By Katrina Bell

Many Concordia students took a trip to Vegas on Friday, January 23rd. The Concordia Activities Board (CAB) hosted a Vegas themed casino night in the BEC. Beginning at 9 p.m. and ending at midnight, the turnout was fairly large and the event was hopping. Many of the students dressed up for the evening, but those who did not fit in just fine. It was, after all, Vegas.

CAB had four Blackjack tables set up for the students, these Blackjack tables, although interesting enough simply for the novelty of gambling, were found slightly frustrating by many of the students that played, because it seemed the dealers were a bit confused on exactly how to play Blackjack. Despite this, students are still thankful to those who volunteered to help with this event.

These tickets gave students the opportunity to enter in prize drawings. These prizes included an iPad mini, Beats wireless headphones, a Fitbit, a Magic Bullet, and a great deal more. CAB provided food for those in attendance and the BEC was decorated so that everyone could imagine themselves at a small, entertaining Vegas party. The dance floor was small, but was never completely empty and props are given to the DJ Admissions Counselor Adrian Perryman. The music was diverse and was much appreciated by the crowd of ladies that danced the night away.

Kudos also to the men that danced with the ladies, those who allowed themselves to break away from the Blackjack tables and have some real fun. The DJ played group line dances, such as the “Cupid Shuffle”, and “The Wobble.” The evening ended with a painful yet funny sing-along of “Let it Go.” All in all, the evening was successful and completely entertaining.
Dear Concordia faculty, staff, students, and community members,

This is the first issue of The Sword for 2015. Welcome back to school and let the spring semester begin. Spring is the time for growth after laying dormant all winter, but this is Minnesota and that causes a few months delay to the beginning of spring. No need to fear because you will have a great newspaper to read and keep you company while you wait for the warm weather to appear. It is really good to see and hear the start of a new semester and also watch as everyone goes about their business with gusto. The tempo will fade eventually but in the beginning everything is attacked full-on.

This is a very busy semester that includes many specific themed days and the week all college students dread; Spring Break! Okay, maybe dread is the wrong word to use here but it's what came to my mind. Our staff at The Sword has changed a little and hopefully our product will not. Adding fresh faces and ideas will help us grow into a more efficient and productive group. Please be on the lookout for these upcoming changes.

Finally, because we decided on stories in January on a paper that comes out in February, I forgot to include any articles that mentioned or discussed Black History month/President's Day. For that I truly apologize and I would like to close out this month’s note from the editor with two quotes that will touch both omissions. They are from a great man named Frederick Douglas who was a friend of President Lincoln and just happened to be black. The quotes are “Once you learn to read, you will be forever free” and “I prefer to be true to myself, even at the hazard of incurring the ridicule of others, rather than to be false, and to incur my own abhorrence.” I learned these quotes long ago in my life but they have stuck with since then. I think they have true relevance in higher education and the times we live in at the presence.

Welcome back all,

Charles Hines
Editor-in-Chief

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A New Art Community
LutheranArts.org: A Brand New Lutheran Arts Website

By Andrew Toelle

Last semester, Concordia St. Paul professor Keith Williams was involved in the development of a brand new website called LutheranArts.org. Lutheran Arts is a small one-stop shop & clearing house for all Lutheran artists in any field of the arts. LutheranArts.org is also an exciting new art community where artists can promote their talents, showcase professional works, search for new job opportunities, and learn about other Lutheran artists in the field.

While Keith contributed to the creation of the website, Douglas Koons was the founder and brain child of LutheranArts. Keith came into play in this project four years ago. “Doug is affiliated with Luther Seminary, and I was an early consultant on the project and later a chair of the visual arts committee. Doug has been incubating this for nearly twenty years, and consulted with other CSP professionals David Mennicke, and President Ries. We all said this was a good idea.” Following Douglas’ retirement, he put together a Board of Directors with successive teams that would help create the website and design it. After working with Doug and seeing the formation of a Board of Directors, featuring Concordia St. Paul’s President Tom Ries as a chairperson, Keith was proud to see LutheranArts launch in fall 2014.

“LutheranArts.org is not just reserved for painters and sculptors,” Keith mentions, “the website is open to everyone. Artists of any field in fine arts including musicians and graphic designers, writers, actors, media artists, photographers, and many, many, more are welcome to join.” Clients can browse the collections of registered artists and post job opportunities. LutheranArts is also a place where students can read Lutheran articles from years past, and announce shows, performances, and showcases with a performance and events calendar. With so many opportunities to choose from, anybody with a creative mind and skills of a professional artist will want to climb aboard.

Following the website’s launch, Lutheran Arts has slowly been growing. There are currently a small number of registered artists, including Professors Keith Williams and David Mennicke. Keith considers the site to be going through a “Word of Mouth” phase. “As this website continues to go through a word of mouth phase and growing through social media, the word will go out and reach other artists and grow the site.” Keith says. Alongside promoting LutheranArts.org to his students, Professor Williams plans to promote LutheranArts.org to local Lutheran churches and organizations, requesting grants and promoting artists from the site. He also states that LutheranArts.org will need to grow into a densely populated community, and become self-sufficient financially.

