

NEW PAINTINGS | CULTURE, P. 5

# the houghton STAR

Houghton College's Student Newspaper Since 1909

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK:  
EMBRACING THE UNEXPECTED  
OPINIONS, P. 7

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HIGHER ED. LIST | NEWS, P. 3

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## New Hires and Departures Bring Admin. Changes

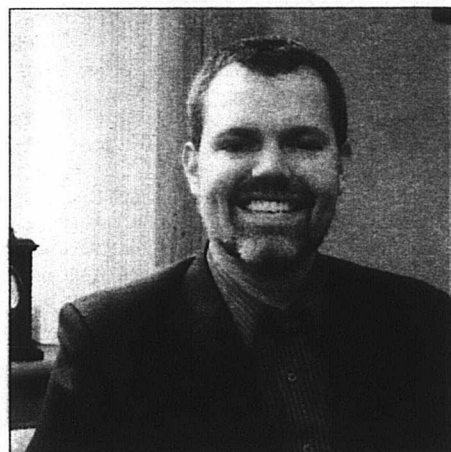


PHOTO BY ANDREA PACHECO

Jeff Kirksey serves as the new Dean of Admission and Retention.

BY COURTNEY COIRO

Each new school year brings with it unique changes. This year several departures and new hires have resulted in significant restructuring for administrative offices at Houghton.

Over the summer, Jeff Kirksey exchanged the title Director of Major Gifts for the title Dean of

Admission and Retention. Kirksey will be responsible for "short- and long-term strategies" of admission and serving as a liaison with other departments. He will also facilitate honors recruitment in cooperation with Mark Hijleh and the program directors as well as oversee the Visit Office.

Right now, Kirksey says he is still in "the learning phase...stabilizing" from all the changes that have taken place. Recognizing that there is "no silver bullet" to convince students to attend Houghton, the office will be evaluating "our processes and approaches" to find the best strategy for this year. At the same time, Kirksey places a high priority on valuing his new staff's experience and affirming their good work. "This group works hard," he said.

Kirksey enjoyed his former position in Advancement, even though it deviated slightly from his job experience. Prior to working at Houghton, Kirksey worked at George Fox University, Baylor University, and Geneva College in admissions, new student programs, and student retention. Kirksey was impressed with Houghton since attending a conference for admissions personnel years before accepting a call to work at the College in 2009. He enjoyed the opportunities his

*Administration cont'd on page 3*

## Houghton Librarian's Blog Upsets Opera Elite

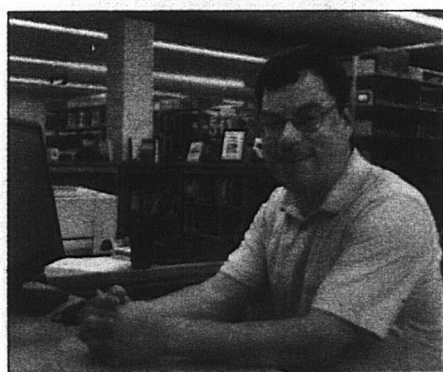


PHOTO BY ANDREA PACHECO

Wilber has posted updates about the Met for the last 10 years.

BY RENEE ROBERTS

Houghton staff and students know Bradley Wilber as the man who sleuths for paper and lecture resources, a NY Times crossword constructor, and as the man who is infinitely knowledgeable about movies, obscure or not.

Yet, there is more to Wilber. He is also an avid opera lover. His interest began in the early

1990s; crossword clues were often opera-related, and soon Wilber's interest was piqued. He began listening to the music of the great operas and learning the names of the major performers. During this time, Wilber joined a listserv, an e-mail chain, dedicated to discussing the Metropolitan Opera's season. He would read interviews and jot down tidbits of information about different performers or upcoming operas. When members on the listserv asked for opinions regarding the future of the Metropolitan Opera, Wilber would often e-mail them privately and share information he had collected.

Around 1995, