Six Seconds to Fame

By Kyle Grim
Contributing Writer

Six seconds is a short time to do anything. Bryan Raymond used that time to make people laugh on Vine. Vine is a social media site launched in 2013 that hosts short video clips. Each video can last up to six seconds.

Users make a variety of videos whether they are comedic or informational. The site quickly grew in popularity, branching out from iPhones to Androids.

Raymond discovered Vine after his friends introduced him to the app. “I used to make Vines in school to entertain my friends by doing and saying dumb stuff,” he said. “Until I realized you can do so much more with it.”

Raymond has done a lot on Vine. His account, LifeWithBryan, has over 130,000 followers. Raymond began obtaining followers by using another form of social media. He used Twitter to promote his videos and this helped people to find him on Vine.

“I try to keep it pretty consistent by posting a couple videos throughout the week so that my follower count will keep growing and growing because they can expect a vine on my page at least once,” Raymond said. Raymond is still developing a strategy for his personal brand. “As of right now, I don’t really have a goal with Vine,” he said. “I’m just kind of making them as I go along and trying to get more followers as well as accumulate more money from companies who want me to advertise on my page.”

As of right now, Raymond has received several small sponsor who ask him to collaborate and promote their products. These sponsors consist of several apps such as Badoo or Hot or Not, as well as apparel companies like Jord Watches and Recognize.

Raymond has been asked to promote K-Mart and is looking to create a promotional Vine soon. The possibility of a bigger future is never far from Raymond’s mind. He tries not to dwell on it.

“It would be nice to be able to get an acting career or be placed on TV shows like some Viners and maybe move out to LA,” he said. “But I’m not dreaming that big.”

Raymond has a variety of famous followers. “I know that Michael Jackson’s son follows me on Vine,” he said. “Kyrie Irving the basketball player and Rhio Thomas (Zero from the movie ‘Holes’) have both revined one of my Vines, and both Drake Bell and Tyga have tweeted my vines.”

Vines seem to run in Raymond’s family. Bryan’s younger brother Brandon, better known by his Vine alias, Bump on the Head, has six seconds to fame as well.

Picture Credit: Courtesy of Dr. Caroline Fitzpatrick

Santo Domingo Needs “Sustainable Communities”

By Alexis Bendyna
Contributing Writer

Are you interested in learning about a foreign culture? Does having an opportunity to study abroad for a short period of time at a low cost appeal to you? If the answer is yes, you may want to consider taking Alvernia University’s spring course, “Sustainable Communities: Santo Domingo.”

This course is team-taught by Alvernia University’s assistant professor of Biology Dr. Adam Heinz and assistant professor of English and Communication Dr. Caroline Fitzpatrick.

Throughout the course students acquire skills on voter analysis and filtration, English as a Second Language (ESL) training and grant writing. For the grant writing portion of the course students will be collaborating with the grant writing office of the Bernardine Sisters on existing grant applications.

The class culminates with a 10-day service trip to the Bernardine Sisters’ mission in the Dominican Republic’s capital of Santo Domingo.

First Year Seminar Makes an Impression

By Madelyn Johnston
Contributing Writer

As the fall semester ends, winter and spring semesters are right around the corner, and by now students have finalized their schedules. Winter and spring semesters give first year students an opportunity to continue their educational career with the same major or change it.

Students at Alvernia know it has a diverse array of majors, from Sports Management to Biology to Theater Studies. However, certain majors are much more popular than others.

For example, out of Alvernia’s 28 undergraduate majors, much of the 2014 First Year Class chose Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Criminal Justice, Business and Education. In fact, students in those five majors make up 52% of the 2014 First Year Class.

Almost 30% of the First Year Class comes from Pre-Nursing, Psychology, Athletic Training, Undecided, and...
Flynn Files: Get Engaged

In my last column, I reported the results of the Gallup national study of 30,000 college graduates. They confirmed what many have long suspected: It’s not where you go to college that matters for your future success and long-term well-being; it’s what you do while you’re there.

According to Gallup, active engagement by students is THE key. It is not enough simply to study hard and complete assigned tasks. Students should pursue opportunities for engagement best suited to their learning and personal growth: Internships, field placements, or academic research, especially with a professor; academic and social clubs; chorus or theater, athletics, or other activities; or at Alvernia, community service projects or a role as a tutor; OWL, RA, first-year mentor; tour guide; student ambassador.

Over time, many students do not simply join these efforts. They lead them. On our campus, beyond the minimum community service expected of all undergraduates, 86% of students are involved in a co-curricular organization, club, team, or project; 70% are active in two or more. Best of all, many range widely and join a varsity team and SGA or serve as a tour guide, a peer mentor, and/or an officer in their academic club or work in the South Reading Youth Initiative and as a student ambassador and student campus minister.

Here’s a sampling of active and engaged Alvernia All-Stars! See http://alvernia.meritpage.com for many others.

