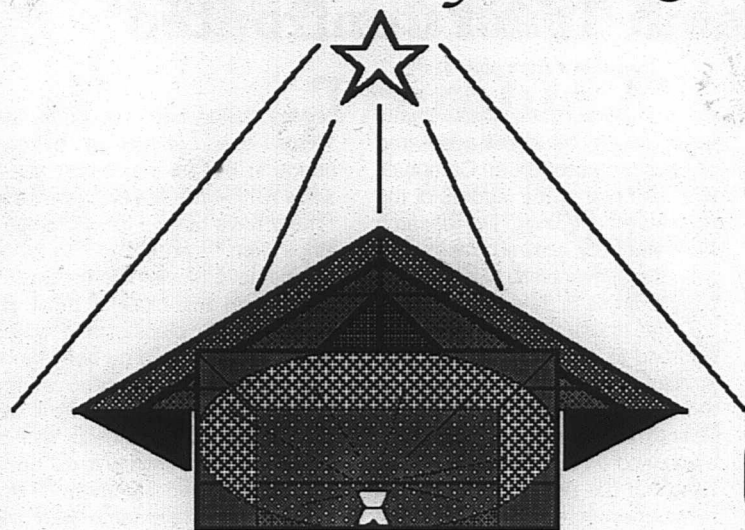


THE HOUGHTON



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December 18, 1989

Volume 82. 10

Commission Team Confronted

by Dave Wheeler

A research team sent to Allegany County by the New York State Low-Level Radioactive Waste Siting Commission was made painfully aware of citizen concern last week. Six state technicians were detained at the proposed Allen dump site. They were encircled by around 100 people in protest of the commission's plans to locate a waste dump in Allegany County.

The six technicians, representing the commission, Dunn Geoscience of Albany, and contractor Roy Weston, Inc., arrived at the Allen site on Wednesday, December 13. They were to conduct a "walkover" of the site, one of three proposed sites in Allegany County.

The commission had not notified the landowners of when the research team would come; it had simply told the landowners that it would conduct its walkovers between Wednesday and Friday. The commission and its representatives do have the legal right to enter the land, as an injunction filed by the landowners to restrict the commission's entrance was turned down; but it was required to notify

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Prof. Jack Leax addresses a gathering of anti-waste dump protesters on Route 19. Details on page 3.

Photo by Dave Perkins

News

Commission Team Confronted

(continued from page 1)

he landowners and give them the opportunity to accompany them. According to Gene Hennard, an active member and coordinator in the Concerned Citizens of Allegany County (CCAC), the commission refused to grant the landowners 24 hours notice before the research team's arrival.

Members of the Allegany County Nonviolent Action Group (ACNAG) had set up a watch for the commission. According to Professor Jack Leax, "a couple hundred" of volunteers were "out as early as 6:00 a.m." The majority of ACNAG members, expecting the commission to come to the Caneadea site, gathered at the German settlement church in Caneadea. Other members were at the other sites, keeping contact with the Caneadea group through CB and telephone links.

According to Leax, ACNAG's plan was to "hold the siting team before they get to the land," detaining them "until dark." The protesters expected to be arrested, but relied on their numbers to delay police proceedings. Since the commission arrived unexpectedly at the Allen site, it was able to gain entrance.

Eventually, ACNAG arrived at the Allen site, its members encircling the state team, locking arms. Negotiations took place between ACNAG, the research team, and the sheriff; then information came which "totally turned things around," according to Leax. Landowner William Giovanniello accused the state team of trespassing without permission, stating that he was never notified by the commission of the team's imminent arrival and that his land wasn't even on the site.

An agreement was finally worked out by the sheriff and Alfred physics professor Stuart Campbell, who was one of the leaders of the ACNAG proceedings. The research team would be allowed to leave the site after Giovanniello filed the trespass charges in Belmont.

The research team reportedly returned to Albany Thursday, presumably to obtain further legal authorization for coming onto the land. Retired dairyman Donald Miller, who owns land on the Allen site, hasn't ruled out the possibility that it will return unexpectedly. "You can't trust them [the commission]," Miller warned. "They're very devious. We'll monitor all the sites. They'll be back, armed with legal documents."

The commission contacted Miller beforehand, offering him \$600 for admittance onto the land. "I considered that like a bribe," said Miller, explaining why he refused the commission's offer. "Their purposes certainly weren't going to be beneficial."

"They're trying to destroy everything I've worked hard for, for years," Miller exclaimed, reflecting on 35 years of hard work. The waste dump will "poison the air" and "contaminate the soil"—particularly disquieting to Miller because the dump site is "just behind my place," he explained.

Miller sees the entire process by which the commission has conducted its research as "a farce." He claimed that the research team was taking readings on an area that "was on the very tip of the buffer zone," rather than on the dump site. He also pointed out that the commission has actually been using aerial

photos dating back as far as the 1960s—one contains a railroad bridge in Belfast that hasn't stood since 1972—in researching the area. "There have been a lot of changes since then," said Miller. "A lot of people have moved into the area."

