MODERN-DAY IDOLATRY

Veritas Forum seeks to find compass for today’s Christians

Sarah Wightman
Staff Writer

American Idols: Losing Our Address on the Way Home,” was the theme for Hope College’s Veritas Forum.

The inspiration for the forum’s focus was a quotation from Christian thinker and writer, G.K. Chesterton: “Idolatry is losing your address on the way home.”

Sam Wells, dean of chapel at Duke University and writer on Christian ethics, opened the forum on Thursday night with a lecture introducing the theme of contemporary idols and how these idols lead us away from spiritual well-being.

“(Sam Wells) was very intellectual with deep thoughts. One idea that spoke to me was that “home is where Jesus is,” that we should think about not just the here and now, but the future too,” Alison Garza (’10) said.

A panel discussion about celebrity worship and fame, as well as an address by author Lauren Winner regarding reorienting oneself in relationship with a redeeming God, took place on Friday.

The forum continued on Saturday with a talk by author Donald Miller continuing discussion on how Christians can keep their spiritual bearings and their own or sign up for one of the daily activities.

Some behaviors are classified as “daily activities” and 10 minutes of “vigorous activity.” Participants can work out on their own or sign up for one of the many classes and activities offered around campus and the community.

John Yelding, professor of education, said he has seen “more people out walking since H20 started.”

In addition to the daily nutritional and exercise goals, many “positive living behaviors” are promoted to help participants achieve complete wellness. Suggested behaviors include meditation, prayer and playing a musical instrument. Some behaviors are classified as “daily activities” while others, such as getting a massage, are called “non-daily.”

According to Maureen Dunn, the program’s director, H20 was started to promote healthier living, consequently reduce health care costs. The program is currently scheduled to run through July 2008, when it will be re-evaluated.

FACULTY WELLNESS TAKES CENTER STAGE

Anne Schmidt
Staff Writer

Thanks to Hope’s Healthy Options (H20), faculty and staff who receive health care benefits are eligible for the program. Employees can work out on their own or sign up for one of the many classes and activities offered around campus and the community.

Some activities are classified as “daily activities” while others, such as getting a massage, are called “non-daily.”

According to Maureen Dunn, the program’s director, H20 was started to promote healthier living, consequently reduce health care costs. The program is currently scheduled to run through July 2008, when it will be re-evaluated.

For more information, visit the H20 website: http://wellness.hope.edu. Anyone with a Hope email address can set up an account through the website.

All are welcome to track daily progress with the online tools available to both faculty and staff, with health benefits, are eligible for the prizes.
PRESIDENT REVISES IRAQ WAR PLAN

Bush presents new plan for Iraq, including an addition of 21,000 troops to current Iraq forces

Brian McElvanan
Senior Writer

Last Wednesday, President George W. Bush presented a new plan for the nation as televised address, detailing a new strategy that he hopes will increase the chances of success in Iraq. Key points of the new strategy include increasing U.S. troop levels in Iraq, setting goals that the Iraqi government must accomplish and calling upon neighboring Middle Eastern nations to support the fledgling new government.

The core of the strategy centers on the addition of 21,500 troops to the forces already in Iraq. The majority of these soldiers, approximately 17,500, will be stationed in Baghdad in order to help quell the violence there. In his speech, President Bush stated that approximately 80 percent of the violence in Iraq occurs in and around the capital. Violence has remained high, the president stated, because certain neighborhoods had been cleared of insurgents, but then abandoned due to insufficient numbers of soldiers. insurgents would move back in as the soldiers left.

This surge in troop levels will, if all goes according to plan, allow the military to hold cleared neighborhoods. The remainder of the troops, approximately 4,000 of them, will be sent to the Anbar province, described by Bush as a center of operations for al-Qaeda.

According to the plan, the new U.S. forces in Baghdad will be embedded within formations of Iraqi soldiers, preparing the Iraqi military for November, when the Iraqi government will assume responsibility for the defense of the nation. The purpose of several benchmarks set by the U.S. government for the Iraqi government.