Jenna Harper, an OT major is an SGA officer, OWL, varsity lacrosse athlete, and student ambassador and can also be found—camera in hand—shooting pictures for the Sports Information Office. Andy Kaucher is dedicated to his English major, to Sigma Tau Delta (one of our nationally visible academic societies) and to community service in Reading and can also be found—brush in hand—in his Goggleworks art studio. He also found time to call me out for the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge!

Rob Waller, an Iraq veteran, accounting major, and Holleran Fellow is one of the students who led the development of our Bog Turtle Creek Farm and is active in other environmental projects and in our Alternative Break programs.

Ashley Winters, an elementary and special education major involved in the Education Association and as a tutor in the Learning Center, is another Holleran Fellow who has been a leader in the South Reading Youth Initiative and a key person in the launch of the Reading Collegate Scholars Program. Kelli Finn is an OT major active in her academic association (SOTA) and another third-year RA, oversees all freshman learning communities and serves as a head tutor for the Learning Center in addition to helping out as a tour guide and ambassador.

Janessa Rasmus, a nursing major, combines leadership roles as an RA, student campus minister, and member of Alvernia Sexual Assault Prevention Peers (ASAPP).

Broanna Whitten, a behavioral health major with minors in psychology and music, leads our flute ensemble, plays French horn in the band and is the work study staff in the Fine and Performing Arts Department as well as president of Hooked on Helping and secretary for the Veteran’s Club.

Mylen Ruppert, an early childhood education major and two-sport athlete (track and cross country) recently chosen for the highly selective Marine Corps Officers Program, is an officer of the Ethnic Awareness Society and Active Minds and serves as a peer mentor and Diversity Committee member.

Amanda Galanit, a sport management major and another two-sport athlete (field hockey and softball), has been a team captain and a member of the Student Athlete and Intramural Advisory Boards (SAAC and IAB) as well as being active in the Sports Management Association.

Brielle Gincey, a transfer student marketing major working to launch a campus chapter of the American Marketing Association, is a Holleran Fellow active both in environmental (Bog Creek Turtle farm) and inner city education (South Reading Youth Initiative) issues and has helped found Alpha Phi Omega.

Andy Harrington (aka Spiderman), a Health Care Science major and vice president of the Science Association, is a third-year RA who works in Student Financial Planning and also serves as a mentor, volunteers at St. Joe’s Hospital and the Highlands, and participates in the CureSader and Veterans clubs.

Actively engaged students are happy and satisfied students too. A recent extensive survey of our students found 9 of 10 seniors and an astonishing 98% of last year’s freshman satisfied or very satisfied with their Alvernia experience. To say the obvious, those profiled above are a few of the countless examples of Alvernia students (soon to be proud alumni) who are “Doing Well and Doing Good.”

Peace and All Good, Tom Flynn

What does PERFECT JOY mean to you?

St. Francis liked to add adjectives to emphasize the meaning of words so he could convey his significance to those he preached to and with. Perfect Joy is a Franciscan term often used when things aren’t even close to being perfect as a reminder to carry on in a joyful, humble and patient way. To persevere, to be joyful and find joy despite any challenging circumstance. In what ways are you living perfect joy?

Many display a nativity, manger scene, also called a crèche, around Christmas to visually depict the birth of Jesus. Did you know this is attributed to St. Francis of Assisi?! In 1223 in a town of Greccio, St. Francis wanted to reenact the events in Bethlehem to rouse the hearts of those weak in the faith. This incarnation approach of using very concrete means to awaken peoples faith is central to Franciscan heritage. The Incarnation is the embodiment of Jesus human and divine nature. At Christmas we are reminded of the humanity of Christ, of Emmanuel or God With Us. How might you be more aware of God’s presence in your life?
Major Choices (Continued from Pg. 1)

Healthcare Science majors. The remaining 18% comes from all other declared majors. But why are some majors more popular than others? Director of Undergraduate Admissions Dan Hartzman thinks that a lot of that decision takes place well before students enter college. "Students know what they want to do and what they want to be," he said. "That major of choice is probably a combination of something they enjoy and that has good career prospects coming out of it." Incoming students generally agree with Hartzman about their choices of major. Sandra Smith is a first year student in forensic science. "I was always good at science in high school and it interested me," she said. Smith changed her mind about her major after realizing that the amount of science she had to learn was too much for her to handle. Smith instead moved to Criminal Justice, where she can pursue her interest in a way that fits her aptitudes. "I wanted to be the one who found out how [a crime] was done," she said. "I can do that in CJ without getting overwhelmed with science. I could catch the person who did it and I'm told I'm good with people." First year student Blaise Kabbeko says that his desire to advance the minds of others was what drove him to Secondary Education. "I wanted to go into a profession that I could present information, be able to teach it, and help people intellectually as opposed to helping people in a health care or law enforcement related area." Students later in their academic careers can also find themselves wanting a new direction. Caitlin Miller, a junior, switched from Communications to Psychology based on her interests. "I wasn't enjoying what I was learning," she said. [At the same time] I was becoming fascinated by the human mind, and I knew that [Psychology] was what I wanted to learn." Junior Healthcare Science major Joshua Stevens found that he wanted a major that was rewarding and could lead him on a good career path. "There are a lot of possibilities with this major as far as career choices go," Stevens said. "The course load prepares us for getting a head start in the healthcare field." However, some students may still have their doubts as to whether or not they are fully satisfied with their major. What they may be overlooking is the opportunity to take a minor. "I think minoring in either Communications or Psychology is often overlooked," Hartzman said. "It can be for their job markets or what the students enjoy learning. Also, they refused to feel obligated to stay with or choose a major that did not satisfy them." It is best that students major in what they enjoy and know where their major is taking them. As the late George Burns said, "I'd rather be a failure at something I enjoy than a success at something I hate."
More Than a Bump on the Head

