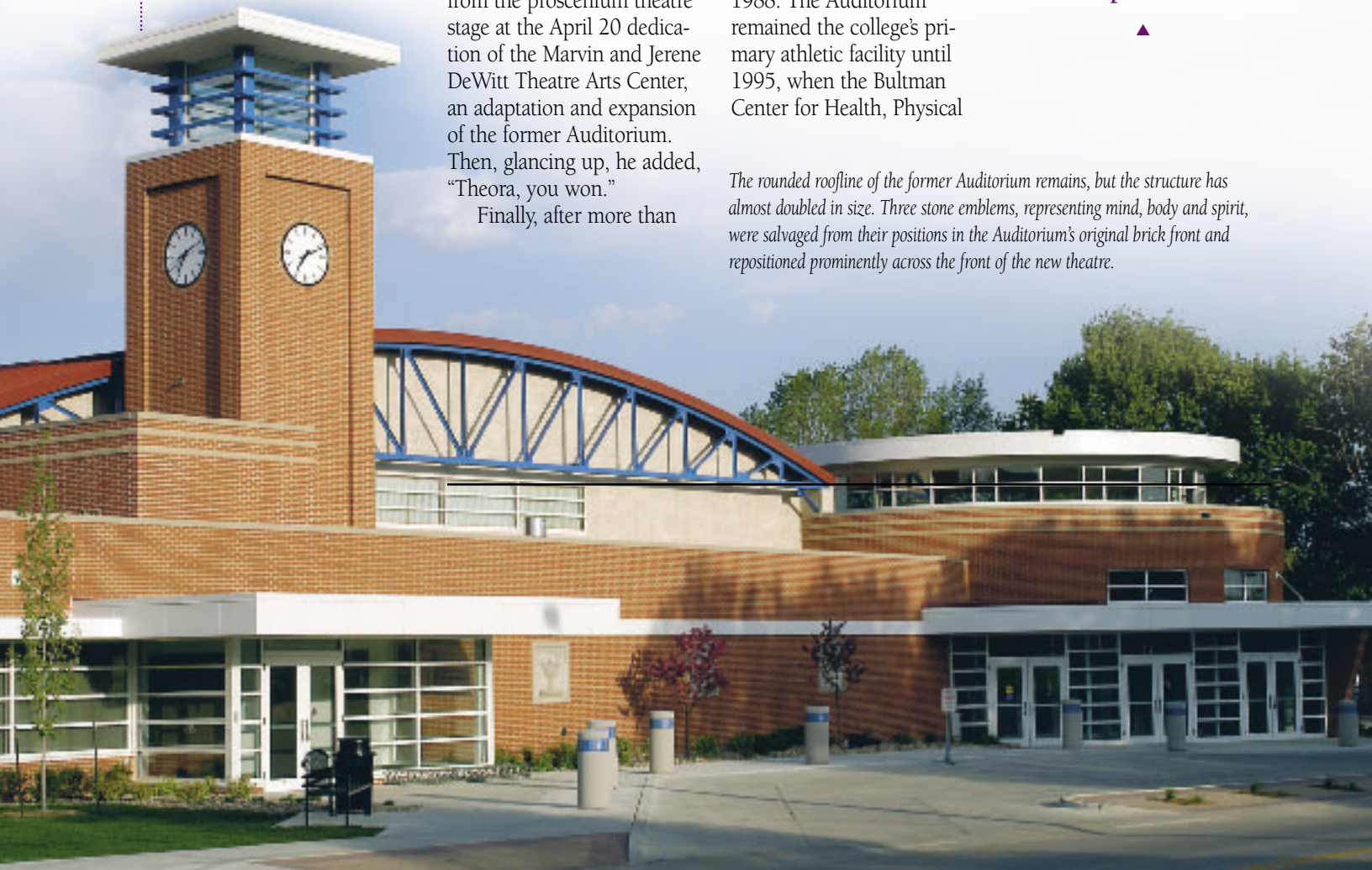
Finally, after more than

five decades in facilities that made people wonder how Northwestern theatre could be so excellent despite many limitations, theatre students and faculty have a building that matches the high quality of their program.

Theatre productions moved out of the Auditorium in 1970 when the Playhouse was purchased; concerts moved to Christ Chapel in 1988. The Auditorium remained the college’s primary athletic facility until 1995, when the Bultman Center for Health, Physical

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“I can hardly walk into this building without weeping. People can’t believe how purely beautiful it is. Our theatre is now better than what most small professional companies have.”
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The rounded roofline of the former Auditorium remains, but the structure has almost doubled in size. Three stone emblems, representing mind, body and spirit, were salvaged from their positions in the Auditorium’s original brick front and repositioned prominently across the front of the new theatre.



Education and Intercollegiate Athletics opened.

Theatre consultant Ron Jerit, Chicago, first suggested Northwestern theatre could find a home in a remake of the building that was standing empty on the corner of Highway 10 and Albany Avenue. The DeWitt Theatre Arts Center consolidates all functions of the theatre department into one premier campus location.

At 52,000 square feet, the building houses two equally excellent theatres: a proscenium theatre with fixed seating and stage and an orchestra pit, and a black box theatre that allows for a variety of production styles. Both theatres are equipped with high-tech acoustical, lighting and mechanical systems and easy-access catwalks.

The \$7.9 million building also includes a scene shop, a costume shop, make-up and dressing rooms, a green room, seven faculty and staff offices, classrooms, a design studio, a box office and a spacious lobby/coffee bar.

The theatre department moved in over Christmas break this year, and reactions to the completed project have been—well—dramatic.

"I can hardly walk into this building without weeping," says Professor Karen Barker. "People can't believe how purely beautiful it is. Our theatre is now better than what most small professional companies have."

"Visitors are in awe," adds theatre major Heidi

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Northwestern's theatre department now has two performance spaces of equal excellence. The proscenium theatre (shown) seats 191. The black box theatre can seat up to 250.

Same passion, different place

	Playhouse	DeWitt Theatre
Seats	161	196 in the proscenium theatre 250 in the black box theatre
Box office	none	one—plus a spacious lobby, coat room and coffee bar
Phone lines	2	22
Staging possibilities	proscenium	proscenium, thrust, end stage runway, theatre-in-the-round ...
Bathroom stalls	6	12
Makeup stations	10	18
Dimmers for stage lighting	48	172 in the proscenium 160 in the black box
Computers	2	32
Catwalks	60 ft.	414 ft. in the proscenium 576 ft. in the black box
Distance from scene shop to stage	6 blocks	6 ft.
Bats	variable	zero

The Playhouse ... had a certain charm

When theatre first began at Northwestern in the 1950s, rehearsals and productions competed with athletic practices, physical education classes and concerts for time and space in the Auditorium.

Given the limitations of producing plays in the multi-purpose space, it was a major turning point in the history of the program when the college bought the former American Reformed Church for \$25,000 and converted it into the Playhouse in 1970. Faculty and students spent another \$15,000 readying the space for its debut as a theatre.

The future of the Playhouse is unknown. The purchase contract dictates that American Reformed Church, Orange City, will be offered the first chance to buy the property back from the college.



Formerly a church, the Playhouse served as Northwestern's primary theatre performance space for 34 years.

THEATRE IN THE ROUGH



Keeping a sense of humor helped theatre students, faculty and staff achieve excellence despite the Playhouse's many difficulties, like water in the basement, where the costume shop was located, and bats.



Illustrations provided by T-Graphics West, Dan Van Beek '92, owner

Playhouse memories

"How many dozen times did I climb in the window because many years ago I gave a student my last key and never got another one?" Jeff Barker, professor

"The theatre girls would host 'Theora night.' They'd meet at the Playhouse late to try on their favorite costumes and dance on the stage." Donna Durham, former costume shop manager

"One afternoon I slipped into the Playhouse by myself and opened all the shutters so the sun could shine through the stained glass windows into the sanctuary. Then I stood on the stage and sang and danced to God." Heidi Friesen '04

"My best Playhouse memory was watching Lee Fiskness ['03] and Samuel Van Wyk ['03] trying to catch a bat during 'fright night' my freshman year. ('Fright night' is when the seniors take the freshmen to the Playhouse and try to scare the bejeebers out of them.)" Kristen Olson-Jones '06

"I remember working in the crawl space under the stage to fabricate the system that moved the raft for Big River. I also spent time working above the ceiling, in the insulation, trying not to fall through to the seats below." Jeff Taylor, professor

Do you have a favorite Playhouse memory to share? Send it to the Classic editor: beeson@nwciowa.edu for inclusion in the fall issue.

