Romney to rally at NW

BY TYLER LEHMANN
FEATURES CO-EDITOR

A campaign rally for Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney Friday at Northwestern College sparked criticism from campus members claiming the institution's hosting implied a political endorsement.

"We're part of a sales campaign for Romney, and I have a problem with that," said John Hubers, instructor in religion.

Hubers first shared his criticism via a faculty listserv in reply to an email from NW's administration encouraging professors to consider canceling their Friday morning classes.

"I cannot get past the fact that this rally will be a tacit endorsement of the Republican party and the Romney candidacy," Hubers said.

NW's administration, however, refuted claims that the institution endorsed Romney by hosting the rally.

"This is absolutely not an endorsement of Mitt Romney," said NW President Greg Christy. "That would be totally inappropriate to endorse any candidate as a college, and we're not."

The administration justified the decision to host the rally because of the presumed educational value of the event.

"One of our values as a Reformed institution is that we want our students to be engaged in the world, which includes being engaged in politics," Christy said.

Hubers, however, questioned the ethics of political events hosted at educational institutions.

"It's not simply a chance to meet a candidate," he said. "Your very presence at the rally bolsters support for him. It's a rah-rah for the Republican party. That brought home to me there's an issue here."

The Romney campaign defended the rally at NW as a common political practice.

"Both parties host at educational institutions," said Romney's communications director in Iowa, Scott McCoy.

Hubers said he thinks the rally at NW might have been part of an effort by the Romney campaign to court the evangelical vote. For many evangelicals, Romney's Mormon faith is a sensitive topic.

I think the subtext behind this rally is that Romney can say, "Look, here are evangelicals supporting me,"" Hubers said.

NW was recommended as a host site for the rally by a Romney campaign official in Des Moines, according to Christy.

Senior political science major Connor Knutsen said he thinks the Romney campaign might have targeted NW for the rally as part of an attempt to connect with young voters, much as Obama did in the 2008 election.

"We're the swing voters in the swing state," Knutsen said.

Knutsen said he thinks NW's agreement to host the rally is less about endorsing a candidate and more about promoting the college.

"It's definitely a publicity stunt of sorts," he said. "It will display the campus as a progressive, involved institution that cares about today's culture. It will put the college more on the map."

Besides directing national media attention to the college, NW's agreement to host the rally likely gratified its predominantly conservative donors, according to Jeffrey VanDerWerff, professor of political science.

Hubers conceded the rally's value as a public relations opportunity for NW even though he disapproves of the event.

"Students should be aware that this is a promotional event, and everything is painstakingly choreographed," Hubers said.

"The Romney campaign knows this rally needs to be like a rock concert. The whole purpose is to draw people into the experience and become one with Romney's purpose," Knutsen stressed the need for students to examine the facts behind each individual issue instead of defaulting to political ideology.

"You need to take these speeches with a grain of salt," he said. "Ask if his beliefs are what you want. Be analytical of what he says."

Matt Erikson, a senior double majoring in political science and religion, suggested that students avoid political shouting matches by refraining from buzzwords, which he said include words like "greed" and "socialism."

"These kinds of words are good for getting people riled up, but they aren't good for being civil with each other," Erikson said.

The rally's potential to spur political discussion among the student body is its redeeming feature in Hubers' opinion.

"Unless a conversation ensues afterward, I'm not sure that any education will have really happened. The point of a rally is to prevent critical thinking and just keep people cheering," Hubers said.

Critical thinking, though, is just what Christy said he hopes Romney's rally will promote among students.

"I'm not interested in telling students to favor Democrats or Republicans. I just like to see our students engaged in the political process," Christy said.
Arts & Culture

Kinsinger earns finalist spot as a model

BY JEFF HUBERS

Neither was this the case for Northwestern senior Graham Kinsinger. Yet currently, he sits in third place in an online contest hosted by American Eagle that began this summer.