Among the citizens most affected by the placing of a waste dump nearby would be dairy farmers, as Marilyn Ostrander, whose family also owns land on one of the proposed sites, explained. "Milk is one of the first things to show signs of radiation," said Ostrander. Miller echoed her statements with the words, "God knows this place needs dairy farmers." He cited the shortage of "milk cows" currently in the state, and mentioned that the state already brings milk in from such states as West Virginia and Maryland.

"We have a great heritage here, and we're reluctant to leave it," said Ostrander, speaking for herself and her family, the Chaffee household. "This will affect four generations of our family. The farm has been in our family for seven generations."

The landowners are committed to doing all they can to prevent further intrusion on their land. "We'll stop them," stated Miller. "If it means arrest, that's fine; we're prepared for civil disobedience. Our health, our whole lives, depend on this place here."



News

"Will Not the Land Tremble?"

by Dave Rhenow



Snowflurries and frigid temperature didn't stop over 150 students and faculty from gathering by the side of Route 19 Thursday afternoon for an anti-waste dump rally. The crowds started to arrive at about 12:55 p.m., some carrying signs reading "No, no, we won't glow," "Don't dump on us," and "What a waste," among others. Those without their own signs were given the familiar "Posted: No Dumping" sign to hold up for passing motorists to see. Many motorists honked, smiled, waved and gave the thumbs-up signal.

After a few minutes, Dr. Irmgard Howard gathered the crowd's attention and delivered a short but poignant message. "This is not a pro-nuclear or anti-nuclear issue," she began, "not even an issue of risk versus benefits. This is an issue of basic oppression." She called the siting commission's choice of Allegany County for three proposed sites for a low-level radioactive waste dump a "perversion of justice under the guise of scientific integrity" because the proposed sites are so close to Houghton College and to the Genesee River. There is no science behind their selection, she claimed; the commission came up with "an absurd result" to their study based on flawed material.

Howard made reference to the Book of Amos, quoting, "Will not the land tremble for this, and all who live in it mourn" (Amos 8:8), likening the "oppression" of Allegany County to the oppression found in Israel in Old Testament times. "The Lord God Almighty," she added, "is on the side of the oppressed."

After a hearty round of applause, Prof. Jack Leax read three of his poems lamenting the materialism and greed of today's society.

Finally, Dr. James Wolfe closed in a word of prayer, imploring God to help us to be "good stewards" of His creation. He prayed that God would "enlighten the members of the siting commission; that they would see more than just the opportunity to put waste in this county," and that their "ultimate responsibility is not to the nuclear power industry," but to God. A verse of "Seek Ye First" was sung, and the crowd disbanded.

The purpose of the protest, according to Wolfe, was to "make the siting commission aware that their statistic that there are only 200 people living in Houghton is really incorrect." Students, he said, are concerned as well as faculty and other Houghton residents, because they will be impacted by the decision.

When asked why they participated, some Houghton students re-

sponded that they wanted to support Houghton's fight against a nuclear waste dump, and that they thought the bureaucracy was being unfair to Allegany County because of its lack of political and economic power.

One student expressed that he felt the rally was too short and not organized very well. Another expressed that she is "not an activist," but being a science student, she doesn't believe that Allegany County is a safe location for a nuclear waste dump. The Genesee River, she pointed out, would carry any leakage right into Rochester.

Visiting 1989 alumnus Mick Williams, who has relatives near West Valley Waste Dump in Cattaraugus County, a dump which has not had a very good record, stated that he doesn't want history to repeat itself in Allegany County. "This type of thing transcends all political boundaries," said Williams. "Nobody likes pollution, whether they be right, left, or center."



A reflection of area sentiment.
Photo by Dave Perkins

News

10,000 Maniacs Support Concerned Citizens

by Beth Johnson

On Sunday, December 17, at Alfred University's McLean Center, the folk-rock band 10,000 Maniacs performed a concert to benefit the Concerned Citizens of Allegany County in their fight against the placement of radioactive waste in their county. All money raised from this concert—an estimated \$28,000 to \$30,000—will help pay for the CCAC's legal expenses and public education programs. 10,000 Maniacs received nothing; only their travel expenses were provided for.

According to concert coordinator Cassie Babbage, the CCAC wrote over 400 prominent recording artists across America, including Joan Baez and the Grateful Dead, in hopes of gaining a popular act to perform and draw attention to the plight of Allegany residents and problems of nuclear waste disposal.

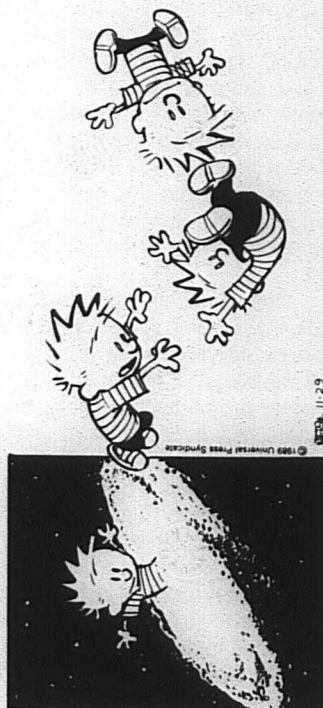
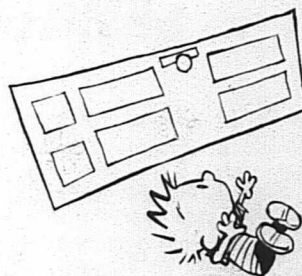
Ironically, the Jamestown-native Maniacs were not contacted; it was through Molly Albrecht, an Alfred student, that the band was made aware of a potential no-nuke concert. After a Buffalo concert, Albrecht spotted Maniacs lead vocalist Natalie Merchant walking along the street. Albrecht approached Merchant about performing; and at the next Maniacs concert, Albrecht was invited onstage to speak about the nuclear dump issue and Allegany

County's efforts to resist it. The band then agreed to perform, free of charge.