By Gabrielle Valenti
Editor

A concussion can have life-altering consequences. While most of us think that concussions are mostly problems for athletes, anyone can suffer from them.

Dr. Jodi Radosh, associate professor of Communication and Associate Director of the Holleran Center, suffered a serious concussion in July 2013. She visited the hospital weekly for ocular, physical, and vestibular therapy to help her motion sensitivity, neck pain and eye problems.

The doctors and therapists at Bryn Mawr helped Dr. Radosh understand what happened to her and that she had knocked out her vestibular system, which was affecting the gaze stabilization of her eyes.

“I didn’t understand what was happening to me before going to rehab,” she said.

“My therapists helped explain everything to me. I finally understood I had very bad concussion and it could take a long while before I was myself again.”

“It’s more than 15 months since the injury and she is finally getting her life back on track. She is not where she was prior to the accident but she is on her way.”

Dr. Radosh is very happy to be back on campus this semester; her neurologist has cleared her to return to campus.

“A concussion can have for some and providing the support they need. I wholeheartedly realize the importance of being heard and understood especially since people with concussions look “normal” on the outside. Often, others may not recognize the seriousness of those affected by concussions; therefore, validation is critical.”

Dr. Radosh wants to continue raising as much awareness about this as possible.

“If anyone is suffering from a concussion please contact me. I would be happy to help in any way I can. It’s much more than just a bump on the head.”
Six Seconds to Fame (Continued from Pg. 1)

Childish Brandino, has over 450,000 followers from his own Vines.

Bryan relishes a time spent vining with his little brother because of the chemistry they have as siblings. Bryan and Brandon have enjoyed a lot of success when vining together.

“I love vining with my brother a lot,” Raymond said. “It’s so easy to get it done since we both envision it the same way. Since he’s my brother and all, we kind of have that chemistry going for us. Also, usually one out every three vines we make together ends up doing really well and that’s always nice too.”

Raymond loves Vine and everything that it comes with it, but has prioritized school over pushing his Vine career. “I still have to focus on school right now.”

You can find and following Raymond on Vine by searching for him at LifeWithBryan.

The Pen is Mightier than the Sword

By Maeve McGhee
Contributing Writer

Dr. Rachael Zeleny is a professor on a mission to help Crusaders write better.

“I want to establish the visibility of writing initiatives on campus,” Dr. Zeleny said.

Alvernia hired Dr. Zeleny this year to serve as both the Writing Program Director and an Assistant Professor of English.

Dr. Zeleny went to University of Delaware and James Madison. She became involved with teaching first as a graduate student, later as a high school teacher and then again while pursuing her PhD.

As a doctoral student, Dr. Zeleny worked in the writing center, co-taught their pedagogy course for writing instructors and worked as an assistant to the athletic program so as to provide extra support for students who needed one-on-one guidance.

Dr. Zeleny is running a "Teaching Tutoring" class next semester. The goal of developing the course is to help students be better tutors to their peers.

This will also improve the level of feedback from the learning center, instead of just having students go there for grammar issues they might be having.

The student tutors will be able to meet with faculty and learn their lesson plan. When students ask those tutors for help, they will have knowledge of what the professor is asking for, and be able to provide the best assistance.

Dr. Zeleny also plans to start a satellite class to help students reach out to tutors more easily. One of the goals of the classes is to have students feel more comfortable getting help with their papers. The other goal is to have convenient tutoring for students wherever they may be on campus.

Aside from helping students write better, Dr. Zeleny also wants to reach out to faculty. She intends to run workshops for faculty to help them develop ways of better teaching the kind of writing that their majors need.

“As I grew older I have learned that teaching writing isn’t just about essays; it is a means of empowering students to express themselves, advocate for themselves, pursue careers, declare love, and assert their place in a world that is changing by the minute.” Dr. Zeleny said.
Cheese-Takes And Mistakes: A Culinary Journey

By Preston Moser
Contributing Writer

South Philadelphia revolves around two essential things: Sports and food. South Philly is defined by the Eagles and the working man. flyers and 76ers just as much as Pat’s Geno’s, and Jim’s. Philadelphia fans are united within the stadium or arena, but when it comes to cheesesteaks, it’s a house divided.

