Artist enlightens with stripes

BY KALI WOLKOW

Walk into Te Paske Art Gallery, and turn right. Hanging from an oversized clothespin, a plain piece of paper reads, “This installation is essentially an environment which envelops the observer with my creative perspective. Ultimately, I am looking for the viewer to experience my art rather than just view it.”

Shannon Sargent, the artist of the current gallery exhibit, “Striped Objects for the Purpose of Understanding,” asks viewers to read their own stories into his work.

“I want you to share stories and experiences with each other,” Sargent said. “If you can bring something from your own experience there, then we are sharing it … and that’s when it (the artwork) becomes universal.”

The gallery is filled with a colorful display of random objects. Jars filled with such things as bouncy balls, coffee beans, toy trucks and baby doll heads line the windowsills.

At times, one could even say, he recycles too much.

“When I travel, I look for articles to use that are already interesting,” Sargent said. “I recycle everything; some objects I’ll use for a while, then sandblast off their color and use them again.”

And when Sargent says he recycles everything, he means it. “That wood in the gallery used to be my deck,” Sargent said.

At times, one could even say, he recycles too much.

Sometimes when my daughter knew I was working on a project, she’d ask, ‘You’re not taking anything from my room, are you?’” Sargent said smiling. “Sometimes I was.”

However, his daughter’s dolls didn’t end up in his artwork just because he needed more objects; they were placed there for the memories.

“I want to keep them for her … and for me,” Sargent said.

Although this exhibit is about the viewer’s personal experiences, Sargent’s own memories are tied to his artwork. In fact, his memories provide the foundation for the installation.

His idea to use jars was born out of childhood memories of him and his grandmother canning together. The ropes hanging from the ceiling are remnants of Sargent’s time spent as a mountaineering instructor in the Marine Corps. Even the overall theme of stripes is linked to the military background; noncommissioned officers in the Marine Corps wear a scarlet “blood stripe” on the trouser legs of their dress uniform, and the stars and stripes of the American flag are never far from their minds.

At each place Sargent goes to, he makes a new object to put into his installment. Northwestern’s addition was a striped mannequin on the wall. In return, Sargent’s contribution to NW was a gallery that sparked interesting conversation and uprooted fun memories.

Are you ready for a game of “I SPY”? “Striped Objects for the Purpose of Understanding” will be available for viewing through Feb. 7. Gallery hours are 8 a.m. to midnight Monday through Saturday and 1 p.m. to midnight on Sunday. Good luck finding the lizard.

By Megan Current

Part-time English professor Ryan Pendell announced that he will be leaving Northwestern in April to join a monastery.

Pendell has taught at NW for a year and a half and is also a NW graduate. He said that the decision to leave his current life behind was a long process but that the move is necessary in order to follow his calling of becoming a monk.

“I’m in the situation where I’m young, single and at the start of my career,” Pendell said. “I’m not throwing away a lot of things. If I don’t do this now, I think I’ll always wonder if I should have tried it.”

Pendell started visiting The Order of Julian of Norwich monastery when he was studying to get his masters in Chicago. He said that this was when he started to feel a calling and that growing up in an Episcopal church led him to Julian House.

“It has been a long process, and last spring the pieces sort of fell into place,” Pendell said. “When I travel, I look for articles to use that are already interesting.”

Although Pendell is young and single, the monastery’s addition was a striped mannequin on the wall. In return, Sargent’s contribution to NW was a gallery that sparked interesting conversation and uprooted fun memories.

Are you ready for a game of “I SPY”? “Striped Objects for the Purpose of Understanding” will be available for viewing through Feb. 7. Gallery hours are 8 a.m. to midnight Monday through Saturday and 1 p.m. to midnight on Sunday. Good luck finding the lizard.

(From left) Juniors Sara Van Gorp, Janet Pitsenberger and Anna Zeutenhorst view one of the pieces.

See “Pendell” on Page 5
Emily Mahlum, senior: “The piece hanging all tangled up in the middle of the gallery brings me back to the days when I would jump rope for hours at a time.”

Samantha Rhoda, sophomore: “The hanging grid of jars caught my attention. It’s a mosaic of familiar objects connected to memories — mostly the jellybeans in their variety of bright colors.”

Sara Van Gorp, junior: “The jar with the ‘collection of form’ (written on it) had a baby face inside. It made me think of Sid from ‘Toy Story’ and his deformed toys.”

