Operation Christmas Child: Hope in a Shoebox

By Eric Cannedy

Thanks to Concordia students, shoeboxes will bring joy to children throughout the world this Christmas. By taking part in a ministry called Operation Christmas Child, sponsored by Samaritan’s Purse, students will send shoeboxes filled with gifts and Christian literature to children in various countries. Approximately seven million suffering children in more than 100 countries on six continents will receive personal, gift-filled shoe boxes through this project. For many of these children, the gift will be the first present they have ever received.

Junior Stephanie Randolph participated in Operation Christmas Child this year, and was excited to be a part of a ministry that affects the lives of children all over the world. “Operation Christmas Child is an incredible ministry. Children don’t just receive presents; they receive the gospel message, too,” Randolph said.

Volunteering for Operation Christmas Child is simple for anyone. First, a shoebox is wrapped in Christmas paper. Then, depending on the gender and age range desired for the recipient, the box is filled with presents including things like small toys, school supplies, hygiene items and a variety of other items. Once the box is assembled, packers are asked to put $5 in an envelope in the box to cover the cost of shipping the box overseas. Once it is packed, rubber-banded shut and the Operation Christmas Child label is affixed, the box can be dropped off at a collection site.

Shoe boxes will be filled and donated by millions of people in 100 countries: United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, the Netherlands, Germany, Ireland, Austria, Switzerland, and Finland. Some Concordia students are volunteering at the national processing center located in Minneapolis. At this location, students go through the shoeboxes to scan for inappropriate items, such as war-related toys, perishables, etc., and then prepare them for shipment. Samaritan’s Purse staff and partners will then hand-deliver the shoe box gifts to needy children.

Operation Christmas Child is a project of international Christian relief organization Samaritan’s Purse, headed by Franklin Graham. The organization is currently working in 100 countries, including Afghanistan, where after the fall of the Taliban, the organization established a hospital, rebuilt several schools, and helped build hundreds of homes. Samaritan’s Purse is also working in numerous countries devastated by HIV/AIDS to help bring relief, education and hope to the victims and orphans of the pandemic.
The SWORD staff wishes the community a blessed Christmas.

Peace on Earth to all.

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President's Wish: Peace to You

Time out! In athletics, "Time out!" usually means individuals and the team need a moment for reflection, refocus and rest. When the challenges are great and the pressures are real, nature human nature benefits from a "time out." In the summer, at the end of the day I spend time in my garden. Somehow the time with the plants enables me to relax no matter what happened in a pressure packed schedule.

At this time of the year, Concordia is pressure packed. The end of the semester matches with the cadence of a firing squad aiming at us with deadlines for grade-determining tests and papers.

"My prayer for you is that you will do well and even enjoy the days as we count down the fall semester."

- President Holst

Time management skills advance in rank from luxury to necessity. We know that we'll be busy; now we must plan also to be productive. Set priorities and time goals in your schedule in order to meet deadlines. An "all-nighter" may come from poor planning and may result in fatigue related in-efectiveness. Work and no pleasure can also dull the brain. Plan time to relax with friends. Simply lean back in your chair from time to time to loosen the mental muscles. A little humor can also go a long way. My son attended Cal. Tech, which is infamous for the pressure on students. Students "beat the system" by having non-stop cartoons during final test week in the student union! A good laugh lets the air out of academic tires about to explode. In addition, I find worship and prayer help me face pressure. I don't know how I'd survive without the little prayer chapel under the Udgaard Education Center steps. My prayer for you is that you will do well and even enjoy the days as we count down the fall semester.

Finally, remember that after the "time out" comes the time for energetic engagement. Do well on your papers and tests. Enjoy the semester break! Return in January, eager to learn. Since this may be the final SWORD edition, I wish you a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and meaningful semester break. God's blessings to you one and all.

President Bob Holst

A Call to Action

by Andrea Fasanello

Recently, as I enjoyed a late dinner at a local Perkins, I overheard a comment by a college student at a nearby table.