Others include the Iraqi government’s contribution of $10 billion of its own funds to reconstruction, setting a date for regional elections and completing a law that would share oil revenues among various groups and regions in Iraq. In his speech, Bush also admitted that mistakes have been made in Iraq and that the time has come for a change. However reactions to that change, in the surge in troop levels, have been mixed among Iraqis and Americans alike. Among Shia Iraqis, the general feeling is that increased troop levels will solve nothing.

“Nobody’s thinking properly about making things better in Iraq. I think it’s very wrong to send more soldiers to Iraq. It’ll just create more problems, not solve anything,” said Haythem Zalzala, a pharmacist who runs his business in Baghdad, told the BBC.

THE COACHES’ CHOICE

Hope swimmer recognized nationally
James Ralston
Senior Writer

Over the last four years Lisa Smith (’07) has received many honors and accomplished more in Division III swimming than most could ever imagine. A short list of her accomplishments include six-time NCAA All-American, MIAA record holder in both the 100 and 200 butterfly and currently national record holder in the 200 butterfly. Smith’s teammate Andrea Keller (’09) believes that many factors contribute to Smith’s success.

“Lisa is not the one to call attention to herself but this award is completely deserving of her hard work and dedication to the team,” Keller said. “She doesn’t have to say a word and yet everyone looks up to her and it’s not just because she’s fast, it’s because of her personality.”

Despite her many personal achievements, Smith is quick to point out the importance of team.

“Every time I’m on the block is an opportunity for me to go fast for God and she’s there cheering me up to her and it’s not just because she’s fast, it’s because of her personality.”

Despite her many personal achievements, Smith has never let her individual successes hard work and quality training, but her improvement from year to year makes her an exceptional swimmer.

“Freshman year I was swimming scared, I put the block and then swam as fast as I could,” Smith said. “Later on I gained confidence which helped to push me to the next level and helped me to improve every year. I’m fortunate to have a good training base at Hope that has brought forth my potential.”

Growing from a young freshman to a senior captain and NCAA All-American, Smith has never let her individual successes stand in the way of being a strong leader and a good role model for her teammates. “She (Smith) is great because she’s so humble,” Kate Williams (’10) said. “You can talk to her and never know she’s one of the best swimmers in the MIAA.”

NATIONAL BUTTERFLY — Lisa Smith (’07) was recently voted national swimmer of the week, due to her victories in the 100 and 200 butterfly against Division I Oakland University.

Larissa Mariano
Senior Writer

On Jan. 22 a 21-day period of fasting and prayer is beginning at Hope’s campus. This event is being put on by Hope for the Nations, an organization dedicated to training students for cross-cultural ministry and expanding minds to God’s call to all peoples to faith.” The purpose for this fasting and prayer is for those who want to engage with God for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on college campuses and to engage with God for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

For the Nations believes that today’s college students are in desperate need to be “hotbeds of God’s Holy Spirit.” The purpose of fasting and prayer is for students to “seek God’s heart for the nations.”

For the Nations works to help students become fully able to share the Gospel with “skill and sensitivity.” They believe that students need help to understand how God’s Holy Spirit is to “abandon devotion to Jesus Christ and to call the nations to ‘white hot’ love for Christ.”

The same victory on college campuses in the MIAA.

HOPE FOR NATIONS PLANS FAST FOR FAITH

Hope for the Nations meets every Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the Manna building on Ninth Street and Central. According to the group, “all are welcome to come along on the journey through Bible study and worship.” Through the Bible studies and the worship of God, participants can begin to “seek God’s heart for the nations.”

Hope for the Nations also participates in the daily prayer meetings that are held in the basement of Dimnent Chapel on campus from noon to 12:30 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. All Hope students are invited to attend or to learn more about the prayer meetings. Students can find more information online at www.hope.edu/student/organizations/activities/hopefortheNations.
**This Week in Art**

**Wednesday** Jan. 17  
Luminescence Auditions  
7 p.m.-9 p.m. Noyes 105  
Coffeehouse Entertainment: Eric Bourseau  
9 p.m.-11 p.m. Noyes 105

**Thursday** Jan. 18  
Vanderploeg Auditions  
8 a.m.-10 p.m. Chapin 810

**Friday** Jan. 19  
Film: “The Guardian”  
Jan. 19 & 20: 7: 9:30 p.m.; midnight.  
Jan. 22, 23, 24: 7:30 p.m. Winters Auditorium.  
52. Sponsored by SAC.