A New Stage . . . continued from page 21

Friesen '04, Amherst, N.Y. "It raises their respect for the college and Orange City as a community that values the arts so highly."

Professor Jeff Taylor agrees. "This is beyond what we expected. I'm amazed at

the vision and faith of our administration and supporters—their unwillingness to build something that was less than the best."

More important than the beauty and the amenities, though, is the way the



The DeWitt Theatre's lobby has received rave reviews from audiences, who enjoy the space and refreshments during performance intermissions—and from students who use the couches, tables and chairs for studying and socializing 24/7.



Marvin and Jerene DeWitt, Zeeland, Mich., and members of their family contributed the theatre's naming gift. The DeWitts and five of their seven children attended the dedication on April 20.

DeWitt Theatre Arts Center serves the program's mission with excellence. Northwestern theatre is known for its commitment to ensemble, to process over product, to serving one another and the audiences.

Facilitating the ensemble spirit is easier now,

according to Professor Jeff Barker. "We're more connected with students because they take classes here, work on shows here, hang out here," he says. "The unity that's possible in this space is exceptional."

Theatre faculty and students aren't the only ones who are enjoying the DeWitt Theatre. Others on campus and in the Orange City community have begun using the building as well

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Jill Vaughn, Twin Falls, Idaho, controls light and sound during the Black V's improv rehearsal in the black box theatre.

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"We're more connected with students because they take classes here, work on shows here, hang out here. The unity that's possible in this space is exceptional."
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Acting the Bible

Musical of ancient Israelite dramas opens DeWitt Theatre

An actor climbs, agile, behind another actor who is older and a little out of breath.

ISAAC: My father.

ABRAHAM: Here am I, my son.

ISAAC: Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

ABRAHAM: My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.

The actors continue to climb. When they reach the summit, Abraham builds an altar and then, heartbroken, resolved, he binds the hands of his own confused and frightened son and lowers him to the altar. Isaac is shaking, terrified, as Abraham raises the knife to kill him.

GOD'S VOICE: Abraham, Abraham.

ABRAHAM: Here am I.

GOD'S VOICE: Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

Abraham's upturned face is bathed in light. He lowers the knife that might have slain his son and uses it to cut the ropes that bind him—destruction divinely transformed to deliverance. Grace in a gesture.

* * *

The scene is from *And God Said*, a new musical written for the dedication of Northwestern's DeWitt Theatre Arts Center. It's captivating. Viewers feel more fully than ever before, perhaps, Abraham's anguish and Isaac's bewildered fear. An anxious sigh rises from the audience as Abraham raises the knife; an exhalation as God's voice stops Abraham from doing the unthinkable. Seeing the story acted prompts a person to ask, as one audience member did, "What else have I been missing as I read the Bible?"

Dr. Tom Boogaart, professor of Old Testament at Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Mich., thinks the Old Testament is a play anthology. Northwestern playwright Jeff Barker agrees and wrote *And God Said*, with script and lyrics drawn exclusively from the King James Version, to test the idea.

Boogaart saw Barker's initial attempts at the Christians in Theatre Arts (CITA) national conference last summer and said: "What a moving experience. I've worked with texts like this ... and had to imagine how it might have looked to the people of Israel.

"But really *seeing* it performed—I was not prepared for the impact it made on me. It's not enough to read texts and simply imagine. We need to perform them. And this is not true just for me; it's true for everyone in the church."

Others at last summer's conference responded just as enthusiastically, prompting Barker to incorporate 11 Old Testament texts into a musical that also would serve officially to open Northwestern's new theatre. *And God Said* dramatizes the stories of Abraham and Isaac, Moses, Samson, David and Bathsheba, and others. Broadway composer Ron Melrose wrote the production's lyrics and score.

Craig Ihnen, executive director of the Iowa High School Speech Association, traveled from Des Moines to see the show



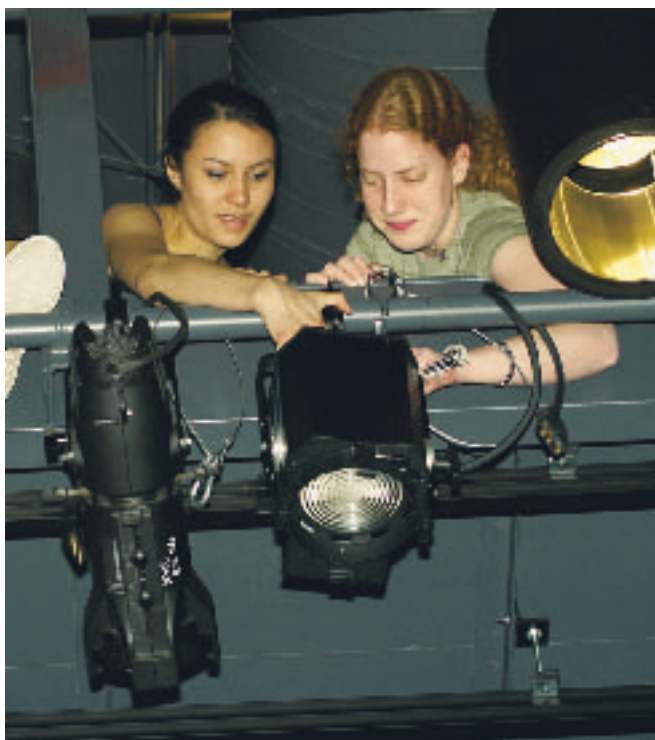
And God Said dramatized 11 Old Testament stories, including the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:16–3:24). Actors in this scene are (from left) Ben Landegent, Holland, Mich.; Heidi Friesen, Amherst, N.Y.; Shadi Awwad, Amman, Jordan; and Crystal Brown, Elk River, Minn.

and said, "Wow. I was so taken by the production and the work you did to make [the Bible] come to life."

"There were beautiful scenes (Abraham kissing Sarah on the cheek, Moses being breast-fed by his mother) ... It made the Bible real to me," wrote sophomore Mary Edwards in a note to the cast and crew.

The show was followed by a symposium for Bible scholars, worship leaders and theatre artists who explored this new way of seeing the Bible. "If the Bible is indeed full of plays, this could dramatically alter the way we view the role of theatre in worship," says Barker.

It could change the role of theatre artists in the church too, he says, and the task colleges like Northwestern have preparing those artists for their place in the world.



An extensive system of catwalks in both theatres makes theatre technical work not only easier, but safer too.

A New Stage . . . continued from page 23

for studying, meetings, and fiction and poetry readings.

With so much new, is anything still the same in Northwestern College theatre?

"The soul of who we are doesn't—can't—change because we changed facilities," says Karen Barker. "The things that made us strong before—commitment to ensemble work, commitment to having servants' hearts—those stay the same."

Friesen agrees. "I came here because the emphasis in Northwestern's theatre program is on loving each other and encouraging each other to excellence, something so unusual in the theatrical world. That's unchanged."

"We still work with an attitude of thanksgiving," says Taylor. Then, with a smile, he adds, "That's a whole lot easier over here."

▼
"I'm amazed at the vision and faith of our administration and supporters—their unwillingness to build something that was less than the best."
▲

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Determined Singer

by Anita Cirulis

Susan Van Kley finds success in the world of opera



Van Kley's opera career has included performances at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center.

Susan Van Kley's first hint of her future career as an opera singer happened when she was just six years old.

"I remember singing my heart out in church, and a woman turned around and told my mother, 'Could you tell her to be quiet? It's too loud,'" she says.

