Grad student cites protecting subjects as reason not to testify

Scott DeMuth says he refused to testify before a grand jury to honor confidentiality agreements.

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Snow. More snow.

Metereologists estimate at least 6 to 10 inches of snow will fall on campus, along with winds in excess of 30 mph; as the storm moves east, bitterly cold temperatures and wind chills well below zero will hit the city.

---

Long ago past comes to light in North Hall café

Renovators uncover 60-year-old artifacts from North Hall elementary students.
UT alums paying debts

Iowa has the highest average student debt when compared with other states.

**By JOHN DOETKOTT**

As students across the country default on their student loans, the situation in Iowa has not surprised state officials, Mark Warner, the director of the Iowa Student Loan Financial Aid Office, said Monday. "In Iowa, students make the payments they have more to do with their level of education than it does in other states and counties."

The national default rate on student loans reached 6.7 percent in 2007 — the highest rate available — while graduates from the University of Iowa reported a 4.2 percent rate, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

The news comes after the first cohort of students recently released a report about their finances. Ninety-two percent of them graduated in 2008 or 2009. "We have not seen any other state with an average of $28,747 in loans. The only region with a similar average is Washington, D.C., whose student average was $28,740 on debt average," the report said. They agree that school supports and financial assistance methods, such as loans, have not been enough for those from their area of residence, for her friends, have helped improve Southeast Junior High.

Eighth-grade students, team officials and teachers at Southeast formed a district-wide student support team for the 2009-2010 school year and started teaching lessons associated with the program this year.

Teachers are encouraged to be responsible and "challenge staff to make staff" in a schoolwide support program through "Small Talk" as a support team for students at Southeast Junior High.

Positive Behavior teachers have instituted positive behavior support.

Schools in the first year of the program at Hoover — 100 percent of students, Van Allen — 70 percent, Kirkwood — 80 percent, Hills — 80 percent, Roosevelt — 70 percent, Central High — 80 percent.

Source: TEAM

SOUTH SOUTHEAST IOWA DAILY IOWAN

New positive-encouragement methods have helped Southeast Junior High students.

By HOLLY MONES

Thinking positively at Southeast Junior High.

Southeast Junior High eighth-grade student Sarah Baxa recently offered her support for the anti-drug program titled Schoolhouse S.O.B., an anti-drug program that has been introduced to schools in the area.

Southeast Junior High, 13th District and 45 percent of independents feel the same way.

**By Aaron Stone

SOURCE: MARKETwatch

Nite Ride extended

UI alums will need to purchase tickets for their last two rides of the year over the next few weeks.

Nite Ride will end on May 10, 15 and 31; each ride will cost $50 for full year, $95 for summer session, $67 million, with the average debt among graduates was 0 percent, they are able to secure jobs that are in line with their major because they know why UI graduates are not making the payments has to do with their level of education than it does in other states and counties.

The regents are studying student aid on the ISIS website, "That's something they should be really concerned about," he said. "It's why it's important for students to understand why their loans are and who are the ones that don't pay their bills."

Devin said students can help improve the site by asking what is important and should check to make sure they always know where their financial aid is coming from.

"In the long run, the better job they do in knowing their aid and the better off they will be," Devin said.

MARTY WILSON

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"In the long run, the better job they do in knowing their aid and the better off they will be," Devin said.
Smile... Saving lives is not only a good thing, it makes you feel good too.

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HALL CONTINUED FROM 1

Officials hope the recent discoveries can give them more insight into the building’s background. Students and staff in the School of Social Work are excited about the artifacts because they believe the history of the school is crucial and want to preserve it, she said. After the pieces of the past were uncovered, renovators and staff have decided to take special measures to save and display their findings. Marzen Bauer, who is working on the coffee-shop project, said work- ers plan to show off the reading circle by covering it with a clear finish. In addition to preserving the floor, Palermo said, she wants to frame the kindergarten class’s artwork and show it off during reading circle by covering it with a clear finish.