"My high school didn't have a recycling program. We had the cans for, but they were emptied into the regular dumpster with the rest of the trash," she said. She continued with this comment: "I don't think the administration ever wanted to recycle in the first place. It was just a front to make the students feel better about being "environmentally active."

I played these comments over and over again in my head. I wondered about Concordia and why it seems that our recycling bins always have regular trash in them and never the recyclables. Were the blue recycling bins everywhere just a tactic to make the students feel environmentally responsible and active?

I took my concerns to the Assistant Director of Custodial and Security Services, Jim Orchard. I asked him why I never see the contents of the blue recycling bins set aside from the regular refuse. I asked him about recycling plans for Concordia past, present, and future. I asked him to upload or refute the rumor that "we don't recycle at Concordia."

I found the answers Orchard gave pleasantly surprising. He reassured me that the contents of the recycling bins are never set aside from the bags of normal trash is simple: People ignore that the bin is for recycling and throw non-recyclables into it. "The moment one person puts a sand-which wrap or a plastic trash bag in a recycling bin, it becomes regular trash," stated Orchard.

The Maintenance Operations staff used to post a notice at every recycling bin stating that the bin was to be used ONLY for recycling. The signs were ignored time and time again, said Orchard. Currently, all of the blue recycling bins on campus are to be used as recycling bins, but it is up to students, faculty and staff to treat them as such. Some departments on Concordia's campus separate paper recyclables from their other trash, and maintenance takes it to our campus recycling dumpsters.

"Recycling dumpsters?" We have recycling dumpsters? Yes Concordia, there are two green recycling dumpsters on campus for all of us to use. There is one located in Lot A, next to the Dining Hall and OHSCO, and there is another one in the Student Union driveway. Orchard told me that anyone can take their recyclables, unsorted, to one of these green dumpsters, and they will be taken to a recycling center.

Now that we have this information, what do we do with it? As students, faculty and staff, we need to take the responsibility ourselves to keep our recycling bins free of contamination and to remind others of that responsibility.

Some students are already taking action. Last week, resident student Kali Williams took the idea of recycling cans to the women on her floor, Luther 2 North. A sign was posted over the recycling bin about only putting aluminum cans in it, and the residents are keeping one recycle bin for aluminum only. Williams informed me that Ludwig 2 North also want to set aside a "paper only" recycling bin.

It's time to take action, Concordia! We, as individuals, CAN make a difference by keeping one another accountable about being environmentally responsible. As the early 1990s superhero, Captain Planet, would say, "The power is Yours!"

University Presidents Help Build Habitat House

By Eric Connolly

The Twin Cities Campus Chapters (TCCCs) of Habitat for Humanity held their second annual President's Build on Saturday, December 6, 2003. College presidents and high school principals joined their students to help build the third TCCC sponsored Habita-t house, 5 minutes away from CSP campus on Sherburne Avenue. Dr. Cheryl Chatman, Executive Vice President and Dean of Diversity, represented President Holst at Saturday's build, because the president was out of town.

The event started at 9 a.m. with a brief ceremo-ny containing speeches from school representatives as well as TCCC and Twin Cities Habitat representatives. The event was followed by students and presi-dents working on the house that will be completed by mid-February. Construction on the house began in Sep-tember with members of the TCCC contributing hours of labor towards the house.

"This allows the presidents to see what we as students do and take part in building a Habitat home." - James Westin

The TCCC schools include: University of Minnesota, Hamline University, Concordia University, Macalester College, University of St. Thomas, St. Paul Central High School, Mounds Park Academy and St. Thomas Academy.

Habitat for Humanity is dedicated to elimi-nating poor housing in our community and making decent, affordable housing a matter of conscience. Concordia is in its first year as a Campus Chapter. For more information on becoming involved with the CSP campus chapter of Habitat for Humanity, email cnscrecy@csp.edu.

Christmas All Year Long

by Janelle Cutter

It is the Christmas season. You can tell by the commer-cials for the Salad Shooter, Chia Pet and The Clapper. There are donation buckets for the Salvation Army, Christmas presents for needy children, and billboards that profess "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward All." It is time for Christ-mas spirit.