Today, Van Kley's audiences are more appreciative. The 1987 Northwestern graduate has appeared at Carnegie Hall as a soloist with a New York City orchestra; performed with the Santa Fe, Washington and Chautauqua operas; and sung with orchestras in Maryland, Florida and Indiana.

"As a singer, she possesses a wonderful instrument," says John Schofield, a renowned Peruvian tenor. "Her voice is big, enormous, but still warm and sweet. She's a naturally gifted artist, especially fit for Wagner and heroic roles."

Talent alone, however, doesn't automatically lead to success. As Van Kley experienced in church that day, it also takes determination and perseverance in the face of criticism.

▼
"I've always loved singing, and I've always known I'm supposed to sing, and I've always known God will provide the opportunities and venues to sing."
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"It's a very hard field, a very small field," she says of the professional singing world. "Even once you're in it, it's very subjective. If you're auditioning and they don't like the dress you're wear-

ing—or they want a redhead and you're a blond—you never know what they're looking for."

Add to that the fact that New York City, where Van Kley lives, has hundreds of theatres but only two opera houses.

Such realities don't discourage Van Kley, who is described by friends as positive yet practical, with a great sense of humor.

"I've always loved singing, and I've always known I'm supposed to sing, and I've always known God will provide the opportunities and venues to sing," she says.

A soprano, Van Kley grew up listening to opera on the radio with her grandfather, who sang in a symphony chorus. Her mother, while not classically trained, also is a singer.

Referred to Northwestern by her pastor in South Holland, Ill., Van Kley

became a music major when she was offered a music scholarship. She was the only freshman in the Heritage Singers and one of the few first-year students enrolled in private lessons.

Her first year at Northwestern, she studied with the late Lynda Sittser, wife of then-chaplain Jerry Sittser. Van Kley describes her voice teacher as someone who loved singing, teaching and music.

"I remember going into lessons and feeling very encouraged and very cared for and very safe," Van Kley says. "I felt like I could learn anything and do anything."

Other Northwestern voice teachers added to her training. From Dr. Kimberly Utke Svanoë, she learned to understand and communicate the text and to sing expressively. Ann Dorr, who had sung professionally and lived in New York, gave Van Kley a

perspective of the world beyond northwest Iowa. Theatre and musicals, meanwhile, provided a fun, creative outlet that helped her overcome her shyness.

Graduate school gave Van Kley an opportunity to continue to develop her voice. At Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., she earned a Master of Music degree in voice and opera.

"I learned a lot at Northwestern University," she

says. "I became more determined. I realized, 'I can do this and I'm good at it and I enjoy it.'"

Following graduation, Van Kley auditioned for apprenticeship programs and was chosen as a first alternate by the Santa Fe Opera.

"First alternate means, 'You did good, but we don't want you,'" she jokes. "But I was given a contract by an outdoor opera company in New York, so I spent the

summer wearing enormous costumes, being bitten by mosquitoes and having a very fun time."

She continued to audition, and after three years as a first alternate, was finally signed as an apprentice artist by the Santa Fe Opera in 1994. Two years later, she followed her singing coach—Neal Goran, Santa Fe's assistant conductor—to New York City.

"I started working twice a week with Neal, singing,

and things started happening," she recalls.

Van Kley got an agent, began doing oratorios, and landed contracts with the Washington Opera at the Kennedy Center, the Alabama Opera and the Connecticut Opera. She also found a job with a large accounting firm that gave her the flexibility to pursue her singing career.

"The big names are making a living singing full time,"



"The big names are making a living singing full time.

I'm not a big name. I may never be. But I'm happy. I enjoy my life."



she says. "I'm not a big name. I may never be. But I'm happy. I enjoy my life."

In August, Van Kley is getting married and moving to Connecticut, where she plans to look for a teaching position. How such a life change will impact her singing career remains to be seen.

"If my career is going to go forward, it's going to go forward whether I'm married or single," she says. "For me, it's more important to build a life with someone.

"While singing is really great, living and people are far more important. That's something a lot of singers don't realize. In the end, you either have a voice or you don't. Whether you choose to let it control you or you just enjoy it, it's up to you."



Susan Van Kley, right, performs in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, presented at the Santa Fe Opera.

Master Teacher

Alumnus wins nation's highest science-teaching honor

by Amy Scheer

Kevin Brasser '85 is leaning over a brightly painted cardboard box, pointing to a clump of uncooked spaghetti.

"The endoplasmic reticulum is a protein transport network in a cell, so this group put a little car on the spaghetti to represent that," he says. Past the pasta and some Fruit Loops, he points out a graham cracker chewed into an oval. "The mitochondria here create energy in the cell," he explains.

The Styrofoam ball suspended mid-box by a paper clip? "This is the nucleus with the DNA."

Brasser's students will learn more about DNA soon, on

the day they arrive in the classroom to find a "murdered" mannequin whose assassin is yet to be identified by the genetic material/building blocks. Meanwhile, they'll maneuver the pipe cleaners that represent the DNA's ladder-like structure.

Labs like this one helped send Brasser to the White House this past March, where he received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, administered by the National Science Foundation (NSF). Ninety-five middle school and high school teachers were chosen; Brasser, a South O'Brien High School science instructor in Paullina, was the only science teacher from Iowa to win the award.



Kevin Brasser works with ninth-grader Chelsea Maris to prepare a DNA sample in a biology lab.

"I try to take difficult concepts and break them down so that kids know what's going on. I'm not a big lecturer; I'm a doer, and I've found so much more success by doing hands-on models and experiments," Brassers says.

says with a hearty laugh, recounting the story just a few weeks after the smell finally cleared out.

Brassers, his wife, Karen (Hagge '88), and the other award winners were treated to a special week in Washington, D.C. They



Brassers explains to students how to load DNA samples into an electrophoresis gel.

His classroom bears witness to his style: Hand-held computers and data probes lie about, and students often come before and after school to "simply have fun with science stuff." Bright, new ceiling tiles hang overhead, installed just a few months back after an experiment involving methane gas and five gallons of liquid pig manure shot through the suspended ceiling, dripped through the light fixtures, and splattered the walls and equipment.

"I had pig manure everywhere in this room," he

received a private tour of the White House and the Smithsonian Museum, met and spoke with President George W. Bush and first lady Laura Bush, and participated in a congressional hearing on continued funding of the NSF.

The Presidential Award winners will receive \$10,000 each to be spent at their discretion, though they are encouraged to use it for educational purposes. Brassers, who has taken his students to locations as near as Minneapolis and as far as Southeast Asia, thinks he

might use the money to help fund his way on the Florida trip he and senior science students take each year.

"I'm very humbled by the whole experience of this award. I don't feel worthy of that. I'm just an average joe," he says. "The whole thing is all because of the Lord."

Looking back at God's work in his life, Brassers sees a diagram as intricate as the one scrawled on his classroom's dry erase board explaining protein synthesis. Nearly every step of the way, there's a connection to Northwestern.

After graduating from NWC with a biology major, Brassers spent a year in Taiwan teaching English through the Reformed Church in America. While there, under the care of resident missionaries Lucy (Brunsting '47) and Sam Noordhoff '47, Brassers discovered he had a love for kids and teaching. He returned to the States, and with the gracious assistance of education professor Ron Juffer, packed in his teaching certification requirements in two semesters. In 1987 he was hired at South O'Brien, where he's been teaching for 17 years.

"All of these people fit the puzzle of who I am," Brassers says, pulling from his pocket a yellow Post-it with some 10 names of Northwesterners—friends, former professors, a coach and a chaplain—and rattling off what he's learned from each.

"I've been gone 20 some years," he says, "but the thing that sticks out for me is the caring attitudes of the professors and the staff. It brought me to the next levels in my life. I owe a lot to a lot of people."

Named Outstanding Biology Teacher of Iowa in 2000, and a RadioShack National Teacher Award recipient in 2001, Brassers has evolved from a fourth grader catching frogs for a science company (for a quarter



"I try to take difficult concepts and break them down so that kids know what's going on. I'm not a big lecturer; I'm a doer, and I've found so much more success by doing hands-on models and experiments."



apiece) to an award-winning science teacher.