10,000 Maniacs is known for its liberal political and environmental views, concerns demonstrated through such songs as "Poison in the Well":

- ☆ *O they tell us there's poison in the well*
- ☆ *Someone's been a bit untidy and there's been a small spill*
- ☆ *All that it amounts to is a tear in the salted sea*
- ☆ *Someone's been a bit untidy, they'll have it cleaned up in a week.*

CACC member Mary Smith expressed hopes that the concert received press attention; celebrities speaking for a cause often garner public awareness. She also stated that the concert reached older high-school and college students, and urged citizens to stay informed about the nuclear waste issue.



The Star really, really, really, really needs a sports photographer!!! If you wish to be a part of this exciting enterprise, contact Dave at ext. 210 or 433, or Chris at 7-8090.

News

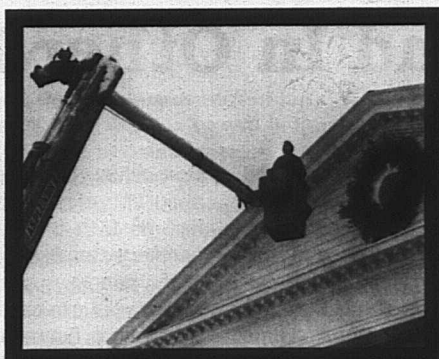
Houghton Granted \$2,000

submitted by the Public Information Offices

Houghton College has received a gift of \$2,000 from the Buffalo Foundation, a significant help in matching the \$32,514 Consortium for the Advancement of Private Higher Education (CAPHE) grant received last spring to help the college underwrite anticipated programs at the downtown King Urban Center, the former St. Mary of Sorrows Church now being restored.

In acknowledging the gift to foundation director W. L. VanShoonhoven, President Daniel Chamberlain wrote: "We believe this project will be life-changing for the Houghton students who provide tutorial services as well as for the inner-city students who receive the assistance." Programs to be implemented over the next two years include the tutorial service for the inner city Buffalo schools, an early childhood center, and a continuing education program for clergy and laity.

According to CAPHE project director Dr. Charles Massey, the Buffalo Foundation grant reduces the amount yet needed to complete the match to \$10,000, a gap he believes can be closed by early next year.



A rite of the season (Photo by Dave Perkins)

Administration Shuffles Sports Fee; ACO Declines Drive Money

by Stephen Vorkler

The final Student Senate meeting of the decade took place on Tuesday, December 12. Topics discussed included reports from the Financial Affairs and Athletic Committees, CAB news, and a change in the Senate Charity Drive recipient.

Representing the Financial Affairs Committee, Darren Chick informed Senate that the administration has lowered the Student Activity Fee by \$30, the amount paid by each student for intercollegiate sports. To cover this, however, it has added the \$30 onto the tuition cost. This action was taken without consulting Senate or any other student organization. In response, Senate voted to send a letter to the administration expressing "extreme displeasure" with the "absence of student consultation" when making this decision. Chick also notified Senate that dorm damage fees have been raised from \$10 to \$15.

According to Laura Hayes, who represented the Athletic Committee, Houghton is now solely affiliated with the NAIA, in order to streamline the athletic budget. Previously, the college had a "dual

affiliation" with both the NAIA and the NCCAA.

CAB chair Mary Biglow announced that Take Six will perform at Houghton on February 15, 1990. She also mentioned that CAB is planning a "Bad Movie Night" for February.

With regards to the Senate Charity Drive, Allegany County Outreach president Charlie Howard informed Senate that ACO cannot accept the money from the drive, which was to purchase a van for the organization. Howard announced that the college itself plans to supply ACO with a used van, most likely during next semester. After this announcement, Senate voted to instead support the STEP program in the Charity Drive. This will be the second successive year that STEP has received the money from this drive.



News

And In Other News . . .

a commentary by John Chong



The 1990s are almost here and the 1980s will soon be consigned to the history books, but much has happened in the past decade: former actor Ronald Reagan is President for two terms, the U.S. finally flexes her muscles for the first time since the Vietnam War, the Berlin Wall comes down, Hungary becomes a republic—and lastly, Mikhail Gorbachev. When historians look back at this period, Gorbachev will definitely stand out.

The world loves Gorbachev, even some Americans. This past week, he was nominated by the Norwegian people for this year's Nobel Peace Prize; and opinion polls indicate he will win. People all throughout the world (especially in Eastern Europe) are chanting, "Gorby! Gorby!" He has "shaken communism to its roots" and since coming to power in 1985, he has reshaped his country's political structure and has taken on the gigantic task of bringing the economy to its feet.