LutheranArts.org is an exciting new place for the growing art community. Some advice Keith gives to Concordia students who are interested about LutheranArts.org is this, “It’s easy, do it. Use a website that will connect you most directly with potential patrons, or other like-minded people who have a vision of quality.” Both students and alumni can join LutheranArts.org by paying a small one-time registration fee of thirty five dollars. This fee will support the entirety of the website and help the artist promote their work. Once registered, artists can create a profile for all of their professional work. Any artist who has an idea can register with LutheranArts.org as long as they are advanced college students or older. Keith also mentions that this website can be a helpful transition for college students who are launching into their professional careers.

LutheranArts is a young new website with many standing behind it; this is an exciting time for Lutheran artists. With the help of friends, church congregations, and the entire local community, Lutheran Arts will continue to be a growing website for talent. Keith hopes that with the growth of LutheranArts, students will learn to be mindful about their work and to be intentional about networking; providing them opportunities to grow their unique God-given talents in a world that needs it most.
observed on the third Monday of January each year, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is an American holiday that is set near Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday. King was a chief spokesperson for the Civil Rights Movement, and he was so by promoting nonviolent activism in the protest of racial discrimination in the late 60s. This year, as in past years, Concordia’s CALL center has organized a service day, quoting Dr. King, “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’” The challenge is to make it a day to serve others.

The day started off with pizza and an introduction in the BEC. Cydi Yang and Naajee Dennis both presented spoken word pieces that they wrote themselves, and four members of UMOJA presented a part of Dr. King’s speech. The volunteers gathered were also asked, and given the opportunity to share, their responses to the prompt: “Because of what Dr. King achieved, I can....” Some of the responses included, “Be who I am,” “Experience freedom, and love others who are different from me,” “Vote for the first black president,” “Lead with a gospel focus,” and many other inspiring words that are now being displayed in the Meyer tunnel.

For the event, three different venues were chosen, all within a mile and a half of Concordia, promoting the idea of how we can help people in the community around us. The 40-50 volunteers were randomly bestowed to one of the three different locations. ARTS-Us, where the volunteers helped children make signs such as “Be the Change” and led them in a peaceful picket along the sidewalk, the Episcopal Church Home, where volunteers led the residents in a sing along, and at the Dorothy Day Center, where volunteers made cookies and gave them to the current residents. Shades of Harmony Gospel Choir also participated in the event, traveling to each venue to sing to the different groups of people. At Dorothy Day, some of the residents and volunteers even joined in on the singing.

After all of the traveling, everyone shared reflections about the day and Dr. Chapman gave the closing remarks, thanking everyone for participating and reflecting on the day and how important it was, and to inspire everyone to recall life’s most persistent and urgent question, “What are you doing for others?”
Fighting The Good Fight

By Elisabeth Coats

The societal system that created the United States does not work in the best interest of people of color. For those of you following along at home, people of color means non-white. You may be saying “That is simply not true. We are all one race. The human race. We must remember the words of Martin Luther King: we should not be judged by the color of our skin.” My question for you then is this: are you white? If that is the case, please have a seat and keep reading.

DISCLAIMER: I in no way intend for this article to attack white people. I recognize that we all have struggles living in this disjointed world and I do not mean to devalue the negative experiences of anyone. Just hear me out, no matter how you identify racially.

In light of the good Dr. King’s birthday as well as Black History Month, I will focus primarily on the issues surrounding Black Americans. You may or may not have seen the tag #ReclaimMLK circulating throughout the social media. What does this mean, exactly? Dr. King was a symbol of equality and peace, what is there to “reclaim”? Black Lives Matter Minneapolis - a local activist organization - facilitated an event titled the Reclaim MLK March along with other groups nationwide. (Remember what happened at the Mall of America the Saturday before Christmas? These folks made it happen.) This march took place on Martin Luther King Day, January 19, and went from Snelling & University all the way to the State Capitol. It began at 1 p.m. with a rally in the middle of the tracks of the Green Line, and it ended at 5 p.m. with a candlelight vigil commemorating Marcus Golden, a young black man who was killed by the St. Paul police the previous Wednesday. Marchers of all ages and races waved signs, chanted, sang, and laid in the street for all to witness. The State Patrol and Saint Paul police guided the march and blocked off the streets.

At one point around 2:30 p.m., Interstate - 94 was shut down, just in case the march was to hit the highway. The demonstration was peaceful yet prominent, just as Dr. King would have wanted. What makes me such an MLK expert? I’m not. The closest tie I have to the man is that my father had the privilege of shaking his hand as they marched together in Chicago nearly fifty years ago. I do, however, know what Dr. King would NOT want. I often have witnessed King’s powerful words used to silence the voices of the marginalized and the oppressed – the voices of the very people he looked to support: black voices.

Let me paint a quick picture.
Frederick Douglass in his lifetime stated: “Truth is of no color, God is the Father of us all, and we are all Brethren”. Does this mean that when a fellow abolitionist spoke ill of a white slave owner, Douglass interrupted saying “Woah man, come on now. We are all brethren. All lives matter, bro. Be cool. He’s just doing his job.” I highly doubt it.