The drawing hanging inside the door of his classroom sums up Brassers. Drawn by Erin, one of his three children, the picture depicts an enthusiastic, smiling man holding a test tube. Brassers loves kids, and he loves what he does. "I try to do what's best for kids," he says. "I love my work. I wouldn't want to do anything else."

An Agent of Grace

by Duane Beeson

God, you have brought me here for a reason. I ask that you again empower me to be directly in the center of your will. I ask for opportunities to share your hope with others and open doors to be an agent of grace.

(Journal entry, April 10, 2004, Baghdad, Iraq)



Called in March to active duty in Iraq, the Rev. John Boyer finds military ministry so fulfilling he plans to pursue becoming a special forces or Ranger chaplain after returning.

Hours after writing that prayer, the Rev. John Boyer '98 was called to the emergency room at Camp Falcon in southern Baghdad. A member of his battalion lay dying from a rocket-propelled grenade wound, and other soldiers wept and yelled in anger.

For Boyer, the youngest U.S. Army chaplain on full-time, active-duty status, being in the center of God's will means ministering to a unit that suffered three deaths and eight combat

injuries in its first two months in Iraq. He is assigned to about 750 soldiers who are part of the First Calvary Division, based in Fort Hood, Texas. Their battalion was deployed to Iraq in March for at least a year's tour of duty.

Despite the danger and stress, Boyer says he loves being a military chaplain. A 2003 graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary, he knew he wanted to be an ambassador for Christ—but in an environment outside

the church.

His wife, Crystal, says the military is kind of like a big youth group. And John ministered to youth for several years in Boyden, Iowa, and Paramount, Calif.

"It seems like he's really found his fit," says Crystal. "He does well working with non-Christians."

"I knew being an Army chaplain would give me incredible opportunities for ministry," John says, "helping to provide hope for soldiers who are faced with the incredible—and often traumatic—circumstances of war. I love being the one soldiers turn to when they face tragedy."

"From the moment I rise to the time I lay my head on my pillow at night, I feel God's presence all about me. I see him at work in his people each day, calling the hearts of young men and women back to the Father."

Each day is different for Boyer. His responsibilities include everything from preaching at a weekly chapel service and leading memorial ceremonies to riding with troops on patrol and counseling suicidal soldiers. He also meets regularly with the head Sunni imam for the whole region west of the Tigris

River to talk about ways to develop peace.

And when a member of his battalion has been killed or wounded in action, Boyer conducts critical incident counseling with the soldiers who witnessed the horror.

"I ask them to share their emotions freely with each other, so that healing may be drawn from their shared experience. I make a point to always close in prayer and physically touch and comfort each person as they leave. The response to these times has been overwhelming; it is the one true hour soldiers can gather together and break down—for the purpose of being built back up."

"On my own I am not talented enough to do the things God has asked of me. But by his grace, I am empowered to do all he asks and requires, according to his will."

To cope, Boyer is diligent about spending regular times in prayer, journal writing and worship through praise songs.

"Like the psalmist David, I come before the Lord in times of worship, and I once again realize where I stand before God," explains the chaplain. "I realize that in the mystery of my own weakness, it is there I can find my source of strength, through God who loves us."

Boyer also finds strength from regular phone calls and e-mails with his wife back home with their 17-month-old daughter, Kyndra, in Harker Heights, Texas.

"Crystal is a tremendous partner in the ministry with me.



Chaplain Boyer pays tribute to two fallen soldiers during a memorial service.

She inspires, supports, encourages and counsels me. She also has started a weekly Bible study with the wives of our men who are deployed."

John says the hardest part of serving in Iraq is being away from his family and experiencing the daily moments of life with them.

Yet, he believes he has never experienced God's faithfulness, blessing and miracles like he has since he's been deployed in Iraq.

"Who can understand the ways of God? That is why I love him so much, because his way is perfect, even when we do not understand. We trust he sees the bigger picture, and that his love and care for us cover our inability to understand his every action."

Alumni service project

Join with other NWC alumni to serve Christians in Monterrey, Mexico, Nov. 5–14. Working with Initiatives International, our alumni service team will participate in construction projects at a church, orphanage or rehabilitation center.

Building relationships with the Mexican people and Northwestern alumni will be among the highlights of your week. You and other team members will stay with a host family from a local church.

- Construction experience is helpful but not necessary.
- Spanish speaking skills are valuable but not required.
- Cost is \$660 per participant, plus travel expenses to and from McAllen, Texas.

Contact the alumni office at 712-707-7106 or alumni@nwciowa.edu for more information.



Chicago program reunion

The Chicago Metropolitan Center (CMC) is looking for you! We will celebrate our 30th anniversary this fall and are seeking to connect with our alumni. CMC has changed a lot over the past 30 years, including our name—we're now known as "Chicago Semester." To celebrate, we want to invite all the CMC/Chicago Semester alumni to a huge Chicago party in October.

If you participated in the CMC internship program **between 1974 and 1984**, please log onto www.chicagosemester.org/forms/alumni.htm to provide us with your current information (we have current information for alumni from 1984 on). We'll be sure to send you an invitation to the 30th anniversary event!

Alumni corner



Karen Woudstra '79, Director of Alumni and Parent Relations

As I planned for the 50th reunion for the class of 1954 this spring, a letter came across my desk that made me smile! Two 1953 junior college alumni had an “engaging” experience after their class reunion in 2003. Nelva Van Zyl and Galen De Valois were classmates who both married NWC alums. They raised their families and both had lost their spouses.

This spring, in a letter to friends and former classmates, Nelva wrote: “Our 50-year reunion was attended by a guy and gal who stood side by side for their class photo, sat at the same table for the banquet, and, at the end of the evening, discovered they have many things in common.”

For Nelva and Galen, the decision to attend their class reunion resulted in a re-acquaintance that eventually led to a June wedding! Nelva said, “Needless to say, we are grateful to Northwestern College for sponsoring class reunions, and we encourage them to continue to do so. And to all our friends we say, ‘Be sure to attend your class reunion—who knows what may happen!’”

When I send class reunion invitations and encourage alumni to reconnect with their classmates, this isn’t what I have in mind. But God works in mysterious ways, and he definitely used the class of 1953’s reunion to bring two people who love life and the Lord into a new relationship.

I’m not suggesting you attend your reunion for the event’s matchmaking potential, but I *am* suggesting that reunions can be a great time to reconnect, reminisce and share with each other what God has done in your life since you left NWC.

My own 25-year class reunion is this fall. If you’re like me, you may hesitate to go because you haven’t been in contact with classmates for years, can’t remember half of them or aren’t sure what you’d talk about.

Northwestern’s alumni office will help you by making nametags with yearbook photos to remind you who that stranger used to be. Old photos, the *Beacon* and other memorabilia from your era also help bring the memories back.

Reunions are a time to experience what’s changed on campus since you left—and to rekindle your love for what’s stayed the same. Come to your reunion! I can’t promise it’ll be life-changing—but then again, you never know.



Galen and Nelva De Valois

Deaths

John De Wild '36, age 86, died May 18 in Rock Rapids, Iowa. After graduating from Northwestern, he studied at Iowa State University. He married Fannetta Kusters in 1939. During his career as an electrical engineer, he worked for Lyon County Rural Electric Cooperative, Iowa Public Service and the city of Rock Rapids. In 1952, he started an engineering firm that grew into De Wild, Grant, Reckert and Associates, which he headed until 1970. He served Northwestern as associate director of development from 1973 to 1984. He was elected president of the Consulting Engineers Council in 1958 and was named the lieutenant governor of Iowa for Kiwanis in 1963. Active at First Reformed Church in Rock Rapids, he sang in the choir, served on the consistory and taught Sunday school. Among his survivors are his wife; three children, **Sharon Tilstra '60**, **Dale '66** and **Brenda Van Rockel '74**; and a sister, **Ruby Vander Lee '54**.