A part of getting a cheesesteak is one of the essentials when visiting Philadelphia, as is going to see the LOVE statue and running up the “Rocky steps” of the Philadelphia Art Museum.

As getting a cheese steak is important to getting the full Philadelphia experience, so is picking a favorite cheesesteak joint.

From the infamous corner of South 9th Street and Passyunk avenue, to the shops of South Street, the cheesesteak industry offers many similarities, but also their unique differences. Whether its customer service, to simply the famous taste of Cheez Whiz and meat on a hoagie roll. Options are critical, for new comers or first timers, knowing how to order your cheesesteak is a valuable skill. A cheesesteak novice must know what kind of cheese (Cheez Whiz, American, or provolone) they want. Newbies also need to know whether they want onions or no onions, properly pronounced “wid or widdout” in the streets of Philadelphia.

Some might wonder who has the best cheesesteaks in Philadelphia, so myself and my first year friend, Kevin Walsh, Stefanie McLaughlin, and Deyon Taylor went downtown to see for ourselves. We ranked the cheesesteaks using three categories, taste, presentation, and customer service. The first place we went to was Geno’s, the best cheesesteak in the world.

Right after I polished off my Geno’s, my friends and I stumbled our way across the street into what seemed like a new neighborhood. We all sat down and began eating our Pat’s and as soon as we could get the sandwiches out of the wrapper, we made a decision to order a whole cheesesteak after doing this, I feel like I have lived in the Philadelphia area for my whole life. It isn’t just cheesesteaks, but an experience I will never forget.

Alexis Benton’s Total Transformation

By Junior Bernard
Editor

What does it take to be a nationally competitive bikini contender?

“It takes a lot of dedication and self motivation, as well as self-control.” Alexis Benton said. “You have to be able to say no parties and time out for me was food. I’d see my friends eating ice cream and donuts; I’d have no choice but to say no.”

“Besides developing a better body shape and definitions, maintaining a carefully calculated diet is necessary for fitness. Things I’d consume were mainly protein shakes, vegetables and lots of meat multiple times a day.”

Benton goes further to explain that the average person eats between 1800 to 2200 calories a day. “During the beginning of training I ate around 1700 to 1800 a day” Benton said.

“When I started to cut weight, I reduced it to about 1500 calories.” Benton has since risen up the ranks. She competed in the first time as a bikini competitor on June 28 at the NPC South Jersey Championship.

Alexis Benton is determined to win even greater honors. Benton’s success qualified her for nationals. As of now, the dates for the upcoming championships have yet to be released. However, Benton is determined to win her next competition with even greater honors.

“This time I will train harder and stay more focused because this is just the beginning of an amazing journey,” she said.
## The Man Behind the Microphone

By Brian O'Shaughnessy

**Classifying Writer**

“FOR THREEEEE” is one of the signature calls that defines Crusader basketball’s play-by-play announcer. Many students love how much excitement that rumbling call brings to the game, but few know his name. Mark Piekarski is the Director of Annual Giving at Alvernia and he is the voice of your Alvernia Crusaders.

Piekarski began calling games at Marian High School in Indiana, after a season-ending knee injury ended his sophomore basketball season. “My High School didn’t have a public address announcer for a game,” Piekarski said. “and since I was done for the year and knew I wasn’t gonna be able to play, they asked me if I could fill in and I filled in for the rest of the year.”

After working for and calling games at SUNY Oneonta in New York for seven years, Piekarski moved to Alvernia in May of 2012 and accepted the Director of Annual Giving Position. After hearing that Piekarski was coming to Alvernia, The Sports Information Director at SUNY Oneonta called Jon King, Alvernia’s Sports Information Director, and highly recommended him.

After talking with King, Piekarski agreed to call the games for Alvernia’s basketball teams.

His reward: All the Diet Coke he can drink during the games.

**Editor’s Note:** While Mark Piekarski gets all the Diet Coke he can drink for his stellar play-by-play work, students will still need to purchase their own refreshments when attending Crusader home games.

“We’re lucky to have a professional like Mark to handle public address at our home basketball games,” King said.

“He’s reliable, he entertains the crowd, and he’s genuinely invested in not only what he’s doing behind the mic, but also how our teams are doing on the floor.”

“It’s a blast,” Piekarski said. “You get the best seat in the house.”

Piekarski is not only appreciated by the home crowd but by the visitors as well. “I’ve had parents of the players on opposing teams come down after games and tell me that they liked the way I call a game,” Piekarski said.

Piekarski believes that the reason he’s good at calling games is because of his experience playing basketball in high school. “It’s easier for me to call games because I can anticipate what’s gonna go on by what I see on the court,” Piekarski said.

“I’ve been told that I’m faster at calling a game than most people.”

During his two and a half years at Alvernia, Piekarski has attended over 500 local sporting events, including Alvernia’s basketball games.