Exhibit envelopes observers with artist’s perspective
Photos by Kali Wolkow and Emilee Berry

“Striped Objects for the Purpose of Understanding” was created to be experiential and to start conversation. Several students answered the questions: What objects helped you connect with the installation? What did it remind you of or make you remember?
Star-studded ‘Gangster Squad’ lacks character

MOVIE REVIEW
BY KARA NONNEMACHER
Warner Bros. Pictures released “Gangster Squad” on Jan. 11, 2013, but the film was originally due to hit theaters on Sept. 7, 2012. The release date was moved back after the theater shooting in Aurora, Colo., in July. At that time, all trailers were pulled from the internet and the two stars, and Warner Bros. chose to reshoot certain scenes.

The film stars Josh Brolin as Sgt. John O’Mara, Sean Penn as Mickey Cohen, Ryan Gosling as Sgt. Jerry Wooters and Emma Stone as Grace Faraday. It is set in Los Angeles in 1949. Directed by Ruben Fleischer, the film is based on a true story about mob king Mickey Cohen, who holds power in both the legal and illegal circles of LA.

Chief Bill Parker (Nick Nolte), the head of the Los Angeles Police Department, puts O’Mara in charge of an undercover unit with the sole objective of stopping Cohen and his mob. O’Mara’s wife, Connie (Mireille Enos), helps put together a unit of six men who call themselves the Gangster Squad.

The film tells the true story of the victory and heartache that these vigilantes experience as they struggle to serve justice to Cohen.

In the opening scene, Cohen is shown standing over a man whose arms and legs are chained to two pickup trucks. At Cohen’s signal, the trucks accelerate in opposite directions and rip the man apart. This is the first of many violent scenes of the movie that keep it moving fast. With fewer action scenes, the film would have little substance. The character development is the weakest aspect of “Gangster Squad.” Viewers struggle to understand why characters behave the way they do, and because there are so many violent scenes, the dialogue is lacking as well. For example, both O’Mara and Wooters are war veterans, which isn’t manifested in their decisions and actions. Did Wooters’ war experience have anything to do with his initial refusal of the job? Why did O’Mara and Wooters become cops? Was their bond due to shared experiences? These questions are left unanswered.

The weakest character is Grace Faraday. She is portrayed as no more than a damsel in distress. Her historical character is Cohen’s lover, a woman kept around to look pretty, and her theatrical character serves a similar function.

Faraday is in the film to look nice and add a few romance scenes. Stone and Gosling worked well together in “Crazy, Stupid, Love,” but in “Gangster Squad” their interactions are awkward.

There are better crime films available, but “Gangster Squad” is worth watching, even simply as an educational representation of the power struggle in post-WWII LA.

Rating: ★★★

‘Zero Dark Thirty’ is realistic and convincing

MOVIE REVIEW
BY MERIDEL WEITZ

Although “Zero Dark Thirty” is classified as a military thriller, the majority of the movie is focused around the office drama that the characters experience throughout the movie. The action arrives at the end of the movie when a helicopter crashes, troops search the house, bin Laden is killed and bombs are set to explode. Even this serious moment is lightened by the playful banter among the special forces unit assigned to the mission as they keep themselves levelheaded by making jokes about their mission.

Director Kathryn Bigelow takes a realistic approach to her characters and their story line. Intelligence work is not always glamorous, and Maya is a believable character. She wears down and becomes agitated when her work is ignored. Even though torture is difficult for her to deal with at first, she refuses to help a detainee and advises that he tell what he knows. She fights to be noticed and believed by her superiors, and this persistence pays off in the end.

Although not the action-packed thriller some hoped for, “Zero Dark Thirty” is strong. With Bigelow’s focus on the facts and realistic storyline, it is an interesting and convincing film.

Rating: ★★★★

‘LONG.LIVE.A$AP’ is disappointing

ALBUM REVIEW
BY TOM WESTERHOLM

A$AP Rocky’s debut studio album, the highly anticipated “LONG.LIVE.A$AP,” is both technically fantastic and eminently disappointing. The good: A$AP’s vocals flip effortlessly between normal and effected, and his minimalist beats bang the most accessible Odd Future tracks. And although most of A$AP’s guest musicians make sense (Drake, Kendrick Lamar and 2 Chainz all make appearances), the more experimental artists work just as well. A$AP’s flexible flow can even speed up and slow down appropriately to match dub-step artist Skrillex on “Wild For the Night.” On a musical level, “LONG.LIVE.A$AP” is a roaring success.