**Saturday** Jan. 20  
Hypnotist: Frederick Winters  
8:30 p.m. Location TBA.

VWS PRESENTS MICHAEL MARTONE

Fiction writer Michael Martone will read Tuesday, Jan. 23 at the Knickerbocker Theatre to open the spring session of the Jack Ridl Visiting Writers Series. Martone is known for his unconventional approach to fiction writing which mixes what is true with what is not. He has published more than a dozen books of fiction, prose, and poetry and currently directs the MFA program at the University of Alabama. All VWS events are free and open to the public.

COTTAGE THEME FOCUSES ON ARTS APPRECIATION

Tonight, Wednesday Jan. 17, the new Fine Arts Theme House will host an open house to raise awareness about the theme and to brainstorm ideas for future activities. The open house starts at 9:30 p.m. in Steffens Cottage at 138 East 13th Street across from the Lichte/Kollen parking lot. Fun will be provided.

GOSPEL CHOIR HOSTS GOSPEL FEST

Saturday, Jan. 20 2 p.m. Kletz-Gospel Fest will feature seven choirs in Dimnent Chapel. Joining the Gospel Choir in praise are Grand Valley State University Gospel Choir, Calvin College Gospel Choir, Christ Memorial Church Gospel Choir, Providence St. Mel High School Gospel Choir of Chicago, and Grand Rapids New Hope Baptist Church VIP group. Gospel Fest is free and open to the public.

ENGLISH PROFESSOR PUBLISHES WRITING GUIDE

Creative writing professor, Heather Sellers recently released “Chapter After Chapter: Discover the Dedication and Focus You Need to Write the Book of Your Dreams.” The book contains practical advice for beginning and completing a task which many people find daunting. Such advice includes deliberately carving out the time to write. It is available in hardcover and retails for $19.99.

**ARTS**

ITD opens spring dance season

Courtenay Roberts  
Arts Editor

It’s the spring semester and time for new things; new classes, new books and a new concert for Hope’s resident jazz and tap dance company, InSync Dance Theatre. Jan. 19-20 beginning at 8 p.m. at the Knickerbocker Theatre, the ten-member cast along with guest dancers and choreographers will perform under the direction of Hope dance professors Rosanne Barton-DeVries and Ray Tadio.

With only three returning members, many of the students will perform their first full-length concert as members of IDT. Ashlin Wallace ’09 is excited about the upcoming show.

“The show is completely different than anything I’ve ever been in before. Each piece is so unique that I just can’t wait for the audience’s reaction,” Wallace said. Fellow IDT member Robyn Anderson (’09) said, “the audience should expect a whole lot of fun.”

The concert includes new works as well as some more familiar to Hope audiences. “Haunted,” a work choreographed by guest Michael Mizeryan, is being premiered. It will illustrate some of the struggles that women face, from social acceptance to forgiveness. Mizeryan is the artistic director of Mizeryan Dance, a company.

Katie Bennett  
Senior Writer

This month the Depree Art Center gallery will show the work of Hope faculty members Jennifer Gardiner and Steve Nelson. The exhibition entitled “Perspective/Introspective” contains a series of Nelson’s black and white photography and Gardiner’s paintings and sculptures.

Gardiner, whose background is in printmaking, incorporates printmaking techniques into the collection. As a result her pieces contain many layers of texture and color.

“I don’t begin a piece with a preconceived notion of it,” Gardiner said. “I title them after they’re through.”

Three of Gardiner’s sculptures also make up the exhibit.

“There’s a certain level of opulence to metal,” Gardiner said, referring to her frequent use of gold, silver and bronze leaf. “Yes it’s pretty, but I think it also has a subconscious preciousness with us.”

Gardiner’s strikingly colorful work is a perfect contrast to Nelson’s black and white photography.

Though some of the photographs resemble ancient cathedrals, they are all of industrial ruins in Michigan. In the past, Gardiner has taken photographs of ancient European ruins as well.

“That series interests me, but there is also a romance with these modern ruins,” Gardiner said.

