The Houghton STAR

November 21, 2025
Volume 122, Number 09

Houghton University's Student Newspaper
Since 1909

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DUMPSTER *News, p. #1-2*
WALTON *News, p. #1-2*
MEETING SOMEONE *Opinions, p. #3*
THANKSGIVING FOOD REVIEW *Columns, p. #4*

OUR RECYCLING SITUATION MIGHT BE A DUMPSTER FIRE

ANNA CAHOON '27

On Thursday, Oct. 6, the contents of a Casella Waste dumpster truck caught on fire near 3 Bums Pizza shortly after emptying garbage and recycling bins on campus and the upper section of the Houghton community. The driver saw flames spitting out the back of his vehicle and followed company protocol to safely pull over and dump the truck-load out at the beginning of Houghton University's (HU) townhouse entrance. Trash was heaped about ten feet high while the driver, Terry Bendler, called for aid. In terms of resolving the danger, Bendler emptied his entire fire extinguisher while waiting for professionals, to no avail, as it caught fire a second time before it was put to rest by the volunteer firefighters. Houghton's Volunteer Fire Department and a State Trooper responded to the scene, resolving the not-so-eco-friendly incident.

COURTESY OF ANNA CAHOON

Fire department extinguishes dumpster fire at townhouse parking lot entrance October 6th.

Houghton Volunteer Chief Paul Cronk could not determine an exact fire trigger, but speculated the fire was caused by "an electronic piece of equipment." He later confirmed his initial investigation, "the cause was a direct result of a discarded piece of rechargeable electronic equipment that contained rechargeable Lithium-Ion batteries."

One careless toss into a garbage bin might not bring the ozone layer to an end, but it poses a serious concern for the driver's safety and the surrounding area.

Brian Webb, the previous Director of Sustainability for HU, served for 16 years and decreased the carbon footprint of the campus by 46 percent. HU no longer has this role and cannot accurately report what the carbon footprint is now. The improper recycling of this electronic device not only started a fire, but it could have increased carbon emissions through the release of carbon dioxide in burned materials as well. Webb reflected on how difficult it is to "get students to recycle correctly, even though it's really easy to do." When he held the director position at HU, one of his major contributions was placing recycling bins at all accessible locations on campus to encourage the ease of choice, along with signage to describe what can be thrown in each receptacle. Based on his own study of sustainability efforts over the years, he recommends that the campus incorporate "intentional electronic waste (e-waste) collection processes for students." Webb commented that "if that process isn't accessible to [students], then it's not going to be taken advantage of."

Vice President for Student Life Bill Burrichter reacted to this news with a hope for the future establishment of a student-run club to focus on reengaging with creation

See **DUMPSTER** *page #2*

Rev. Dr. Andrew Walton

RYLEE SORRELS '27

Rev. Dr. Andrew Walton is a beloved professor on campus, known for his deep biblical insight and unwavering passion for guiding students. As the Old Testament professor in the Bible and Theology Department, Walton brings Scripture to life in ways that captivate his students. "I hope to get others excited about reading God's word," Walton shared, "recognizing there's so much that can come to life from the texts when you actually start studying."

Holding a B.A. from Houghton College, an M.A. in Biblical languages from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and a Ph.D in the Hebrew Bible from Harvard University, Walton emphasizes the importance of reading God's word, studying it, and understanding it to the best of one's ability. "One thing people don't often realize," Walton noted, "is that we read God's word because it is God's word, and He wants to use it to change us and shape us."

Rev. Dr. Andrew Walton presenting at Faculty Scholarship Day.

COURTESY OF MARCOMM

Over a year ago, Walton was featured in the STAR for being named the Willard J. Houghton Library's Faculty Model Reader for 2024. Yet his influence extends beyond the classroom. Walton serves local congregations, preaching at churches in need of pastoral support. His passion for teaching God's word is evident in both his lectures and his sermons. "I have preached at Caneadea United Methodist Church, Houghton Wesleyan Church, Fellowship Wesleyan Church in Buffalo, and Rushford Baptist, and several others. Just all over the area, whenever a church is in need of someone," Walton explained.

Walton took a step further in his passion for ministry this year as he was ordained in the Wesleyan church on Oct. 19. Although previously ordained in Massachusetts, Walton sought ordination within the Wesleyan denomination to align with his theology and his role at a Wesleyan Institution.

While Walton was in college, he once insisted that he would never be a preacher or a pastor, feeling his personality did not fit the role. "I remember doing an internship in a church while in college. And I told myself that I

See **WALTON** *page #2*

SWING DANCE SOCIAL THIS MONDAY

COURTESY OF CHIARA IANTORNO

Candid from one of Dance Club's swing dance meetings. The Dance Club is hosting a Swing Dance Social, 8:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Monday the 24th in Presser Hall in the Basement of the Chapel.