What exactly is Christmas spirit? Just look at any se-aonal cartoon and you'll know. Rudolph bears the power of acceptance. Garfield discovers that, "It's not the giving; it's the getting." And, possibly most accurate is Charlie Brown's lesson. Linus takes the stage at the Christmas pageant to tell the story of Jesus, and because of the gift of the Savior there should be "peace on earth, good will toward all." I seem to be sensing a trend here... peace. But why is it that peace (ironically our theme of the year) should be found only at Christmas?

My mom's favorite seasonal song reinforces this thought. "One night a year we believe in peace on earth. One night a year we hail Our Savior's birth. I wish every night the whole year through could be like Christmas Eve." This Barbara Mandrell 1984 hit is true. We take time out of our lives one night a year to spend time with family, go to church, and wish peace on earth, good will toward all. One night a year.

I encourage you to celebrate the Christmas spirit long after the decorations are down and Chia Pet commercials no longer infiltrate the airwaves. Sing "Joy to the World" in March. Have a family feast in September. Let Linus's lesson carry you past Christmas Eve; pray for peace on earth and good will toward all every day of your life. Celebrate the spirit of Christmas more than one night a year. Peace be to you.
Luther' Earns Mixed Reviews

by Paul Brutscher

It is with trepidation that I endeavor to review a movie about the life and work of a man whom, when he was alive, was held in such high regard, whose stern but honest face looks out at us from building decorations, a statue, and even one of the scenes in the Concordia scene. We, as an institution have a huge amount of fondness as well as respect for this German ex-monk. We are proud of him, and do not want to be portrayed as a nutrictive actor here any more than we want to see him as a duesy academic who happened to be in the right place at the right time.

Well, if they wanted a perfect visual likeness of Martin Luther, there are many students of this university as "Da Man"), those responsible for this movie of him. But coming to mind is Jack Black as the cleric. Take a look at any portrait, statue, or bobblehead of Luther and tell me I'm wrong.

All in all, a more accomplished and photogenic actor was cast, not least of all for the historical and religious drama that is just too many students of this university as "Da Man"), those responsible for this movie of him. But coming to mind is Jack Black as the cleric. Take a look at any portrait, statue, or bobblehead of Luther and tell me I'm wrong.

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approximately 40 CSP introduction to literature students attended Shakespeare's tragic drama "Othello" at the Guthrie Lab on November 15. To purchase the story of the Moor, the characters were briefly married, this classic is "sickeningly beautiful." Students discovered the tense production kept them interested in love, deception, good, evil, jealousy, and— in the end—murder for over three hours.

"Othello" is simple to understand. It's about an African man named Othello (played by Lester Purry) who is a general in the Venetian army. In the beginning of the play he is commissioned to lead the army against the Ottoman invasion of Cyprus. Othello secretly marries Desdemona, a white daughter of senator Brabantio (who is played by Nathaniel Fuller). The plot thickens when Othello does not have a best friend lago to be his "right hand man" but another officer Cassio (Robert Berndt). Motivated by resentment and jealousy, lago hatches a plot to destroy Othello's life by making Othello think Desdemona and Cassio are having a love affair.

"Othello" is wonderfully played by Bill McCallum, one of the most wicked and sneaky characters you would ever want to see. You love him for his funny remarks and gestures, but hate him for his vulgar language and the web of deception he has woven to ensnare Othello and Desdemona. Despite lago's diabolical self, lago's performance seduces the audience into regarding him as wickedly charming.

Purr gives an excellent performance as Othello. His acting emphasizes how calm, relaxed and sophisticated Othello is at the beginning of the play—before his mind is poisoned by jealousy. As soon as lago starts his plot to ruin Othello, "Othello" turns into a marvelous expose of how much Othello changes into a crazy love sickened maniac blinded by lago's false words.