As Alvernia prepares for another season, Piekarski encourages all Alvernia fans to come out for the games and cheer on their Crusaders.

“There’s nothing more fun than being a public address announcer when the building is full.”

## The King of Sports Information Reigns Over Alvernia

By Lamont Clark

**Editor**

A lot of people come to the sporting events here at Alvernia University. The majority of those people do not know what goes on behind the scenes of those sporting events.

The Sports Information Director is the one doing most of the work behind the scenes.

The man with that responsibility at Alvernia is Jon King. King and his crew do a great job broadcasting each sport. They keep the record books and take stats of all sports.

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The new pressbox on the turf field stands vigil over the Crusader field. The press box is great,” Jon King said.

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First Year Seminar Makes an Impression on Students

By Genesis Ciriaco
Contributing Writer

Transitionaling from high school to college can be a challenging obstacle. Alvernia’s First Year Seminar program helps first year students successfully undergo this transition.

College is much different from high school. A new college student has to take responsibility for their education, including going to class and keeping up with a heavy workload. They are no longer on an “all day” schedule and they don’t have teachers reminding them when assignments are due. Tests and projects are weighed more than attendance and participation.

Some courses do not have an attendance policy, meaning some students can interpret this as a class they do not have to attend.

FYS encourages students to attend every class, rewrite notes and stay organized, syllabus, how to take notes, think critically and how to manage their time. With Alvernia’s FYS program, first year students are welcomed into the university life with open arms. FYS teaches students the “ins and outs” of college and the values of a liberal arts school.

“We try to give the students more than just a four year college career” Dr. Muzevich said.

“We teach them Francisian values with our liberal arts school in order to help them become a well-rounded person.”

“We strive to give the students more than just a major; we offer diverse courses and promote various activities in order to get them involved with the school. This gives them networking skills and an idea as to what they are ‘called to do’ once they graduate.”

Beyond classroom time, FYS instructors send students to use credit cards wisely or stay away from them all together. He gives tips on budgeting and saving one’s money.

The purpose of Deitz’s presentation is to help the students decrease their anxiety of college debt and making sure that their financial worries are taken care of.

Another lecture all the first year students were required to attend was the Coach Smallwood lecture on October 30. Mike “Coach” Smallwood from the Rodale Institute discussed how organic food can both feed and save the world at the same time.

Besides organic food, he encouraged everyone in the room to make a change and be a leader. The first year students learned that change starts with them. FYS also integrates peer mentors. A peer mentor serves as a big brother/sister to the first year student.

In mentoring new students into successful Alvernia graduates and build a strong bond with them.

in mentoring new students into successful Alvernia graduates and build a strong bond with them.

A recent survey by the peer mentors were given to the first year students. So far, the feedback has been positive. Aside from the early timing of the course, the first year students enjoy FYS and find it to be very helpful. They are gaining writing skills, building bonds and are on the road to successful paths.

“I feel really comfortable here,” Dayshaun Dennis, a biology major, said. “I feel like faculty is willing to help, which is always a good thing.”

FYS and find it to be very helpful. They are gaining writing skills, building bonds and are on the road to successful paths.

“Expectations are much higher in college compared to high school,” Dr. Kathleen Muzevich said. Dr. Muzevich is the First Year Seminar Director.

“We try to help the freshmen become self-determined learners. This includes showing them how to understand a course to various events in which they write reflection papers about afterward. These events include how to use MyAlvernia to talk about financial literacy, a “majors meeting” and a structured visit to the library.

For instance, Jason Deitz, a financial consular gives a lecture on how to stay out of debt in college. He shares his college experience with credit card debt and warns students to use credit cards wisely or stay away from them all together. He gives tips on budgeting and saving one’s money.

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FYS encourages students to attend every class, rewrite notes and stay organized.
**Be Creative and Spend Less This Holiday Season**

By Marisa Then  
Contributing Writer

Are you sick of spending so much money on the holidays? There are many ways you can create gifts without spending a fortune. Homemade gifts come from the heart and will be most treasured by your loved ones.

“I personally prefer to make homemade gifts over buying gifts because I feel like they have more meaning to them,” Rosemarie Thress, senior said. “Store bought items are too impersonal.”

Since winter is on its way, one great gift idea is crocheting a hat, scarf or gloves. You could even make a sweater or a blanket a few stitches for about $5 to $10. Store and buy yarn and a set of hooks. You can make a hat, scarf or gloves. You can make a hat, scarf or gloves. A pair of mittens or a scarf could win in four different categories: Cutest, Scariest, Funniest, and Best Overall.

Most individuals love sweaters, and the holidays are the best time to bake cookies, sweets, and other desserts. A can of goodies is always an exciting gift. You could also put the mix in a jar and hand it to your friends and family. They can make their own any time they want.

“One year I baked gingerbread men for my boyfriend’s girlfriend and she absolutely loved it,” Thress said. “Every year at Christmas she puts it back on her recliner chair.”