As previously stated, my intention is not to antagonize white people. Yet when I see Dr. King’s quotes about love and equality used to silence, reprimand and ridicule the work of protesters around this nation and around the world, I am deeply disheartened. I firmly believe that there still are injustices facing black lives, and because of this I will demonstrate. I do not ask you to agree with me, but I do ask you to stop turning the words of one of the most influential figures in black history against the cause that millions are choosing to fight for. Especially when the cause is much the same cause that Dr. King died for. As a word of encouragement for any and all of you who believe the world can still be vastly improved, I will conclude with one of my favorite MLK quotes: “Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”
Attack on Charlie Hebdo

By Adam Sven

Charlie Hebdo is a weekly published French satire magazine that stimulates readers worldwide. Their comedic and extreme left wing focus is geared towards its views on politics and religion which are expressed through illustrations and articles. Seen by many as being extremely offensive, Charlie Hebdo has sparked multiple lawsuits and protests. Their articles and comics make fun of all religions, political parties, and anything else that separates people by categories. The magazine recently became worldwide headlines after a group of Islamic extremists attacked the headquarters killing multiple people and injuring many others.

On January 7, 2015 in Paris, France, two armed men entered the building where the Hebdo offices were located. On the second floor, they killed the building's maintenance man and editor's police bodyguard before calling out to an editor and four cartoonists and executing them. They then opened fire killing three editorial staff and a guest who was attending a meeting. Witnesses said that the gunmen were shouting "We have avenged the Prophet Mohammad!" and "God is great!" along with the names of the editor and the four cartoonists.

The police were alerted to the massacre and arrived as the two men were leaving the building; the gunmen opened fire on the police car and escaped. Fortunately, the officers were not harmed in the altercation. During their escape, they stopped the car, got out and opened fire on another police officer standing on a sidewalk. One man then walked up to the injured officer and shot him at close range, killing him. Both got back in the car and fled once again. Police later found the gunmen's car deserted after an accident miles north of the Hebdo headquarters. Inside they found Molotov cocktails and two jihadist flags; and the gunmen hijacked another car to get away.

"twenty lives ended (including the gunmen), several injured, and many more that suffer the mental anguish of witnessing something so horrifying"

Over the next two days, a city-wide man hunt ensued, requiring a major police operation that called on over 500 police officers and technology personnel. During the look for the two men another shooting took place killing a police woman and injuring another man before those suspects fled, police later believed that the attacks were connected. Eventually police closed in on the Hebdo shooters and had an eight-hour standoff with the shooters, who eventually came out and opened fire on police officers, injuring one officer; both gunmen were shot and killed. Meanwhile, police had another operation to find the other two suspects that killed the police woman. They had taken hostages in a supermarket outside of Paris. The two men demanded that the Hebdo shooters be allowed to go free. Upon hearing of the deaths, the man opened fire, killing four hostages before being shot and killed by police; the female suspect was able to escape, and is believed to have fled to Syria or Lebanon. All four shooters have been connected to the same Islamic extremist group.

In the end, twenty lives ended (including the gunmen), several injured, and many more that suffer the mental anguish of witnessing something so horrifying, and all over negative feelings generated by what is considered a comedic magazine. Though this attack is extreme, we as people need to come to the realization that even though something like Charlie Hebdo is offensive, it is still a worldwide publication. Meaning that there is a market for their offbeat and crude style, and we as people need to make a decision whether we will let it offend us. We can simply give it no acknowledgment.

Being a comedian I understand what Hebdo does, though I don't agree or like their particular style. You'll never make everyone happy; all you can do is perform what makes you happy and hope that it becomes a marketable style. It might offend some people; I certainly have told jokes that people have gotten upset over, but is that my fault? Or theirs? It's meant to be shock humor, a lot of people are fans of it, a lot of people aren't, but if you choose to get upset over it then that says more about you than it does the performer or publication.
Male Athlete of the Month
Michael Yahnke

By Karina Schlecht

Some people think of basketball as a hobby, some as a sport, but for Michael Yahnke, junior from Delano, Minnesota, basketball is a lifestyle. He started in third or fourth grade, and though he picked up football and track along the way, those were dropped in high school to avoid potential injuries that could hinder him from playing the sport he truly loved. “It’s been my entire life,” Yahnke says, and by the end of high school he was playing all year round.

His dad has encouraged him to play since the beginning, and though he pushed Yahnke to work hard and keep playing, Mike says he ultimately stuck with it because he really loved it. He adds, “It has helped me pay for school, which is a gift, and not a lot of people get to experience that.” However, the scholarship was not the deciding factor for Yahnke to choose Concordia. He started out at the University of Texas – Pan American, but it seemed too big for him. “I came from a small high school, so the transition to another small school was easier.” He says he likes knowing most everyone on campus, and Concordia is close to home for him.

Yahnke is studying biology with the hopes of becoming a dentist. He plans to apply for dental schools this summer with interviews happening the following January, and ideally, after his senior year at Concordia next year, he will be headed off to dental school. He was on the 2013-14 NSIC All-Academic Team, and when asked how he managed to balance a science major, basketball, work, volunteering, and social life with such success, he answered that it is difficult. “Basketball takes a lot of your time: you’re away on weekends, you practice 3-4 hours a day, you think a lot about who you’re playing next.” But he also says that though it may be stressful, it has certainly helped him grow. “It’s taught me how to be organized.”