Ruth (Lubbers '40) Foreman Miles, 82, died Feb. 23 in Los Alamos, N.M., of complications from breast cancer. She taught grade school in Orange City before marrying Lester Foreman in 1942. She served as the town clerk and keeper of the city jail in Hull, Iowa, before returning to school to earn bachelor’s and master’s degrees in English at South Dakota State University (SDSU). A professor of English at SDSU from 1962 to '89, she earned a doctorate from Drake University. She served as a Fulbright Scholar in Macao in 1989 and did additional teaching in China, Malaysia and Hong Kong. Northwestern’s Alumni Association honored her as the 1993 recipient of the Distinguished Service to Community and State Award. In 1989, Ruth moved to Los Alamos, where she continued to teach university classes. She married Dan Miles in 1998. Survivors, in addition to Dan, include a daughter, a son, a sister, and three brothers, including **Willard '39** and **Gil '49**.

Viola (Bynes '45) Blemaster, age 78, died March 3 at her home in Moville, Iowa. She married Albert Blemaster in 1956. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Morningside College and taught school for 45 years, the last 25 of which were in the Woodbury Central School District in Moville. A member of Moville United Methodist Church, she sang in the choir and taught Sunday school. Among her survivors are her husband, a son and a sister.

Ruth (Block '52, '72) Ackerman, age 71, died April 19 after a lengthy bout with cancer. She taught in country school for several years. After her divorce, she and her six children moved from Little Rock, Iowa, to Orange City, where she earned a library science degree. She moved to Lytton, Iowa, where she worked as a public school librarian for 22 years before retiring in 1994. She made several trips abroad, including spending several months as a volunteer librarian at a missionary school in Colombia and at Sheldon Jackson College in Sitka, Alaska. A member of Lytton Presbyterian Church, she served as an elder, deacon and choir member. She presented many programs in churches, schools and nursing homes, sharing her testimony in song and telling of her experiences. She is survived by two daughters, including **Michelle Drenth '85**; four sons; a sister; and a brother.

Roger Mollenbeck '74, age 51, died Feb. 18 at his home in Hampton, Iowa. He taught vocal music in a number of school systems and was serving as the director of music and organist at First United Methodist Church in Mason City at the time of his death. A former officer in the North Iowa chapter of the American Guild of Organists, he presented an alumni recital at Northwestern in 1992 and performed in Christ Chapel during Tulip Festival in 2000. He served on the new organ committee, the historical committee and the cen-

tenial music series at Zion Reformed Church, rural Sheffield. He wrote the *Mollenbeck Family History* in 1983. An avid traveler, he visited Mollenbeck, Germany, on several occasions. Among his survivors are his mother; two sisters, including **Cindy Lind '77**; and a brother.

Carol Vosburg-Lawson '76, age 50, died April 18 as the result of an automobile accident in Story County, Iowa. A resident of Ames, she served as activity director at Bethany Manor Nursing Home in Story City. Active at Ames' Calvary United Methodist Church, she was a member of PEO and the Ames Choral Singers. She married John Lawson in 1989; he died in 1995. Her survivors include her parents, two brothers and a sister.

Dennis Blake '88, age 40, died March 11 in a Sioux City hospital. He was a history and social studies teacher at Sioux City West High School and head football coach at Westwood High School, Sloan. He married Patti Andrew-Tyer in 1995. Survivors, in addition to Patti, include a daughter; his parents; two brothers, **Larry '83** and **James '87**; and a sister.

'69

Ardys (Hessellink) Hansum took early retirement in 2003 after 33 years in education, 29 of them as an elementary library media specialist in Omaha's public schools. She now works part time as a para-professional reading assistant with Westside Community Schools in Omaha.

'72

Steve King, Tucson, Ariz., has been named president and CEO of the Beacon Group SW. This company was formed after the merger of two nonprofit firms that have been providing services to people with disabilities for over 50 years. Steve was president of Tetra Corp. for 24 years.

'73

Norbert Bradley is a member of the Lenox, Iowa, City Utility Board, which recently erected a wind turbine that is generating more than enough electricity for the town. Norbert was named the Rural-Urban Citizen of the Year by the Rotary Club.

'74

Doug Van Meeteren has been promoted to chief operating officer at Primebank in Sioux Center. He has been with the bank since 1981.

'78

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Macchia, Lexington, Mass., recently released his latest book, *Becoming a Healthy Disciple: 10 Traits of a Vital Christian*. He is founding president of Leadership Transformations, a ministry focusing on formation needs of leaders and the spiritual discernment processes of leadership teams in local church and parachurch ministry settings nationwide. He is the author of *Becoming a Healthy Church* and *Becoming a Healthy Church Workbook*.

'82

Dan Kruse now serves as elementary/middle school principal and assistant activities director for the Central Lyon School District, Rock

Westervoort, the Netherlands, where they continue their work as resource coordinators for a team ministering to the Romany (Gypsies) in Europe. They encourage Northwestern alumni who are traveling near Arnhem or who would like to volunteer for a month or week to contact them at holmesvr@compuserve.com.



1954 junior college alumni gathering for their reunion at Heritage Day in May were (front row, left to right): John Van Sloten, Coreen (Bergsma '58) Van Sloten, John Landegent, Audrey (Heemstra) Landegent, Lyle Vander Werff, Phyllis Vander Werff, Joan (Dekker) Hendrix; (second row) Wilmer Ver Meer, Joyce (Schuiteman) Ver Meer, J. David Muyskens, Donna Muyskens, Ruth (Grooters) Van Binsbergen, Warren Van Binsbergen, Betty Schut, Herlan Schut, Dena (Van Oort) Kuiper, Edward Kuiper; (third row) Dale Slykhuis, Marlene (Van Loh) Slykhuis, Ruby (De Wild) Vander Lee, Norman Vander Lee, Leona (Riphagen) Schreur, Kathy (Cleveringa) McKinstrey, Leona (Stander) Eggink, Charlie Eggink, Marlys (Bonnema '70) Van Aartsen, Henry Van Aartsen; (fourth row) John Vande Steeg '53, Diane (Mattlin) Vande Steeg, Minerva (De Beer) Van Peursesem, David Van Peursesem, Trudy (Dykstra) Den Herder, George Den Herder, Gertrude (De Ruyter) Aberson, John Aberson, Helen (Van Abbema) Petersen, Larry Petersen '53; (fifth row) Norman Bonnema, Lorna Bonnema, Lyle Ver Hoef, Myrna (Harberts '55) Ver Hoef, Larry Korver, Betty (Kraai) Korver, Wayne Koele, Joan Koele, Eunice De Boer, Maynard De Boer, Nelvina Wissink and Gerald Wissink.

'76

Susan (Rehder) Blom is now the costumer in the theatre arts department at Dordt College. Her husband, **Dean**, is the building inspector for the city of Sioux Center. The Bloms live near Hawarden.

'79

Jane (Van Beek) Zupp teaches reading, English Language Learners and computers at River Valley Elementary in Washta, Iowa.

'81

Mary Van Rheenen and her husband, Keith Holmes, live in

Rapids, Iowa. He started at Central Lyon in 1986 as a physical education instructor for K-8. He later served as elementary/middle school guidance counselor and activities director. He earned a master's degree in counseling from South Dakota State and a master's in administration at the University of Sioux Falls.

Mini profile



Folkers crowned Mrs. Nebraska

by Emily Hennager '06

There was no drum roll before Paula (Dykstra '86) Folkers was named Mrs. Nebraska United States. Instead, she got the news through the mail.

"At first I thought it was a rejection letter because it was so thin," says Folkers, of Blair, Neb. "Then I read it and said, 'Oh my goodness!' It was pretty anti-climactic. There was no fanfare."

Instead of the traditional stage competition, contestants submitted a résumé, application and photos. They were judged on intelligence, beauty, poise and their ability to articulate a chosen platform.

Folkers' platform is helping women find balance in their lives. At official speaking engagements, she encourages women to take time for themselves.

"Women give so much of themselves to everyone else that they forget to eat properly and take personal time. They're so willing to give up anything that nourishes them in order to help others," she says.

Between the responsibilities of homeschooling her four children, ages four to 11, directing the women's ministries at church and volunteering at a preschool, Folkers has had to find balance in her own life.

"There was a time when I was out of balance and life was rough. I finally realized if I don't take care of myself, I'm not

much good for the rest of my family," she says.