One valuable gift could be written poems. If you’re familiar with someone’s favorite songs and artists, you could make them a mixed tape or CD. These days, people mostly rely on electronic, such as iPhones and Pandora for music, but CDs and tapes are still used at home and in cars. Give your friends and family something good to listen to while they’re driving instead of the same songs that are played over and over again on the radio.

Danielle Avington, a senior, received a CD from a friend in the past. “These are the songs we use to hear on the radio and sing at the top of our lungs while we were in the car,” Avington said. “It was a wonderful gift because every time I hear these songs it brings me back to the times we drove to play practice when we were in stage crew together.”

Meaningful photographs are also great assets to consider for the holidays. Why not create a collage? Pictures are always fun to look back and smile at and even better as decorations on walls.

Instead of buying an expensive bracelet or necklace, make one yourself. This is especially good for younger kids. Most of them enjoy making beaded jewelry for others. So receiving some is bound to put a smile on their face.

“My best friend made a friendship bracelet for me when she moved far away,” Melissa Baker, 5th year Occupational Therapy student, said.

Most individuals love sweaters, and the holidays are the best time to bake cookies, sweets, and other desserts. A can of goodies is always an exciting gift. You could also put the mix in a jar and hand it to your friends and family. They can make their own any time they want.

“One year I baked gingerbread men for my boyfriend’s side of the family. They thought they were delicious,” Thress said. Your significant other may appreciate thoughtful gifts more than anyone else.

One thing you can do is create coupons. For example, one could offer a free back rub or a movie night with their choice of movie.

The holidays can be tough challenging when it comes to spending money. However, these ideas are bound to make anyone happy.

“I’d rather someone make me something nice than spend $50,” Thress said.

For more information about inexpensive gift ideas, contact Marisa Then at marisa.then@alvernia.edu. She would love to hear from you.

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**Carving the Way to Halloween**

By Sabrina Case  
Contributing Writer

Alvernia students carved, shaved, stabbed, and scraped their way to Halloween as part of the Annual Pumpkin Carving Competition.

The Annual Pumpkin Carving Competition has become a staple of Halloween on campus in the past, and this year was no different.

Students from the 3D art classes as well as other classes used their own unique designs. They ranged from traditional jack-o-lanterns to sea turtles.

Some students chose to carve their pumpkins while a few people also used a shaving technique to take away layers of the pumpkin and create a 3D design with different colors.

The student’s pumpkins could win in four different categories: Cutest, Scariest, Funniest, and Best Overall.

Sydni Gajewski’s pumpkin won the category of cutest, Fordiane S Jean-Philippe won funniest, Sharenee Tolentino won Scariest, and Cassandra Noray’s pumpkin won Best Overall.

Although pumpkin carving seems like a long running tradition at Alvernia, the idea actually originated hundreds of years ago in Ireland. It started out as the carving of various foods to keep the evil spirits away.

Next Halloween when you sit down to carve a pumpkin, just remember that you have the Irish and a clever man by the name of Stingy Jack to thank for the fun and unique tradition.

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Photos courtesy of Marisa Then
Finals Week: Laughing or Crying?

By Samantha Marino
Contributing Writer

Get ready: Finals are upon us.

While some students see little to fear, other students find finals to be the scariest things possible.

As a first year student, you have no idea what to expect. Many first years have to confront both being in a new place for the first time and facing college level assignments. Fortunately, seniors have techniques and tips to get through finals in one piece.

One challenge for first year students is the intimidation factor. The possibility of reviewing all the material they learned over the semester can be overwhelming.

“Now that I am in my senior year of college finals don’t seem to intimidate me the way they used to when I was a freshman,” Alexis Bendy, senior communications major, said.

“I have sat through so many finals throughout my college career to know what I need to do to obtain a good grade.”

Another issue first year students have is figuring out which way of studying works best for them. Even thinking about preparing can be scary.

“Beginning to study weeks in advance, forming a study group, getting a good night sleep before the final and eating a healthy fulfilling breakfast the morning of the final are all ways to boost your score,” Bendyna said.

Nutrition and getting enough sleep is critical to student success. Having the right amount of sleep and a healthy breakfast will help you retain your studied information.

A fun event to attend for anybody would be the late night breakfast the cafeteria offers during finals week. It is a good time to hang out with friends and relax a little bit.

Seniors clearly have the advantage because they have experienced all of this before, they know what to expect especially if they have had the professor before.

During your years in the college students learn to handle each final differently, they can prepare differently if needed.

“Over my four years here I have learned that sitting and reading through a textbook is not my way of studying,” Heather MacNamara, senior communications major said.

“I succeed when I use note cards and have a study group to help me grasp concepts that I didn’t fully understand when they were being taught.”

Having the ability to form a study group can give students various ways of reviewing the information from the course. It can help a student relax when preparing for finals week as well.

By Mikailleigh Baker
Contributing Writer

Alvernia University is a great place for someone to learn what they came to this campus to learn, but when it comes to weekends, it gets bland with not much to do.