He has elevated two words to prominence: *perestroika* (restructuring) and *glasnost* (openness). Some believe that he will change the world as never before; some even think that he may be the Anti-Christ. Who knows?

So why are the people in his own country unhappy with him? The answer is simple: he hasn't delivered on most of the promises he made over the past five years. Winter is fast approaching and the Soviets are once again plagued with shortages, this year maybe more serious than previous times.

Many people in the USSR feel that reform is going too slowly and they are losing hope and faith in

Gorbachev. In a recent Soviet poll, about 60% of respondents said they had no faith in the future. Gorbachev is steadily losing the support of the people, support he needs if *perestroika* is to succeed. Winter is barely here, but rationing of necessities is widespread, especially soap and coal. Officials are worried that discontent will grow; and according to a senior social scientist, "The country is heading into anarchy."

Let's face it: *perestroika* in the USSR is a major flop so far. The economy is still backward and there appears to be no sign of improvement in the future. Coal is in short supply due to last summer's miners' strike. Transportation of goods has been crippled due to workers' grievances which left 1,700 trains stalled in October. Soap is very scarce; even with the increased imports and production, much of it has been hoarded or stuck in warehouses due to the breakdown of transportation. Many people in the USSR are consequently suffering from lice.

Added to the shortages of almost every necessity, inflation is on the rise, as there is too much demand (money) for goods which are not available. Inflation in the USSR is believed to be running at about 20 to 30% annually. As a result, there is a devaluation of the ruble; on the black market a US dollar is worth about 15 to 20 rubles.

Why is *perestroika* not working? Part of the problem lies with Gorbachev; he is a visionary who knows where he wants to take the country but doesn't know how to get it to the "Promised Land." There are members of his economic team who don't understand the concepts of a market economy, evident when they

pushed heavily on industrial investment but failed to realize that there would be fewer consumer goods available due to opportunity cost in emphasizing industrial rather than consumer investment.

This demonstrates the lack of understanding of economics, as well as Gorbachev's emphasis on developing the industrial sector. But if he wants to keep the masses happy, he had better start providing more consumer goods.

Another problem plaguing the Soviet economy is the running of the plants. The managers have been left to control the whole operation without training in market-style management. They also must deal with the lack of resources and energy for production, as well as the lack of motivation and cooperation from the workers. Basically, the Soviet managers don't have an understanding of the fundamentals of business (maybe we should send a few Houghton business majors to the USSR, any volunteers?) and the top economic officials don't have an understanding of the workings of supply and demand.

To top it off, the inefficiency and heavy hand of central planning is still present in the economy.

Gorbachev's main problem is that he doesn't want *perestroika* going too fast and out of control, which could then cause the Politburo conservatives to react negatively, destabilizing his position.

Like it or not, Gorbachev is a faithful Communist, even with all the great "democratic" ideas he initiated. He is failing to deliver his economic promises because "he is trying to make changes without fundamen-

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If Gorbachev wants to survive the winter and still be in power to accept his possible Nobel Peace Prize, he should start initiating more radical changes and start to satisfy the people's demands.

(Acknowledgements to **Newsweek** for background resources and data.)

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Opinion

Dear Editor:

Sometimes I'm surprised when something unexpected touches me right where I am at a certain point in my life and helps me make some sense out of where exactly I am in my life. Maybe you've felt what I'm talking about but am having trouble putting into words.

It's the afternoon of November 29. From my desk I can see a clock that says it's 2:15 p.m.—my time. In your time, Houghton time, it's about 9:15 a.m. I'm writing this letter from London, England, where I've been studying for the past 3 1/2 months. Although these thoughts of mine won't get back to you within any reasonable space of time, thanks to the efficiency of Britain's Royal Mail System, I hope the thoughts themselves will be right on time for someone there at Houghton.

A dear friend sent me a copy of November 10's *Star* to help me feel a little less distant from Houghton. It's bizarre being a "Houghtonian in absentia." One becomes *quite* reflective on the experiences she's had at the college she chose over every other in the country from which to receive her "higher education." Frightening thought, I think sometimes.

Jenna Gieser wrote an article in that issue about "Institutional Deprivation." I think she must have had someone or -ones particularly in mind when she wrote, "The students here, in general, are not getting the emotional support they need," and, "Houghton College has lost its sensitivity towards the emotional, spiritual, and personal struggles of its students." Well-written, and true on one hand, but quite a generalization on the other. Jenna, I don't want to spend my time agreeing or disagreeing with your article's concern. I think it's quite credible, but I'd rather shift a little to what thoughts it raised in my mind as I read.

I've found I'm the only Christian here on my campus. Having come from a college where the student body meets together four days each week to have what they call "chapel," to a place where students sit down during that same hour to a light lunch and an "I can prove to you in 10 minutes that God doesn't exist" conversation, I can tell you I've felt awfully lonely and frustrated on more than one occasion. Ever sat down to morning devotions with your Bible, study guide and a staring roommate or two? That's not likely to happen at Houghton.

