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THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF HOUGHTON COLLEGE

# THE HOUGHTON STAR

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Party Like it's 1883:

## Houghton Celebrates 127 Years at Homecoming 2010

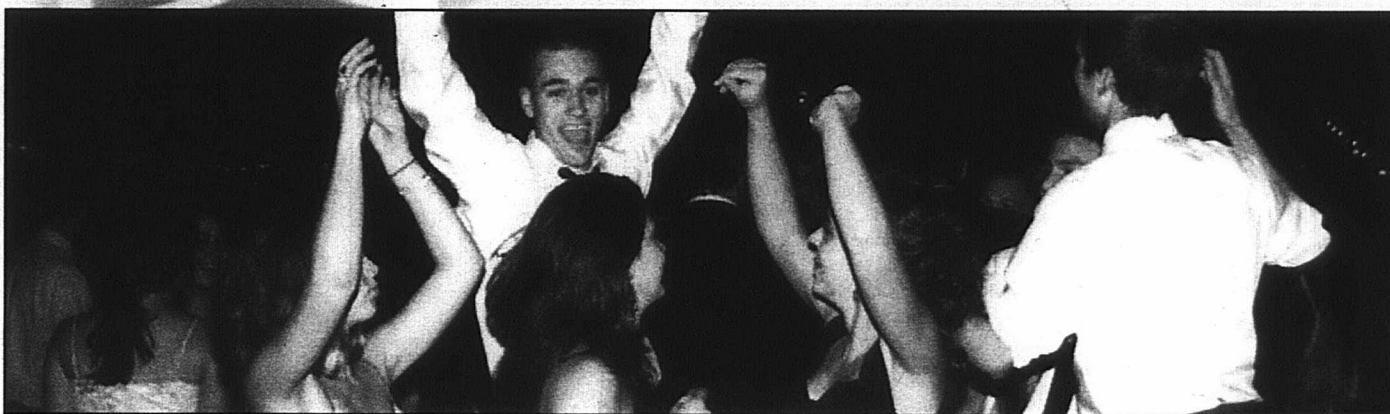


PHOTO BY RACHEL BLEW

Houghton students dance to the music played by Houghton-hired DJ Benny from Jammin' Sound in Buffalo. The dance was just one of the many activities the weekend offered.

BY REBECCA DYGERT

"Homecoming is the time that we take to celebrate everything Houghton," said Jocelyn Matuszkiewicz, student Campus Activities Board (CAB) director and senior at Houghton. This year, Homecoming kept that tradition, as the student body assembled to celebrate the new school year and new experiences headed our way.

Months of planning go into the setup of Houghton

College's homecoming weekend. The planning begins in the spring semester and does not end until the day following the events. The department heads work tirelessly to establish the sports lineup and guest speakers, while CAB plans the highly-anticipated Celebration on the Quad, the Homecoming banquet, and the biannual variety show known as SPOT.

"Hours and hours are spent planning," said CAB member Kristen Beck, junior. "It was

hard work, but the end result was so worth it."

The weekend began Friday with an extended chapel recognizing Founder's Day, which provided students with an opportunity to both worship and learn more about Houghton's past and alumni. The guest speaker this year was Richard Mouw, class of 1961, who spoke of the importance of working for God rather than ourselves. To stress this point, he quoted the popular song "Satisfaction,"

by the Rolling Stones, which triggered quite a few laughs from the audience.

Following chapel, some students welcomed their families, as Houghton opened its doors to them for the duration of Homecoming. Friday night concluded with the popular Celebration on the Quad, where the students relied on DJ Benny from Jammin' Sound in Buffalo, to bring them the popular hits of today and to guide their cha-cha slides and shuffles.

Saturday's lineup of events was just as hectic as Friday's, filled with a tailgate lunch offered by Sodexo, a 5K fun run, a small carnival, a dinner banquet, and SPOT to close off the weekend.

For many, the Celebration on the Quad was the campus favorite. Students had the opportunity to dress up and dance, an opportunity that was not given at Houghton for quite some time.

*Homecoming cont'd on pg. 3*

## Changes to Chapel Attendance Policy Set in Motion

Houghton creates alternative chapel options and cracks down on "scanning and scrambling"

BY ERIKA BREMER

A couple changes to chapel have been implemented this semester, including alternative chapel options and disciplinary measures for scanning and scrambling. Administrative Assistant to the Dean of the Chapel, Brian Webb, said that alternative chapels will give students more opportunities to meet their chapel requirement while at the same time promoting attendance to different campus wide events that qualify for chapel credit. He believes that this is a "more holistic approach to spiritual development."

Any individual—including faculty, students and guests speakers—or organization on campus can request that their meeting or event be eligible for chapel credit. These would include such things as New Vision Week workshops or organized class activities with spiritual emphasis. Webb said that they would like to steer away from giving chapel credit for weekly events such as Koinonia in order to encourage students to attend some of the special events offered.

Junior David Giannetti agreed. "You don't want to put a twist on something that's

been formed organically and authentically, or get aside from what it was originally intended for."

As far as the idea of alternative chapels in general, Giannetti said that he thought that it is a good thing when a student, like himself, is unsure where he stands when it comes to having mandatory chapel.

"I appreciate that there are alternatives now with something that I can engage in on a more personal level and that I have freedom to choose. Not that it has to be more individualized but just that I feel like I can really get something out of it,"

said Giannetti.

Sophomore Theresa Bailey said she thought that while optional chapels are a good idea, they need to be better advertised. "I don't know what they are or where they are."

She also said she found it hard to make time for these alternative chapels. "You already have that set time for chapel, but if there's an alternative chapel you have to jam it into your schedule."

She said she's hoping these chapels will be more personally applicable.

"I'd like to know more of what's going on locally [in

Western New York]. We're like monks, here," and she said she wants to see some of these opportunities emphasizing the wider community outside of Houghton College.

Penalties for scanning and scrambling, on the other hand, are implemented by as a form of accountability. These penalties include two deducted already-earned chapel credits for every time caught scrambling.

While it has always been a problem, Dean John Britain and Webb decided they should take action regardless of whether

*Chapel cont'd on page 2*

Questions or concerns about the chapel attendance policy? E-mail chapelattendance@houghton.edu.