The photographs, which were all taken with a plate camera (see ARTS, page 7)

DePree Gallery features faculty art

Perspectives on Jars of Clay  
Sarah Lemieux  
Rose Weima

Before the show began, Jars of Clay displayed no signs of pre-concert jitters. They all stood around the chapel classroom-turned-green room joking about the one thing they would change in the world.

“His biceps,” one band member said, teasing another. “No but seriously, health care,” Charlie Lowell interrupted. “I like being humble. We all want to be on the same level, we’re all experiencing something together. We’re all having an experience and it’s great to be part of something like Veritas Forum,” Haseltine said.

As they were about to go on stage, one of the band members spoke of only pre-concert ritual.

“He does 127 push-ups,” the band member said, pointing to the one whose biceps were noticeably different than the rest of the band. “Oh yeah, man, you better get started!”

In laughter, Jars Of Clay left for stage to begin their portion of the concert.

The band’s jovial nature was carried to the audience. As soon as Jars of Clay took the stage, everyone was on their feet in wild anticipation.

For the first hour, the band played old favorites with a good mix of newer, high-energy songs allowing for the audience to yell out their favorite refrains.

The high energy songs rocked the pews of Dimnent harder than they had been rocked in years. Dan Haseltine was the center of attention as he fell to his knees on the stage and then began jumping around, increasing the passion from the crowd.

Audience members raised their hands to the sky, clapped to their own beat and sang their hearts out to the songs they loved.

One local youth group leader said that he owned all of Jars of Clay’s CDs but they just sound ed so much more electric when they performed live. His group found enjoyment in the audience’s reaction.

“They were mystifying, yeah!” the students yelled.

In the midst of the bursts of energy, the anchor page 7
Gerald Ford, Friend of Hope, Dies

Shannon Craig

Gerald Ford, the 38th president of the United States, died Tuesday, Dec. 26 at the age of 93. While a nation remembered Ford’s pardon of Nixon, Hope College remembered a friend of the college.

“We acknowledge with gratitude to God, President Ford’s service to our country,” said James Bultman, president of Hope College, in a press statement. “We are grateful for the affection he showed toward Hope College during his distinguished career, first as congressman, later as president, and in his recent years as statesman.”

Ford served as congressman in the district that served Holland from 1949 until 1973. As Representative Peter Hockstra said “Because of my very, very high regard for Hope College, no degree – earned or honorary – will mean more to me than the one I received from this outstanding institution.”

President Gerald Ford was remembered Ford’s pardon of Nixon, December 26, 1974. No one went into that campus.

A variety of activities have been scheduled from Monday through Friday, Jan. 22-26, to commemorate Ford’s time at Hope College.

The week is coordinated by Hope’s Asian Perspective Association (HPA) and the Center for the Arts and Humanities, in conjunction with the college’s Office of Multicultural Life.

The public is invited to all of the four events. Admission is free to all of the activities except for a Great Performance Series concert on Jan. 23, at 7 p.m. in room 1000 of the college’s A. Paul Schaap Science Center. The 2000 love story focuses on the relationship between two tenants of a seaside home who have not met but fall in love through notes they leave to one another at the house even as they live two years apart in it. It will be presented in Korean with English subtitles. The film was remade in 2006 as “The Lake House” starring Sandra Bullock and Keanu Reeves. Dr. Moses Lee, who is dean for the sciences at Hope College, will present the special degree.

There are still two vacancies on Student Congress. Any student interested in either of these positions should contact Student Congress at congress@hope.edu. There are still two vacancies on Student Congress. Any student interested in either of these positions should contact Student Congress at congress@hope.edu.

FINDING HIS ADDRESS AGAIN — Kenny Bauman ('09) listens to a keynote speaker at the Veritas Forum.

Veritas

Jars of Clay concert found it to be a distinctive experience.

“It was really mellow compared to most concerts but it was unique experience to watch such talented performers in such a personal environment,” Michelle Read ('10) said.

Much planning goes into the forum.

“Vegan” will be shown on Tuesday, Jan. 23 at 7 p.m. in room 1000 of the college’s A. Paul Schaap Science Center. The 2000 love story focuses on the relationship between two tenants of a seaside home who have not met but fall in love through notes they leave to one another at the house even as they live two years apart in it. It will be presented in Korean with English subtitles. The film was remade in 2006 as “The Lake House” starring Sandra Bullock and Keanu Reeves. Dr. Moses Lee, who is dean for the natural sciences and professor of chemistry at Hope, will present “Home Sweet Home,” reflecting on growing up in Malaysia, on Wednesday, Jan. 24 at 6 p.m. in the Multicultural Lounge of Phelps Hall. Lee joined the Hope faculty as dean in 2005 after previously serving on the chemistry faculty at Furman University in Greenville, S.C., where he had taught since 1989.

The Ahn Trio, Juilliard-trained sisters who are originally from South Korea, will perform through the Great Performance Series on Friday, Jan. 26, at 7:30 p.m. in Dimnent Memorial Chapel. Tickets are $16 for regular admission, $12 for senior citizens, and $5 for children and under, and may be purchased at the ticket office in the main lobby of the DeVos Fieldhouse, which is open weekdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and can be called at (616) 395-7890. More information can be found at http://www.hope.edu/student/organizations/activities/hapa/.
A conversation with Donald Miller

Jeremy Benson

In his newest book, “To Own a Dragon: Reflections on Growing Up Without a Father” (NavPress, 2006; written with help from father-figure John MacMurray), Donald Miller shares his trials and questions resulting from a fatherless childhood. In his previous books, “Blue Like Jazz” and “Searching for God Knows What,” Miller wanders the line between intimate memoir and theological discussion, offering peripatetic wisdom rather than oblique interpretations of ancient proverb.

The father wound idea is not a new one: Robert Bly in “Iron John” talks about the pain that modern, emotionally distant fathers inflict on their sons, as does John Elderdrige, with an evangelical spin, in “Wild at Heart.” But Miller strays from Bly’s obvious universality and Elderdrige’s rigid focus on the white, Protestant, middle-class male. Instead, Miller builds relatability through specificity.

Miller gives readers crisp, honest imagery rather than the candy-coating so often found in evangelical writing, allowing more than one group of people to relate. The intended audience is men and boys who also grew up fatherless, yet anyone can benefit from the questions Miller raises about God the Father and his relationship with the sons and daughters of God. Certainly everyone will enjoy Miller’s brilliant storytelling.

‘To Own A Dragon’ on shelves now

He writes, “When I was growing up my friend Tom had a father, and I learned from this that real fathers…clean guns while watching television, weed-eat the lawn with one hand while holding a beer in the other and squeeze their wife’s butt in the kitchen while she is cooking dinner.”

Miller sits down for a chat with The Anchor during his visit to the Veritas Forum and shared some ideas about life and writing.

Anchor: Your books are extremely personal. What is it like to bare your soul on the page and have it so widely read?

Miller: Those are the hardest parts to write. Those are the parts you’re standing on the edge of a cliff and deciding whether or not you’ll jump, or how high the cliff actually is. That’s the adrenaline rush of writing for me. Writers should tell something about themselves that they don’t want to—that we’re not alone in this story, makes us more human. The reader appreciates that risk because I am giving the reader something he or she can use against me. The reader can make fun of me now, which creates trust. Readers, 99 percent of the time, will thank the author for being open because they [the readers] are good people.

Miller: What advice can you give to young writers?

M: Writing is hard work. It’s some of the hardest work you can do. If you’re looking for a romantic job, you’re not going to get it. And if you do get it, it’s going to be short lived. The best advice that was ever given to me was to be brief, be clear, and be human. Get to the point, say it with heart and be vulnerable. If you do that, people will enjoy your writing.

M: What advice or authors have been most influential in your life and writing?

M: Annie Dillard—anything she writes. I’m a huge fan of Anne Lamott. Early on, John Steinbeck and Ernest Hemingway taught me to write with muscle.

M: You refer to several of your friends quite fondly in your books. What can you say about the importance of friends to your faith?

M: I don’t know if faith is possible without community. My friends help me to see that we’re together in this story. Love is what defines God, and we get to participate in that by living in community with other people.

M: You mention in “Blue Like Jazz” that “Jesus didn’t mesh his spirituality with politics.” How do you see Christians interacting with politics and how should they be?