Such times strengthen the bond I feel with "Houghton"—not quad, snow and buildings you picture when you tell someone you go to Houghton, but the people who challenged you, prayed for you, cared about you, made themselves vulnerable to you, and upset you so much you could do nothing but grow when you'd finished crying inside. These people deserve to be called your "student development center" much more than the ones who have offices in the Campus Center (no offense intended). Chances are, once you leave Houghton, it is this group who will color your memories of the place and determine what your answer will be when you ask yourself how much you've grown in the past 4-odd years.

Having had the opportunity to kind of jump out of my Houghton experience mid-stream, my reflection has shown me who my "student development" have been. They're not just my roommates, or the bunch of friends everybody inevitably hangs with most. They're professors I've gotten to know outside my classrooms who have shared their insights, informal lives, friendships and off-the-record comments with me; community members who are as much "Houghton" as anyone on the hill; and others I've been blessed to meet when activities have taken me

away from the academic and social spheres of the campus. I never imagined these people would have such an impact on my "growing up."

I might be about to make an obvious statement, but I'll risk redundancy anyway, remembering the number of times I missed something everyone else had caught the first time around. This time we're spending at Houghton and this education are our own; not our professors' or someone else's. Nobody's called "time out" on our lives while we study and try to discern where the Lord wants us after graduation. Everything we're learning now is important, as is everyone we're forming relationships with, as is every adjustment we're making in our world views.

In the same vein, every opportunity to learn we're passing up is important, too: in class and out. Don't worry about making yourself vulnerable by talking to somebody your friends may think you uncool to talk to (like a professor, CLEW or chapel speaker who said something that really hit home with you). You owe it to yourself and to the Lord to stick your neck out and live your life now, trusting Him to teach you what's important and valuable (and just and of good report, etc.). I know that sounds like quite a parental thing to say, but I'm going to spend 34p on a stamp and mail this anyway. 'Sides, your parents didn't say it just now, I did; and I'm largely talking to myself anyway.

The point is, thinking about the "real world" looming outside Houghton need not be frightening. If you haven't already, move outside of whatever wants to keep you inside of yourself and form substantial relationships, not just social or academic ones, with your profs and other non-students around you (If you have, disregard this message). We're fortunate to be at a place like

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Opinion

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We're fortunate to be at a place like Houghton where we can—at many schools, these folks float somewhere above us on a cloud called "faculty and administration." Don't wait for something intangible called "Houghton" to give you all the emotional, academic or spiritual support you need and ask for yours in return. Get to know those you might not have without some hard work on your part. Truth is, these relationships will probably follow you away from Houghton.

Allcia Beckford



Dear Editor:

As a new member of the community, I have been following with concern the columns and letters expressing heartfelt desires for Christian love and wholeness in Houghton.

If we are looking for solutions, one is in the opportunity for corporate worship here. The ultimate answer for many could be found in the peaceful, reassuring presence of Christ Himself, given when, together, members of His Body seek His face. I was personally moved by God's presence last Sunday morning and evening in the services of song and the Word. I rarely have the opportunity to attend services in Houghton. What a privilege and blessing they can be. Thank God for gifted and available pastors and musicians who minister to us when we hold up our hearts like empty cups. And thank God for His generous grace—accepting our worship and our longings and giving back more than we can ever offer. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst . . . they shall be filled."

A specific "Thank you" to all the students and staff who ministered to us in music Sunday evening. I saw some faces on Wesley Chapel plat-

form who must have been lost in wonder, love and praise. These moments are a genuine part of the Houghton experience and should spill over into the everyday grind. Instead of looking to an institution or to those around for reasons to criticize or complain, let's take advantage of all the means of grace offered in this place. I believe we will find life worth living and smiling about.

If we worship God regularly with a body of believers on the same journey, give ourselves and our talents for His service, soak up the consistent and rich teaching of God's Word, take time to minister to someone else who is hurting, and glory in the presence of a holy God dwelling in us, I think we will find Houghton not such a miserable place to be after all. Let's take advantage of regular Sunday worship with open, longing hearts.

Paul Shea



Dear Kris:

I was both encouraged and discouraged by your letter to the *Star* on December 8. It is good to know that there are other people that are aware of spiritual matters here on campus. However, your article did address mostly negative things, like academic pressure; let's not forget some of the positive things on campus either. Have you noticed the tremendous growth of good, spiritual prayer meetings over the last two years, or the seemingly genuine spirituality of our student leaders? I have been greatly encouraged by the growth of spirituality on campus since I came here in 1987.

I also agree with you that Satan is at work here on campus. Anytime the spirit of God starts to move, so does Satan. Last year was a very hard year for Houghton, both faculty

and students; but I also think that the awakening many of us received was very beneficial. So where do we go from here with our spirituality now that last year's tribulations are over?

Well, we could all slack off; I believe some of the problems you've observed are a result of this.

We could also realize that Satan is still very alive and strong at Houghton, and sharpen our spiritual swords for the battle. This is what you and I both want.

I have found this semester particularly difficult, as have many others I have talked to. This is at least partially because we have stopped really pressing in to God. He has become less important than my papers, or my running, or my free time.

It is very easy to fall into this sort of trap; as you mentioned, we need to keep our priorities straight. Once we do this, I daresay we will find the academic pressure lifting a little and our burdens becoming lighter. Trying to serve academics is like putting the wrong size yoke on an ox. Everything is more difficult then, including the very yoke of academics you're trying to heft.