American Eagle started the contest as part of a jean campaign for the coming spring, in hopes of finding new models to sport its apparel, especially its various styles of jeans.

"Nudged by my girlfriend, I figured I might as well," Kinsinger said when asked how he got into the modeling business.

The contest spanned four weeks, with one finalist emerging from each week. Each style category narrowed down their search to four candidates.

Based on the profile he created, Kinsinger was selected as the week-three finalist in the "boot cut" category determined by the public vote.

"I didn't go crazy promoting the project; I felt a little sheepish about the fact that it was a modeling campaign," Kinsinger said.

Despite a lack of self-promotion, Kinsinger made it into the final three for his category. The American Eagle website is tallying votes and will release the winning models sometime in the near future.

Over the course of the voting, the website displayed the percentage of votes that each contestant was receiving. Kinsinger's percentage had him sitting in third place.

Kinsinger assumes this placement will be the final outcome, but the results are still pending.

Although final results have yet to go online, Kinsinger said he expects he will come in third overall in the "bootcut" division.

"The top two guys made use of a marketing tactic that I failed to utilize—shirtless pictures," Kinsinger said.

Kinsinger is not hurt by his standing; his attitude toward the contest was purely recreational.

"I wasn't "pouring his everything into this"—just one of those random occurrences in which one says, "I'll give it a shot.""

"I never suspected I would come anywhere near where I did," Kinsinger said. "I'm not hurt by a third place finish."

"People will be happy to know that I'm still working towards completing my college degree," he said.

"My career options aren't ruined if I don't finish first in an American Eagle modeling contest."

Animal Collective creates weird new sounds

ALBUM REVIEW

BY MATT LATCHAW

Right now, thousands of giant radio telescopes all over the globe are constantly watching for signs of life elsewhere in the universe.

At the same time, countless radio stations all over the globe are broadcasting the diverse sounds of thousands of different types of music on hundreds of radio frequencies at all times.

Imagine that an alien civilization were searching for signs of intelligent life in the same way we are.

This is what Animal Collective's "Centipede Hz" (that's Hertz) sounds like. In fact, the concept is one of the influences of the album.

Even the album art represents the garbled overload in the modern music world. Now, try to imagine that some outgoing punk extraterrestrials tried to recreate some of the music they heard.

These alien hipsters must have picked up transmissions of quirky and original yet popular bands of the last 10 years, such as MGMT, Radiohead, The Flaming Lips, Vampire Weekend, Sleigh Bells and even Coldplay.

In addition, there must have been an '80s station aimed directly at this group of music pioneers. Fans of bands such as Depeche Mode, Talk Talk and Pink Floyd would recognize familiar styles in this album.

All comparisons aside, Animal Collective has been continually concocting its own sound for 13 years and across nine studio albums. The band has been lauded for its psychedelic yet organic and fluid experimental sounds. Old fans will not be disappointed with this offering, and new listeners might be attracted to this album's more straightforward rock sound.

This follow-up to the acclaimed "Merriweather Post Pavilion" keeps the electronic feel of the previous album, but the meandering, ambient feel of many of the band's previous works has been traded in for a more internally consistent, directed and intentional feel throughout the album.

The whole experience is held together by the sounds of radio announcers, interference and ethereal sounds jumbled together and fading in and out between each song.

The first listen of the new album is difficult. New sounds along with a unique and chaotic instrumentation and a questionable mix of each sonic voice at the same level in the foreground make for a difficult album to listen to. Driving drums, whirring synth and swirling vocals create an overwhelming wall of sound, with textured sounds that become almost cacophonous, making it impossible to listen to in the background—it demands the listener's attention.

However, further and more careful listeners will reveal a very detailed, deep and skilled arrangement.

The rest of the album calms down with a more traditional electronic style with an anthem-like delivery. Consistent yet repetitive sounds in each song remain interesting and engaging as each song has a very unique and separate feel.