LETTERS CONTINUED FROM 1

UI senior Claudia Taylor, who went on e-mail, said she is paying her out-of-state tuition on her own. “If you made me pay only $100, she said. “But I already take out a lot of loans, and with interest rates, $100 will not go deeper than just $100.” Taylor said she doubts the regents will consider her request to reconsider the surcharge. However, some students said they were not concerned about the surcharge. “I have other concerns related to being a graduate student,” said LeAnn Poison, a graduate student and English TA. However, some students are deeply concerned about the surcharge vote until this week’s meeting. “I'm concerned because I'm a dissatis- facted, maybe they will go somewhere else,” said Ann Peterson, the president of COGS. “I'm concerned because it's a dissatisfactory vote. I'm concerned because the surcharge will never look good, and then you don't pay that $100, you lose that entire tuition.” But Mr. Brown said he’s not going to argue anything about the possible surcharge on tuition because it’s his responsibility to be exact what you want!

HEARING CONTINUED FROM 1

me immunity and not pur- sue criminal charges origi-
nally,” he said. Officials from the U.S. Attorney’s Office didn’t return calls seeking comment. DeMuth’s federal indictment didn’t specifically mention the Spence/Seashore break-in, in which four masked indi-
viduals caused about $450,000 in damage. But the dates, location, and nature of the charge matched the incident.

Grand-jury proceedings are sealed, and DeMuth said he isn’t entirely sure why he was subpoenaed. But he believes his work supporting animal rights and environ-
mental movements, as well as his sociological research into these groups is why prosecutors are so eager to have him testify.

As a graduate student in sociology at the University of Minnesota, DeMuth has interviewed people involved in activism and those oppo-
sitions are protected by confidentiality agreements — upholding this confiden-
tiality is the reason he didn’t testify, he said. “A sociologist who testi-
ifies before a grand jury would likely face an all court-order in bar his or her field, said Lisa Walden, a profes-
sor at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minn., where DeMuth conducted research as an undergradu-
ate student. “If he wants to go in front of a grand jury and spill his guts, it would be a huge problem,” she said. “He could never return to research as a sociologist.”

Sociologists often speak to people who break the law, and research is integral to helping the pub-
lic understand how certain groups work. In the process of these interviews, it’s not unusual for a researcher to offer her or his subject’s promise of confidentiality, said Christopher Ogger, the chairman of sociology at the University of Minnesota.

Confidentiality protects the research subject from harm and allows the researcher by allowing people to be more comfortable answering questions, said UI sociology Assistant Pro-

essor Michael Sauder. DeMuth is supported by his professor at the Uni-
versity of Minnesota, one of whom has started an online petition urging pros-

ecutors to drop charges. DeMuth said prosecutors showed no evidence proving he was present during the Spence/Seashore incident. Authorities contested that DeMuth was linked to the break-in after a journal and kick-birding devices were found in his home in 2008. DeMuth has pleaded not guilty to charges, he was released from jail Nov. 30 pending trial.

A fellow activist, Cariste Feldman, remained jailed as of Tuesday evening on a charge of contempt of court.

HALL CONTINUED FROM 1

Wild Bill's reopening next semester. Officials also plan to use two other antiquities — a cabinet and a large mirror and a coffee shop's renovation — to make it more handicap-accessible; it is funded by donations from students at the UI,said Toth, who is from Hungary. "If I try to find that, I would get deported."

"This is a bona fide emer-
gency,"so he said. Instead, Donner believes he went to save the potential for per-
tinent tuitions increase for next year would be more drastic.

Some students most affected could include the many international gradu-
ate students at the UI, said Gyorgy Tóth, the interna-
tional student representa-
tive for COGS. For most of these stu-
dents, he said, the university provides a much easier way to make income, strict immigration laws limit outside employ-
ment for each student. "I can't just come and get money for this surcharge by working nights at McDonald's,"said Tóth, who is from Hungary. "If I try to do that, I would get deported."
Letters

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR may be sent to email dailyiowan.com (but not as an attachment). Each letter must be signed and include an address and phone number for verification. Letters should not exceed 300 words. The opinion of the Editor reflects the viewpoint of the author and is not necessarily that of the Editorial Board.

Go meatless for the earth
I was delighted to hear that the University of Iowa College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is initiating a meatless day during home football games.

However, there is an even better way to reduce our environmental footprint. A study conducted by the University of North Carolina's Gillings School of Global Public Health found that people who eat a plant-based diet have a 27% lower chance of being overweight than people who eat a meat-based diet.

The study also found that a plant-based diet can help reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

In conclusion, eating a plant-based diet is not only good for the environment, but also good for our health. Let's all do our part to make a positive impact on the planet.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

Go meatless for the earth

Guest opinion
Israel-West Bank barrier essential to preventing civilian casualties

By JOSE ASSOURLINE

In response to Patrick Hitchon's guest opinion in the Daily Iowan, regarding the West Bank barrier, I would like to express my agreement with the argument he presented.