One of the best actors in the drama has to be Virginia Burke, who plays Emilia. Burke captivates her audience with her sensible reactions to the characters around her even though her role is relatively minor. Burke, who is married to evil lago, unknowingly contributes to Desdemona's demise by intensifying her loyalty to lago. With her funny jokes and intense sorrow, Virginia really grabs her audience whenever she is on stage.

This four hundred-year-old play must be seen when it comes to CSP in January. Deception, love, hate, murder, and chaos: what else can you ask for in a play?
Devotion Harks Back to Jeremiah
by Dan Eichelberg

Jeremiah 33:14-16
"The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will fulfill the gracious promise I made to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days and at that time, I will make a rightous Branch sprout from David's line; he will do what is just and right in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: 'The Lord Our Righteousness.'"

Advent is a time when people start to think of Christmas as well as the happiness, joy, and hope that accompanies the season. People are happy in decorating their homes and buying presents for others. We are happy in celebrating the gift of Christ, and hope in the future because of Christ’s fulfilled promise. Though this may be the season to be jolly, it does not go without worries.

During the time that Jeremiah was written the Babylonian empire sacked and destroyed Jerusalem’s city and temple. The Jewish people were taken from their home city and prevented from worshipping in the place where they believed God dwelt. It may have seemed as though they had no hope, but Jeremiah wrote that God will do what is just and right. Judah was surely saved and Jerusalem lived in safety. It may have seemed as though the Hebrew people were abandoned by God, but God had promised that He would deliver them with a rightous king. God fulfilled this promise in Jesus Christ.

It may be times when we feel there is no hope. On 9-11, many people wondered if God had abandoned our nation. There may be times when we wonder if God is with us when we have several papers, projects, and tests due. Or, we may wonder where God is in the midst of our tale or if He even exists at all. But we know that God has fulfilled his promises in the past when He sent Jesus into the world. We can continue to have hope in Christ that He will continue to fulfill His promises in our lives. "God will be with us always to the end of the age," and "He will continue the good work that He has begun."

Now for the real question, is practicing the customs of Christmas sacrilegious? Matt Kohl, the former campus minister at Concordia, had some opinions on this. "In secular society I wouldn't call it necessarily sacrilegious...but the fact that it is being commercialized can be disheartening." It is safe to say that Kohl is very much pro-Christmas and the positive effects it has on our lives. Kohl believes that Christmas is a celebration of giving, and we should always keep in mind that Jesus will always be the greatest gift to humankind. Kohl, and Christmas is ultimately a celebration of his divine love and sacrifices.

During Christmas it is easy to lose sight of what the real meaning is. So, if you find yourself starting to see the negative aspects, or are physically ill to approach the altar. The service is full of lives, and most of the others, to some advertising executives.

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Secular Tradition Recalls Tenth Century
by Morgan McLaughlin

In 1999, the website www.vice.com asked more than forty-one hundred people, “Do you believe in Santa Claus?” 66% voted yes. So who is St. Nick and where did he come from? Most Christians believe St. Nicholas was a Bishop from Asia Minor, who died in the middle of the fourth century AD, however, historians do not believe that he ever existed. These historians believe Nicholas was an altered pagan god. They believe St. Nicholas is a gestalt creation of the Greek god, Poseidon, the Roman god Neptune, the Teutonic god Njord, and Belenf of Italy who was said to have filled kids’ stockings with presents. These histories believe the Christian church created a fictional life and death for the Bishop St. Nicholas of Myra, and an attendance to the first council of Nica. St. Nicholas is the patron saint of children and sailors and like all saints there are many stories of his amazing deeds. One such story is told of when he was an infant. His mother only nursed him on Wednesdays and Fridays, and he fasted on the remaining days. Another story tells that at times he would snuggle into the dust with children. During his lifetime, he aided children and often threw gifts anonymously into the windows of their homes. His mission was to make children feel special, which he did with his help and seeing poor children. He grabbed the sword of an executioner to save the life of a political prisoner. He became known throughout all the people who lived near him and his mission was shared. During the tenth century, the writer Metaphrates collected and wrote many traditional stories about St. Nicholas. In the early nineteenth century a man called Christkindlein with the help of a vertically challenged helper traveled around giving secret gifts to children. Christkindlein eventually turned into Kris Kringle.