The whole album displays a youthful, wide-eyed innocence and outright disregard for the expectations and rules, but the performance still manages to remain skilled and purposeful.

The band has continued to refine its sound, and it's unlikely it will begin to slow down or settle in any time soon.

Rating: ★★★

Key Tracks: "Today's Supernatural," "Moonjock"
NW grad creates museum-like photo exhibit

BY KATI HENG
A&F EDITOR

Ryan Stander’s art exhibit, “Objective Subjects,” now open in the Te Paske Gallery, contains hundreds of antique photographs. So many, in fact, visitors can spend hours in the gallery and never see them all.

“The exhibition came together from a couple different threads,” Stander, an Alton native who received his undergraduate degree in art from Northwestern College, said.

One of those threads originated in a flea market.

“There was a box with old photographs for sale,” Stander said. “In my family, photographs are precious; you wouldn’t put them up for sale. I worried why these people would be selling their memories.”

While at seminary following graduation, Stander thought deeply about memories, experiences and how each shape the way we interpret the world, our lives and the Bible.

He was influenced further while working as a photographer on the site of an archeological dig, taking photos of pieces of pottery and other objects.

“I saw thousands of objects put into trays with these cards full of coded information,” Stander said.

For his exhibit, Stander attempted to recreate that sterile museum environment, contrasting it with photos of families, children, pets and other scenes bursting with life.

Most of the photos featured in "Objective Subjects" were purchased off of eBay, often sold by the hundred or the thousand. Sometimes, though, Stander would buy a single photo by itself.

“I might buy it because of the subject matter, or if the photo was developed with a rare process,” Stander said. “For instance, in the 1860s and 1870s, photos were developed onto glass rather than onto paper.”

When a purchased box of photos arrives in the mail, Stander begins by thumbing through the photographs.

“It’s kind of like getting a package of baseball cards,” Stander said. “You never know what’s going to be inside.”

From there, he begins sorting the photographs into different themed trays, such as “Pets,” “Marriage Photos” and “Women in Dresses.”

“A majority of the photos go into a large bin for the big sorting trays you’ll find in the exhibit,” Stander said. “Then there are some I’ll pull out because they are so unique. I keep those for myself; they don’t go into any collection or exhibit.”

Although sellers on eBay will often advertise that their photos can be used for art, Stander doubts if any of the sellers know their photos are being featured in galleries, sorted through by hundreds of visitors.

“There is one buyer whom I bought thousands of photos from that I talked to,” Stander said. “I tried to explain to him what I was doing with the photographs, but he seemed more interested in selling to me than in hearing about my exhibit.”

Stander has never had a visitor recognize a photograph or a person in one, but he does wonder what their reaction would be if that ever occurred.

“I have wondered if they would be upset,” Stander said. “I figure, once you buy something on eBay, it’s yours, so I think I’m allowed to do what I want with them.”

At the Grand Forks opening of his exhibit, audience members were kept from touching any photographs — even those teasingly placed into sorting racks or trays.

“I wanted to mimic a museum, where common visitors don’t get to touch the objects,” Stander said.

For the show at NW, Stander was wondering how to make the photo exhibit more participatory.

“I decided to put them out at NW and see what would happen,” Stander said. “When I showed up at the gallery opening, people were already looking through trays, sorting through the photographs. It was fun to see people shoulder-to-shoulder digging through the photos.”

To see the photos, visit Stander’s exhibit on the fourth floor of the Te Paske Gallery of the Korver Visual Arts Center, open now through Sept. 20.

The Expendables 2 underwhelms

MOVIE REVIEW

BY MICHAEL GUTSCHE

“The Expendables 2” is an aggressively okay movie. It’s not good, but it’s not awful either, which makes it the worst kind of blockbuster forgettable.

It follows a slightly revised cast of the first film, a group of mercenaries, brought back together to do another “easy” job by a CIA agent known as Chariz.