And this technical brilliance is what makes “LONG.LIVE.A$AP” so disappointing. Because although A$AP’s music will make listeners nod their heads, the lyrical content is shallow like a kiddie pool.

“I said it must be cause a n**** got dough/ If the monks hadn’t come out and dragged him in, we would have had a frozen block of Luther.”

- Professor Mike Kugler on the practices of native Tahitians.

“Poor: ★ ★ ★ ★

Fair: ★ ★ ★

Good: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Excellent: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Classic: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

There are better crime films available, but ‘Gangster Squad’ is worth watching, even simply as an educational representation of the power struggle in post-WWII LA.

Rating: ★★★

It’s a form of hospitality. ‘Come in, sit down. Would you like a cold drink?’ Sleep with my daughter maybe?”

- Professor Mike Kagler on the practices of native Tahitians.

“If the monks hadn’t come out and dragged him in, we would have had a frozen block of Luther.”

- Professor Milch Kinsinger on the subject of Martin Luther.

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Students travel to Holy Land

Two professors and 14 Northwestern students spent 18 days traveling in Israel during Christmas break. Throughout their journey, they visited many cities and landmarks such as Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, the Sea of Galilee and the Mount of Olives.

Captions by Katie Krebs, Photos Submitted

Experiencing the people and culture of Israel was a rewarding part of the trip for juniors Zach Wittenberg(right) and Mike Mabee(left). “I feel that the country of Israel as a whole, bucks the stereotype that we place most Middle Eastern countries in,” Wittenberg said. “It is similar to many of the American cities we are accustomed to.” However, there is still turmoil within the country. “All these people wanted to do was tell us their stories so that we can share it with others,” Wittenberg said. “They understand that we are the generation that can now make a difference, and they want us informed of the issues.”

The Dome of the Rock (right) is a Muslim shrine. Believed to be the site from which Muhammad ascended to heaven. Students were able to experience the Dome of the Rock but were not allowed to bring Bibles or other Christian objects in. “The fact that Scripture was not allowed there seemed imposing at first, but God cannot be held at bay by metal detectors,” said senior Jeffrey Hubers. “Our God is everywhere, even where Bibles are not allowed and public prayer is discouraged.”

The Acacia Tree (left) is found in desert regions of Israel. Standing on the Mount of Olives, the students saw these trees while looking over the city of Jerusalem. The Acacia Tree is also known as the thorn tree. According to senior Leslie Stover, “An Acacia tree with thorns may have been the type of branch that the crown of thorns was made of.”

Visiting the Sea of Galilee was a highlight for senior Adam Van Der Stoep (above). By standing in the same spot Jesus once stood, he was able to feel just how human Jesus once was. Although he witnessed the presence of God during his time abroad, “You don’t need to go all the way to Israel to encounter God,” Van Der Stoep said. “No amount of miles or uncertainty can keep Him from trying to show you how much He loves you through the Savior of the world, His only son, Jesus.”
Features

Pendell leaves Northwestern to pursue calling

FROM PAGE 1

Life in the monastery can become repetitive. The typical day at The Order of Julian starts at 3:30 a.m. and ends at 7 p.m. It is tradition to wake up early to pray in the silent morning hours.

The day consists of silent prayer, eating, recreation, work and spiritual readings. There are also many activities that the community does during recreational time.

“I asked a nun what they did for fun, and she told me that one activity they did was read ‘Pride and Prejudice’ as a group. They also talk, knit and play games,” Pendell said.

The monastery tends a garden, and the community works together to make homemade meals. Pendell said he enjoys the peace and tranquility that surrounds the people there.

“I found that after a day or two, the silence is very natural and peaceful,” he said.

The community meets several times a day to chant Psalms. Life in the monastery centers on prayer and meditation.

When entering the monastery there are vows that Pendell will have to make. There is a vow of chastity, obedience and continual prayer.

“You commit to following the rules the way everyone else does,” Pendell said. “The vow of chastity brings loneliness. It just comes with the territory. The value is being completely available to serve God without distraction.”

Hospitality is a key element and goal of the monastery. Visitors may stay whenever they please and the community hosts many retreats.

The monastery has internet access, but Pendell will not be able to use it his first year.

“I am looking forward to this experience and not being able to use the internet. I have never lived without it. It will be interesting to know what that will be like.”