## Engaging the World

## Abandoning Ignorance and Exercising the Right



PHOTO BY JORDAN GREEN

BY JENNIFER SLIWA

As humans, we like categories. Despite the tendency of some to insist that we should burst all the bounds of society, we typically enjoy drawing boundaries around things with vigor. Some of these boundaries are more flexible, and we draw lines in metaphorical sand. Some issues are traced in metaphorical pencil and others we build stone walls along. When it comes to defining truth, Christians tend to favor pictures of the stone walls.

Christianity, many would say, is not built for a pluralistic society, and yet our political system is structured to support just that. Though we may desire for the "correct" opinion to be marked off with a distinctive stone wall, we often realize that the lines are blurry and unclear. Democracy requires compromise: are we able to

do that we our conceptions of truth? If we go into every debate convinced that we must hold to some immovable line, are we honestly able to respect and engage another's ideas? We complain that political bureaucracy is slow and unproductive, but there are times when our inability to compromise leaves us in a stalemate of our making.

Election Day is fast approaching; how do you choose your vote? Do we really strive to understand what type of political ideologies our votes are supporting, or do we declare that this candidate is "pro-life" and therefore deserves our support? Protecting the sanctity of human life is important, but declaring this a stone-wall-line on which we vote disrespects other important issues that also depend on what we mark on our ballots. Candidate A may have in mind stricter legislation regarding abortion laws, but that does not mean Candidate B wholeheartedly supports partial-birth abortions. We dismiss people so easily when we feel our stone walls are threatened; do we really know what's out there? Or what we've let in?

Because politics are politics and people are people, it's not always easy to feel like there is a good choice available. But democracy is all about compromise. If I may be so presumptuous as to do a little political stereotyping of Houghton — please know that I am *aware* these are not the only opinions on campus — it is probably fair to say that the Republican

party is known for positions that better align with evangelical's views on abortion and gay marriage. But while we're defending the sanctity of human life, it might be good to note that some of the Democrats ideas of social justice line up with the Christian's call to the poor and downtrodden. Viewing the political system as a whole is also important; though bureaucracy moves slowly and tediously, a united versus divided government (i.e. the senate majority and the administration are aligned with similar parties) is worth pause. Are we able to take in the larger picture when we cast our votes? Are we *honestly* listening to those we disagree with because they might have new insight that we lack? Or do we shut them out because they reside outside of our "walls?"

This applies to more than just politics. What ideas are we shutting out because we have declared them "wrong." If any place in the world should be safe for asking tough intellectual questions and getting solid Christian answers for them, it should be here at a "Christian" college. This is my challenge to Houghton College: go out and listen. If you want information on a political candidate, don't read about them on their opponent's website. Go to that lecture when you *know* you'll disagree with the speaker; worst-case scenario you'll leave with a better understanding of why you disagree with him. Question. Probe. Discover. And go out and vote!

## Chapel con't from page 1

anything was done about scanning and scrambling in the past.

Webb claims, "It's a real integrity issue...even conscientiously objecting [to attend chapel] the whole semester is a student's choice," but also thinks it is less offensive than scrambling. Webb concedes, "I'm not going to bar the gates of the chapel and accost every student that attempts to flee, but we do want to have some kind of accountability sentence in place." He understands that many students will not be caught necessarily—but this is not the intention. "The basic idea is that there is a penalty, just like cheating, for lying about chapel attendance."

Students have mixed feelings about these new penalties. Various students mentioned that they do not see how deducting already-earned chapel credits will prevent scanning and scrambling.

"The people who have been scrambling will continue to do so," remarked Pamela Williams. Most of the students had a hard time separating the scanning and scrambling policies from the idea of mandatory chapel.

As Kendra Inglis put it, "I think scramblers should be disciplined some way, but that doesn't seem like the most effective way—I still wonder if we should be forced to go to chapel at all."

Giannetti had similar concerns, wondering how effectively they will be able to catch students. "It's a question of proper engagement...kids are just going to change how they get around it or how they approach chapel and it's still going to be a question of engagement."

For Bailey, discipline is important for people who scan and scam repeatedly, but "a lot of people when they're at the point where they have to meet chapel requirement and they don't want to listen to the speaker—what's the difference between scanning and scrambling or sitting there napping or reading or doing something else...the whole point of chapel—the spiritual life aspect—you get from chapel, but you're also living amongst it."

Bailey admitted to having scanned and scrambled in past semesters, but stated that it was only out of desperation to meet attendance requirement at a time when she was overwhelmed with other academic demands.

If integrity is the main issue, many students have said that mandatory chapel burdens them with the unnecessary need to split their priorities between meeting that requirement along with schoolwork and other important commitments.

"Why would we want to force people to go to chapel if they're not going to get anything out of it and they're stressed about exams; can you really connect with God by just sitting there in the seat and having to listen to another well-educated person profess some truth about the Bible?" asked Giannetti. "The improvement in your faith starts with your own desires—it's not a matter of exposure always."

Webb mentioned how students seem to take more notice of the punitive side of things, but for Britain and himself, the alternative chapels are much more exciting. "Our hope is that it will be widely used and that students will see it as advantageous for them." Concerning the scrambling discipline, he said he wishes "that those students [who scan and scam] will rethink what they're doing in the light of personal integrity." ★

## The World OUT There

BY DEREK SCHWABE

## Peace Corps Returns to Sierra Leone

American Peace Corps members were recently deployed in Sierra Leone for the first time in 16 years. An adventurous group of 27 volunteers from all over the United States have begun their assignments as teachers of science, math, and english throughout the country. A long, brutal Civil War had dominated the country for more than a decade, finally ending in 2002. It was not until this year that the US government deemed the country safe enough for extended terms of service. Many volunteers have begun their work in areas that lack most modern amenities, including electricity and running water. Many locations can have illiteracy rates as high as 70%. Peace Corps members indicated enthusiasm and optimism for the new opportunity.

## Facebook Introduces New Privacy Tools

Facebook has introduced several new ways for users to manage their personal information, said Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg, from an event at the corporate headquarters in Palo Alto, California. The new initiative, called Groups, will provide users with an option to keep some data private or limited to a small subset of the friends list. Zuckerberg presented a demonstration in which he described how Facebook members could share their information with smaller, organic clusters of people; each "group" includes three parts: a shared space, group chat, and e-mail lists. The new addition will serve to replace the previous "top friends" feature, allowing users to create and invite friends into more personalized groups such as "family" or "soccer team." Other privacy and saliency tools were introduced, with the aim of securing and empowering people in their Facebook use.