The West Bank barrier is an essential measure to prevent civilian casualties in the region.

Since the beginning of the conflict, countless innocent civilians have been killed and maimed by Israeli military action.

The West Bank barrier, while criticized by some, is a justified measure to protect civilians from the constant threat of violent actions by Hamas and other extremist organizations.

Proponents of the barrier argue that it serves as a deterrent to violent action, protecting civilians from the constant threat of attacks.

In conclusion, I believe that the West Bank barrier is a necessary measure to prevent civilian casualties and should be maintained.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
**Arts & Culture**

**Writing little collisions**

Ben Lerner clears the way for linguistic sincerity in his latest poetry collection.

**By REBECCA RODEN**

Ben Lerner investigates modern American society, one line at a time. The 30-year-old Topeka, Kan., native, who currently teaches writing at the University of Pittsburgh, has made a substantial name for himself as a resident observer of the human condition. 

His second book, *Mean Free Path*, as a finalist for the 2006 National Book Award. His second book … which will be released next month. 

---

**Reading**

**Ben Lerner**

When: 5:30 p.m. today Where: Frank Conroy Reading Room Admission: Free

This was a poet … who wanted to work language to a sharp edge.

- Michael Więgier, executive editor at Cooper Canyon Press

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**Letterman jokes about Woods**

By JAKIE COYLE

**NEW YORK (AP) —**

David Letterman, after a week off, dived right into material about Tiger Woods on the “Late Show,” joking that he wishes the golfer would stop calling him to ask for advice.

Even though the CBS late-night host is only weeks removed from his monologue with the subject of Woods, he had been hounded by claims from several women that they had affairs with him.

“Boy, it looks like that Tiger Woods is having some troubles,” began Letterman, puffing his cheeks out.

He joked that if Woods’ situation had happened three months ago, he’d “have material for a year.”

He still got plenty of mileage out of it Monday, on his first new show after a week of repeats.

“President Obama is sending troops to Afghanistan,” Letterman said. “Well, it’s too bad he isn’t sending them to Tiger Woods’ house.”

Woods, the world’s No. 1 golfer, crashed his luxury SUV outside his Florida mansion on Thanksgiving weekend, and his wife conta...
Yifan Ivan Lai has been playing the piano since he was 5, when his parents plucked him down in front of the keys and told him to churn out something beautiful.

The toddler, not knowing what to do, began hanging on the keys, glancing up at his parents for approval. They promptly scheduled lessons for him.

“I didn’t know what to do at first, but this was a right path,” Lai said. “My parents wanted me to learn.”

Lai said he’s used to handling stress from the sixth-floor Daum lounge floor, but Macbook Pro and marketing homework strain about his feet.

“It’s safe to say he would have rather been playing the 88 keys in Stanley or Currier,” said Jordan Fries, a UI freshman who recently interviewed Lai.

The UI freshman came to the UI this past August, a foreign-exchange student from southeastern China. He split his time among studying a lot, watching American movies and TV shows, and wanted me to teach him English.

“I taught myself English, but I wanted you to teach me as well,” Lai said.

Lai said he is beginning to feel he is “at home” on campus.

“Sometimes, my mom calls me on the phone, and I say, ‘I know, and I’ll be back home in two weeks, and he is not too homesick. His sixth-floor Daum peers have done their part to help him feel comfortable.

“Sometimes, my mom wants me to call her, and I say, ‘I know, and I’ll be back home in three months away from home at a time traveling to perform, and he is not too homesick. His sixth-floor Daum peers have done their part to help him feel comfortable.”

Lai said he is used to spending up to three months away from home at a time traveling to perform, and he is not too homesick. His sixth-floor Daum peers have done their part to help him feel comfortable.

His parents, is originally from China and his “destiny” without the presence of his mother, made him the best piano player in the entire country for his age group.

Lai said he can’t achieve his “destiny” without the help of his parents.

“Everything seems planned out from the moment I was a little child,” he said. “My mom has played such a big role in my piano playing, and I am honored to be a part of this blueprint, something greater than myself.”

“Some people may think I am forced to hear their complaints as a result.”

His sixth-floor Daum resident assistant, Guan, a UI senior, is originally from China, and his “destiny” without the presence of his southeast China home city’s — 3 million.