DUMPSTER *from page #1*

when it comes to e-waste. Burrichter shared how it comes down to a "willingness to be inconvenienced" and wait for when the opportunity is given to safely dispose of products at a local station. In recent years, he has gone to the Allegany County Waste Station to use their e-waste designated bins. Burrichter stated, "We have to balance the value that we hold with our own comfort," he continued, "as Christians, we're called to care for the things that God has given to us to steward … it is our responsibility." For students with a passion for this issue, he wished that this incident would spur a creation-care club: "I hope that would be the case. So much of what happens on the university campus, we really want to be student-led, student-directed, student-initiative, because when the students own it, it has sustainability."

The only place to dispose of e-waste locally is the Allegany County Collection Events at the Belmont Recycling Center located at 6006 Co Rd 48, Belmont, NY 14813. The station hosts four annual events for disposing of e-waste, with the last listed opportunity scheduled for Jan. 17, 2026. The acceptable items are televisions, VCR players, DVD players, scanners, printers, computer wires & cords, computers, monitors, game consoles and controllers, keyboards and mice, copy machines, and fax machines.

The fire on campus property may have caused no physical harm, but it draws attention to Houghton's trash and recycling practices. As Burrichter recommended: take the time to be inconvenienced, and protect the beauty of the earth that we are blessed to live on. ★

THE WEEKLY W'S

These Highlander teams took home the win this week.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

*Women's Soccer will be going to the **NCCAA tournament** in Florida, November 28th through December 7th.*

WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

*Women's Cross Country finished 9th in the **NCAA Niagara Region Championships,** which is the highest they have ever placed in the championships.*

***Noelle Linenfelser '26** led the Highlanders with a 16th-place finish.*

MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

*Men's Cross Country finished 7th in the **NCAA Niagara Regional Championships,** which is the highest they have ever placed in the championships.*

***Amos Bixler '26** finished 8th and will be the first male athlete from Houghton to qualify for an NCAA championship.*

WALTON *from page #1*

would never be a preacher or pastor," Walton recalled. But his journey towards ministry was far from predictable. "I do remember the pastor telling me to be careful about what I say," he added.

Everything changed during his Ph.D program at Harvard, as Walton began to see the divide between his academic study of Scripture and his personal spiritual life. That tension led him to accept an opportunity to work in a church. "I started working at the church part-time during the Ph.D, and that's when my academics and spiritual life came together. I realized that teaching and studying this stuff can have a great impact on people's lives," Walton stated. Though he was initially hesitant, he soon recognized how deeply studying and teaching God's word could transform lives beyond the academic setting.

This revelation reshaped his calling. Walton began to view his scholarship and ministry as inseparable, a conviction that continues to shape his teaching. Today, Walton encourages this same perspective with ministry students at Houghton University (HU), offering them opportunities to preach in local churches while continuing their studies on campus.

Michael Carey '27, a Bible and Theology major, recalled Dr. Walton's impact on his exploration in ministry. "The opportunities that Dr. Walton has given me and many other students to preach is one example of the ways that he demonstrates Houghton's commitment to training up ministers who are equipped to carefully handle the Word of God, and prepared for practical ministry in our changing world."

Balancing his many roles—professor, preacher, researcher, husband and father of four—Walton still finds time to connect with students outside the classroom. A former member of HU's men's soccer team during his undergraduate years, he continues to join intramural soccer matches on campus. His approachable personality and willingness to engage in campus life make him a familiar face beyond the lecture hall.

Ryan Kullander '27, a Childhood Education major, expressed his gratitude for Walton's impact outside the classroom. "It was an absolute pleasure getting to play with a professor who I look up to as a teacher, but who was also willing to meet me in the campus-wide activities outside the classroom. Dr. Walton serves as a role model to me and others on campus as we endeavor to become better Christ-followers in the community."

Earlier this semester, Walton surprised students by showcasing an unexpected secret talent during the SPOT event, where he participated in a lightsaber duel. Although he ultimately lost the battle, he laughed about the experience. "I admit that I lost the duel, and that I had to change my ways a little bit—to make sure that I don't make my tests impossible. It really changed me," Walton joked.

Since the showdown, playful rumors have circulated among students suggesting that Walton channels "the dark side" when crafting his famous challenging exams. He takes the teasing gracefully. "I don't mind having the reputation that my tests are hard," Walton said, "I give tests that make people work and study. And if that's the definition of hard, then I am proud of that label. My tests are not dark. They are fair."

Whether in the classroom or the pulpit, there is no doubt that Walton cares deeply about his students, inspiring those around him to pursue excellence—not only in academics but also in spiritual growth. Through his example, Walton continues to remind the campus community that studying God's word is not merely an intellectual exercise but an invitation to encounter the Divine. ★

Meeting Someone You Can No Longer See

KANTA UENO '26

When distance, disappearance, or death separate us, memory remains a reliable bridge.