M: It is important that Christians participate in politics. And yet, there are things that are much more important. I think the question to ask is what we’re trying to accomplish. If I’m trying to help people, are there more efficient ways of doing that than through politics? Most times there are. If the motive is to serve, then why aren’t they out there serving? It seems like the motive of many Christian people is that’s the desire for power. That’s a sin. I’m a cynic when it comes to Christians in politics; I think a lot of people are.

M: What has been the Conservative Christian response to your work?

M: I haven’t felt a reaction. I’m asked that question a lot, which tells me there is a reaction I don’t know about. I just stand in the grace of God and certainly my heart is to win people to Christ and I’m hoping in the end that that’s ok.

M: Have you ever worked on fiction?

M: I’ve done short stories and we’re writing a screen play right now. I went through a phase about a year ago where I really doubted that story meant anything. I doubted that sitting down to write was actually serving the kingdom of God. And I just said God help me, help me understand why writing is important. And God answered me, ‘I gave you the heart to do this and it’s true,’ those are some beautiful affirmations. All of the talk I gave at the Veritas Forum about why story is important was God’s answer.

Story matters.

Right now, Miller is working on “Map of Eden,” due to come out at the end of 2007 or beginning of 2008. “Map of Eden” tells the story of Miller’s friend Kate Kasdan and Adam Bybee who adopted an adult mentally handicapped man.
**Down deep**

**Jenny Cencer**

Last fall, thick musky darkness peeled my lids back into my head to capture light that was lost; darkness that expanded retinas ’til they burst. My eyes sighed in redemption when the first headlamp clicked on. The limestone glistened with age and discovery of a new world. The air and the air around us exhausted throughout the passage, breathing smooth and cold like our boots in the stream. It trickled from the surface, some hundred feet up. Up where the light was, up was the source for all life that ventures in caves and crevices where only the brave or desperate or both explore. Millions of miles are traversed throughout one’s life; to reunite loved ones or to escape unseen lands…the emissions of hustle and bustle rise from earth, hissing towards planets yet to be named and conquered. Stars continue glistened as Aztec gold, winking at the next Cortez. Beneath the swirling storms of Jupiter, perhaps there is a haven where peace cannot be extinguished. Or is peace closer, just a few hours drive away or too near to be seen. Elysian peace forever resists capture; it floats resilient and pure in the highest heavens and the swift whale of the sea. I long to cast my splintering sins into the soothing abyss of peace but cannot find the bridge that scales its milky depths. The cave was called “Endless” and wound through a limestone deposit in Cave River Valley, Indiana. We had to cross our final East. Hope and Grand Valley gospel choirs come together from different campuses and for the whole (Hope) community to come together.

Hope has been a member of the choir for three years. Without the community she finds there, Howell said, “I don’t think I’d be able to stay at Hope…Being a minority student it’s the only constant thing I can do that really feel a part of more than anything else.”

“IT’S a daily struggle,” Lowe said, adding that the administration is “being very aggressive and assertive about hiring people of color, about recruiting students of color. They’re teaching them to have a voice.”

The Hope and Grand Valley gospel choirs are also looking forward to Gospel Fest. The hope and Grand Valley gospel choirs are also looking forward to Gospel Fest.

**Civil rights**

was to have diversity. That’s what this is about all to me.”

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**Endless**

Jenny Cencer

Civil rights

To the Editor:

In the last few weeks, our nation witnessed the death of a president who oversaw an ending of a war and a speech by a president who started one. Remembered as a decent man guided by West Michigan values, President Gerald Ford’s death rekindled America’s nostalgia for a true statesman. While eulogists and editorialists spoke of the vindication Ford gained over the years for his decisions on Iraq. I do not think it will.

**Will history vindicate Bush?**

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I believe this

Of Mice and Men and Moral Absolutes

My favorite book of the Bible is Ecclesiastes - I love it for the honest questions and surprising answers. A passage that has recently struck me is verses 19-21 of chapter 3:

For the fate of the sons of men and the fate of beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts; for all is vanity. All is gone to one place; all are from dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down to the earth?