To keep life under control, she created a weekly schedule for household chores and started exercising regularly. Now she and her husband, Paul '87, run four miles at least five days a week. And she is enrolled in a tap dance class.

Growing up, Folkers never thought she'd enter a pageant, let alone win one.

"As a child, I was self-conscious, bullied and made fun of. My teachers told me I wasn't very smart, and I believed them," she says.

It wasn't until she met Paul at Northwestern that she began to see herself differently.

"My husband showed me I didn't need to believe what others said about me. He saw my potential and helped me see myself as I was," she says.

That confidence helped her get into pageants. After watching a friend compete, Folkers entered her first pageant in 1996, placing fourth in the state. She entered again in 2002 but didn't place. Though disappointed, she decided to try one more time.

"I really believe this title is God-ordained because I worked very little at it. I said, 'God, if this is where you want me to be, it will happen. I don't know the purpose, but I'm here and I'll do what you want,'" she says.

In August, Folkers will go Las Vegas to compete for the title of Mrs. United States. Though this will be her largest competition, her focus is the same: to glorify God.

"This title was given by God to be used for his glory and to further his kingdom," she says. "Each of us has gifts from him to be used for him. This just happens to be mine."

Alan Ritchie has become a partner in McCurdy Funeral Home, Council Bluffs, Iowa. He has been a licensed funeral director for 20 years. He and his wife, Kristi, have a son and two daughters.

'84

Gretchen (Brown) Hoffman recently completed her doctorate in counseling from the University of South Dakota. She works part time as a psychotherapist at Southeastern Behavioral Health Care in Sioux

Falls. Her husband, Doug, is an attorney in private practice. They have two children, Derek (9) and Paige (1).

'85

Laura (Graham) Kienzle and her husband, Paul, continue as missionaries with South America Mission in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. They and their three daughters will be returning to the United States in July for a one-year home ministry assignment.

'86

Kathy (Marsh) Conger and her husband, Chris, live in northern Minnesota near the headwaters of the Mississippi River. She educates their five children at home near Akeley while also tutoring and substitute teaching. She received a master's degree in education from Southwest State University last May.

'87

Ken Jensen, Coon Rapids, Minn., sold Snack Attack Vending

Company and started Long Arm Distribution. He still drives the shuttle bus for Crystal Evangelical Free Church on Sundays.

'88

Joyce (Ramold) Christopher has been working for the Missouri Division of Vocational Rehabilitation as a senior certified rehabilitation counselor for 12 years. She and her husband, David, own a packing, shipping and copying business.

Prayer corner



The Rev. Harlan
VanOort '82
Chaplain

On the one hand, at Northwestern College, prayer is *not* in a corner. It permeates the campus. Prayer floods the academic calendar, the classroom, co-curricular activities, student life, and the vision of faculty and staff.

At Northwestern, we live by prayer. The college exists by God's grace and calling. Our prayer is that God would be the author of the transformation of students as scholars and as Christians. Faculty and staff pray that God will graciously empower them to fulfill their calling on campus. Students pray for courage, endurance and inspiration as they learn about God's world and discern their calling in it.

On the other hand, at Northwestern, prayer is in a corner. Though it covers the campus, it is often hidden. Though it happens in almost every corner of classrooms, chapel and residences, it seldom occurs on the "street corners" so as to be seen by others. Jesus urged us to pray in secret (Matthew 6:5). Even when we pray together, it is not to impress but to encourage one another and listen for God.

Though prayer shapes the campus, we need more of it. As alumni and friends of Northwestern, please join us in prayer. Find a corner where you are, and pray with us and for us as we journey in the realm of ideas by the power of the Spirit.

'89

Dr. Shawn Ritenour, assistant professor of economics at Grove City College in Pennsylvania, has been awarded a one-semester sabbatical. He will continue work on a book, *A Christian View of Economic Principles*, funded through a grant from the Tithes and Offerings Foundation.

'91

Gregory Parker earned an M.B.A. from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore in 1998 and graduated from Washburn University School of Law in Topeka, Kan., this May. He is president of MIKAN Business Solutions and is starting a law firm in Washington, D.C.

'92

Michelle (Ballanger) Fraasch lives in Milbank, S.D., and works for State Auto Insurance. She and her husband, Jason, have two daughters, Katie (7) and Alexa (5).

'93

Todd Arends was named boys' basketball coach of the year by the *Sioux City Journal* and *Northwest Iowa Review* after leading Sioux Center High School to third place in the Class 2A state tournament. The Warriors finished the season with a 23-4 record.

Jill (Wassenaar) Reindl is a stay-at-home mom in McCook Lake, S.D.

'94

The Rev. Darrin Kimpson serves as the lead pastor for Papio Creek Church in Papillion, Neb., a one-year-old church planted by Westwood Church of Omaha. Darrin says he's looking forward to speaking at the Homecoming worship service on Oct. 3. His wife, **Pam (Brinks '97)**, serves Papio Creek as the ministry coordinator. She also works part time at the coffee shop where the church worships on Sunday and for Westwood Church's Moms' Day Out.

Scott Yoder is a mortgage originator at Bank of America. His wife, **Cindy (De Boer)**, is a stay-at-home mom. They live in Mason City, Iowa.

'95

Denise (Talsma) Marquardt and her husband, Scott, live in Plymouth, Wis., where she is a stay-at-home mom for their son, Caleb (2), and step-mom to Aaron (12). Scott is an electrician.

Monte Vander Velde, instrumentation/control engineer with Interstates Control Systems in Sioux Center, has received his professional engineer certification. He now is licensed as a control systems engineer.

Brian Veenendaal teaches fifth grade in the Wauwatosa School District just outside of Milwaukee. As a member of the men's praise group at Trinity Community Church in Brown Deer, Wis., he sang the national anthem at a Marquette University basketball game in the winter of 2003 and will do the same at a Milwaukee Brewers game on Aug. 21. He and his wife, **Tricia (Reynen '97)**, have three children.

'96

Kevin Bullis, who has served as a visiting instructor in Northwestern's English department the last two years, will pursue a master's degree in science writing at MIT this fall. His wife, **Heather (Nunn '97)**, received a bachelor's degree from NWC in May.

Bryan Hibma works in the information technology department for CommerceBank in Kansas City, Mo.

The Rev. Trygve Johnson has been appointed the Hinga-Boersma dean of the chapel at Hope College. He will assume his duties at Hope in January after completing his doctorate in theology at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. He was



Academy alumni from the class of 1954 enjoying their class reunion were (front row, left to right): Martha Hartog, John Hartog, Glenn Wiersma, Joyce Wiersma, Marilyn (De Beer) Hoffs, Kermit Hoffs; (second row) Jean (Albers) Vander Laan, Karl Vander Laan, Gladys (Korver) Vander Berg, Gladys (Vander Wolde) Van Drie, Thelma (Jouwstra '56) Haverdink, Eugene Haverdink; (third row) Harold Vogelaar, Pisamai Vogelaar, Norm Van Klompenburg, Pat Van Klompenburg, Joanne (Rozendaal '56, '58) Hoff, Marvin Hoff, John Rozendaal and James Van Vugt.

Mini profile

Schultz wins state coaching award

by Duane Beeson

When Wes Golden, head cross country coach at Clinton (Iowa) High School, was called to serve in Iraq with the National Guard, Ted Schultz '88 also got a call.

"In two days I have to go to Fort McCoy in Wisconsin, then on to Iraq," Golden told Schultz, who had served as girls' assistant coach for eight years. "Until I return, you're the girls' cross country coach."

"At first I was in awe," Schultz recalls. "But it was in January (2003), so I didn't get too concerned."

As the cross country season began, Schultz realized the ramifications of that phone call. Already working full time as sports editor of the *Clinton Herald*, a position he has held since 1995, Schultz had to put in a few more hours a week as head coach—making transporta-

tion plans, attending coaches' meetings and taking care of other details.

The worst part was Saturday morning practices or meets—after working until 2 a.m. to complete that day's sports section. "Once I had to set up for a morning meet at 5," says Schultz. "I went to sleep after listening to one talk radio program, and the same program was still on when I woke up a few hours later."