We all know the moment: someone once close is suddenly out of reach. They slip from our circles and pass from this life—and we realize their importance only after they are gone. What follows is regret: the message we did not send, the conversation we cut short, the thank-you left unsaid.

However, is it too late once we notice—already hopeless, never able to meet again? I don't think so. If there is someone you desperately want to see, if you regret what happened back then, please take this article as a guide. The only way to meet someone you cannot see is to let your thoughts go to them and connect with them in your heart. You can meet them in the only place time and distance cannot close—your hearts.

Remember those days, imagine them, and send your thoughts—express your gratitude and your love. Even if you cannot see them before you right now, you still remember the small, casual conversations and exchanges you shared—their smile and expressions. When you recall the memory and show your love, we enter a living encounter with what mattered between us.

I myself have lost many people and experienced many farewells. Each time, I regretted things and grew despondent at the thought that I would never see them again. One day, one of the bereaved family who saw me like that said these words to me: "They will live on in your memories. They can exist only within your heart now. You can meet them anytime in your heart. Please hold your head up and keep looking forward."

Those words turned my perspective around. Physical presence can end; significance does not. When we open the door of memory, we do not manufacture a past—we revisit a real bond that shaped us.

Life brings many hardships. Among them, the death of someone dear is one of the hardest. But take heart. Popular culture sometimes says it plain. There is a line in my favorite Japanese anime, One Piece:

"When do you think a person dies…?"
"A man dies, when he is forgotten…!"

"When do you think a person dies..?"

"A man dies, when he is forgotten…!"

Even those you can no longer meet are still alive in your heart and your memories. This is a temporary parting, not a forever farewell. If you do not forget them, you can meet them anytime by sending your thoughts. Some partings may be painful but never erase the memories you share. After all, they are the last proof that person left you—their final keepsake. The person you can't meet now is surely somewhere sending their thoughts to you too, wishing to see you. You cannot change the past, but you can change the use you make of it. What you can do now is not to dwell on the past and your regrets, but to face forward and live your life with strength. Surely that is what they would want for you.

If memory is the only guarantee against final separation, then our task is clear: say the words now. Be generous with appreciation. Tell your family, friends, professors, coaches, and colleagues what they mean to you.

In this one and only life, among more than eight billion people, those whom fate has allowed you to meet are special to you. And when your own time comes, you will want to be with people for whom you would have no regrets. From now on, find as many of those people as you can. Surely, they also cherish you.

Lastly, when times are hard, painful, or lonely, please remember these words: "You are never alone." There are many people who are always cheering you on. Even the people who shaped you have not vanished; they live in what they planted. And the people around you now—many of them are cheering you on, hoping you will say the simple, brave things that keep the bridge strong: "Thank you. I remember. I'm glad we met." ⋆

Kanta Ueno '26 is a senior studying Adolescence English Education. He teaches English and coaches baseball to children in Japan and the U.S. He draws on his experience around the world to nurture children who keep challenging themselves and aim to contribute to the world. He also works as a baseball analyst, scout, and study-abroad advisor.

"They will live on in your memories … Please hold your head up and keep looking forward."

Have an opinion you want to share?

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SPEAK OUT!

Letters to the editor should be less than 600 words

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The mission of the Houghton STAR is to preserve and promote the values of dialogue, transparency and integrity that have been the ideals of Houghton University since its inception. This is done by serving as a medium for the expression of student thought and as a quality publication of significant campus news, Houghton area news, and events.

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The Houghton STAR

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Thanksgiving Food Review

The Ultimate Thanksgiving Analysis Of All Time

PETER MURRAY '29

Picture this: a trolley, out of control, is hurdling down the tracks. In its path of destruction lies a turkey, beside it a heaping bowl of mashed potatoes surrounded by stuffing and dinner rolls. You stand close by, hand on a lever able to divert the trolley's course down a sidetrack. But alas, the sidetrack is far from empty. Strewn across it is the cranberry sauce, a sweet potato casserole, the gravy boat, and a whole host of pies. Torn between two terrible outcomes, your mind races to decide the fate of these foods.

Or perhaps your mind is already made up. When presented with these two groups, you see no real choice as there is a clear winner in your eyes. As always, the Thanksgiving favorites are a topic of great debate, however, once and for all, I will end this discussion. My ranking of the classic Thanksgiving foods stands as the authoritative Word of Peter™, so without excessive, spurious, or obsequious ado, let's begin with perhaps the quintessential Thanksgiving food.