## GDP Growth to Drag

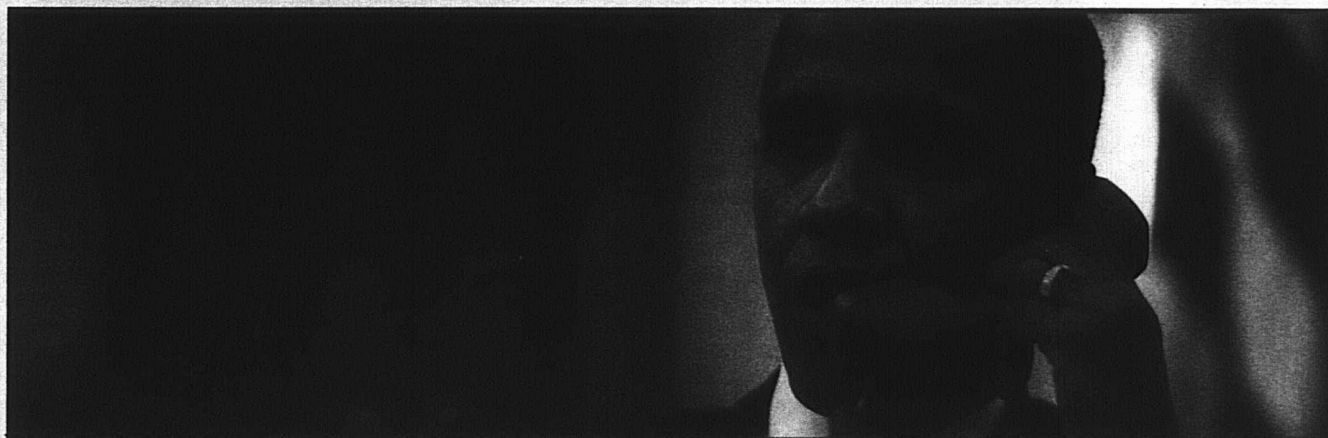
The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said this week that the global economy next year will grow slightly more slowly than previously anticipated. It predicted GDP would increase by 4.2% in 2011, down from an earlier forecast of 4.3%. The IMF also stated that economic recovery would be accompanied by high risks. It further explained that the global financial system will likely remain in the "weak link" in the chain of economic recovery. The advanced economies, including the US, UK, Japan, and members of the EU were deemed vulnerable to economic aftershocks as stimulus spending wanes. It predicted larger rates of economic growth, near 6.4%, in emerging economies such as Brazil, Russia, and China. The US economy was estimated to grow 2.6%, still considered a vast improvement from its 2.6% decline in 2009.



photos courtesy of peacecorps.gov, attorneygeneral.utah.gov, kaufman.senate.gov



## Pres. Obama Holds Conference Call with Student Journalists



OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY PAUL SOUZA

President Obama, in a conference call on Sept. 27, discussed new policies designed to not just increase federal loans, but also to help states generate more tax revenue. He, in response to a concerned student, said that calling the current generation the "lost generation" was a misnomer. "I think your generation is going to be just fine," he said.

BY MONICA SANDREGZKI

Last week, President Barack Obama spoke with student journalists in a national conference call organized by the College Media Network, to discuss the Obama Administration's efforts to aid young adults by "strengthening higher education," which will, according to the President, ultimately be achieved through strengthening the economy.

He opened with an introduction to all of the student participants, emphasizing that it is this generation that will be the driving force of the success in the future. In the past couple of decades alone, the United States has fallen from first to twelfth in regard to graduation rate. The enrollment rates, the President said, are fairly high, but that a third of college students and more than half of minority students do not finish

college, even after six years.

Obama indicated that the goal is for the US to return to its former top position, and in order to achieve the goal, the Administration has put in place several new policies.

First, a key goal is to make higher education more affordable by redirecting about \$60 billion of federal aid from banks directly to students and tripling the investments of college tax credits.

Moreover, Obama indicated that his administration is trying to alleviate financial pressure post-graduation, which stem from debt payments and paying for health care.

He has proposed that, starting in 2014, young adults will be able to "cap their debt" at ten percent of their salary and, if serving in a public service job, their debt will be completely forgiven after 10 years.

To cover their health care, under the Affordable Care Act, young adults

will be able to stay covered under their parents' insurance until the age of 26.

"The only caveat to the thing is that it assumes that your employer doesn't offer you health care...But if your employer does not offer you health care, or if you're having trouble finding a job...you will be covered under your parents' plan," said the President.

After the his opening statements, Obama took questions from some of the students listening in to his call. One student asked about what national initiatives will make higher education less expensive, citing that his school, UCLA, had a 32 percent tuition increase.

Obama responded with several factors necessary to making higher education more affordable, but also said that one reason the price of education has increased is because state budgets have had to make "severe cutbacks in the support they provide to public education," to which it is imperative that the national economy be thriving in

order to take pressure off of states so that they can take in more tax revenue. Currently, higher education is the only arena in which inflation is higher than health care inflation.

"[P]art of what I think we've got to examine is are we designing our universities in a way that focuses on the primary thing, which is education.

"How courses are taught, so that we're making sure that the teaching loads at universities continue to emphasize research and continue to give professors the opportunity to engage in work outside the classroom that advances knowledge, but at the same time reminding faculties that their primary job is to teach, and so you've got to structure how universities operate to give students the best deal that they can," said Obama. ★

### Homecoming cont'd from page 1

"It's mostly because [The Celebration on the Quad] is so new to Houghton and only happens once a year," said sophomore CAB member Lauren-Ashley Brugger, in reference to this event being a College favorite.

CAB members worked diligently throughout the day of the dance to decorate the quad, surrounding it with blue lights and couches for weary dancers to lounge on. They had to wait until the day of to decorate because the wet weather was a factor, and CAB members had to be sure there was no sign of rain before putting the final touches on the dance plans.

For most of campus, however, SPOT is the annual homecoming event everyone looks forward to. At least an hour before the 10 o'clock show started, masses of people were lined up outside of the chapel in high anticipation for the laughs and entertainment soon to come. People flooded Wesley Chapel as soon as the doors opened, and proved to be overwhelming for those involved in setting up.

"I try to warn my CAB staff about playing bouncer, but there is really no way to describe it without seeing it in person," said Matuszkiewicz. "They were a little bit overwhelmed at the

excitement that this event stirred up, but were happy to get such a good response."

Ranging from topics about President Mullen's marriage to ones about marriages between students, the jokes and sarcasm heard in SPOT brought no end to laughter.