Things go wrong, one of them dies, they swear revenge and then the movie turns into a bunch of old action stars as they fall about “behind enemy lines,” shoot up half of Russia and blow up another third.

It should be conceded that at least the movie is fairly explicit about what the viewer is going to get out of it.

Whether that is something worthwhile is up for debate, and while it isn’t terrible, it certainly isn’t the best giant-cast explosion extravaganza in the last year.

Technically, the movie is mediocre-to-good. The effects and composition are sub-par at worst, but occasionally fine, despite having a relatively bland color palette, things still manage to be obscured an unfortunate amount.

The writing is simultaneously trite and convoluted. The score is lacking. However, theoretically, neither of those things would be important to a movie like this. The action and pacing are underwhelming, which is unfortunate since these are probably the two most important elements in an action movie.

Like the previous film in the probably-going-to-be-a-franchise, it poke fun at the kind of ridiculous action blockbusters that got started in Hollywood about twenty years ago, and it does so in a way that might work: by using the same actors that star in those sorts of movies.

It should work, but it really doesn’t. This movie is aiming to simultaneously satirize and memorialize these sort of movies. To act in a send-up of themselves is an admirable thing for these actors, but they don’t deliver something that’s actually worth watching.

Unlike, for example, “Shoot Em Up,” which satisﬁes action movies by deconstructing the genre. “The Expendables 2” makes tired jokes and blunt observations about these sorts of ﬁlms, and while there are pieces that work, it does not achieve any real greatness. Mediocrity remains the word of choice. Maybe that’s the wait for the DVD release, rent it and watch it with a crowd at some kind of informal gathering.

Rating: ★★

“Campus Quotes”

“So this teacher ran away with her 8th grade student...”
- Senior Elisa Banninga, presenting in class.

“It happens.”
- English Professor Ann Lundberg.

“I’m here because I’ve never seen potato heads having sex before.”
- Randy Van Peursen while sitting in on a genetics lab.

“I should give you an education for free, not prostitute myself for base coin.”
- Professor Lundberg on Sophism.

Send your Campus Quotes, with context, to beacon@mwc.edu or submit via twitter, at #mwcbeacon
Student hands reach around the world

Northwestern’s Summer of Service program allows students to experience different cultures both around the world and within the United States. This summer 21 students took advantage of this opportunity by serving in 11 countries and two states.

Serving in Louisiana, senior Brianna Hobbs faced several struggles the first few weeks she was in New Orleans. Hobbs said, “I really struggled with spiritual warfare. I was tired all the time, and Satan dragged me down so much that I did not like it the first few weeks. I had a breakdown where God showed me my selfishness. So many people had told me that this would be the best summer of my life, and so I asked, ‘Why, God, am I not loving this?’ He showed me my selfishness because I went down there thinking that my relationship with Him would grow so much. He opened my eyes to show me that this town needs to know Him too. I realized this summer is not about me and my relationship but about showing people about Him.”

Upon arriving in Malawi, junior Kate Koster’s first thought was “What am I doing?” Through her work in a surgical ward at a hospital, she found an answer to this question. Koster said, “Ending up in the surgical ward turned out to be a huge blessing. Before I went on the trip, I always knew I wanted to do nursing, but after this summer, I really fell in love with nursing in a third-world country. This just reaffirmed what I felt God calling me to do in pursing nursing and mission work.”

In Athens, Greece, seniors Lindsey Boulaia and Charissa Thornton worked with refugees from Persia, Iran and Afghanistan. They served meals, taught English and built relationships. One thing Boulaia said she will miss most about Greece is the people: “I spent a lot of time with two little boys. I would spend three to four days a week with them. They were so joyful and would give me hugs. We couldn’t speak a whole lot because of the language barrier, but we would play games and dance. They beat me in chess a lot. One day, they thought it would be funny to call me Barbie all day… I really miss the people, and I miss the community. I miss being surrounded by people of different generations. They just love so deeply.”