Lai said he “loves the aura of the grand piano and at the Chicago Federal Reserve, where the “honor” of performing awaits him both behind the grand piano and at the head of a marketing firm.

If Ivan Lai play the piano.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is especially pleased to recognize the scholarship and achievement of the December 2009 students graduating with distinction and honor in their major.

Congratulations.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences December 2009

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Traci A. Bruns
Sydney Marie Hamran

**With High Distinction**

Kimberly Erin Carson
Anja Chimlesi
Juliana Helene Dancer
Stephonia E. Kelso
Mary-Kathleen Gallaghher
Melissa Ann Hamilton
Kristin Michelle Lewis
Julie S. Peterson
Aby Lynne Rau
Isabella Lois Santoro
Jenna A. Shute

**With Distinction**

Eric Boucher
Breit Jason Chiles
Alicia Lynn Corcor
David Roy Dunsrtrup
Stacey Lynn Frischels
Nellie Ann Fisher
Daniel Joseph Graniss
John David Hart
Kara Christine Hunsld
Ryan M. Hunkel
Matthew John Logan
John Carl Markham
Abby June Matthews
Kyle Nathan Phillips
Lydia Jane Phillips
Ekaterina Rokhlin
Alissa Andrea Ruscher
Julie Ann Schafer
Yenna Park Schoenfeld
Carrie Ann Schweitzer
Emily Jane Wagner

With Honors in the Major

Kristi Anne Beisler
Kimberly Erin Carson
Anne M. Cleaverger
Juliana Helene Dancer
Stephanie Darrell Dodson
Malane Meghan Drake
Herschel Ennor
Stephanie K. Enloe
Stephanie Finken
Mardon M. Fnep
Gregory Regis Elliott Gaettor
Melissa Ann Hamilton
Ayumi Ino
Jeanette McLean Irwin
Kelyn Elizabeth Jessen
Amylee K. Joyce
Kristen Ann Keck
Abby June Matthews
Sara Ellen Parker
William Potratz
Bryan William Reed
Ekaterina Rokhlin
Isabella Lois Santoro
Julie Ann Schafer
Katherine Marie Sherry
Meghan Kathleen Tierney
Emily Jane Wagner
Drew L. Wisnack

The College is proud of our nearly 8000 new alumni and wishes them success in their future endeavors.

Sincerely,

Dean Linda Maxson
UI Alumni Association Dean’s Chair in the Liberal Arts & Sciences
Iowa City hasn’t seen snows and winds of this magnitude in 10 years.

By MARLEEN LINARES
mlinare@iowarepublicmedia.org

The first winter storm to hit this semester could be one of the worst in the last 10 years, and many UI students wonder if classes will continue, the rest of the week. Official said weather conditions will be “danger- ourse and urged Iowans to limit travel Tuesday night as winds, and snow made its way through the area.

“The kind of snow is danger- inately unusual,” said National Weather Service meteorologist Chris Lagow. The weather service continu- ally updated the rad- of the storm on Tues- day, raising its ranking from “moderate” to a Haz- ard and then to an “extremely dangerous win- ter storm.”

“Once people get home (Tuesday night), they should put away and ride the bus,” Lagow said. Meteorologists estimated at least 6 to 10 inches of snow by the end of the night with winds of more than 30 mph. After the storm passes, temperatures are expected to plummet.

UI prepares for ‘dangerous storm’
UI spokesman Tom Moore said officials will announce whether classes will be can- celled at 6 a.m. today.

He said there are no spe- cific rules for determining if professors should hold classes as scheduled.

“We just keep the well-being of the students, faculty, and staff in mind,” Moore said.

The last time classes were cancelled because of icy winter conditions was in January 1996.

But some students are weary about missing out on the extra in-class study time. Many class cancellations this week are focused on reviewing for finals.

“I can’t be critical that we have class (Wednesday),” said UI junior Mahidol Saint Fleur. “If the class decision helps us to keep the weather, she said. UI spokesman Tom Moore said the university will “continue to function normally during severe winter weather if it is safe.”

UI student Jocelyn Neel said she was also wor- ried about the storm itself.

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UISSC advances

UISSC advances to men's 3-on-3 pre-holiday championship thanks in large to effective substitutions Tuesday night.

By JANE KRZECZOWSKI

A 20-year-old student opened fire in a community-college classroom in Woodbridge, Virginia Monday afternoon, but did not hit anyone. He was arrested in a hallway, police said.