It was time to leave the city streets in the dust. The group drove to Mueller’s cabin with the white beard traveling in a reindeer pulled sledge. We can attribute the melody of the bongo and electric guitar. Even if one is not accustomed to the lively setting, one quickly learns that vocalizations are welcomed at this time to lift hands or clap with the melody of the bongo and electric guitar. Even if one is not accustomed to the lively setting, one quickly learns that vocalizations are welcomed at this time to lift hands or clap with the melody of the bongo and electric guitar. Even if one is not accustomed to the lively setting, one quickly learns that vocalizations are welcomed at this time to lift hands or clap with the melody of the bongo and electric guitar.

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MS Retreats to Naomi Shelter
by Ashley Staab

Concordia Mission Society stepped off the streets and into the woods. A group of students took an overnight trip to stay at a cabin on the Mississippi River, Paul Mueller, a Professor of Outreach at Concordia.

The weekend opened with a trip to the Naomi Shelter in downtown St. Paul. The Naomi Shelter serves as a safe haven for battered women and their children. Aside from this, it also allows the women who stay to have the opportunity to continue their educational learning. A ceremony honoree those who took part in this program. While this joyous event took place, the CMS team took over childcare responsibilities for the night. This gave everyone at the shelter an opportunity to enjoy the evening. Meanwhile, the CMS group of 11 outnumbered the 10 children, who ranged in age from three to eight years old. Despite concerns, it was a rewarding experience for all who attended. The smiles of the children matched the smiles of the Concordia students as they sang songs, shared a children’s message, made placemats and decorated cookies.

It was time to leave the city streets in the dust. The group drove to Mueller’s cabin, which would provide well deserved rest and relaxation. Although a booth had been planned, the group skipped the outside cold and enjoyed each other’s fellowship. More relaxation followed through the night and into the morning. An attempt was made to make Amish bread from scratch, but it came out of the oven in questiona-

The SWORD ~
Tow Truck Tragedy: How to Avoid Trouble

by Megan Corson

Freezing temperatures, snow and tow trucks worry many students as they finish finals. Winter is coming quickly, and every person should be making slight modifications and modifications to their car and its needs. Most car dealerships over winter is 5W30 and the anti-freeze needs to work to 34 below zero for Minnesota weather. Before pulling away from

Donohue Avenue, Latuff Bros., Inc. on University Avenue.

Whitaker Buick Jeep/Eagle estimates costs

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Whitaker Buick Jeep/Eagle estimates costs as being $25 for an oil change, while flushing and adding the proper anti-freeze costs $125. Whitaker’s winterizing services include checking all the fluids and rotating the tire.

Cold temperatures and snow cannot be avoided this winter, but waiting for a tow truck is avoidable. A quick check of your vehicle now could avoid hassle later.

Dealerships costs will vary depending on the make of the

vehicle. The tire inflation varies with tire size, but most tires should be between 32-35 pounds. Make sure that the car has the proper amount of transmission fluid, oil, anti-freeze and windshield washer fluid. The proper type of oil for winter is 5W30 and the anti-freeze needs to work to 34 below zero for Minnesota weather. Before pulling away from

CSP, check to make sure that the vehicle’s windshield wipers, lights and brakes are working. Most car dealerships and small shops will perform the winterizing services.

Places near CSP include: Heppner’s Auto Body on Donohue Avenue, Latuff Bros., Inc. on University Avenue and Whitaker Buick Jeep/Eagle on University Avenue.