Yahnke is a power forward and center as a Golden Bear, and he loves the contact and physicality of these “big man” positions under the basket. At six-foot-seven, he says he is one of the shorter guys in the league (which may sound like a joke, but it’s not), so he has to be strong under the basket. He says as though he’s improved from last season: “My mobility and my horizontal movement is a lot better this year, my defense is better. I’ll be able to move and keep up with the smaller people...more than I did last year.”

Another improvement from last year is the teamwork, thanks to the leadership of Coach Joey James, of whom Yahnke says, “I love him. I think he’s gonna make us win...he’s brought us together; the chemistry [on the team] is amazing.” And so far, Yahnke’s been right. After a 5-17 record in the NSIC last season, the Golden Bears won eighteen of their first nineteen games under the new coaching staff this year. Unfortunately, Yahnke separated his shoulder in their game on Friday, January 9, so he won’t be seeing much court time the rest of this season. But that’s not keeping him away from practice and games, and he’ll certainly be recovered and ready for action his senior year, because after all, basketball is life.

Second Half!
2014 May Be Over, But Basketball Season Is Not

By Tony Kohanek

Spring semester has started up on Concordia’s campus. All the students have moved back into their dorms and classes have resumed. However, while everything else is just beginning, the basketball season for the men’s is still going strong as the men enter into the second half of their season. This is Coach Joey James’ second year as a head coach and first year here at Concordia.

The second time Concordia plays SMSU (Southwest Minnesota State) will be February 20th down in Marshall, Minnesota. This is Coach James’ first year as head coach of a division II school with having one year of being an interim head coach for University of South Dakota, where he was an assistant for eleven years. While this is not his first year as a coach for a DII school, since the University of South Dakota was Division II up until 2011 when the school moved up to Division I, Concordia is his first head coaching experience at this level. Coach James really enjoys the conference that Concordia is in, he calls it a “heck of a league. The team is very proud of how they have fair against such a tough conference, having won % of their road games so far in the new year. He is very impressed with how the team has improved since start of the season. Improvements were made on offense and defense and he is overall pleased with the way the team has been able to share the ball. One challenge he says the team is having with the conference we are in is trying to get everybody in the game. This conference is a big challenge.

Coach is very happy with how his record sits so far and wants to continue to keep improving. He’s happy to be winning more than last year he said. As for the rest of the season, the team is very excited to get ready for the conference tournament and continue to improve.

Coach James and the Men’s basketball team are excited to keep playing and keep pushing trying to get better and keep the season going. Coach James wants all the students and facility to get over to the court and support both the men’s and the women’s team and support the school!
By Adam Sven

It's almost spring, you know what that means; baseball season is upon us. Time to hear the lovely sound that happens when the bat hits the ball, and when the ball contacts the glove. This baseball season will be a very fun one with stiff competition in the NSIC. The Golden Bears Baseball squad has many returning starters who have matured and taken on more leadership opportunities and also a group of transfers that will help kick start and give depth the pitching corps.

The NSIC is one of the most competitive conference in DII baseball, with teams like Mankato and St. Cloud who are consistently putting in good seasons, CSP will battle to best said teams. "We're going to have to come to play every game, you can't count anybody out in the NSIC." said Joe Muench. Going 28-14 last season and 6-0 at home Joe says "I think we're going to be one of those teams with a kind of target on our back this year."

Overall the team is looking good! There are a lot of players who are returning and have been Golden Bears since they were freshmen which adds a really strong core to what they want to do as a team. "The veterans have stepped up and set an example for how we go about business on and off the field." Says Joe, he goes on to say "We have a team now that's buying into the framework that we've been able to build all together and I think that's going to serve us well moving forward for this season and beyond."

Anchored by seniors and juniors with fresh talented sophomores and freshmen, while coached by Mark "Lunch" McKenzie and his staff this season looks to be promising as The Golden Bears Baseball team looks to improve on last season's success after being predicted to finish at the back end of the conference. This will be a great season, so come check out a game and show the guys some support. Good luck fellas, go Golden Bears!

By Adam Sven

Growing up in Apple Valley, MN Tom Obarski has come a long way, and just might kick his way into the NFL. Tom was invited to the Senior Bowl to play for the North team down in Mobile, Alabama. Being one of only 2 kickers in the country to be selected for the Senior Bowl is pretty impressive. Going for a degree in finance, Tom also manages to get to kick up some pretty good grades. Oh, did I mention he also recently got married to his wife Cate? Sorry ladies, it's true.

But given all of his success on the field, in the classroom, and in his personal life, Tom doesn't take any of the credit for himself. He instead gives the credit of his success to God, his family, friends, and the support he gets from the rest of the students here at CSP.

Tom's biggest influence in his life is his father. "Since I was young he was my soccer coach and we spent lots of time together. He taught me to work hard in everything that I do and to remain humble." The lessons his father instilled really stuck, Tom is thankful for his parents being there for him, and showing him love and support.