"It's always fun when you can poke fun at your school and peers and still be in good humor about it all," said sophomore Kathryn Dygert.

Despite the insane amount of work that goes into planning such a large weekend-long event, CAB still managed to add a few new things to the line up such as, the 5K fun run and the tailgate lunch. However, one event truly highlighted the idea of new beginnings and celebrating Houghton College and all it has to offer--the ceremonial demolition of one of the walls of the Paine science building. President Mullen, along with a team of alumni, donors, professors, and students tore down the wall to symbolize the changes that are to come.

"It is exciting to see the new changes and evolutions Houghton is involved with every year, and Homecoming is the designated time to celebrate them," said Matuszkiewicz. ★



PHOTO BY MIKE WISE

President Mullen pies senior Devin Paige as part of a fundraiser for Young Life Saturday.

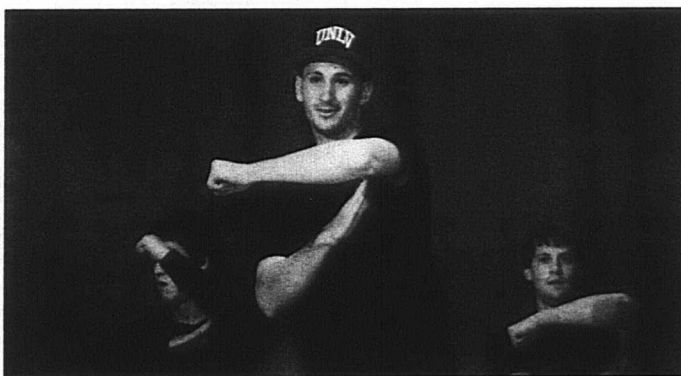
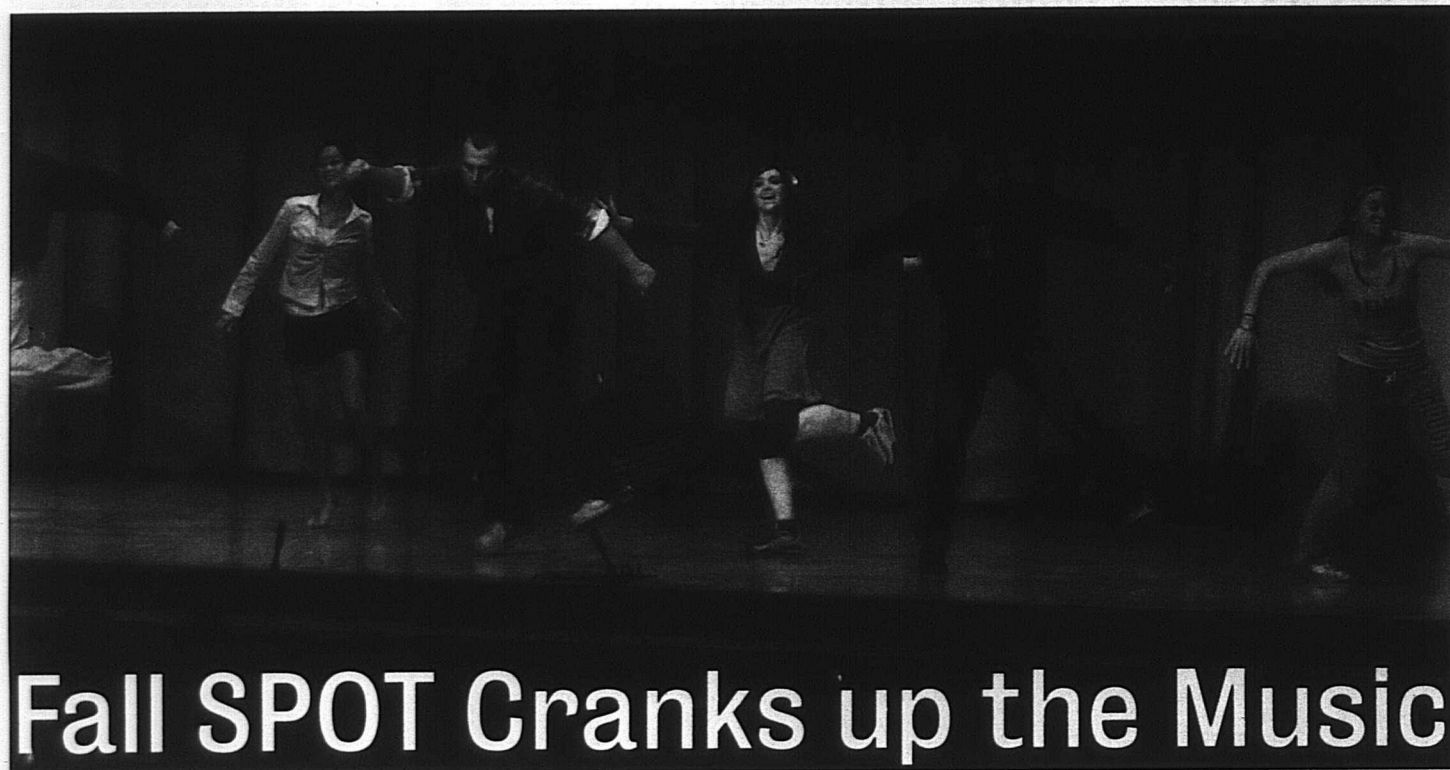


PHOTO BY MIKE WISE

Houghton student Mike Amico, sophomore, dances with Danny Kim, junior, and Tim Putnam, senior during SPOT Saturday.



## Fall SPOT Cranks up the Music

PHOTO BY JORDAN GREEN

Sheri Tuttle, Caleb Martin, Amber Payne, Joshua Akpan, Bethany Ortuist, and Bryan Overland (not shown) swing dance in one of SPOT's numerous musical performances.

BY EVAN YEONG

Every year hundreds of students flock to the chapel steps to stand and wait, sometimes arriving almost an hour early. When the clock strikes 10:00 and the doors crack open, a cheer rings out from the crowd and for the next ten minutes it is nothing but pushing and jostling, elbows and excitement. Then, as seats are found and the band plays, the show begins. Welcome to Houghton College's SPOT.

Started decades ago as a student response to not being able to watch Saturday Night Live on the one Saturday of the month when there was no new episode on air, SPOT has grown from a weekly event to a show that now premieres each semester. Any student second year and up knows what the heart of Homecoming Weekend, past the fair and the games, actually is.