Juniors Jessica White (fifth from left) and Jackie Niewenhuis (third from left) journeyed to Indonesia. There, they lived with Muslim families and took language classes. White was most impacted after attending a Muslim worship service in a nearby village. White said, “When we were at a worship service, there was a little girl who knew all the words and drum instruments. I noticed that the women around us singing had no joy; their eyes were just dead. There was no joy in their worship; it was just lifeless. The reality sunk in that this little girl will grow up to be like these women if nothing happens… I guess it was the week in the village that made me realize why I was there at that time. Hundreds of language groups haven’t heard the gospel and don’t have anyone working to translate Bibles for them. There’s work to be done.”

Senior Ignacio Reatiga (pictured right) worked in the Basque Country in Spain. One day at lunch with Spaniard friends, he had a conversation. Reatiga said, “My friends told me they didn’t believe in God. I asked why. They said because He hasn’t done anything for them. Since they live in a rich country, they have everything they need. They don’t feel the need to believe in God because everything they have, they’ve worked for. They believe that God hasn’t done anything for them. It opened my eyes to a new way of seeing things. In a poor country, people believe in God because they don’t have anything else. They trust in Him to give them their daily meal.”

Editor’s Note: The refugees Boulaia worked with were in Greece illegally and were running from extreme persecution for either their faith, being educated or speaking against the oppressive political systems in their home countries. Because of this, she was unable to take a lot of pictures and cannot submit any for publication.
Features

New kids on the block: freshmen first impressions

BY KATIE KREBS

Seven freshmen were asked about their first taste of Northwestern. Here are their responses.

What has been the biggest shock starting your new life at NW?

Potter: The homework and all the reading. I used to skim by and now I actually have to sit down and read in the library.

Johnson: My mom not feeding me every night.

Dykstra: Trying to learn how to take notes from different professors has been a challenge. They all have a different way of doing things.

Benda: It is ten times better than it was in high school. And we get to eat so much more.

Nelson: I mean, you can only look at so many hamburgers in a day.

What has been your best experience so far?

Johnson: Just getting to know everyone on the cross country team and everyone in the Suites.

Benda: Going on a donut run the night we moved in. I got a regular glazed donut.


Penning: Spending every waking moment with other people. Everyone is so fun and so nice.

What about the college experience has been different than your expectations?

Benda: The "community" feel. It feels like a family in Heemstra. Everyone is always willing to talk and hang out. It's been a very welcoming experience.

Dykstra: The college experience has been different than your expectations.

Penning: How close-knit everyone is. I wasn't expecting it to be like that.

Nelson: You walk a lot more stairs than I expected. I feel like all I do is walk stairs.

Stoessz: I wasn't expecting how friendly everyone is. Anyone is willing to stop and talk to you and its genuine.

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Opinion

Write us now, fools

BY JODI STAHL
OPINIONS EDITOR

The goal of the Beacon is to generate student voices at Northwestern College. Ideas circulate on campus each and every day between classes, in the Cafe and within dorms. The Beacon provides a constructive medium for those thoughts to be heard by people who can bring change.

I had the opportunity to read many newspapers as part of my summer internship. In my daily perusal of publications, I found letters to the editor to be honest and risky proposals to solve community problems.

This is what I am asking stakeholders of NW to do: Take that risk. Give us a glimpse of your viewpoint. Share your opinion.

A solution might not be found immediately, but bringing attention to your point of view can be a step in the right direction.

The Beacon encourages comments from readers and asks that submitted content be less than 300 words. Sign comments with a cell number, and turn them in to the Beacon office, located in the basement of the North Suites by Wednesday at 6 p.m.

Staff can be reached via email at beacon@nwc.iowa.edu. The Beacon reserves the right to edit all letters.

Beacon Abroad

Several students are studying off campus this semester. Beacon Abroad will be a regular column to let these students share their experiences, thoughts, comparisons and contrasts throughout their time away from the Northwestern College campus.