Tom is able to kick a field goal from 65 yards out, but instead of basking in the glory of being able to outkick some of the pros, Tom instead gives the credit to God. Staying strong in his faith is very important to Tom, it shows love for God as often as he can. He feels blessed to have such an amazing life and to have great friends and support around him, and he likes to give that love back to God. Kickers typically can be a bit superstitious, but Tom isn't one of those types. Sure he has a routine but, he just goes out there and gives it the best he can the rest is up to God.

Tom is excited for the possibility of being the second player drafted from CSP in the 2nd consecutive year behind Zach Moore who now plays for the New England Patriots. Tom thinks that the continued success will help pave the way for other talented people on the Golden Bears Football team and he hopes that the success they as a team experienced towards the end of the season translates to next season, he would love no more than to come back and visit and see his alma mater getting W's. Tom selflessly hopes for the best for everyone around him whether he knows them personally or not, he's just that type of guy and it shows.

Tom is nothing like the Adam Sandler song "The Lonesome Kicker," he has a lot of people around him giving him encouragement and support, and he humbly thanks everyone. Hearing a "good luck" while walking down the halls means a lot to Tom as he continues to work hard to achieve a dream that he's had since he was a child.

Tom is more than just a potential NFL kicker, he is a husband, a son, a friend, an all-round God loving good person, and Tom is a Golden Bear. Good Luck in everything Tom, keep up the good work and humble spirit.
Female Athlete of the Month
Amanda Barton

By Tony Kohanek

The women’s basketball season is in full swing with over half of their games played. For the month of February, the female athlete chosen is senior forward, Amanda Barton. Barton has spent the past two seasons with the Golden Bears, after having spent both the 2010-2011, and 2011-2012 seasons at Northern Iowa, before transferring to Concordia. Amanda Barton was born back in 1991 and ever since she started kindergarten, she been involved in some type of sport, including flag football, and baseball. It was not until 4th grade, however, that she picked up a basketball and started playing sports competitively. In middle school, Barton focused on baseball and basketball. During her high school years, Barton continued to play basketball, and joined the softball team for two years. She graduated holding two school records, most points in a game (35) and most rebounds in a game (23). She also was All-conference four times, won All-state twice, and was a nominee for McDonald’s All-America, and two-time athlete of the year.

Barton was recruited by UW-Milwaukee, University of North Dakota, University of Northern Iowa, University of Evansville, Dixie State, San Diego State University, and MSU-Moorhead to come and play basketball. In the end, she chose University of Northern Iowa. She redshirted her first year before appearing in 20 games in her second and final year at Northern Iowa, Where she helped them make it to the Women’s Basketball Invitational where they lost to the University of Minnesota in the final round.

After that season she transferred to Concordia to be closer to family. It was also the respect for coaching staff and the program that sealed her decision to come here. Her first year at Concordia was a lot of fun getting use to the new teammates arid being able to create new relationships at a new school and a new program.

Since coming to Concordia, she has had some quality time to grown both individually and with her team. Last year Barton missed to time due to an injury, so this year, being her senior year, she’s learned to not be so critical of herself and just go out and play.

Barton looks forward to finishing this year strong and is inviting out all the fans to come out and support the team.

Golden Bears Women’s Basketball

By Tony Kohanek

Winter is just getting to its full strength, which means two things. One, we are all going to be cold for a very long time, and the women’s basketball team, is in its second half of their season and getting ready to make a run in anticipation of playoffs. After making it to the third round of the NCAA championship tournament and are hoping to be get back into the tournament this postseason. The team ended 2014 with an overall record of 6-5, which according to the women’s head coach, Paul Fessler, it is not where he wants the to be at this point in time. However last season, the team did not get off to a great start either according to Fessler, and look at how far that team made it. The 2014 freshman class are helping this year Fessler says he likes how they are producing. That’s something you want to see out of the younger players.

Looking back at the first half of the season from this point in the season, Fessler feels that the team could have played better; one big problem is getting into the roles they need to play. Some high points were two very important wins; one was on the road against Northern Michigan, and a home victory early against Fort Hayes. In a recent road victory against Bemidji State, the team was able to put up a season high 103 points. Despite the fact that they feel they could be better, according to coach Fessler, there have been no out of the ordinary challenges during the first half of the season.

Looking where the team is now and forward to the upcoming half of regular season the team has, the team really wants to improve from where they are sitting now. The big plans for the rest of this season is to really work hard to improve and get ready for conference play. They have not peaked yet, and that’s ok. Coach wants to see the team peak up here shortly and be able to hold that while going into playoffs and be able to play their best basketball and make another run.

Coach Fessler is just ready to keep working hard and getting ready to see where this season ends up. He really could use the support from the fans. He believes we all should be one big family as a student body. He likes how his players attend the fine arts events such as plays and art exhibits, he wants everybody to support each other.
February 5th through March 4th, Anna Metcalfe: A Living River is showing in the Concordia Art Gallery. Metcalfe is a local artist who investigates how art can be a catalyst for social change. Reflecting a concern for environmental issues, such as food systems, water, and agriculture, Metcalfe uses her artistic skills and interests to involve the community in her pieces.