This fall's SPOT was hosted by juniors Nathanael Smith and Kyle

Johnson, who kicked off the show dressed to the nines in matching tuxedos. Smith openly admitted, however, that they "weren't as planned as [he] would have liked." In spite of this their hosting was very well received, which he said he found surprising. He also mentioned that SPOT turned out to be "funnier than [he] intended it to be."

This year's show managed to add a spark of originality by having a group of hip-hop dancers star as the first act of the night. Yet in terms of the diversity, many acts found themselves leaning more towards the musical. Joe Covey, senior, commented that the "guitar/singing acts may [have] been a little overkill," and considering that a short list of the acts entails a rap about homeschoolers, a Katy Perry cover, and a song about a certain someone's recent marriage sung to the tune of "Use Somebody," it's easy to see where he's coming from.

On that note, this SPOT also leaned thematically towards relationships in general, specifically about President

Mullen's wedding over the summer. Although these jokes may have been a little too heavily sprinkled throughout the night, the topic brought to light the song "We All Come to Houghton to Get Engaged" by sophomores Kelsey Howse and Sarah Jacoby, already being lauded by many as filling in the shoes left behind by Alex Glover.

Other highlights of the night include a skit featuring the plight of widely named "London Boy," sophomore Joel Ernst, and a recreation of a MAD TV skit about English problems. This show's band featured a jazz quartet, which provided a much more relaxed atmosphere than the other genres played in the past. Andrew Bonanno, junior, and Alice Browning, sophomore, took on the mantle of "Weekend Update" from alums Jennifer Miller and Ian Taylor, and most definitely did their act justice.

The class of 2014 also made their presence well known this semester, despite being the butt of a good number of jokes. An all-freshmen cast were

the ones to headline the first skit of the night, and used their time to poke fun at the college as a whole. Freshman Luke Crawford was actually the one to approach his class' SGA, and helped write their act as well.

Describing his experience, Luke said, "I really enjoyed hearing about the legacy of SPOT, all of the great acts that had gone before me, and all the people who were looking forward to seeing their friends perform." He also ended by saying that SPOT is "a great way to bring the talents of the community together."

As the music and lights are turned up, the cast members of every act begin to frolic on stage and the audience begins to rise. It has only been a little over an hour but you can be assured that everyone walking out of the chapel doors will be talking about SPOT for at least the next week, if not two. They are not even all the way down the chapel steps and already their minds are on next semester, and what surprises the next SPOT will bring. ★

## Sufjan Strikes Again:

The ever-innovative artist supplements his diverse repertoire with a new EP

BY BEN MURPHY

My first thought when listening to the opening track "All Delighted People" was, "who in the world has the nerve to paraphrase Simon and Garfunkel?" And then I remembered who I was listening to...

Sufjan Stevens is no stranger to the weird and ambitious. His past releases run the gambit from melodic banjo strumming, to endless Christmas covers, to Folk/Electronica, to what often resembles "just noise." I have found that many fans prefer one or

maybe two of Sufjan's various 'faces.' I loved Illinois and Greetings From Michigan, but I couldn't get past the creep factor of Enjoy Your Rabbit or the Kurt Cobain Folk collision entitled A Sun Came. His newest EP, All Delighted People, presents a robust mixture many of Sufjan's most distant faces.

Both "All Delighted People (Original)" and its parallel Classic Rock version are complex, textured compositions. With all the best of horns, female echoes, guitar distortion, piano riffs, violin strains, and an RT-D2 synthesizer, the album begins.

The tone of the album is borne in this first track. Sufjan is captured by the cruel irony of being alone in a world full of people. The paradox of being materially comforted and abated while lacking any true fulfillment is echoed as Sufjan twists and distorts the words of the classic song, "The Sound Of Silence." He sings: "Delighted people raise their hands/And the people bowed and prayed/And what difference does it make?/ It doesn't matter anyway/The world surrounds us with its hate." These manipulations fuse with the haunting words of Paul Simon to create a unique, albeit eerie,

framework for Sufjan to work in.

Other lines, such as "And I took you by the sleeve, no other reason than to be your leading man" and "when your legs give out just lie right down, and I will kiss you till your breath is found," tell a pathetic but familiar story. Sufjan's 'delighted people' seek solace in human companionship, but not healthy, loving bonds. Instead, they forge clinging, last-ditch attempts to thwart loneliness by latching on to another equally wretched being: a kind of parasitic attack for self-fulfillment

*Sufjan cont'd on page 5*



# Will More Teams Be Worth the Cost?

## Perspectives on NCAA Possibilities and Houghton's Athletic Budget

BY CHRIS HARTLINE

Last Tuesday, the University of California-Berkeley announced that it was cutting five athletic programs, including their baseball program, which will save the University \$4 million annually. According to the *New York Times*, "The move comes at a time when athletics have faced strong criticism at Berkeley because money-losing sports have been subsidized while the academic departments have been forced to make severe cuts." This move by Berkeley raises a serious question about Houghton's recent actions concerning their athletic department. At a time when Houghton finds itself in the midst of budget difficulties, why has the administration and athletic department decided to add baseball and softball programs for next year as they consider a move to NCAA-Division III?

Houghton's athletic budget is already seen by some as a burden on the financial stability of other programs, as well as a drain on student tuition dollars. Larger universities, such as Penn State and Notre Dame, which have large booster programs and huge gate and advertising revenue, have profitable athletic programs. For example, the total expense for Notre Dame's athletic department, according to Department of Education records for 2008-2009, was \$64 million. In the same time period, the total revenue for the athletic department was \$81 million. As a result, the financial

burden of a vibrant athletic program does not fall on students in the form of tuition.

At Houghton, however, where there is almost no booster program and no gate revenue, the athletic department budget is funded exclusively from tuition dollars. With an athletic budget of approximately \$1.4 million and a student body of approximately 1200 for the 2008-2009 year, each Houghton student pays over \$1000 annually towards the athletic department in the form of tuition dollars. According to Vice President of Finance and Administration, Efrain Rivera, the addition of baseball and softball – and eventually the addition of more athletic programs and facilities to comply with NCAA Division-III standards – will "ramp-up expenses" for the athletic budget in the coming years.

Athletic Director "Skip" Lord explained the rationale for the possible switch as involving a shift in the geographic focus of the NAIA.

"NAIA, which is a wonderful organization, has morphed into an organization that is strong in the Midwest and South but has shrunk in certain areas of the country; the Northeast is one of those areas," said Lord.