Schultz may not have been as rested as he would have liked, but he was able to lead the team to a successful season. The River Queens placed third in their conference, behind two state-qualifying teams, and narrowly missed advancing to the state meet themselves.

"They worked hard and had a nice season," says Schultz. "I was most proud that we were very successful without having a dominating

lead runner. We had a pack attack."

E-mailing from Iraq about three times a week, Coach Golden kept in touch with Schultz on the team's progress and offered encouragement.

"He did great things," says Golden. "They over-achieved under him. I didn't worry; they were in good hands."

Golden felt so good about how Schultz and the assistant boys' coach, Jim Thyne, did in his absence that he nominated them as state assistant cross country coaches of the year. The two received that award in December.

Schultz's wife, Marsha, also was honored at the awards banquet, being named the state assistant girls' track coach of the year. A sixth grade teacher in Clinton, she also coaches middle school volleyball.



Ted Schultz offers race strategy to Clinton (Iowa) High School distance runner Heather Parker.

Being a two-coach family has its advantages, says Ted. "She knows a lot of these kids. We bounce ideas off of each other."

The only downside: "Getting dog-sitters is hard."

Back in his assistant's role, Schultz says he looks forward to another cross country season. "Coaching gives me the chance to make an impact on the kids. I've tried to let them know I'm interested in them more as people, not just as runners."

Northwestern's chaplain from 1999 to 2002.

Kristin (Falksen) Knoke works as a tenant services representative for CB Richard Ellis in Kansas City, Mo. Her husband, Mark, is an agent for United American Insurance Company.

David and Kay (Hekter) Wynn live in Austin, Minn., where David is a systems designs analyst for First Data Corp. of Omaha. Kay is a stay-at-home mom.

'99

Adam Collins is pursuing an M.Div. degree with an emphasis in collegiate ministry at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo. He also works part time at UMB Bank. His wife, **Angie (Grosvenor '00)**, works in human resources as the payroll manager for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, which is headquartered in Kansas City.

Dan Faber graduated with an M.D. from the University of Nebraska

College of Medicine in May. He has begun residency training in internal medicine/pediatrics at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. His wife, **Angie (Halverson '02)**, teaches pre-kindergarten at Omaha's Westwood Church, where they are members.

Heather (Finkelstein) Huey works as a reference/instruction/technology librarian at the Alexander Library of Rutgers University.

Tiffany Lassen works as a disability rating specialist for the U.S.

Department of Veterans Affairs at Yongsan Army Garrison in Seoul, South Korea. Last year she worked on the Air Force and Marine Corps bases in Okinawa, Japan.

Kimberly (McGlone) MonteMayer works for Accelerated Rehabilitation Centers in Chicago.

'00

Robert Graham is a claims representative for the Social Security Administration in Spencer, Iowa.

Mackenzie (Thedens) Grondahl is an M.Div. student at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. She and her husband, Kevin, will be moving to Port Lavaca, Texas, late this summer for her internship year.

Lisa (Kooima) Nafziger works at Southwestern Mental Health Center in Luverne, Minn. She provides home-based counseling services to the community and adult mental health case management services.

Jamie (Hansen) Nalos is a stay-at-home mom in Battle Ground, Wash., after serving as a second grade teacher.

Craig Paulsen is the assistant director of annual giving at Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell, S.D. His wife, Lindsay, works for the Office of Child Support Enforcement for the South Dakota Department of Social Services. The Paulsens are involved in establishing Mitchell Young Life, a high school Christian outreach organization.

Noah Van Oosterhout is a technical instructor for Kawasaki Motor Corp. in East Lansing, Mich. His wife, **Teresa (Rummel '01)**, is pursuing a doctoral degree in sociology at Michigan State University.

'01

Ben Ellingson is working on a doctorate in computational chemistry at the University of Minnesota and is scheduled to graduate in 2005. His wife, **Alicia (Moehring)**, has been working at Intrepid USA Healthcare Services for two years. She recently was promoted from marketing assistant to branch administrator for the Roseville Intrepid office.

Laura (TerBeest) Strubbe has taught fifth grade at Springville Elementary in Omaha for three years. Her husband, **Ezra '00**, works as a computer technician, loan officer and assistant branch manager for Mid-City Bank.

Planned giving notes



Cornie Wassink '73
Director of
Planned Giving

Why endowments work

Many of our current donors have been supporting Northwestern College financially for years. In fact, we've grown downright dependent on their annual generosity. We've become true partners in this great mission. Consequently, when these supporters are gone, the absence of their giving will be felt.

Some of these faithful donors know this and are doing something to make sure their giving never runs dry. They are taking steps—through their will or trust—to create an endowment fund. A portion of their estate will be set aside for a special fund that will generate annual gifts to continue the giving they are doing now.

Endowments work well for faithful people. Here are three reasons why:

Endowments are perpetual.

Like an artesian well, endowment funds keep giving and giving. They allow donors to “lock in” their giving. Buildings may crumble—and people will come and go—but endowments last.

Each year in the future, the Northwestern community, as well as family members, will be reminded of the donors' involvement with NWC and the value of making regular gifts to support our mission. What a wonderful legacy to leave behind!

Endowments are protected.

Endowment funds at Northwestern are kept separate from operating and capital fund accounts. Endowment donors have the assurance that their endowment fund will be secure. The written agreement will be on file, and the terms will be carefully followed.

Endowments are personal.

While it is possible and sometimes desirable to create an unnamed, unrestricted endowment fund, many people want their fund to bear a person's name. And they want to direct their endowment to benefit a specific area of interest or department. They appreciate the flexibility and the opportunity to personalize their “artesian well.”

Northwestern College has developed sound policies for creating and managing endowment funds. This information is available upon request. I can also show you a variety of ways you can use the tools of gift planning to make an endowment dream come true—whether now through a current gift or later through your estate plan. I will be happy to visit or correspond with you about this exciting area of philanthropy. Contact me at 712-707-7109 or cwassink@nwc-iowa.edu.

'02

Dana Folkerts and his wife, **Tonya (Neufeld '03)**, live in Annville, Ky., and serve Jackson County Ministries as volunteers. Dana works in the housing ministry; Tonya works in the youth ministry.

Dave and Julie (Jansen '01) Perrigo work at South O'Brien School in Paullina, Iowa. Dave is the high

school at-risk coordinator, and Julie is the 7-12 guidance counselor. They both also coach.

Rachel Van Den Broek serves as the instructional services/outreach librarian at Cornerstone University in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Belinda Vermeer will be a technology/computer teacher at Benson High School in Omaha this fall.

Andrea Weinert works at Park Community Church in downtown Chicago. The assistant music director, she works with the programming team to add all artistic elements to the services.

'03

Jaylene (Wiersma) De Vos will be teaching middle school and high school English in the Cherokee, Iowa, school system this fall.

Abbie Klinker, San Diego, works as an account manager for Homecomings Financial, a mortgage servicing company.

Ezra Johnson is a resident director at Indiana Wesleyan University in Marion. His wife, **Molly (Reynolds)**, is a first grade teacher in Marion Community Schools.

John Kramer taught science at Pomeroy-Palmer School in Pomeroy, Iowa, this year. He will teach middle school science and ninth grade health at Lynnville-Sully this fall.

Kristin (Erickson) Lassen serves as a purchasing assistant at MED-TEC in Orange City. Her husband, **Dan '01**, is associate director of administrative systems in the computing services department at NWC.

Becky Reed serves as program director at Camp Blodgett in Grand Rapids, Mich. She is in charge of

the summer camp and year-round programs.

New arrivals

Mary (Vinke '78) and Dann Schroeder '77, daughter by adoption from China, Emma Lian (2), joins Jacob (5).

Shawn and Jane (Van Beek '79) Zupp, daughter by adoption, Sarah Susan Alice (3).

Mary Lou and Victor Menning '84, daughter, Laura Rose, joins Katharine (6), Rebecca (4) and Emma (2).