Full Name: Lyric Morris
Hometown: Oklahoma
Year: Sophomore
Academic Major: Art/Graphic Design
Location: Lüpeni, Romania
First Impression: “I think 'genuine' is a word that quickly comes to mind. The people, places and atmosphere just feel so authentic and charismatic. Also, the land is absolutely gorgeous. Today we saw the mountains from the turrets of a hilltop fortress; it was the most beautiful thing I've ever seen.”

Full Name: Leah Wielenberg
Hometown: Orange City
Year: Sophomore
Academic Major: Psychology
Location: Lüpeni, Romania
First Impression: “There's such a deep beauty to be seen in everything. Being opened up to the rich history of the country through exploring some of its castles and ruins has been incredibly intriguing. Lest we also forget, it's a rare moment in which we aren't surrounded by incredibly eating a grand burrito or quesadilla for the fifth lunch in a row, I usually have to settle for pizza or a burger, which I usually have for supper every day. Lack of variety makes my mealtimes surprisingly monotonous.

When I do find a dish that looks appealing, the wait usually just isn't worth it. Backing out of the lines is a common occurrence. Call it laziness, call it impatience—either way, I'm starving and just want a plate of food. Although I do appreciate the service and effort put forth by the Cafe workers, I can't help but think that I'm a college student and can make a plate of chicken and potatoes by myself. I'd kill to be able to make a plate of mostaccioli for myself, too, but I can't seem to find the noodles anywhere.

I realize part of this process is timing. Show up during the rush isn't the best idea, but some of us have no choice. I also realize this system is brand new (for everyone), but rethinking a few key aspects would go far in raising efficiency levels and overall satisfaction. Plus it'd be nice to get chocolate milk or a banana once in a while.

I'm a college student and can make a plate of chicken and potatoes by myself.”

BY KAITLIN FLOERCHINGER

It was a genuine concern for my friends and me—we wanted the new Cafe going to be open for the athletes that first week of practice. We wanted to be in the know before everyone else, find those creeping spots and pinpoint the best stations before the mad rush of everyone moving in started.

My teammates and I have been at school for nearly a month, compared to three weeks for the rest of the students, and I still can’t figure out the best spot to sit, much less where the pastas are. Sure, the new layout looks fantastic, but is it really as efficient as it could be?

Many times, I’ve caught myself scanning every station more than once and hoping a new, different dish will come out from behind the counter. The healthy food station always looks good, but being blessed with no allergies makes that section unavailable. Instead of
Previous success motivates NW

BY TOM WESTERHOLM

The Northwestern men’s soccer team enters its 2012 season with weighty expectations. After a successful 2011 campaign that included a 12-7-1 overall record, a 6-4 record in the GPAC and a trip to the conference semi-finals, the Raiders didn’t graduate a single player.

“Yeah, we have high expectations,” said head coach Dan Swier. “It’s an experienced group of players with a good freshman class. We definitely expect to equal our accomplishments from last year, and we hope to go beyond them.”

Some of the talented returning players include second-team All-GPAC senior forward Mario Garcia, as well as All-GPAC junior defenders Matt Dowie and Justin Lehman. According to junior midfielder Nick Hengst, an All-GPAC selection last year, the quality freshman class will pose one of the biggest difficulties NW will face this year.

“It’s going to be difficult to incorporate all of the talented freshmen that we have into the team,” Hengst, a team captain, said. “The coaching staff did a great job of bringing in quality freshman players. I think if we will just take a little bit of time to make sure that we are using each of them in the best possible way.”

The Raiders’ experience at goalkeeper, the Raiders expect to be a competitive squad once again this season because of their experience and talent.

“Having so many returning players makes the team chemistry and dynamic that much better,” Hengst said. “We have a very skilled and talented squad this year and we are full of potential, so to sit back and be complacent with our talents and abilities would be an incredible waste of a season. If we stay focused and determined through the good and bad times, we will be a very tough team to hang with this year.”