Being a part of NCAA Division-III would allow Houghton to compete in the Western New York region and allow the Athletic Department to "embrace our brand in the Western New York market," according to Lord. This emphasis on the region would give the Houghton athletic department much

greater notoriety and be a considerable aid to the recruitment process.

There are two main justifications given for the addition of baseball and softball to the Athletic Program for the 2011-2012 academic year. First, Lord pointed out that NCAA Division-III requires 12 athletic programs, and that the school is showing a clear sign that it is working towards that goal will aid in the four-year phase-in process.

Second, athletic department and administration officials have claimed that adding these sports will increase enrollment, and baseball will specifically increase male enrollment.

"Baseball and softball have the highest level of interest for admissions office," said Lord.

Newly named baseball coach Brian Reitnour added his opinion on the subject saying, "I firmly stand behind the college's decision to add baseball (and softball). While I know that it was a difficult decision to make, I believe it will inevitably benefit the institution's enrollment, finances and educational environment."

However, Professor Carleton Fisher, philosophy department, replied to that assertion by saying "if you can find six boys who come to Houghton to play baseball and wouldn't have come otherwise, I'd be shocked."

Fisher, whose department went through cutbacks in recent years, commented, "I don't think we ought to be spending more money on a non-essential program," even though being part of a more publicized athletic division "better fits the kind of school

we aspire to be." The issue being questioned is not whether switching from the NAIA will be beneficial to Houghton in the long-run. It will even be advantageous as teams will no longer be forced to make long trips to Ohio for competition but rather will compete exclusively in Western New York. But adding baseball and softball – sports that necessitate an expensive trip to the South during Spring Break and will eventually necessitate the construction of new facilities – in this time of budget difficulties and departmental cuts is seen by some as reckless and hypocritical.

Fisher wanted to emphasize the fact that he approves of the job done by the athletic department. "They run a clean program."

Many Houghton students can agree that the athletic department is beneficial to the Houghton educational environment. Athletics is important to a liberal arts education and Houghton Athletics is a necessary and beneficial component of the college's relationship with the community. On top of that, baseball and softball are popular sports which could expand enrollment and recruitment. But while the college is cutting professors' positions, cutting staff salaries, and increasing tuition, is now the right time to add programs to the athletic department? This is a question which has yet to be answered. ★

Sufjan cont'd from page 4

SUFJAN STEVENS

ALL DELIGHTED PEOPLE EP

that leads to nothing but deeper hurt.

The EP offers one glimmer of greatness in the more electronic stylized track "From the Mouth of Gabriel." "Don't be so sure of what you feel (it might as well be trouble)/ From

now on just let the universe be your shelter from the enemy." However, this soothing aplomb is almost immediately toppled with the following laments, "Your face has changed/ I hardly know who you are this time/ And what a mess I've made of you/ You probably would but I won't let you run away/ You probably should but I won't let you run away this time."

The track, "The Owl and the Tanager", is the lowest of low for the album. The dreary and painfully slow, skeletal piano accompanies an eerie hooting that tells of a sublime nightmare of broken trust, unfaithfulness, abuse, bloodshed, and revenge. "Come to me feathered and frayed/ For I am the ugliest prey." The track ends simply with, "One waits until the hour of death." Lesson learned: don't become a tanager, or an owl for that matter.

The resolution to the bloody bird dilemma is found in my favorite

track. The 17:02 minute-long track "Djohariah" features twelve minutes of epic noise before any lyrics begin. The refrain "Djohariah, Djohariah" dances around background moans, mechanical squeals and a distorted guitar as the song becomes a flowing, psychedelic journey. The guitar rips through the otherwise tame lullaby in an impressive "Dark Side of the Moon" way (a feat not easily accomplished). The eventual lyrics act as a melancholy but somewhat uplifting message: "And the man who left you for dead/ He's the heart grabber back stabber double cheater wife beater/ You don't need that man in your life." The song ends with the repeating chant, "Go on little sister." Although I would never call it a happy ending, at least Sufjan leaves hope for the next generation.

Tracks like "Enchanted Ghost," "Heirloom," and "Arnika" resemble more closely the finger-picked, softer

pieces of his past. They represent the best of Sufjanic harmonies and precisely implemented instrumental support, and they are as close as he comes to reproducing my favorites of the past. Perhaps this makes me a deplorable fan, but I find myself wishing for a new "For the Widows in Paradise" or "John Wayne Gacy." I will always do my best to embrace artistic growth, but I cannot help but think that my favorite 'face' of Sufjan has passed us by. All Delighted People is musically adventurous and explorative, as well as lyrically provocative and gut-wrenching. Sufjan asks old and despairing questions, but I find myself wishing he would just return to calming me down. ★

Album art courtesy of  
www.sufjanstevens.bandcamp.com



# Tearing the Liberal v. Conservative Debate Wide Open

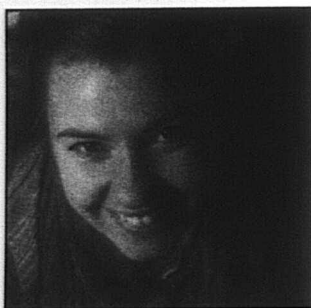


PHOTO BY JORDAN GREEN

BY SALLY MURPHY

Thinking makes us human; having ideas and formulating opinions is one of the great blessings of existence. However, these very ideas and opinions are what categorize us, what divide us into camps that believe differently about what it means to be a human in this world. The problem occurs when we, citizens of this world, believe we are overcoming divisions when really our reaching out is only entrenching what we previously believed. Perhaps the problem is we view the act of reaching out as something that sacrifices our morals, political stances, or social beliefs. I would therefore like to bring the attention to a shift in our nature as opposed to a shift in our politics.

Recently we had a speaker come to Houghton who shook us up, Andrew Marin. He spoke about bridging the gap between the LGBT community and the Christian community. He called us to love each other. Yes, love. And no, not a wishy-washy quotations-in-the-air kind of love but true, biblical and determining love. He represented something that I feel, above all else, is praiseworthy. And I would add that we need to be open-minded.

Here is where the rubber hits the

road. In the United States today, those who would air on the liberal end of the political and social spectrum and those on the conservative end would be relatively equal. But the number of those who could really be called "open-minded" remains despicably low. Being liberal does not mean that you are automatically

open-minded: I am just going to throw that out there. And do not think for a moment that conservatives are off the hook, either. This is, quite frankly, something with which we all struggle. Being open-minded is not a gift that we are automatically granted and it is not something that goes with any territory. You are who you are; that means that no matter what experiences you have in common with another human being, you will never understand that

other person completely. One must remember that, and be willing to listen.