She worked with youth from Minneapolis and St. Paul, participating in conservation work along the Mississippi River to create a series of stories and experiences about their lives and work within the Mississippi. Fascinated with the history along the urban banks of the River, her interest in “Telling River Stories,” grew, turning into a community-based art project that would engage young members of the communities along the Mississippi to tell river-related stories on the surfaces of porcelain boats.

Metcalfe’s work also features a collaboration with Wilderness Inquiry, a non-profit adventure travel organization, whose mission is connecting everyone to incredible places around the world. For this venture, Anna Metcalfe joined forces with teenagers working on restoration along the Mississippi River in Minneapolis and St. Paul. The teenagers from St. Paul were a part of the Community Design Center of Minnesota, which operates the East Side Youth Conservation Corps and Garden Corps. This provides teens with leadership, entrepreneurship, and career skills through environmental conservation and urban organic gardening.

The Minneapolis teens were recruited from high schools in north and northeast Minneapolis, by the Green Team partnership, which was formed as a partnership between the Community Design Center of Minnesota, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMQ), and the National Park Service.

Each week during their educational days, teens participating in each of these organizations were given the opportunity to learn from professionals in different fields. After learning about water resources, Metcalfe asked each teen to draw their stories about the Mississippi River onto prepared two-dimensional boat forms. Then, she made a porcelain boat for each one of the stories.

The exhibit will be held in the Concordia Gallery. After a great deal of installation, the gallery will be a display of stories, but will also include an interactive quality. Many will have the opportunity to share their own stories with the boats of the ‘Living River.’

The reception will take place on February 5th from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. It will include an introduction by Anna Metcalfe and a water bar featuring water from different venues around the Twin Cities, displaying the culture of the piece and the natural landscapes where people live.
By Tara Rupiper

Dr. Jeffrey Burkart is a creative and intelligent talent and a precious gem that Concordia has employed for 37 years. Among the many works Dr. Burkart has written (15 books and 150 published magazine articles), he has written children's books, such as The Hidden Prince. He has also created many music compositions for churches and musicians, and he continues to write plays and musicals about the Influence of God.

Recently, Dr. Burkart decided to take a different turn on the material he was writing. When I interviewed him, he said that he had always liked fables and he had happened to be discussing fables with friends. This made him think about creating a book of his own fables. Besides the fact that he likes fables, he said he wrote the book because, "It was totally for fun."

"Fifteen Cautionary Fables" is a collection of fables — short stories that usually have animals as characters, and each story has a moral. For example, one of the fables, "The Unpersuasive Owl," is about an intelligent owl who is narcissistic, thinking he is the wisest of all the "members of the Wise and Honorable Organization of Owls (WHOOO for short) . . . ," and that they should listen to him. The moral of the story is "To be successful at the art of persuasion one should refrain from rhetoric that alienates one's audience." The great thing about this book is that all of the fables, according to Dr. Burkart, are autobiographical.

I really enjoyed Dr. Burkart's new book, "Fifteen Cautionary Fables." The animals are funny, and the morals, themselves, are very thought-provoking. I even found myself reflecting on my own life and how I treat different situations. The autobiographical fables give readers a more personal look at the author and his life. I give this book 5 out of 5 Swords, because I love the cute animals, the funny interpretations, and the thought-provoking morals.

Do you like to Write? Are you in Photography or Design? Become a writer, photographer, or production assistant for The Sword. Meetings are every Wednesday from 5:30-6:00 in Luther 119. For more information, contact Charles Hone, cphnesc@csp.edu.
By Trenton Burns

Peter Jackson’s exploration of Middle Earth has finally come to an end. For over a decade, moviegoers have witnessed a grand spectacle of fantasy as Jackson and his own army of cinematic wizards brought J.R.R. Tolkien’s masterpieces to life; tales of loyalty and courage, love and friendship, good vs. evil, and the dual nature of Man — all wrapped in sweeping landscapes, a near unfathomable attention to detail, and a scale unchallenged by its predecessors. These were the hallmarks of Jackson’s painstaking efforts to bring the books to life. As the Lord of the Rings trilogy shattered box office records and received nearly every accolade the entertainment world had to offer, it seemed a no-brainer, at least as far as Hollywood was concerned, to revisit Tolkien’s world.

Jackson was seemingly reluctant at first (perhaps fatigued from nearly 20 years of working on the same set of projects), passing the project on to director, Guillermo del Toro — no slouch himself when it comes to cinematic spectacle (Hellboy 1 & 2, Pan’s Labyrinth, Pacific Rim), but the fates wouldn’t allow it. Once he was locked in to direct The Hobbit, it was announced that it would also be a trilogy. Why steer away from a tried and true formula? Franchise films are all the rage in Hollywood right now. It is better to stretch a movie out as long as possible, even if the source material is limited. Only one book to draw inspiration from? No problem, make it a trilogy anyway!