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Head Cold? Blame Locks of Love

by Paul Brutschy

I suppose they think my next move is to buy a suit, sell all my beloved wool pea coat and race back to get

my coat was rightly held as collateral until

the missing hair donation surfaced. So I made a sec-

ond trip, thanks to the deft driving skills of my friend

Owen Rasmussen, back to Walther Hall to retrieve

my coat or sell my beloved pea coat. I was

delighted, however, to have donated my hair to

such a cause. I encourage anybody with a lot of hair

they don’t know what to do with to look into this

program. There are a number of salons and grooming

places in the area that participate in the program, not

to mention a lot of people on this campus with razors

and scissors who would jump at a chance to hone

their skills.

I called Cost Cutters on Grand to notify them I was

in to donate my hair for the Locks of Love orga-

nization. To those of you unfamiliar with the Locks of

Love program, it accepts donations of locks of hair of 10

inches or more, to be used to make hairpieces for chil-

dren, mostly girls, who have suffered permanent or per-

sistent hair loss as a result of Alopecia Areata, a condi-

tion that causes the body’s immune system to attack hair

follicles and arrest the growth of hair on the body. The

program provides restored confidence and a chance to

face their peers not as a victim, but as a person. I as-

sumed they would chop the standard 10-inch donation

brand from my ample stock and leave me looking as

though I had some horrible mangle. Instead, they pro-

vided a complete hair cut and styling, free of charge.

Being a stranger to hair cuts, I had to look at the book of

snug looking male models and select a style. The style

book had all the greatest looks of 1984, from Duran Duran

to the pompadour mullet. I chose MTV’s Max Head-

room, as you can see if you encounter me in the street.

My stylist was quite personable, but adverse to being

photographed. She did an excellent job and I strode out

bravely into the world with my new head, and my spin-

al was left behind at my earliest conveniences.

However, when I reached home, I discovered I had for-

gotten my beloved wool pea coat and raced back to get

it. To my shock, the stylist refused to surrender it, ask-

ing what I had done with the lock of hair. Apparently,

when one goes to a professional stylist to get a free

haircut under the auspices of the Locks of Love pro-

gram, it is with the condition that the donated hair

remain at the establishment to be mailed in and put on

record. My coat was rightly held as collateral until

the misunderstanding was cleared up.

My head is very cold and I look like less like Brooke

Shields and more like a young Christopher Walken.

I am delighted, however, to have donated my hair to

such a cause. I encourage anybody with a lot of hair

they don’t know what to do with to look into this

program. There are a number of salons and grooming

places in the area that participate in the program, not

to mention a lot of people on this campus with razors

and scissors who would jump at a chance to hone

their skills.

Alison’s Guide to Cheap Gifts

by Alison Grosskopf

Being broke is no excuse for not giving Christmas gifts

this year. Here is a quick, cheap way to make a memorable

Christmas tree decoration that will spark memories for years to

come.

What you need to make this ornament:

O Fishing line, or other decorative string

O Pencil

O Glitter (preferably gold)

Glue (any kind should work)

White paint

Six coffee stirring sticks (free at coffee houses ev-

erywhere)

Now you have a gift that will touch the heart of a loved one

without costing you a lot of money or taking a lot of time.

photo by Debra Burke

Create your own Christ-

mas gifts

without spending a

fortune.

photo by Debra

Burke

by Alison Grosskopf

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What is Your New Year’s Resolution?

Jill Kalvik

"Get myself in gear, and get an internship."

Keith Scott

"Start going to church, and get closer to God!"

De Beilke

"Make the Sword the best newspaper it can possibly be."

Adam Kroth

"Stop picking on freshman football players."

Aaron Taylor

"Not procrastinate."

Peter Yang

"Get into graduate school."

by Megan Corson

Debra Burke

photo by Debra

Burke

by Alison Grosskopf

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Now you have a gift that will touch the heart of a loved one (without costing you a lot of money or taking a lot of time).
Concordia First: Football in Mineral Bowl

by Adrian Perryman

The CSP football team was unable to hold on to a lead in order to win its first ever bowl game. Missouri State College (8-3, 7-2 MIAA) defeated the Golden Bears 24-14 in the 38th annual Mineral Water Bowl after scoring two unanswered touchdowns in the fourth quarter. CSP trailed the Griffins for the majority of the game until running back Chris Washington and quarterback James McNeese both had runs for a touchdown with 10 minutes left in the fourth quarter. Multiple turnovers assisted in the CSP loss. Washington was named Offensive MVP of the game.