TURKEY. First off, eating carved turkey on any day other than Thanksgiving is like carving jack-o-lanterns on Memorial Day. Sure, you *could* do it, but you might get weird looks. Just like Christmas music, turkey is good when it is consumed in its proper season. However, an important distinction must be made between what truly constitutes good turkey. If you prefer white meat to dark, I recommend saving yourself some money and marinating a stack of sandpaper for your next Thanksgiving.

MASHED POTATOES. While there are many ways to prepare a potato, there is only one right way to serve it. A good batch of mashed potatoes is like a poorly written essay. You skin off all the outsides of the quotes, boil the substance out of blocks of literature, smash it all into a heaping mound of text, swirl in creamy globs of tangents and sidetracks, and sprinkle a dusting of clichés across the top. And the results? Delicious.

STUFFING. Before any proper praise of the humble stuffing is rendered, it must be said that, much like when a paper is compared to one generated with AI, the artificial one proves superior. It isn't stuffing if it wasn't cooked up in a laboratory, dehydrated, shipped, and stacked by employees on the shelves of whatever corporate food conglomerate holds sway over your hometown. If your great aunt Janice insists that you try her homemade stuffing, it may be polite to suffer a mouthful. Still, once your time of tribulation has passed, you'll undoubtedly return to the milk and honey of artificial stuffing.

SWEET POTATO CASSEROLE. Imagine you are on the JV basketball team, absolutely destroying all those freshmen with your towering 5'7 frame. But then, when you go up to varsity, you are suddenly relegated to head benchwarmer. If you felt that letdown, then congratulations, you've just empathized with sweet potato casserole.

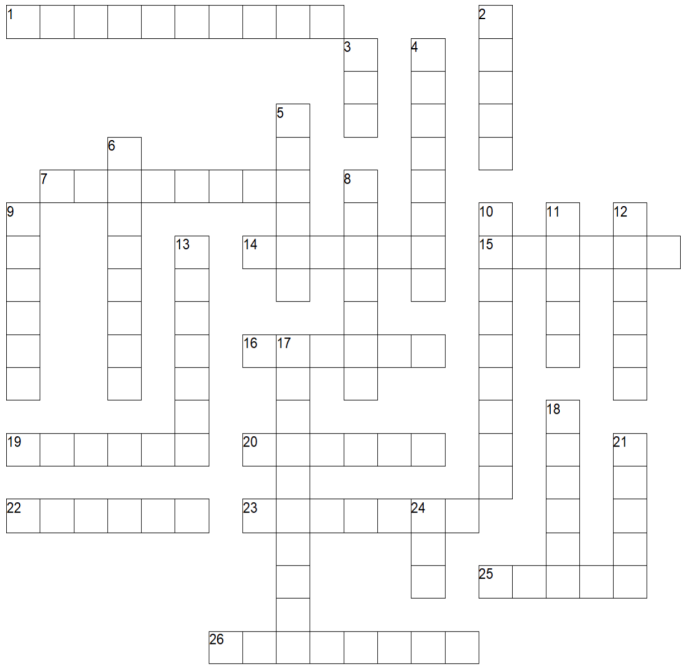
The casserole can't be blamed for the way it is, but it's too sweet to fit in with the savory foods, and too healthy to stand with the desserts. And since any food so entrenched in inherent deception must be shunned, sweet potato casserole will remain forever anathema, treated like the church of Laodicea in the book of Revelation.

To the great regret of all, there remains no time now to share the truth about other Thanksgiving foods. So, while at least for now, cranberry sauce, gravy, pies, and more must go unheard, think not of what could have been. No matter what, enjoy what's here! ⋆

Wishing you a Happy Thanksgiving!
- The Editors ⋆

Puzzle of the Week

CROSSWORD



Provided by Wordmint.com

ACROSS

1. The name of the Cyclops that Odysseus blinds
7. Odysseus' wife
14. The Greek goddess of wisdom and war
15. The messenger of the gods
16. Odysseus' home
19. They lure men to their deaths with song
20. God of the sun
22. False name Odysseus gives to the Cyclops
23. The sea nymph that holds Odysseus as her love slave for seven years
25. Goddess who turn Odysseus offends

⋆ · ☆ · ⋆

DOWN

2. A flowery fruit that makes you forget to go home
3. The Test of the ____
4. The dead prophet that Odysseus travels to the Underworld to see
5. How many years Odysseus has been away from home
6. The suitor that is said to have a blacker heart than the rest
8. How Odysseus crew avoids the sirens
9. She lurks in a cave and eats sailors as they pass by
10. The whirlpool with teeth that tries to eat Odysseus and his crew
11. Faithful canine resident of Ithaca
12. God of the Wind
13. The faithful swineherd
17. Son of Odysseus
18. Athenas disguise for Odysseus
21. The Greeks sneak into Troy inside a wooden one
24. The number of sailors that the Scylla ate of the deck of the ship