Thus we get The Hobbit: Battle of the Five Armies, the final installment in this grotesquely bloated and overly tired trilogy. If for some odd reason I was banking my own self worth on the quality and critical success of this film, I would be in dire straits. The nearly 3 hour non-stop Dwarf-on-Elf-on-Man-on-Orc mayhem lacked almost any emotional core, a problem I found consistent through Jackson’s Hobbit films. There were far too few brief, quiet moments that might give any of the characters a semblance of a soul or a more satisfying conclusion to their story arcs. Instead, what we mostly get is ugly, almost cartoonish CGI battle scenes (did the SFX guys forget to download the latest update or something or did everyone just stop caring?).

Regardless of the fact that Tolkien wrote The Hobbit for children, he crafted a far richer tapestry than what was ultimately produced. Battle of the Five Armies is the creation of a burnt out, yet otherwise incredibly talented, director that deserved a far longer break than he allowed himself. I’m glad to be done with Middle Earth, and it doesn’t sound like the Tolkien estate will be letting anyone else give it a go any time soon. Go see this film if the completionist in you demands it, but it isn’t worth its weight in the Rings of Power.
S.T.A.G.E. Highlights

By Katrina Bell

As a group where many enjoy the company and performances of those involved with the CSP theater department, S.T.A.G.E is the Student Theater Association for Greater Education. Paige Joosten has been the president of S.T.A.G.E for the past two years and has enjoyed every minute of it.

Fall 2014 was very busy for S.T.A.G.E. Along with Open Stage, which includes talented volunteers that sign up for a variety of things, such as improvisation, dance, spoken word, and much more; the annual Hauntitorium was, of course, a much anticipated event. Hosted on Halloween, the Hauntitorium was a big success. Run by S.T.A.G.E. and put together in collaboration with CSP Criminal Justice Club and Psychology Club, the Hauntitorium had rooms that featured Alice in Wonderland, Disney Princesses, Wizard of Oz, Beauty & the Beast, Hansel and Gretel, and Snow White. This past season, the Hauntitorium was more successful than it has been in recent years.

Joosten highlights spring semester 2015 of S.T.A.G.E, which will be hosting two Open Stage opportunities to showcase the talents of anyone willing to share them. It will be hosted in the Blackbox theater on February 8th, and April 12th, both at 8:42 p.m. Make sure to sign up to participate or just plan to attend. S.T.A.G.E. will also be hosting the much anticipated, “Phony awards.” These awards are a celebration of the contributions made to the department as a whole, and are a way to award those who have been involved in the theater department and S.T.A.G.E. throughout the year. These awards are partnered with skits, dances, comedic performances, and other entertainment.

For next year, S.T.A.G.E. is talking about the possibility of a cabaret, which would be a collaboration with CSP Music Club. This possibility is, according to Paige Joosten, currently in motion for future years. S.T.A.G.E is also fully prepared and amped up for another frightening and fun haunted house next Halloween. The Hauntitorium is sure to be even more successful and scary than it was in the Fall of 2014.

The goal of S.T.A.G.E is to involve theater students and students from campus in social and educational experiences which focus on theater as an art form. If you would like to know more about S.T.A.G.E, feel free to email cspstage@csp.edu.

SKYSCRAPER: The Plebian Scrolls

By Katrina Bell

Violence, love, action, comedy — all of these themes are part of this semester’s brand new and upcoming show, SKYSCRAPER: The Plebian Scrolls, by guest director Jon Ferguson and Concordia’s own Mark Rosenwinkel. Ferguson and Rosenwinkel first met in 2006, and after years of working together and knowing each other through theater, they had a mutual desire to write a play together.

An original theatre piece, this world premiere has the inspiration of television and video games. It is an epic of classical versus modern theater. More than simply a recreation of a dystopia, the stage will be turned into a modern arena of command warfare, where business suits mingle with sword battles and dramas that will leave the audience at the edge of their seats. This play communicates the struggle of people in power, and the struggle for power. Stage Manager Mikaela Vogland states, “Think the Office meets Game of Thrones.”

Ferguson says, “There is a fast pace quality to it that isn’t always seen in other plays. Cool stuff happens, not all endings are tied up, and there is a lot of violence, but it isn’t graphic violence, it’s more situational theater violence, the idea of violence.”

When it comes to the creation of the play, Vogland says, “The script is still in writing, actually. And it is pretty cool because the cast gets to have input on the play, as well. We all bounce around ideas and sometimes we just go with the personality of the actor and that determines it.”

Rosenwinkel agrees. He says, “The cast does have some space for ideas, it just depends on the details of the story.”

The play is a stringing together of action and psychological realism, often seen in video games, and it also involves an epic soundtrack, created and run by Jeremy Rosenwinkel, Mark’s son. Both Rosenwinkel and Ferguson highlight the fact that the two strongest characters are women, which begs the question, will there be an epic catfight?

The play is set to open on Thursday February 19th at 7:30 p.m., continues on Friday Feb. 20th and Saturday Feb. 21st at 7:30 p.m., and has a final performance on Sunday, Feb. 22nd at 3:00 p.m.

Tickets can be obtained by calling (TicketWorks at 612-343-3390 or online at csp.edu/tickets). While CSP students get in for free, tickets are $10 for adults, $5 for Students from other schools, Seniors, Children under 12*, and CSP Faculty & Staff. The play will be performed at the E.M. Pearson Theater.