Pendell said he plans to leave NW in February to spend time with his family before entering the monastery in the beginning of April. Although many changes will be taking place in his life, he says he is confident in his decision.

“I see it as a time to seek God regarding what I should do with my life. I think this might be the way. If it’s not, this isn’t a bad way to spend my time. Questions I have now can only be answered by trying it.”

Tennis team rallies back, adds players

BY KAITLIN FLOERCHINGER

In its fifth year after an absence of six, the Northwestern women’s tennis team is up and practicing but with a catch: anyone interested is welcome to come along for the ride.

The Raiders tennis squad entered the year with eight members, but a series of events has dropped the roster to five.

“We need six to play,” said coach Jeff Guthmiller.

“Really put us in kind of a bind.”

Tennis players are uncommon in Northwest Iowa, and recruiting can be difficult. The loss of three players prior to the spring semester added to that difficulty. An email was sent out to the female population on campus to invite anyone with past experience or any desire to play to try out for the team.

One of those five remaining players is sophomore Hannah Stark, who has been playing since eighth grade.

“I decided on NW tennis mainly because I loved the school, and being able to play tennis was a major bonus,” she said. “The program was small, but I was interested in being able to continue my love of tennis after high school.”

Stark and the other members of the program were recruited in by coach Guthmiller, who returned to the helm after the termination and renewal of the program.

“When I came back into coaching again this time,” Guthmiller said, “I said I would only come back if I made it a priority to try to bring tennis players to NW for the program, much like other sports do.”

A couple of factors contributed to the termination of the program in the first place. One factor was the lack of facilities. NW’s program uses the city’s tennis courts, and they were in bad condition.

“Anywhere” includes all the GPAC schools, besides Dordt and Briar Cliff. The tennis team travels around the conference, as well as up to the Minneapolis area and into Des Moines, to play between 17 and 22 matches per season. Also, every other year the team takes a spring break trip; this past season, the Raiders headed to California for a tournament. No trip will be...
I have decided to be undecided

Ever since I was little I’ve been asked the question, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” As a college student, this question has been replaced with: “What are you majoring in?” My answer is the same: I don’t know.

Sound familiar? Yes.

No problem—it’s perfectly okay not to know what you want to do with your life. Think of it this way: you’ll get to explore classes and other areas of study that people who have chosen a major won’t be able to. These students are stuck with taking specific classes unless somewhere along the way they decide they want to change. As a freshman without a major, you will become a well-rounded student. You will have more choices and more diverse experiences. Also, if you don’t like a class you are taking or if you decide it isn’t for you, you can drop it, check it off your list and move on to the next area of study you’re interested in.

For me, being undecided has been a little frustrating. I would love to know what I want to do with my life. I don’t like not knowing or not being able to answer that million dollar question everyone seems to be asking—especially when others seem to be able to answer it so well. However, I like being free to explore different classes, see my options and try something new. If it isn’t for me, it’s nice to know that I didn’t throw off my entire “four-year plan.” I can look at the other possibilities. Also, as a freshman I still have another year to decide. I can take all my general education classes, first so there isn’t really a rush to choose a major just yet. Whether you’re a freshman just starting out or a sophomore that’s hesitant about that next step, remember to enjoy the ability to explore. And if someone asks you that question, flash them a smile and answer, “I’ve decided to be undecided.”

Northwestern should accept religious diversity

BY JASMINE SMITH

What is an identity? Is the definition attributed to an individual’s nationality, major or hobbies? I believe most people on Northwestern’s campus would say that an individual’s identity lies in their Christian relationship with God. Expression of this relationship appears in classrooms, chapel and campus organizations. From a “Hello” in passing, to a small “How are you?” at the Hub, Northwestern is no stranger to hospitality. With the majority of campus claiming their identity in God and accrediting their smiles and community to Christ, I ask about those who do not place their identity in the Trinity. Left as a minority, students who do not claim Christ as an aspect of their identity are afraid to proclaim an important aspect of themselves: their faith.

Fear of condemnation, aggressive conversations and rejection from new friends and professors leave students feeling alone. Regardless of this fear, I know that NW’s compassion allows us the capacity to eliminate this fear among students of other faiths. Thus, I will shed my own fear and openly say: I am a Muslim.

Though I welcome any questions regarding my conversion, this article’s purpose is not to discuss my religious convictions. This article, hopefully, challenges students to ask themselves a few important questions: How much do I know about my neighbors’ faiths? Do I assume that all students on this campus are Christians? Do I assume that all international students are not Christians?