Because of inclement weather, officials closed the Field House early Tuesday, but just enough time was left to get the last few scheduled intramural games in before the championships.

The defending champion Dime Pieces overcame a scrappy and valiant Fearless Four by capturing the women's intramural 3-on-3 title Tuesday night in the Field House in a game that went well over two hours.

Dime Pieces already had lost previously during the season, with the double-elimination format, it had to win four games to capture the championship.

Scoring mostly inside, the Dime Pieces sealed the victory as the series went 15-13, 18-16, 16-12, 17-14, and 15-9 in the won-all favor.

"When we lost our first game, that was too much," Dime Pieces senior Dani Olerich said. "To make it fight back to win the championship was really huge.

With such a long and exhausting final, the Fearless Fourwosome couldn't cope with the fatigue as the team had no substitutes.

"Playing as many games without a fourth person killed us," junior Evany Li said.

Both teams agreed that the starting unit basketball took a toll on their bodies.

"It's going to be a little heart attack but I'm happy," junior Lu Blythe said. "It has already been a long week.

The college enacted its emergency lockdown procedures and later issued an emergency lockdown proclamation.

Situation following reports of an "active shooter" in the main academic building.

The college enacted its emergency lockdown procedures and later issued a statement saying all was a "false alarm."
BOSTON (AP) — Rajon Rondo hit a pair of free throws, and their eighth in nine games. The Bucks, 98-89, and win their night as the Boston Celtics pulled for 8th straight over the weekend.

Lickliter revealed what headaches that eventually caused him severe

Rondo hit a pair of free throws, and their eighth in nine games. The Bucks, 98-89, and win their night as the Boston Celtics pulled for 8th straight over the weekend.

Lickliter revealed what headaches that eventually caused him severe

Rondo had 17 points for Milwaukee. The rebounds, and Brandon Jennings scored 19 and pulled down eight eighth-straight game.

Kevin Garnett scored 25 to go with 10 boards, and Paul Pierce had 17 points, four rebounds and nine assists, hitting a pair of 3-pointers in the fourth quarter before the Celtics

Chicago Bulls' Brad Miller and Luol Deng for the ball with the New Jersey Nets' Derick ROBERTSON — 1-12 away from home.

The Nets got their second win of the season and first on the road, beating the Chicago Bulls 100-91.

Rose drove in 1-12 away from home. Chris Douglas-Roberts added 20 points, and Har

Rajon Rondo had 17 points for Milwaukee. The rebounds, and Brandon Jennings scored 19 and pulled down eight eighth-straight game.

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the ledge

This column reflects the opinion of the author and does not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Iowa.

AQUARIUS
A new challenge, consider if it's worth your while. Don't let uncertainty in a new relationship affect your decision.

ARIES
Be a Contestant on “The Price is Right,” 9 p.m., Industry, 100 E. Oakdale Blvd., Coralville

TAURUS
Calm down before you end up in a feud that ruins a personal relationship you cherish. Meddling or making false accusations may be done without compromising your personal and professional obligations.

GEMINI
Think you’re pretty funny? Prove it. “Do You Laugh at this Joke?” Audience participation, 7 p.m., Bijou, 90 E. Linn St., Coralville

CANCER
You should be making plans for the future that include a follower — the choice is yours.

LEO
Problems with elders in the family will mount if you exclude anything or anyone.

VIRGO
A power struggle is the last thing you need when through with your plans. You have to satisfy your own needs before you can satisfy anyone else's needs or anything, just a little fun and entertainment. Updating your look or improving your lifestyle should be made on the basis what you do on what others want. Personal information must be kept a secret, or someone will steal your identity.

LIBRA
You’ll be eager to take action when it comes to a new job or business. Your primary goal is to lower your overhead if you are quick to respond to an offer made.

SCORPIO
Problems with elders in the family will mount if you exclude anything or anyone. You should be making plans for the future that include a follower — the choice is yours.

SAGITTARIUS
If we think it’s good, we’ll run it — and you?!

CAPRICORN
Just remember that while this guy may have nailed your heart, his vow could be broken.

OCCUPATIONS
— by Eugenia Last

DEC 9
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DEC 9
Football

18 Hawks honored

Friday’s Football Forum was an entertaining trip to the Orange Bowl and January. Here are some of the hottest topics for Iowa fans:

A Lougheed 18 Hawks pointed out that the team’s 18 All-Big Ten selections, including first-team All-Big Ten, on Tuesday.