No, I don't have all the answers to your questions; but you and I, and a lot of other people on campus, know who does. I can empathize with those who are under extreme academic pressure; we're all in the same boat there. One of the things that lifts me up the most is when someone lets me know they are praying for me and thinking of me.

This is my appeal to all of the Houghton faculty and students: let's develop a genuine spiritual concern for our brothers and sisters in Christ. Let us tell people we love them and are praying for them; then be sure to love them and pray for them. No one wants to handle the spiritual and academic pressure of college alone. Let's not make them.

With love, your brother in Christ,
Bernard Waugh

Opinion

Dear Sir:

The New York State Low-Level Radioactive Waste Siting Commission has received numerous questions and comments expressing concern that rural areas were targeted for the siting of the low-level radioactive waste disposal facility simply because they are rural and without the ability to oppose the siting process. This is not the case.

The Siting Commission's position is that a low-level radioactive waste disposal facility could be constructed and operated safely in either a rural or an urban area. However, State law prohibits the siting of the facility in areas with a population density of greater than 1,000 persons per square mile. Finding a site of suitable size (400 or more acres) in an urban area would be extremely difficult, and land acquisition would be extremely expensive. In addition, facility development would be more difficult and disruptive in an urban area due to the intensity of existing land use, traffic congestion, and infrastructure considerations. Environmental monitoring would also be more difficult due to the presence of industrial activities that could interfere with, or mask, the facility's monitoring equipment.

From a public health standpoint, it makes sense to put the facility in a low population area since this would minimize or eliminate the impact of facility construction and operation. The State regulations and the site selection process are designed to identify suitable sites for low-level radioactive waste disposal. The natural features of the site will work in conjunction with the engineered barriers incorporated into the facility design to ensure containment of the waste and protection of public health, safety, and the environment.

The Siting Commission welcomes questions and comments

from the public at any time. We can be reached by calling toll-free at 1-800-441-2401.

Sincerely,
Angelo F. Orazio
Chairman, Siting Commission

"I decline to accept the end of man."

William Faulkner

Meaningless?

by Jenna Gaiser

Papers, exams, deadlines and lack of sleep. There are some stresses everyone is sharing right now. Soon we are wandering around wearing the same clothes for the third day in a row because we don't have the time, energy or money to do laundry, and quoting Ecclesiastes: "Meaningless! Meaningless! Everything is Meaningless!" and "Of making many books there is no end, and much studying wearies the body." It's okay; everyone understands. Each meal becomes a time to compare who has gone the longest without sleep, who has the most to do in the next 24 hours and who gets to go home the soonest.

And then the 20th finally arrives. Most of us will be on our way home, almost everyone will be on their way somewhere, but the struggles we face become diverse. Some will spend the vacation in total self-indulgence, some have to work long hours to make money, some will go home to enjoy family togetherness, some

dread going home, some will shake off the Pledge like a frumpy coat, some will return to families even stricter than Houghton, some leave knowing they are not returning next semester, some are saying good-bye to friends not knowing when they will see them again. We leave this community for a variety of communities we used to belong to, or still belong to.

As you face struggles that are shared by many and struggles that are your own, I give you this verse.

"The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever" (1 John 2:17).

(And Mim, as she leaves Houghton for a semester, would like to give you this quote: "How are you going to teach logic in a world where everybody talks about the sun setting, when it is really the horizon rising?" - cal craig)



"Pray, and the heathen lie will disappear."

David Bowie



Miscellaneous

The **Houghton Star** is a weekly student publication; its focus is on events, issues, and ideas which significantly affect the Houghton College community. Letters (signed) are encouraged and accepted for publication; however, they must not constitute a personal attack, they must be submitted by noon on Tuesday, and they should be no longer than two double-spaced pages. The editor reserves the right to edit all contributions.

L. David Wheeler
Editor-in-chief

A. Cameron Airhart
Advisor

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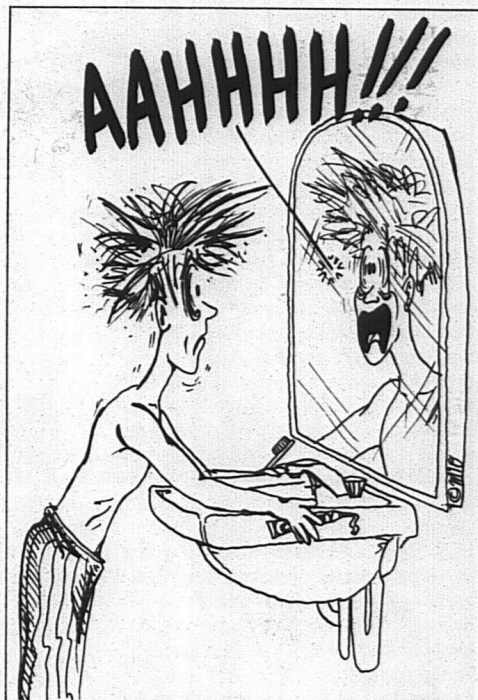
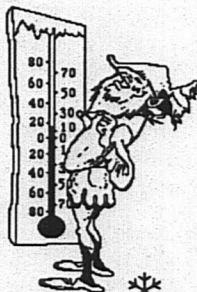
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The management of the **Houghton Star** would like to extend their thanks to all the people listed above, as well as countless other contributors who have spent countless hours producing the **Star** this semester. Merry Christmas and a happy New Decade!!! ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