When knowledge is based off of stereotypes, skewed media and assumptions, willful ignorance leads to a sense of pride that is quick to condemn and results in hurtful relationships. It is wonderful and truly amazing to be part of this Christian institution, but this is also a Liberal Arts institution. When a high school student was asked about her thoughts on NW being a Liberal Arts college during scholarship day interviews, her reply was simple: “It allows us to relate and have smart conversations.”

So as I depart for Oman, I challenge this campus to appreciate friendship, be slow to anger and help create an understanding community where no one should be afraid to say, “I am... me.”

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Sports

Fast start propels NW to 88-77 win

BY MICHAEL SIMMELINK
SPORTS EDITOR

Senior Ben Miller was the hero against Briar Cliff earlier in the season when he hit a shot in the final moments to force overtime and then made the game winner in the extra period. This time around, he was heroic for an entire game.

Miller scored 24 as No. 8 Northwestern defeated Briar Cliff 88-77 on Wednesday night in Orange City. The conference win pushes the Raiders to 10-3 in the GPAC and 16-5 overall. They are currently half a game behind No. 12 Dordt for the conference lead.

The crowd was loud and set an imposing atmosphere before the ball was even thrown up for the tip-off. The Raiders capitalized on that emotion and went up 5-0 quickly with junior Zack Leeper’s free throws and a three-pointer on their first possessions. They did not trail the Chargers all night.

Solid rebounding and defense led to easy baskets to put NW up by as much as 13 with 11:58 left in the first half.

The lead remained steady, and NW was comfortably up 49-37 at the intermission.

The second half was more of the same for both squads. The Raiders continued to find driving lanes to the basket. When they weren’t able to finish their close attempts, a trip to the free-throw line usually resulted.

“It’s been the focus during practice to find the open guys and get to the hole,” freshman forward Bryce Moss said. “Either we get fouled and go to the line or put it in (the hoop) while drawing some contact.”

Briar Cliff continued to try and shoot themselves out of the slump, but many forced shots and turnovers later, NW held an 18-point advantage with 11:58 left.

The Chargers seemed to have given up on the game and took out their starters soon after. The substitutes worked to keep the game within reach, and the Raiders’ comfortable margin had dwindled to eight points with 4:07 left.

Head coach Kris Korver kept his main rotation in, especially in the second half, to get their points. They did not trail the Chargers all night, and he will get things done when they need to get done for us.”

Vander Plaats shot 70 percent from the field and scored 17. Leeper and Goslinga had 16 and 10 points, respectively.

The Raiders did not rely on three-point shooting, especially in the second half, to get their points. They attempted only eight all game. Instead they shot 51 percent from the floor and earned 35 trips to the free-throw line. NW shot 86 percent on its free throws.

Junior Zack Leeper goes up on the block in Wednesday night’s game against Briar Cliff. Leeper had 16 points in the win.

Three Raiders place in Mo. Valley meet

BY JORDAN DYKSTRA & MICHAEL SIMMELINK

The Red Raider wrestling team traveled to Marshall, Mo., on Saturday to participate in the Missouri Valley Invite.

Three Raiders placed in the tournament.

Freshman Tyler McWilliams placed fifth in the 133-pound weight class, sophomore Zach Leeper placed fourth in the 165-pound weight class and freshman Lupe Florez finished second in the 125-pound weight class.

With 10 colleges participating in the tournament, the Missouri Valley Invite provided stiff competition for the Red Raider squad.

Missouri Baptist University, Oklahoma City University, Campbellsville University and the University of the Cumberlands were among the schools present.

“It was a difficult meet to place in because of the strong competition, so placing three guys was a success for us,” Fishman said.

Florez, who placed second in the 125-pound weight class, participated in his first collegiate tournament.

“For being his first one, it was great seeing Lupe have the success that he did,” Fishman said.

Much of the squad also spent Saturday wrestling at the Worthington Open at Worthington, Minn.

The meet attracted many NCAA redshirted wrestlers, making the match-up tough for the Raiders.

No Raider placed in the top five at the tournament.

Part of every squad’s battle to get back into shape after the lay-off over Christmas break. NW is no different.

It is very important to be conditioning as hard as we can to get into top shape for these next upcoming and pivotal meets,” Fishman said. “It starts this Saturday here in our duel against Hastings.”