Senior offensive tackle Riley Reiff was named offensive MVP for the first time, and senior defensive end A.J. Edds previously received second-team All-Big Ten honors. Reiff was a third-team honoree.

Junior tight end Tony Moeaki, sophomore defensive end Adrian Claybrooks, senior linebacker A.J. Edds, and junior punter Ryan Donahue were named to the second team.

The Hawkeyes have had a 18-5 record this season, and the team ranks 16th in the AP poll.

Redshirt waits his turn

Grappling for the Hawkeyes this season isn’t out of reach for true freshman Derek St. John.

Iowa woozle Denzel St. John emerged victorious in the wrestling competition on Nov. 7 over a school record-breaking score of 137 pounds.

Iowa head coach Tom Brands had thrown a redshirt on St. John, who committed to Iowa and said he expected after winning the wrestleoff.

With the 175 title still up for grabs — just as it was before Brands and Matt McDonough were named for the Hawkeyes as far as St. John might seem like an appealing alternative.

Panthers put bite on Hawks

The men’s basketball team struggles in its first true road test, falling to Northern Iowa for the first time since the 2005-06 season.

We had spurs. Our guys, at times, really fought to get back into it, getting over the top, and my hat’s off to Coach Wally.

— Chad Wally, Iowa associate head coach

Women’s tennis sings new tune

The team is embracing its new look with Katie Dougherty after her former coach quit mid-season.

Practices in the past have remained relatively private, leaving what is about to take place. Dougherty said the approach has been to practice and compete every day as though they were in a real match.

“Sometimes when we’re up, we’re just going to stop, and we’ll go a little more forward,” she said. “They’re going to be held to very high standards, and it’s not going to be easy. They’re going to have to work to make it and to want to be able to maintain it.”

Dougherty, a five-year Big Ten veteran, knows the Hawkeyes have had a tumultuous last couple of months, but they are not going to let the ball drop.

After losing Greenman in the fall, Dougherty said with that confusion comes a lack of focus.

Iowa sophomore guard Matt Gatien watches from the bench as Iowa takes on Providence's Vasic AAM in Carrier-Hawk Arena on Dec. 3. Iowa won, 89-61.

Iowa senior guard Matt Gatien watches from the bench as Iowa takes on Providence’s Vasic AAM in Carrier-Hawk Arena on Dec. 3.
The Daily Iowan

Holiday Gift Guide

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

www.dailyiowan.com
A Dance Marathon project spreads holiday cheer.

This year, everybody amounted to 1,801 participants. At its meetings last week, Dance Marathon’s executive council asked all the dancers in the group spirit to bring donations — items for families who didn’t anticipate a long stay in the hospital. Others were Leaps and Barbies.

“I just brought a truck,” Kline said.

Kyle Walters, an event director with Dance Marathon, said that as usual, it’s the thought that counts. “I just want to help the families with the holidays,” he said. “The gift doesn’t have to be much — it goes beyond the money.”

Bon Friedman, Dance Marathon’s business director, also stressed the importance of performing an act of kindness for families with children in the hospital this time of year.

“Usually this project is more among the leadership, the UI senior and morale captain Jonathan Kline,” UI senior and morale captain Jonathan Kline said. “Usually this project is more among the leadership, the UI senior and morale captain Jonathan Kline.”

But this year it’s been more publicized. We told everybody. ‘Usually this project is more among the leadership, the UI senior and morale captain Jonathan Kline.”

Megan Jones, the group’s hospital director, said the gifts will mostly be given to children, but because this year, the group gathered so many, some will also go to toy rooms and to a holiday store in the hospital where kids there can shop for gifts for their families.

This time of year is hectic for everyone, she said, but she encouraged the dancers to take a time-out from the hoopla.

“It’s easy to get wrapped up in holiday shopping,” she said. “So instead of thinking about yourself or your family, we told people to think of kids in the hospital and their families.”

The total of more than 500 gifts raised was well above what Jones expected, she said. She is proud of everyone’s generosity, she said, and she is excited about the kids getting their presents.

“Even a small gift is huge to them,” she said.
They can’t all be filled with Charlie Brown, Pufty, and Ebenese Kringle. Befold, I come with tiding of less-than-great joy: the bottom-five worst holiday TV specials of all time.