The Raiders travel to Arkansas this weekend for two nonconference matches.

Raiders return to heightened expectations

BY DALTON KELLEY

The Raider volleyball team looks to continue the trend of 25 straight seasons above .500 with a current record of 6-3.

The Raiders were picked third overall in the GPAC standings coming into this season.

Returning to the Raider front row after winning first-team all-conference honors in the 2011 season are seniors Jaci Moret and Jennie Jensen. They will bring upperclassmen leadership for the team. Other returning hitters include senior Heather Goehring, a three-year starter.

“This is a real steady group,” said head coach Kyle Van Den Bosch. “They practice hard, train hard and set a good example for the rest of the team.”

Also returning to the starting lineup this season is the dynamic junior middle hitter Megan Hutson who earned All-American honors last season.

Junior Jada Vander Veen, sophomores Katelyn Kragt and Emily Horstman, along with freshmen Karlie Schut and Haley Chambers provide depth up front in the Raider lineup.

Setting the pace for the team this year will be sophomore Kaitlin Floechinger, who earned second-team all-conference honors last year.

“She’s like the quarterback of the team,” Hutson said. “When she is on, the whole team is on.”

A new setter added to the team this year, freshman Madeline Hanno, will compete for court time.

Sophomore Alexis Bart returns as libero this year for the Raiders. Juniors Nicole Jacobs and Claire Roemer round out the back row and the starting lineup.

They will be looking to fill the hole left by senior Danie Floechinger, who injured her knee at last weekend’s tournament in California.

The Raiders say they aren’t daunted by things outside their control.

“We have to worry about playing the best we can and not about the score and always be encouraging,” Hutson said.

The Raiders next match-up will be tonight and tomorrow at the Eagle Invitational in Kansas City, Mo.

Red Raider football squad striving for playoffs

BY TOM WESTERHOLM

The No. 10 Northwestern football team ended its season in disappointing fashion last year by winning its final eight games but losing out on the playoffs once again thanks to early season failures against Doane and Morningside.

The Raiders finished ranked No. 17 nationally, one spot away from playoff contention. According to All-American senior running back Brandon Smith, the same mistakes won’t be repeated this year.

“I think we use it as motivation,” Smith said. “We found the past two seasons that even losing two games can leave you out of the playoffs. We need to treat every game as if it’s going to get into the playoffs because any slip could cost us.”

The Raiders will be returning many key players, including 10 offensive starters from last fall.

Smith will play his final season as a Raider in 2012, but the offense also returns junior quarterback Davis Bloemendaal and junior running back Theo Bartman, as well as senior wide receivers Tyler Walker and Eli Groenendyk. Four of the five offensive linemen from 2011 will protect the playmakers.

Aaron Jansen, an All-GPAC second team selection, will return for the defense at middle linebacker. All-American senior Jordan Carlson will anchor a defensive front that will let Jansen and the linebacker core make plays throughout the field.

“I think you’d see a team that brings it every single game,” Smith said. “We have a bunch of seniors and upperclassmen that have been playing for a long time and want this season to last a long time.”

That’s not to say the Raiders are top-heavy.

“Our depth is excellent,” said head coach Kyle Acherhoff. “We can play a lot of different players at nearly every position without much drop-off in talent. That should help us throughout an 11-game schedule.”

Acherhoff stressed the importance of staying focused on the task at hand, no matter what the standings say.

“I think it will be very important for us to stay focused on playing one game at a time,” Acherhoff said. “We can’t fall into the trap of looking ahead during the season.”

The Raiders are looking for postseason success this year, but for seniors, this season also represents the end of an era. Smith said he recognizes his special opportunity and plans to make the most of it.

“As a senior, every game is going to be memorable,” Smith said. “I couldn’t ask for a better group to play with.”

NW will open GPAC play this Saturday at national championship contender No. 7 Morningside at 7 p.m.