The Raiders return to action against conference rival Hastings at 9 a.m. Saturday at the Bultman Center. Waldorf and Dickinson State will also be at the tournament.

Huseman wins; Giddings among notable performers

BY KORAY KARAKAS

The Northwestern track and field team headed to Ames last Friday to compete in the two-day Iowa State Open. The Red Raiders held their own against tough competition from almost 40 teams, including 16 from NCAA Division I. The Raiders were joined by several other teams from out of the GPAC, including Briar Cliff, Morningside and Dakota Wesleyan.

The Raiders were competing in just their second event of the year in Ames, after competing at the Dordt Open the previous weekend. Sophomore Katiein Floerchinger and junior Kyle Heidebrink met the NAIA NAIA standard.

Hammack has been in the Raider track program since he was 3 years old.

“It is very important to get back into shape after the lay-off over Christmas break. NW is no different. It is to get back into shape after the lay-off over Christmas break. NW is no different.”

The national qualifying meet is quickly approaching on Feb. 16.

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NW will make the drive to Hastings, Neb., on Saturday to battle with the No. 25 Broncos. The game will start at 4 p.m.

“McWilliams was a great opportunity to run against top-notch competition and for us to push ourselves to be better.”

Much of the squad also took exceptional care of the basketball on their home court, only coughing it up eight times all game.

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“McWilliams was a great opportunity to run against top-notch competition and for us to push ourselves to be better.”

Hammack has been in the Raider track program since he joined the school as a freshman and has seen the transition of the Raider program during that time.

“The team this year has grown a lot – not only in number but also in the depth of the talent we now have,” Hammack said. “We are able to compete and make it up onto the podium in every event, and that is something that has never been done in Raider history. We also have a tight-knit group of people that encourages one another and provides a family-type environment that motivates each other to continue to better themselves. Our team can only get better from here.”

The Raiders will attempt to continue their good run of form as they head into their next meet at the Buena Vista Open in Storm Lake this weekend.

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Student teachers experience reaction to Sandy Hook

JULIA LANTZ

Like many other educational facilities, MDC has increased security in response to the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

The tragedy, which occurred in Newtown, Conn., took the lives of 20 students and six adults. It has spurred an increase in security and changes in school policies across the nation.

The NorthWestern students who are student teaching this semester have witnessed how the second-deadliest school shooting in U.S. history has affected their schools.

For student teacher Jennifer Jansen, new policies at her school in Salem, Ore., have already been arranged.

“Teachers have been given information regarding fire drills, lockdowns and emergency procedures,” Jansen said.

Upon her arrival, Jansen was educated about her school’s three-stage lockdown policy. According to Jansen, each stage is code for a different scenario, and teachers have been trained to act accordingly for each stage. The teachers and students know which scenario they are in once the administration announces it on the intercom.

“We actually had a lockdown just the other day,” Jansen said.

For student teacher Logan Smith, changes at her school in Roanoke, Va., are still in the works. At a recent meeting, teachers were informed that plans have been made to install a security camera in the lobby, a visitor bell at the entrance of the school and 30 new classroom doors.

“Teachers are encouraged to have their cellphones on them at all times,” Smith said. Likewise, student teacher Anna McCleary has seen an increase in security at her school, Bondurant-Farrar Middle School in Bondurant, Iowa.

“Before, many of the doors were unlocked during the day, and visitors could come in any of them,” McCleary said. “Recently, all but one door has been locked, and all visitors must now enter through that door only.”

McCleary said these changes have stirred up gossip among her students.

“There was a rumor among the students that there would be an intruder drill,” McCleary said. “No such drill was scheduled, but this prompted an email for teachers to share with students what should be done in case of an intruder.”

McCleary recalled her initial thoughts concerning the Sandy Hook tragedy.

“My initial reaction was to think how I would respond in a similar situation,” McCleary said. “The story of the teacher that hid her students in a closet and told the gunman that they were in the gym really stood out to me.”

Jansen was at her cousin’s house when she first heard the news.

“My cousin is a high school sign language teacher in Riverside, Calif. and when she read the article, she started bawling,” Jansen said.

Later, McCleary reflected on what, if anything, could have been done.

“We are taught general security policies, but there is no way to really prepare anyone for a situation like what happened at Sandy Hook,” McCleary said. “Our principal said if teachers would ever be required to carry a gun, he would quit his job.”