5. “Christmas Comes to Poo-C”

Ever find yourself wondering how your favorite videogame characters celebrate the season? Me, neither. But the people behind the Pac-Man franchise decided to cash in on America’s favorite circular hero by creating this 1982 cartoon special that features a plethora of poorly animated shapes, ghosts, and cherries.

4. “The Leprechaun’s Christmas Gold!”

Like “Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer,” must Jules Bass & Arthur Rankin atop-motion features are timeless pieces of popular culture. But not all shine so bright in our collective consciousness. Case in point: “The Leprechaun’s Christmas Gold!” Complete with a banshee, grossly over-done Irish accents, and a plot worse than a mad Grinch in Whoville, this is one Bass/Arar feature that is in no way a classic.

3. “He-Man and She-Ra: A Warren Special”

This excerpt from the 1985 cartoon special says it all: Skeletor, Man-At-Arms: Tell me more about this “Christmas.”

Miguel: Well, it’s a wonderful time of the year. Everyone has lots of fun.

Skeletor, Man-At-Arms: You mean they get in fights?

Miguel: No, no — they have fun.

Skeletor, Man-At-Arms: Fights are fun. I like fights.

Miguel: And you give each other presents.

Skeletor, Man-At-Arms: And when you open them, they explode, right?

Miguel: No! They’re nice gifts.

Skeletor, Man-At-Arms: Nice? Doesn’t sound like much fun to me.

2. “Santa Claus Conquers the Martians”

Heralded by pop-culture critics as “the Citizen Kane of bad Christmas films,” this 1964 sci-fi flick inserts aliens into the holidays via a Christmas kidnapping of Santa Claus. Check out the “Mystery Science Theatre 3000” version for full results.

1. “The Star Wars Holiday Special”

It’s a trap. What happens when you combine Bea Arthur, Jefferson Starship, a trip to Chewbacca’s distant planet to celebrate “Life Day,” and a gag-inducing song rendition by Carpe Fisher at the height of her alcohol and drug addiction? The awesomely bad 1977 “Star Wars Holiday Special,” featuring all of the original actors from the film trilogy — and enough choice to constitute a watch.

— by Melea Andrys

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Hills are alive with the sound of sledding

By HANNA ROHMAN

Visions of rolling hills encrusted with sparkling snow and large old-fashioned toboggans are the stuff of any Bing Crosby fan’s dreams. While the UI doesn’t quite have that topography, there are plenty of places on campus to relive childhood sledding adventures.

• The Hillcrest hill.
The steep hill by the north entrance of the Hillcrest Residence Hall often sparks a lot of griping.

West Side residents can turn their lemons into lemonade — or in theme of this holiday season, turn their fruitcake into doorstops — by using this hill as an advantage for some holiday fun.

Just be sure to do it during times when there is light pedestrian traffic to avoid taking down fellow students.

• The Pentacrest slope.
For a longer, more enjoyable stretch of snowy sledding, the hill on the west side of the Pentacrest is perfect. This hill provides a longer incline rather than a speedy thrill through the frosted air.

Pedestrian obstacles on this snowy stretch are minimal because of sidewalks, but because of tree roots because of the hill.

But having the best locations is nothing without the best items to use as a sled when you’re on a college student’s budget.

• The disk sled.
This sled is one that has great speed and thrills, but it lacks directional control. It’s ideal for areas such as the Pentacrest because of the slight angle the hill is set upon. The price for this type of sled is about $20.

• The cookie sheet.
If you are sledding on a budget, a cookie sheet is a cheap substitute for a traditional sled that will provide the rider with the same fun. Depending on the hill’s incline and terrain, apply a coat of nonstick cooking spray to the backside of the cookie sheet to add additional speed.

When done sledding, the rider can bake a fresh batch of Christmas cookies as a perfect finish to a winter day.

The price of a cookie sheet can range, but one can be found for approximately $5.

• The storage container lid.
This sled substitute likely comes at no extra cost to most UI students because they are likely to already be in possession of a couple of plastic storage containers currently holding some extra items in a dorm room or apartment.

Though it’s not structurally ideal, storage container lid still allow for a good time.

Like the cookie sheet, one can apply a coat on nonstick cooking spray to the backside to allow speedier sledding.

The price for this type of sled is about $10.

Wishing for this Holiday Season: A French butter dish

Katherine Heinrich

FILE PHOTO/THE DAILY IOWAN