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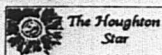
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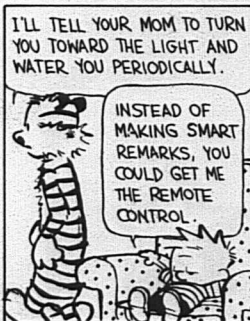
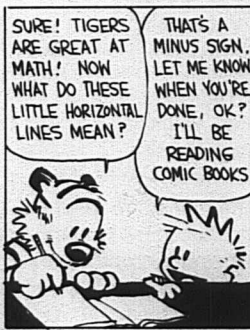
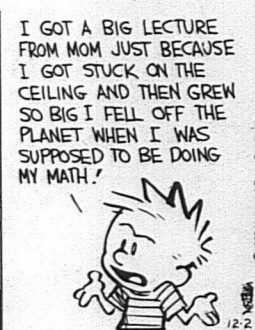
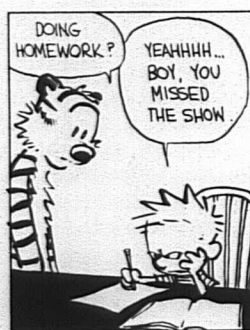
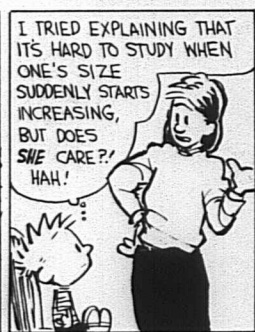
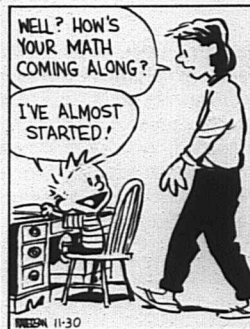
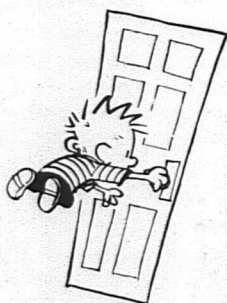
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Inquire about our special rates!



Calvin and Hobbes

by Bill Watterson



On the Record

by Jamie Lindsay

Bob Dylan: Oh Mercy

With this year's Woodstock anniversary, the Homecoming theme, and the resurgence of sixties stars like Paul McCartney and the late great Roy Orbison, the past few years have been full of sixties retrospectives. Musically, the sixties were a revolution in sound, style, and lyrical content; and one of the prime forces behind that change was Bob Dylan. Of late, Dylan has received a lot of criticism because many people have argued that he has "lost his touch." With his latest album, *Oh Mercy*, Dylan once more has proven his critics wrong.

One of the main focuses of *Oh Mercy* is moral and spiritual struggle. Despite the fact that Dylan no longer writes blatantly Christian songs like "Property of Jesus" or "Gotta Serve Somebody," his songs contain Christian morality written in a form that makes you think about what you are hearing and what kind of life you are living. Lyrics like these from "What Good Am I?" serve as testimony:

- ☆ What good am I? If I say foolish things,
- ☆ And I laugh in the face of what sorrow brings.
- ☆ When I just turn my back when you silently die,
- ☆ What good am I?

"Disease of Conceit" attacks the selfish, conceited attitude society has shown in the eighties "Me" generation. "Ring Them Bells" is similar to "What Good Am I" musically and lyrically, as Dylan urges us to be aware of the pain around us ("Ring them bells for the time that flies, for the child that cries, for when innocence dies"). The song makes a further point in stating, "They're breaking down the distance between right and wrong," an important point, for we must face the fact that what was once considered wrong is now accepted as all right and simply an alternative lifestyle. We must not allow our society to continue this; but rather we must redefine the "distance between right and wrong," unless we desire to be surrounded by

increasing immorality and burdened by an increasingly apathetic faith that ignores the needs of those around us.

The album's shining moment comes on the love song, "Most of the Time," which speaks of the loss of a love and how it continues to haunt months, even years, after the loss occurred:

- ☆ Most of the time, I am halfway content.
- ☆ Most of the time, I know exactly here it all went . . .
- ☆ I don't compromise and I don't pretend.
- ☆ I don't even care if I ever see her again—
- ☆ Most of the time . . .

Throughout this song (and the rest of the album, in fact), pain resounds through Dylan's emotion-filled voice. Other notable songs include "Political World," which attacks a world in which "mercy walks the plank," and "What Was It You Wanted," which challenges critics of Dylan who have chosen to judge him by a set of unreasonable expectations while disregarding the 2x8 in their own eyes.