The writer is touching on a question we wrestle with today: Is there a qualitative difference between humans and the other animals? The word “qualitative” is important. Certainly humans are the most intelligent of the animals (a quantitative difference), and with that intelligence comes the ability to excel at mental activities such as self reflecting and inventing tools. But there is nothing special about intelligence. Hummingbirds are among the best flyers of the animals and so they too can do things that other animals can’t - namely hovering in midair and darting sideways.

So the relevant question is: Are humans different from the rest of animals in some way other than that which comes naturally from increased cranial capacity? Christians often argue that the sense of right and wrong is what makes man unique. Francis Collins, the scientist (and Christian) who directs the human genome project, states in the November issue of Time magazine, “The moral law (we all sense) is a reason to think of God as plausible…because we seem uniquely amongst creatures on the planet to have this far developed sense of morality.”

C.S. Lewis agrees. In “The Abolition of Man,” he writes, “It may even be said that it is by this middle element (the sense of moral law) that man is man: for by his intellect he is mere spirit and his appetite mere animal.”

But are humans unique in sensing moral law? It is certainly not clear that we are. Other intelligent social animals such as wolves and the great apes have social structures that involve punishment and reward. And anyone with a pet dog well knows the look of contriteness. The veterinarian of my dog Bluster says that he too can do things that other animals can’t - namely learning how to beg for things.

The logicalian Alan Turing proposed that if a computer acts intelligent then we must consider it to be. Similarly, if other animals behave as humans do when humans feel the moral law, then we should not discount the possibility that they are also feeling moral law to some degree.

But that raises a second question. Just because we sense the existence of an objective moral law independent of any human, does that mean there actually is one? As Lewis argues in “Mere Christianity”? Not necessarily. “Up” and “down” seem very real to us because sense of right and wrong (of 2-gallon size) is irrefutable. But for the last few hundred years we have known that this common feeling is not real false, and children are generally shocked when they see their first globe.

Does this mean that the moral law doesn’t exist? No, it just means that the sensation of a moral law does not guarantee that there is one. Another explanation for this feeling, for example, is that humans who had inclinations to be altruistic and empathetic were more likely to succeed individually and as a group. Thus their genes were the ones that got passed down to us today. Researchers in sociosurvival are actively studying these possibilities. Whatever will be the consequences of the loss of belief in moral law would inevitably lead to the abolition of the objective moral law that defines the human species.

But is that the scenario that gloomy? Queen Elizabeth once said that much is accomplished in the world even if individuals themselves agreed that proper behavior is more dependent upon good moral training than on theoretical understanding. In other words, maybe the one essential thing is not whether a moral law exists, or whether humans believe in it, but whether we continue to train succeeding generations to act altruistically, empathetically, and even nobly. Whether the desire for these “good” qualities was built into us by evolution or by God (or by God through evolution), training someone to live according to these values is beneficial for everyone.

There is another powerful argument that moral absolutes are not necessary. While the other social animals take heart and counsel from the proverb, “Train up a child in a way he should go, and when he is old he will depart from it.” I can attest that it works for dogs.

- Tim Penning, Professor of Mathematics

Jars

Continued from page 3

storny, moments of reverence were inter- spersed. As the fog cleared on stage so did the high energy of the crowd, as many stuck their heads bowed. However, not everyone was moved. One concert participant, Travis Ransom, said that “the energy of the concert was interrupted by the pew.” Others agreed that you couldn’t mosh very well with pews in between. The most clapping that was heard all night was during the band’s final song “All those shoes.” This was the first concert ever for one woman. “I loved it, the band was great,” she said.

IDT

Continued from page 3

IDT is pleased to welcome Michigan Dance Collective to share the stage with us,” said Barton-DeVries. “MDC, under the direction of Philip Leete will present three vibrant pieces exploring the rhythms of life’s partnerships,” she said.

In addition, IDT will feature Mark Yo- nal in his choreography of the Chicago Tap Theatre. This year’s work is titled “Shiny Stockings” which Barton – DeVries describes as “a sassy rhythm piece – the feet fly as dancers work for laser-sharp precision and dynamic.”
There was pressure on both teams when we're playing at Calvin. Brett Jager was a key factor in the victory. His personal accomplishments are not as important to him as the team’s accomplishments. Morehouse's players believe that his leadership led them to last year's championship and that he deserves the honor of "Michigan's Best."