Where are all the sports?

The Beacon staff will cover all Northwestern sports throughout the year. To see how all Raider athletics are doing, even those not in the print edition, check us out online at beacon.nwciowa.edu.
Students react to Cafe makeover

BY GILLIAN ANDERSON

The highly anticipated “Extreme Makeover: Cafe Edition” took place over the summer. Many students are pleased with the final product.

“It is more aesthetically pleasing,” said senior Rachel Kosakowski. Sophomore Sara Vermeer agreed.

“It has a homier feel to it than the other Cafe did,” Vermeer said.

There have been some additions to the Cafe menu and changes in the way some of the food is made.

“We have added a new station which is allergy free food,” Chef BJ said. “It doesn’t have gluten, eggs or cheese. If you don’t need those accommodations there is another station that is serving the same food but with all the ingredients in it.”

The Cafe also has a new dessert bar.

“We now serve hot cookies every day for lunch instead of just on Wednesdays,” Chef BJ said.

The renovations and changes have evoked both positive and negative reactions from students.

“The food got better last semester and carried over to this year,” Kosakowski said.

A commonly mentioned downside about the Cafe is space.

“It took a lot of seating out,” Vermeer said.

Many students feel that the Cafe seems busier now.

“It is very ‘cubed’ and there are not as many defined directions,” said freshman Sarah Lardy.

With the new arrangement Cafe workers are busier.

“It gives the people who are working more to do,” said junior Natalie Church.

There has also been some discussion in the Cafe about whether or not students should be allowed to take food out of the Cafe.

“You can take a piece of fruit, and if you are finishing an ice cream cone on your way out we will let you leave with it. We just can’t let you take six apples up to your room,” Chef BJ said.

This rule seems fair to some students.

“Piece of fruit is enough. They used to not let us bring anything out,” said senior Aaron Jansen.

The pros and cons of the new Cafe will continue to be a topic of debate.

“I think when there is a change people are going to complain because it is something new they have to adjust to,” Kosakowski said.

RUSH participation down by 30 percent

Preparations for this year’s earlier-than-usual production of RUSH have already begun. Freshman Candra Penning, junior Maridel Weltz and sophomore Jami Koens auditioned for RUSH on Monday, Aug. 27.

BY SARA VAN GORP

Northwestern’s annual student dance performance, RUSH, which has been held in February for the past two years, will take place in September this year.

For many of the sophomores and juniors on campus, RUSH being held during the spring is all that they have ever known.

“The main reason for the switch is that it fits better in the theater schedule,” said RUSH stage manager, junior Amalia Vasquez. “It started in the fall and the past few years, when it was in the spring, were experimental years.”

The change has caused some students to rethink their involvement in the event. Last year 210 students participated in RUSH. This year only 140 students decided to be involved in the event.

“I did not participate in RUSH this year because it was at the beginning of the year, and I did not know how hard my classes would be because they were not in full swing yet,” said junior Becca Rens.

Not only is the general anxiety about new classes and the initial syllabus shock a factor in participation, but the amount of students involved in fall sports also plays a role.

“I do cross country in the fall and I just cannot handle the physical toll of both those activities at one time,” said sophomore Paul McCreary.

Other students cannot get enough of RUSH, and it does not matter what time of year it is, they will stop at nothing to be a part of it.

“I love RUSH, it is one of my favorite things on campus. So I knew I was going to do it anyway,” said junior Alex Mullenberg.

Freshmen hear about RUSH from upperclassmen students.

“All the upperclassmen have been advertising RUSH to me, they told me that I would love it. Plus, I love to dance so I know it will be fun,” said freshman Brianna Darling.

RUSH has always been a popular event on campus, whether students are dancing in it or simply attending the show. Students enjoy the energy and talent of all those involved.

“RUSH unifies people from all different majors and all different areas of campus in one event that they can do together,” said RUSH student producer, junior Jackson Nickolay.