Overall, *Oh Mercy* is excellently written and beautifully performed. Musically, Dylan and his cohorts sound excellent. The gentle guitar strains and inspired harmonica solos combine with other instruments to create a great atmosphere that makes no attempts to drown out Dylan's fine voice. Instrumental overkill can often be the death of an otherwise good album, but such a situation shows no signs of life on *Oh Mercy*. While making this album with Dylan, producer Daniel Lanois said, "It's an enlightening experience, watching a great poet embark on a new voyage." Unsurprisingly, it's enlightening to listen to as well. Rating: ☆☆☆ 1/2

Rating System

- ☆☆☆☆ Classic
- ☆☆☆ Excellent
- ☆☆ Good
- ☆ OK
- ☆ Lousy
- 0 Irredeemable



Michael W. Smith: Christmas

The question was not if Michael W. Smith would ever do a Christmas album, but *when* he would. This year saw Smith accomplish the long-awaited task by releasing an album simply called *Christmas*. Those who are looking for the Smith keyboard-oriented style of music are going to find something very different on this album. For the most part, Smith leans back on a more classical style of music for this album, with definite success.

Christmas begins with a song entitled "Overture/O Come All Ye Faithful," a very traditional rendition of the classic piece, complete with a choir and orchestra; and a very nice blend of voices is displayed with Smith and the choir. The album becomes even more interesting with the next two tracks: "Lux Venit" and "Anthem for Christmas." "Lux Venit" is a hymn written in Latin and English by Amy Grant, Bev Darnall and Smith, who wrote the music. The song itself takes on a very ecclesiastical sound that makes you feel as if it is an ancient song of the faith; and the choir in the background redoubles this feeling. "Anthem for Christmas" continues in this traditional sound with very good lyrics, written by Gloria Gaither, which just echo with the true meaning of Christmas: "Glory, sang the angel chorus. Glory, echoed back the night. Love has come to walk among us. Christ the Lord is born this night." This song would definitely take the prize for best song on the album—great accomplishment, considering the album's caliber.

The only song on the album that breaks from the traditional Christmas mode in any significant way is "Gloria," and even that defers a great deal to the sound of the rest of the album. Other notable songs include "No Eye Had Seen," a fairly good duet with Grant, and a very nice piano instrumental of "Silent Night" which gently ends the album.

Overall, I would say that Smith has outdone himself once again. The sound of this album, as I have repeated numerous times, is beautiful. So many artists have tried and failed to modernize traditional Christmas music; and I believe Smith realized this and did not even try. I could not have asked him for a better album. The only troubling task for Michael W. Smith is beating this one. Rating: ☆☆☆

Editorial

Peace on Earth

by Dave Wheeler



A chilling wind picks up, as a handful of shepherds make their way across the starlit fields from a nondescript Judean village. They had left their flocks to bleat in the dark, but that isn't currently on their minds. They rejoice, praising God for all they have heard and seen—as it had been told them.

He sits in the temple scant days after the shepherds' journey, bones creaking with the weight of years as he devoutly waits for the consolation of Israel. Today Simeon finds it, and immediately realizes the possibility of salvation and peace.

A troubled regent sits in his stately chambers, silently pondering. He too has heard the news learned by Simeon and the shepherds some time previously; but it brings him no peace—rather, it brings a sword. Very well, then; he has swords of his own—swords he will bring into play.

The inn went out of business years ago; the stable stands vacant, devoid of its livestock. Cobwebs hang from the ceiling of the dilapidated stable; weeds sprout from its dirt floor. A creak in the rotting wood breaks the silence of this scene, as a shivering, undernourished dog wriggles in through a hole in a wall plank. Its dismal eyes scan the structure and alight on an old manger across the stable. Sniffing around the manger for a while, the dog summons its waning energy and leaps into the manger. It drifts into a warm, contented sleep, the first it has experienced in months.



Christmas is often described as a season of peace; and so it is, for it commemorates the birth of the Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ. He came to offer us peace from the raging turmoil waged within our flesh, peace from the anxiety born of an existence without hope. Peace from the raging fires of hell—in both the literal and figurative senses of the term.

Some will accept this peace, and go on to live renewed lives, maintaining this peace through communion with the Peacegiver. Others, such as the petty regent Herod, will refuse this peace, viewing it as a threat.

Herod was, of course, correct. The peace offered by Jesus Christ is a threat. It threatens our cultivated sovereignty over our lives, attempting to replace it with a continual reliance on God's provision. It threatens our flesh by offering to alleviate us from its dictates; and in so far as our desires have been decided by the dictates of our flesh, it threatens our desires. Many of these desires bring us nothing but pain and turmoil, but in our childish want we don't realize that.

As for myself, I need, desperately, to claim this peace. I'm exhausted. My semester has been one of constant battles with an obstinate flesh which delights in keeping me in turmoil. I suspect that many of you can say the same; in fact, many of you have, in so many words.

Christians are funny people, you know? We see our nonbelieving friends walking about with an immense void within them, a void that strives to consume them and that is all too evident in its efforts to do so, a void they cannot fill because they

don't know what will satisfy it. We, however, know the answer—we know what will fill the void exactly—but we spend our lives in ridiculous pursuits of something else to fill in the void with.

This Christmas, when we hear the word "peace," let's not let it pass by as yet another vague "holiday" word that means nothing in our daily existence. Let's reflect on the peace that is offered to us as surely as it was offered to the old and righteous Simeon, as he joyfully lived out the rest of his days—knowing that his eyes had seen his salvation.

Shalom.