One of the complaints I heard during Andrew Marin's talk was that he did not take a stance on his beliefs on homosexuality with biblical reference. But then again, one must remember that Marin himself is unsure of his belief. As he said, "It is the Holy Spirit's job to convict, God's to judge, and mine to love." Loving someone dictates that we be open-minded. It also dictates that we stop picking on the little details. Marin did not use biblical reference for or against homosexuality because to win the

homosexuality debate is not his objective. His objective is to have us open our minds to the point that we truly realize we are not fighting over abstract concepts; we are fighting over real human beings.

Last year Houghton hosted the Equality Riders. In the weeks leading up to their visit I heard that Bible studies

**Being open-minded is not a gift that we are automatically granted and it is not something that goes with any territory**

around campus were holding fervent prayer meetings to "prepare themselves for spiritual warfare." This attitude made me fear that much of Houghton was not going to be willing to listen. But to my great joy we did. I sat overwhelmed by the communication which occurred. Students who came prepared with Bibles and stern faces began to shake their heads and think

and began to feel the connection which allows love to really grow. They opened their minds, they did not change their political stances, and they did not even necessarily decide to change their social beliefs...but they did what was asked of them. They truly engaged.

Have we forgotten how to do that? I hear often the frustrations of those on campus who want Houghton to somehow become more liberal, especially in light of events such as Soulforce. The problem is they (or should I say we...and yes, I am a self-proclaimed liberal), forget that there are reasons for the choices

Houghton has made. I have watched the so-called "close-minded" conservatives humbly ask respectful questions of so-called "open-minded" liberals and have seen them met only with disgust and condescension. Despite what we may feel, Houghton is not always out to squash the liberal agenda. It may not agree with it all the time, but you are dealing with some rather intelligent (and actually human) professors and authorities.

When it comes down to it the answer is not easy. My roommates and I happen to disagree about nearly every political and social issue on the table today, and there have been more than a few arguments surrounding that fact. But questions lead to answers and often to more questions. And in the middle of that we start to realize that we actually love someone who disagrees with us. You actually open your mind. I will not pretend to say I am the perfect example of this (said roommates can attest) but hey, it is worth a shot. So far we seem to be headed in the right direction. So as long as Houghton continues to invite people to challenge us to our campus and so long as we continue to challenge each other we can only become a better community as a result. So instead of constantly holding back-and-forth debates where we try to change each other's minds, let's take some time to just listen to one another. It sounds cheesy, but in the end whether you are liberal or conservative it is better to open-minded—I do not want to hear any arguments (irony intended).

*Sally is a senior English and Art major*

## Your words could be here.

Letters to the editor (signed) should be 350 words or less and be submitted to [houghtonstar@gmail.com](mailto:houghtonstar@gmail.com). They may be on any relevant issue about which you have an opinion that you'd like to share. If letters to the editor don't appeal to you, register at [www.houghtonstar.com](http://www.houghtonstar.com) and comment on our articles online.

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for this week's poll question:

**How well does SGA represent student opinion?**



## From the Editor's Desk

## Let's Not Always Pretend



PHOTO BY JORDAN GREEN

BY LAUREN KOSOSKI

So much energy has been spent instructing Christians how to act that we overlook a more critical issue: can't it be harmful to live life as an act? Too often, those who identify themselves as Christians wander around with painted smiles because they're told to be joyful; they gather all their strength to suppress inner chaos and appear calm because they're supposed to have a peace that surpasses all understanding. They desperately hope that, maybe, if they persevere in this act, it will become reality. C.S. Lewis argues this very point in his book, *Mere Christianity*. Yes, I went and referenced the man so exhaustively revered in Christian circles that he may as well have his own book of the Bible. However, although his insights are often regarded as seamless and untouchable, I think he oversimplifies this complex issue of being an authentic pretender.

Lewis writes a chapter entitled, "Let's Pretend," dedicated to how and why Christians should embrace acting. He states that "very often the only way to get a quality in reality is to start behaving as if you had it already." As an example, Lewis talks of friendliness, advising that "when you are not feeling particularly friendly but know you ought to be, the best thing you can do is to put

on a friendly manner and behave as if you were a nicer person than you actually are." With persistence and more than a little divine guidance, a mask of friendliness that hides anger will melt onto your face and become a new, genuine expression. What starts as one small pretending will evolve into a lifestyle revolution with one change leading to another. Inconsistencies in how you actually feel and how you ought to feel will bombard your mind like a flood, and "you will find several things going on [...] which would not be going on if you were really a son of God." For Lewis, the solution to ending these "several things" is simple: "Well, stop them." If you're really seen by God as His child, filled with the Holy Spirit, then it should be impossible not to stop them. Lewis goes so far as to suggest that God Himself orders us to pretend.

This supposed divine ordinance to act differently than reality seems unsettling, if not completely delusional, for if everyone is just pretending, where is the authenticity? Often, there is nothing more frustrating and jarring than to enter a church or approach a group of Christians who speak only of how joyful and pleasant their lives are. Those who identify themselves as Christians and who might not be feeling the happy evidence of their saved souls could easily be discouraged by this cheerful group. Imagine: a middle-aged man greets his church and sits in the row that he's occupied for fifteen years now. At some point in his life, he'd offered his heart to the transforming power of Christ, and to

everyone's best judgment, it was a sincere conversion. What no one knows, however, is that he has struggled with depression his entire life, even after the influx of joy that is supposed to come with Christ's heart-occupation. He cannot simply stop these thoughts, as Lewis suggests. Otherwise, he's done everything else that Lewis instructs: surrounding himself with the fellowship of believers, singing with them, forcing himself to be involved, all the while

trying desperately to grasp this joy to which everyone around him seems to cling as they lift their hands in abandoned worship. He pretends that

God really does overwhelm his life with gladness, as it seems He has done with everyone else. But in his car, alone once again, he feels nothing but desertion, that his prayers are just melodramatic

whimpers to a God who apparently has chosen not to fill him with joy. *Am I really even saved*, he wonders? Next week, everyone will sing and dance around the pain of which no one speaks, freezing the group in a stagnant, desperate act. They may or may not notice that one member of their congregation isn't there, finally driven away by the feeling that he just does not belong.