The game ended a record breaking season for the Golden Bears. They accepted a bid to their first bowl game in school history and broke 37 individual and team records. Those records include a new all time leading rusher, Washington, a new all time leading receiver, Joseph Mapson, and new team record for the most points scored by a team in a season with 399. CSP gladly accepted a bid to the bowl game after winning the NSIC championship. Since 2000 the game has had the top teams from the NSIC and MIAA conference, which did not make it to the playoffs, play against one another. Previous NSIC bowl participants include Winona State and UMD. Both teams advanced to the playoffs the season following their bowl game.

The game took place December sixth in Excelsior Springs, Missouri. The team departed for the six hour bus trip early Thursday morning. When they arrived in Excelsior Springs they received the star treatment. They had a police escort everywhere they went while photographers were taking pictures of the weekend’s events.

Joe Peters, Mapson, Washington and McNeese were all named to the D2Football.com all-Midwest Region team. Head Coach Shannon Currier was an honorable mention candidate for Coach-of-the-Year. Four players, Peters, Dusty Kalis, Josh Prigge and Alan Taray, were named NSIC All-Academic Team.

Sandra Benitez Remembers ‘The Weight of All Things’

by Elizza Reas

Sandra Benitez, author of “The Weight of All Things,” was on campus Dec. 4 to discuss her novel of war, hope, and faith. Drawing from her unique past and acclaimed writing career, Benitez shared information with Dr. Debra Buenger, a professor of literature and English at Buenger Education Center.

Benitez was born in 1941 and grew up in Mexico, El Salvador, and Missouri. She worked as a teacher and translator until age 39. She always had a love of books and stories, so she decided to take a writing class. She began writing short stories and eventually decided to write a novel. It took 13 years from the time she took her first writing class to the time Benitez’s first novel, “A Place Where the Sea Remembers,” won the Barnes & Noble Discover Award and the Minnesota Book Award. Her second novel, “Bitter Grounds,” was published. It won the 1998 American Book Award. Two authors that have influenced her style of writing have been John Steinbeck, because of his sense of place, and Ernest Hemingway’s use of words and ability to keep to the point. “The Weight of All Things” is a story about war seen through the eyes of a nine-year old boy named Nicolas Vera. The story is based on the actual massacres in San Salvador and the Honduran border in March and May of 1980. Nicolas’s mother threw herself on top of her son to save him from the torrent of bullets, one of which pierced her skull; she was killed. Nicolas’s hope and faith carry him through the bombing, fighting, and confusion of the war. He stays with his grandfather after his mother dies, both are neutral to the war. Benitez hopes that those who read this novel, especially those of college age, will be able to learn more about El Salvador, the war and the reality of war and hardships that real people endured. She hopes that seeing this incident through the eyes of a nine year old boy will open our eyes to understand that war is real and it is not merely a list of statistics. Benitez says peace is the answer; the devastating effects of war are seen in her novel through the eyes of Nicolas. Currently, Benitez lives in Edina with her husband.

Jennifer Haworth Becomes Director of Student Union

by Robert Mangone

After years of neglect and disorder, the Student Union has regained its direction-literally. Jennifer Haworth now bears the designation of Director of Student Union and Coordinator for Student Activities, an office that has been in existence for 25 years. The Student Union has re-gained its direction—literally. Jennifer Haworth now bears the designation of Director of Student Union and Coordinator for Student Activities, an office that has been in existence for 25 years.