Despite the many questions surrounding this intriguing new play, one thing is for certain, it will be an epic performance! When February 19th finally comes, be sure to attend. There is something in it that everyone will enjoy.

*This play is NOT recommended for children under the age of 13.
High School Honors Exhibition

By Katrina Bell

The annual invitational exhibition, showcasing artwork from outstanding local high school programs was being hosted in the Concordia Gallery from Thursday January 15 through January 28, 2015. The gallery included astounding, meaningful pieces done by graduating seniors. The high schools: Trinity, Highland, Perpich, and Simley were all privileged to be a part of the annual invitational.

Each school involved was asked to submit eight to ten of their best pieces. The art teachers of each school chose the pieces that they believed were exceptional and unique. With a variety of art including digital photography, charcoal, drawings, watercolors, and a great deal of self-portraits, the exhibit was intriguing and diverse.

Dr. Cheryl Chapman attended the opening of the gallery on January 15, 2015, "I’m amazed at the ability of the high school students. It definitely shows the interest of the students along with their acquired talents." Referencing the honorably mentioned ‘Chicken Scratch’ by Catherine Tsombley, Chapman said, “There is so much detail in the piece, and it makes you wonder how it came out. I just wonder what’s behind the mind of the artist, because so many things drive the mind.”

Professor Keith Williams introduced the gallery and awarded many of the high school students for their outstanding art and dedication to their trade interests. Fifteen of the high school students received honorable mentions, and the artistic directors of Concordia came together to decide on five winners that they believed were the most unique and evocative.

The fifth through third place winners received a $25 gift card for “Blick Art Materials” and the second and first place winners received a $50 gift card for Blick Art Materials.

5th place went to Astraëa Smart for her piece: Ambiguous. This piece was chosen because it was, as said by Prof. Williams, "conceptually deep on a variety of levels.”

4th place was bestowed to the intricate collaborative by Lillian Berg, Rachael Kass, Sophia Sheehan, and Emma Vega Martinez. This piece was distinguished by Professor Williams as, "exquisite and different.”

3rd place was given to Jae Shin Cross for her artistic photo book: Safety Net. Professor Cate Vermeland outlined this piece as, “edgy and sophisticated. Very personal, but relatable.”

2nd place went to Eva Janke Furman for her piece: Cretaceous Period, A.D.. Prof. Williams described it as, “Thoughtful and brilliant.”

1st place was given to Allie Michaeellynn for her piece: The Wanderer, Prof. Williams stated that she won first place due to the fact that she, "stayed with the theme, created a thoughtful piece and in doing so, nailed the human condition.”

All were honored and Concordia is proud to showcase the artwork of such incredible talents.
Art Spotlight
Celene Paez

By Katrina Bell

“I am only where I am because I didn’t give up on trying to improve my abilities. I always sought ways to improve my abilities and myself. People always said I was good at art, and the only reason, really, was because I was dedicated to practicing. If you love doing something, you have to practice to get better.” Celene Paez found herself interested in art, “pretty much since [she] could color.” During her time growing up in Bloomington, Ill., Paez went to private school and took the regular art classes that they provide. She was able to explore the many mediums and different ways of creating art.

Although Paez has not had any specific teachers or instructors that have inspired her more than another, she has received encouragement and support from her family, friends, and teachers. This helped her develop her artistic abilities.

When it comes to a favorite art medium, she “like[s] a lot of things. I think [she]’m best at pencil, but painting is fun and so are pastels.” Her style is primarily geared toward Japanese manga, or anime art, but she also enjoys still life. Paez has been recognized 3rd place in her district for the Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest in 2014, and has also been awarded 1st place for the McLean County Soil and Water Stewardship Poster Contest in May 2014.

Although she chose Concordia because of the diverse community and Lutheran denomination, Paez is pleased with the variety of the art program. She plans for a career in Art Therapy, which would allow her to help all ages. Very few U.S. colleges provide this major, Concordia included. But with dedication, she has created an academic solution, resulting in a Psychology major and Studio Art minor, which will eventually take her to graduate school. The end goal? A career she loves that features her passions for art and people.

February Crossword

By Tara Rupiper

ACROSS
4 February’s Season
7 The Sweetest Day
8 February 2 is ______ Day
9 A holiday celebrating our leaders
10 Our first President

DOWN
1 President Abraham ________
2 February is the ______ month
3 Happens every four years (two words)
5 Valentine’s Day is named after this saint
6 February is ______ month
Valentine’s Word Search

By Tara Rupiper

ecfleurosepulocarn
ahiehrsrewolfyscie
tfourteenthesredhot
valentine'sdaydroka
stvalentineutenpicad
thbowandarrowrhboki
rvvchdneobopreheldp
aeouaoisessiknkvunu
eeegnvrbfcsentsuotrc
hsrcedrbdsksklfulewt

St. Valentine
Crush
Valentine’s Day
Adore
Love
Flirt
Chocolate
Eros
Flowers
Fourteenth
Date
Bow and Arrow
Card
Red
Pink
Kisses
Hearts

Lovebirds
Hugs
Couples
Roses
Sweetheart
February
Cupid

Comic

By Andrew Toelle