The Church welcomes people to come just as they are and find rest in the splintered yet beautiful body of Christ, whether it's inside or outside of a sanctuary. And yet, when the damaged do come, they're often enveloped in an act of joy to which they cannot relate, discouraging any hope of laying bare their aching souls. The question is whether it's

better to be, for example, falsely happy or sincerely gloomy. This is not to say that we should always broadcast our woes and discontentment, nor should we always avoid doing something we think we "should" do even when it is incongruent with how we feel. Somehow, there needs to be a balance between brandishing our burdens like a medal and keeping things so secret that they fester inside and destroy us slowly; a perspective that fully sees and grasps how things really are while still keeping a focus on the hope that things will get better. There needs to be a middle ground because we are, in our present reality, trapped in the middle. We are at an interval; between never having been and being forever more. We are currently caught in suspension.

This intermission to eternity is our reality. We are not perfect; we're a swirling blend of hope, anger, fear, love, etc. Should we not, then, honestly reflect this? If we are sinful beings and cannot be spotless in our current bodies, what are we accomplishing by pretending otherwise? If God is in control, if He is the one who can be the perfect pretender, then it is not our responsibility to act. Perhaps your perspective is fixed on the confidence that these real troubles will not last forever. There should then be no fear to discuss and reflect the darker aspects of life. We have been placed in this reality to experience and live in it, not to pretend that we are already transformed. We're alive on this earth, with a perspective of the world that we will never have again. Constant pretending and a fear of authenticity will only waste this life.

Lauren is a junior English and Writing major

There needs to be a balance between brandishing our burdens like a medal and keeping things so secret that they fester inside and destroy us slowly

AP.

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ARTIST  
of the  
WEEK

## Rachel Blew

## A note from the artist:

"Photography is a way of feeling, of touching, of loving. What you have caught on film is captured forever... it remembers little things, long after you have forgotten everything." Aaron Siskind

"To me, photography is an art of observation. It's about finding something interesting in an ordinary place... I've found it has little to do with the things you see and everything to do with the way you see them." Elliott Erwitt

CROSSWORD: *Fall is in the Air!*

## ACROSS

1. \_\_\_\_ guard in basketball
6. Hula dancer's flowers
9. \*Part of tree that does not shed in autumn
13. Fervor
14. To have exclusive rights over something
15. \_\_\_\_ of Pergamon, ancient Greek anatomist
16. Ragout of game in a rich sauce
17. Ann Patchett's novel "\_\_\_\_ Canto"
18. Treeless plain
19. \*They fall and blow all over
21. \*Autumnal equalizing event
23. As opposed to bright
24. Small ladies' handbag
25. Needlefish
28. Cain's victim
30. \*Fluffy sweater material
35. S-shaped molding
37. The windows to the soul?
39. Dance named after horse's gallop
40. \_\_\_\_ Major or \_\_\_\_ Minor
41. Dmitry Medvedev's retreat, e.g.
43. Speech defect
44. Arm again
46. \*Weakened part of leaves in fall
47. "Midnight in the Garden of Good and \_\_\_\_"
48. Skin flap under the jaw
50. \*"To Autumn" in Keats's "1819 \_\_\_\_"
52. The point opposite west southwest
53. Burn to charcoal
55. Formerly National Cash Register
57. \*Popular object this time of year
61. Stick firmly
64. Catholic priest's hood
65. Before tac and toe
67. African sorcery practiced in West

## Indies

69. Spread open
70. Charged particle
71. Like one with high BMI
72. Nicholas II, e.g.
73. Pool stick
74. A pitcher facing first base

## DOWN

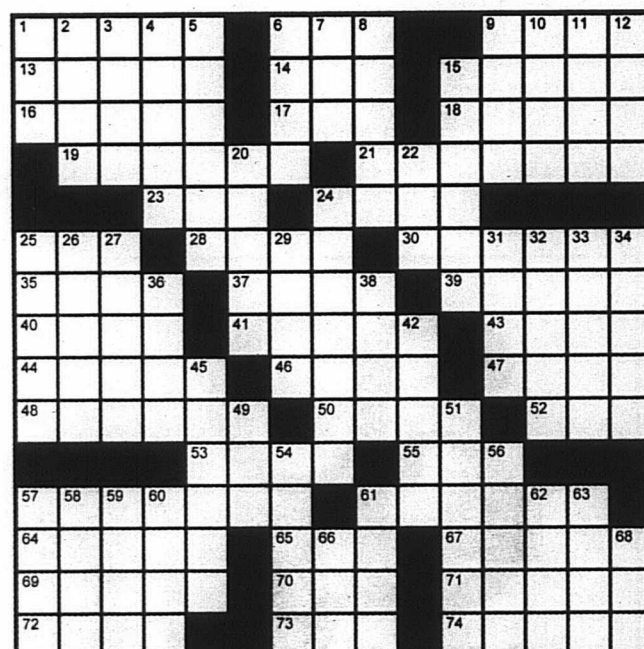
1. A step in ballet
2. Unwritten
3. In neutral
4. Gypsy, e.g.
5. \_\_\_\_ questions
6. Soft, high arching shots
7. Female sheep
8. An arm off a larger body of water
9. Resort island in Indonesia
10. Oscar winner Arkin
11. City in Nevada
12. Well-known Kentucky fort
15. Pasting
20. Implant
22. In so far as
24. Any voting citizen
25. \*Popular decoration
26. Be in accord
27. Redo, especially to a carpenter
29. Young hawk
31. \*Strong wind
32. \*Harvested now to be pressed into oil
33. Pitcher's bag
34. \*Fall's most popular fruit
36. \_\_\_\_ Grey tea
38. Type of outbuilding
42. Set right
45. Negro League player, the great "Biz" \_\_\_\_
49. 21st letter of Greek alphabet
51. \*Back to where?

## 54. Clown act

56. Rabbi in Yiddish
57. Ghost of Christmas \_\_\_\_
58. Mischievous fairies
59. Desert monster?
60. \_\_\_\_ face Capone

## 61. Bane of teenager's existence

62. Great Barrier \_\_\_\_
63. The "right" coast in U.S.
66. An informal debt
68. Attention grabber



**PRIZE: Leroy Townes and the Lonestars album!**

**Last week's winner of the Sudoku challenge was Larry Mullen! Please come by the STAR office to claim your prize.**

**Bring your finished crossword puzzles to the STAR office clearly marked with FULL NAME.**