Danelle (O'Grady '92) and Rick Starkenburg '92, daughter, Gabrielle Morgan.

Patrick and Kristy (Kaster '93) Connor, son, Sean Michael, joins Mackenzie (4).

Susanne and Douglas Draayer '93, son, Tyler Jon.

Jim and Jill (Wassenaar '93) Reindl, son, Chance Phillip, joins Braydon (6), Keaton (4) and Trey (3).

Kim and Paul Van Ravenswaay '94, son, Tyler Jay.

Cindy (De Boer '94) and Scott Yoder '94, son, Grant Michael, joins Julia (4) and Christa (2).

Matt and Barb (Beernink '95) Den

Herder, daughter, Ayda Joi, joins Collin (5) and Avery (3).

Marcy (Van Wyk '95) and Kent Nelson '93, daughter, Sadie Grace, joins Lyndsay (6) and Brenna (3).

Susan (Mitchell '95) and Greg Van Holland '89, daughter, Sarah Grace.

Erin and Bryce Armstrong '96, son, Gabriel John.

Christy (Hoffman '96) and Lou Bram '96, son, Elijah, joins Anna (2). Gabrielle and **Scott Grooters '96**, son, Austin Jay.

Susan (Boote '96) and Shawn Hulst '97, son, Davis Michael.

Marci (Klahsen '96) and Greg Romberg '95, twins, Blake William and Brady Michael, join Austin (3).

Scott and Kristi (Kraayenhof '96) Van Der Weide, daughter, Anna Lou, joins Katie (4).

Kay (Hekter '96) and David Wynn '96, son, Derek Sullivan, joins Alexander (1).

Matt and Tammy (Mason '97) Carlson, son, Simon Matthew.

Carrie (Moss '97) and Chris Deam '98, daughter, AnnaBelle Jade.

Pam (Brinks '97) and Darrin Kimpson '94, daughter, Maria Joy, joins Brooke (3).

Kelli (Hansen '98) and Jon Holthe '96, daughter, Emmy, joins Bria (3).

Heather (DeGroot '98) and Cameron Olson '98, daughter, Charlotte Brielle.

JJ and Kendra (Luiken '98) Veld, son, Darren John.

Dawn (Van Meeteren '99) and Matt De Young '01, daughter, Emily Kate.

Sheldon and Jamie (Hansen '00) Nalos, son, Braden Vaughan.

Amy (Huisman '00) and Mike Siebersma '00, daughter, Zoe Jean, joins Maxwell (3) and Treyton (2).

Laura (TerBeest '01) and Ezra Strubbe '00, son, Carter James, joins Victoria.

Marriages

Nelva (Keunen '51, '53) Van Zyl and Galen De Valois '53, Colorado Springs.

Jane Van Beek '79 and Shawn Zupp, Washta, Iowa.

Heather Harrison '87 and Eric Northrop, New Britain, Conn.

Joyce Ramold '88 and David Christopher, West Plains, Mo.

Kristin Falksen '96 and Mark Knoke, Kansas City, Mo.

Scott Van Aartsen '96 and Allison Gable, Rock Rapids, Iowa.

Kimberly McGlone '99 and Matt MonteMayer, Lansing, Ill.

Kara Van Voorst '99 and Kevin Verschuure, Orange City.

Jamie Aguilera '00 and Jason Bonnema '02, Des Moines.

Robert Graham '00 and Angie Sudtelgte, Spencer, Iowa.

Lisa Kooima '00 and Nick Nafziger, Sioux Falls.

Craig Paulsen '00 and Lindsay Bruning, Mitchell, S.D.

Mackenzie Thedens '00 and Kevin Grondahl, Dubuque, Iowa.

Jami Jelken '01 and Grant Schmidt, Henderson, Neb.

Adam Sperling '02 and Renae Gangwish, Colorado Springs.

Kristin Erickson '03 and **Dan Lassen '01**, Orange City.

The couples reside in the city listed.

Alumni: What's new with you?

Let us know so we can tell your friends and classmates. Send to: Office of Public Relations, Northwestern College, 101 7th St. SW, Orange City, IA 51041. Or e-mail to beeson@nwciowa.edu; fax number is 712-707-7370. Deadline for the fall *Classic* is July 30.

Name _____
 Address _____

 Home phone _____ Class of _____
 E-mail _____
 Current employer(s) _____

Brothers in India

by Kara Wismer '05

The 20 boys I was responsible for had decided to have an all-out water fight, and amidst the screams, giggles and chaos, I kept hearing my mother's voice: "It's all fun and games until someone gets an eye poked out!" Thankfully that didn't happen, but a minor injury was inevitable. The victim was four-year-old Raju. Nothing serious—just a little too much water in the eyes and a few scrapes on his knees.

As I picked him up, cleaned and bandaged his knees, wrapped him in a towel and held him on my lap, suddenly it hit me: Raju is an orphan. He has no family. I knew his story, knew how his parents had died. But I'm ashamed to say that until that moment, I had never really stopped to think about the implications of such a label: orphan.

As I sat there with Raju, singing "Jesus Loves Me," I really understood: *He doesn't have a mom.* He never will. This is his life now. He's got to "toughen up" and take care of himself—learn to wash his own laundry on the rocks.

That was it. I broke. I poured out myself to God because there was no one else. I could barely communicate with most of the boys, but even if I'd had the ability, they couldn't possibly have

understood where I was coming from. I was not really angry with God, but sad to my inner core.

After Raju left my lap to join the other boys, I walked down the path, fell on my knees in the dirt, buried my face in my hands and wept. I was struggling with wanting to understand huge problems: poverty, homelessness, racial divisions, violence, crimes, orphans, hunger, disease ... I didn't just want to know *why*; I wanted to know what *I* was supposed to do about it.

That night I was sitting on the dark porch with one of the oldest boys, Samba Shiva, fighting off the swarms of bugs and waiting for the electricity to return so we could have dinner. As we sat, he said, "I am feeling very bad." "Why?" I asked. "Because you are leaving in four days. The boys and I are feeling very bad."

I thought back to a few weeks before when I had just arrived. I was terrified. I felt inadequate, alone, scared and anxious for the time to pass quickly. I didn't expect to fall in love with these boys. I felt more helpless now than ever. What good had my stay done, after all? He was right. I was leaving, going home to my friends, family and cozy house. And the boys would still be here, in this same condition. Only now they wouldn't even have my inad-



Kara Wismer plucks chickens with some of the street boys she lived with last summer.

equate love. I told him I was sad too.

I started sharing my thoughts and frustrations with Samba Shiva. I asked him if he ever got angry with God for what had happened in his life. I told him I felt guilty about the many blessings I had, that I didn't know what to do about their painful stories.

"You want to do something?" he asked. I said, "Of course. I wish I could change everything. I wish we could switch places ..." I thought I'd lost him with all of my rambling and his struggle to understand English. "I don't expect you to have the answers for me, Samba Shiva ..." I started to continue.

He interrupted me, though, and said: "You want to do something? *You keep being our sister. Keep loving us. Write us letters. Pray for us. And then when people ask us if we're orphans, we can say, 'We may not have parents, but we have a big sister in America who loves us.'*"

It wasn't until I'd left them that I realized God had answered my prayer. I still

was looking for some huge revelation, a way to solve the world's problems. But as I told this story to my SOS teammate, he pointed out to me, "Kara, it sounds like you got an answer: love."

I wanted to argue that love was too simple a message—not nearly profound enough to bring about real change! Then I began to realize: Love *isn't* a complex answer. God gave us this simple command for a reason: The message of love is easily understood by everyone, everywhere. And the best is that simply loving other people is sharing the gospel of Christ—because God is love.

A senior Christian education major from Omaha, Kara wrote this essay last summer after her Summer of Service (SOS) experience in Hyderabad, India. She now leads a prayer and letter-writing ministry to the boys she met and fell in love with there. This summer, 23 new SOS team members are sharing love and the gospel in 19 countries.

Send your Classic thoughts to beeson@nwciowa.edu

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Ron De Jong '71
Dean of enrollment services



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Young
alumni gathering
(for alumni from
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Friday night



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