Yes, Student Activities, Campus Ministry, CAB, etc. plans events but they are usually at night. There are sports, as well, but not everyone goes to them or into sports.

Because of these various factors I have heard several students on campus complain about the absence of activity.

“I know, if students are old enough to go out they do but otherwise the campus is vacant. If it is in the mornings, before 11 a.m. or noon on Saturday or Sunday, it is the same way. No one is out around campus, except for the occasional lone soul just kind of wandering around.

As stated before, there are events held, and there are e-mails sent out, but I know I get so many e-mails in one day that they all get deleted at one time. Because of this, I do not necessarily see the events’ e-mail. The people who do look at those e-mails are those who attend everything and have so much school spirit.

Those who have extra-curricular school spirit go to most of the events, especially the themed ones like Maroon and Gold Night. But why don’t many people have this spirit, as well?

At other schools, people are crazy to show that they go there but here not so much so they do not attend events, as a result. Why?

The student body wants more events on the weekend but do not attend them. Contradictory, right? Yes.

Study groups help break up the information by assigning different members tasks. Different students may have different learning styles, which a study group can bring to the fore more easily than working alone.

Is Alvernia Boring?

By Mikailleigh Baker
Contributing Writer

Have zombies eaten all the students? No, it’s probably just before 11 a.m. on a Saturday morning.

Pros:

1. There would be less complaining about nothing to do
2. Be a more active campus
3. More opportunities
4. More school spirit will be formed

Cons:

1. Very busy
2. Complaints that it isn’t anything they want to do
3. Complaints, in general
4. A lot of work to always have something for a small campus

Will students actually attend events, if there are more? I do not know. One never knows until it is tried and so I think there should be something more than the occasional event on the weekend, events at night or just sports. There should be something more because the weekends can be boring.

2. Be a more active campus
3. More opportunities
4. More school spirit will be formed

COMING NEXT ISSUE

Fire and Ice

Some say the world will end in fire.
Some say in ice.
From what I’ve tasted in desire
I hold with those who favor fire.
But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction
Ice
Is also great
And would suffice.

-- Robert Frost

Is this eerily peaceful campus due to the influence of phantoms, or is the relative absence of people caused by an overwhelming student apathy? More importantly, do you even care enough to read this caption? Is anyone out there? Hello?

Vol. 53 Issue 3

November/December 2014
Christmas Greetings For Our Veterans

By Katelyn Evans
Editor

Americans acknowledge the sacrifices of its soldiers each year on November 11 with a variety of solemn ceremonies.

This year Mary Ann Durant, Instructor of Nursing, wanted to thank you in a special way that required the help of her students in her Health Care Science writing class.

Inspired by a Boscov’s ad that asked for the community’s help in creating or buying Christmas cards for veterans overseas, Durant decided that it was the perfect opportunity to thank veterans for their service.

“The students were ecstatic when the card idea was proposed, and several individuals even coming more than one card,” Durant said.

“The student’s ultimate reward is in the heart, knowing that she is giving a glimmer of light and hope to a veteran by making a difference in that person’s life through remembrance.”

On November 11, HM3 (FMF/SW) Maurice Stover, one of Durant’s students, presented the decorated Christmas greeting cards to (Ret.) Brian T. Johnson, Alvernia University Veteran’s Club Acting President and Project Manager of the Veteran’s Center.

Typically Health Care Science 330 is a writing course that focuses on introducing students to various writing styles and techniques.

The course covers how to build resumes, the basics of creating health care proposals, principles of reviewing literature, and a brief overview of medical terminology.

However, Professor Durant wanted to incorporate the Boscov’s campaign into her HCS 300 class because it gave her students a creative way to encourage and thank the veterans while giving them a practical way to practice writing.

Participating in Boscov’s Christmas Greetings for Veterans Overseas was a great way for Alvernia students to demonstrate the university’s core values.

The project also helped the Health Care Science department raise awareness for Alvernia’s new Veteran Center.

If you missed the chance to participate in Boscov’s Christmas Greetings for Veterans Overseas, there is still the opportunity to send a veteran a holiday greeting.

Organizations like the American Red Cross annually collect Christmas cards for veterans, more information for their Holiday Mail for Heroes drive can be found at http://www.redcross.org/support/get-involved/holiday-mail-for-heroes.

Alvernia University Veterans Club: Serving Those Who Served

By Edgar J. Hartung, M.A., J.D.
Criminal Justice Department Chair; Former Captain, U.S. Air Force

The Alvernia University Veteran’s Club was reorganized on August 8, 2013.

Alvernia University has been designated as a Veteran Friendly institution by Military Friendly Schools for the years 2013 to 2015.

The club has been an active member of the Student Veterans of America since October 2013. Although our club is relatively young, though our car shows, we have donated more than $2,500 to the Keystone Wounded Warriors.

All students, faculty, and staff are welcome to become members of the Veteran’s Club, including those who have never served in the military.

You may contact any of the club officers or advisors for information on joining and becoming an active member of the club.