After meeting with the original designers of CSP’s award-winning Buenger Education Center, Haworth was an honorable mention candidate for Coach-of-the-Year. She worked as a teacher and translator until age 39. She always had a love of books and stories, so she decided to take a writing class. She began writing short stories and eventually decided to write a novel. It took 13 years from the time she took her first writing class to the time Benitez’s first novel, “A Place Where the Sea Remembers,” won the Barnes & Noble Discover Award and the Minnesota Book Award. Her second novel, “Bitter Grounds,” was published. It won the 1998 American Book Award. Two authors that have influenced her style of writing have been John Steinbeck, because of his sense of place, and Ernest Hemingway’s use of words and ability to keep to the point. “The Weight of All Things” is a story about war seen through the eyes of a nine-year old boy named Nicolas Vera. The story is based on the actual massacres in San Salvador and the Honduran border in March and May of 1980. Nicolas’s mother threw herself on top of her son to save him from the torrent of bullets, one of which pierced her skull; she was killed. Nicolas’s hope and faith carry him through the bombing, fighting, and confusion of the war. He stays with his grandfather after his mother dies, both are neutral to the war. Benitez hopes that those who read this novel, especially those of college age, will be able to learn more about El Salvador, the war and the reality of war and hardships that real people endured. She hopes that seeing this incident through the eyes of a nine year old boy will open our eyes to understand that war is real and it is not merely a list of statistics. Benitez says peace is the answer; the devastating effects of war are seen in her novel through the eyes of Nicolas. Currently, Benitez lives in Edina with her husband.

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**SENATE**

**Childhood Nostalgia: Focuses Christmas**

by Andrew Johnson

The semester is coming to a close. For me, this is a time to relax, enjoy some time with my family and friends and continue with the traditions that have been passed down from me to a young kid. As things are winding down, I look back at this semester and can hardly believe that it is that time. It does seem right that final week is coming up and people are going to be leaving for another break. But this time, I plan to welcome week and the first days of classes and that seems a distant memory. Meeting people for the first time, moving into my room and getting things arranged—all of that seems like ages ago. What a paradox.

I look at Christmas, my favorite holiday, and think the same thing. What a paradox. It is a time for family and friends, but a time that has turned into my room and getting things arranged—under the tree and the cookies in the oven. I get caught up in the holiday madness, and I almost forget what it is being celebrated: the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the paradox Himself. True God, born to a virgin to become man, so that he could provide salvation for the world. What a gift we have been given; yet, it is easy to overlook.

So, in this crazy time full of such joys, take a second to step back and remember what this holiday is about. Remember that in all you do, you are going for break; it is far away. And I pray that everyone remembers that Christ is the reason for Christmas. Without that, you are missing out on the best part.

**Winter Formal Warms Hearts and Stomachs**

by Eric Cannon

Every year, the students of CSP enjoy an end-of-semester winter celebration at Winter Formal. Locations, themes, and food vary from year to year, and this will be no exception. The dance will take place in downtown Minneapolis at the Crown Plaza Hotel, in the midst of Minneapolis’s beautiful holiday decorations. The dance is on the second floor of the hotel.

Students can also expect great atmosphere, music and food. “This year’s Winter Formal will be very classy, and I think people will have a great time,” said senior Katherine Moulds, Commuter and Social Activities Chair for Concordia Coffee House Board. Moulds has done much of the planning for the event, which will be in process since September of this year. She is excited about this year’s Winter Formal, and many people showed up to support those who performed.

The presentation combined a discussion on location as well as presentations by the students who accompanied Schuler. The Northeast Church is from the Byzantine Empire and in one of ten belonging to a Decree. Though the church shows signs of Greek influence, the objects found prove that this was later used as a Christian church. His hypothesis was that this were a Greek cross, mosaic tiles, and a sarcophagus holding the remains in the end of the church. Images of the sarcophagus were shown to the audience to help Schuler explain his theory about the church. Schuler explained that the bone position and placement of the sarcophagus may prove that the church functioned as a women’s monastery.

While the presentation revealed that a lot of progress has taken place, there is still a lot more to do. The excavation only began to uncover the eastern end of the church, while most of the church actually continues to lie uncoved. Schuler is leading another excavation in the fall of 2004 to uncover even more of the church.

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