The advisors for the Veteran’s Club are Jason Deitz, Assistant Director, Student Financial Planning; Edgar J. Hartung, Criminal Justice Department Chair; and Barry Harvey, Criminal Justice Professor.

Student officers include: Brian Johnson, Interim President; Heather Foreman, Vice President; Brianna Whitten, Secretary; and Casey Green, Treasurer. Mr. Curtis Stevens, Captain, U.S. Navy (Retired), a student in the Ph.D. in Leadership Program serves as the Veteran Advocate in the Veteran’s Center.

Contributing greatly to the success of the Veteran’s Club are the following individuals: Dr. Thomas Flynn, President of Alvernia University; Dr. Joseph Gicala, Vice President of University Life and Dean of Students; John McCloskey, Admissions/Vice President of Enrollment; Dr. Claire Murphy, Director of Health and Wellness, and Shanna Bosler, Undergraduate Admissions.

Our newly dedicated Veteran’s Center is located on the second floor of Bernardine Hall, across from the Career Development Center.

The funding for construction of the Center was donated by Board of Trustee member, Carl Anderson and his wife Debbie.

A debt of gratitude is owed to the Andersons and Dr. Flynn who facilitated their contribution.

The purpose of the Veteran’s Center is to provide support in a centralized manner to Alvernia University’s active military and veteran students in alignment with the Franciscan ideals of the institution.

Goals of the Center include increased recruitment and retention of this underserved population, by following the 8 Keys to Success: (1) Admission, (2) Financial Assistance, (3) Education, (4) Career Services, (5) Counseling and Mental Health, (6) Supportive Environment, (7) Personal Development, and (8) Legal Assistance.

The plan for the center was endorsed by the Board of Trustees in December, 2013, and led to the dedication and blessing of the Veteran’s Center on September 3, 2014.

As a Vietnam War combat veteran, I have a tremendous respect for military veterans. The citizens of the United States owe a debt of gratitude to these men and women.

Unless you have walked in their shoes, you may not fully understand the sacrifices they have made to ensure the freedoms we enjoy in our country.

Providing a venue for veterans to receive a college education is the least we can do for these patriotic Americans. Veterans, as a whole, are a more mature group of students and as such, are dedicated to receiving an education. They are excellent students.

However, we must be mindful that combat veterans bring with them memories of terrible events, including the loss of comrades in battle, the sacrifices of their families and issues of readjusting to civilian life.

We need to be mindful of their experiences when we have them in our classes.

“A Charge, Reserve, and Veteran students are a great resource at Alvernia University because these students fully understand the values of selfless service, moral courage, leadership, and trust,” Deborah Geiger, Criminal Justice Adjunct Professor, and retired Colonel, United States Army said.

“The care and services that the Alvernia community provides to those that served our Nation is visible throughout the campus and is embodied in the Franciscan idea of compassionate love and servant to all.”

“I believe the veteran population on campus will continue to grow as our Nation’s most treasured resource—the military members—discover the commitment and tradition at Alvernia and embrace the care mission of knowledge joined with love.”

Alvernia University Veteran’s Club Acting President.

ABOVE: HM3 (FMF/SW) Maurice Stover (left), one of Durant’s students, presented the decorated Christmas greeting cards to (Ret.) Brian T. Johnson (right), Alvernia University Veteran’s Club Acting President.

RIGHT: A QR Code for the Red Cross “Holiday Mail for Heroes” program.
Graduate and Adult Education

Winter Session
Starts December 15th & January 5th

Winter One (Dec. 15th–Jan. 16th)
Undergraduate and Adult Education:
- ART 190-W1: Introduction to Digital Photography
- BIO 109-W1: Human Biology
- BIO 203-W1: Biosphere
- COM 290 or ENG 290-W1/W2: North American Folklore & Culture
- ENG 103-W1: Introduction to Poetry
- HIS 112-W1: The Study of American History
- PED 304-W1: Wellness for Life
- PHI 105-W1/W2: Introduction to Philosophy
- PHI 210-W1: Professional Ethics
- PSY 101-W1: Introductory Psychology
- PSY 208-W1: Human Development Across the Life Span
- SOC 111-W1: Principles of Sociology
- THE 105-W1/W2: Foundations of Theology
- THE 210-W1: Medical Moral Theology
- THE 225-W1: Global Issues: Gospel Perspective

Graduate:
- COR 520-W1: Ethics and Moral Leadership
- MBA 502-W1: Accounting for the Workplace
- MBA 506-W1: Economics & Finance
- MBA 520-W1: Marketing Services

Winter Two (Jan. 5th–Jan. 16th)
Undergraduate and Adult Education:
- MAT 208-W2: Introductory Statistics

Interested in getting ahead this winter break? Then stay on course by taking advantage of Alvernia’s Winter Session. Courses are offered in accelerated formats: Online and Blended.

Register today online at www.alvernia.edu/winter

All courses are accredited, and the credits are readily transferable.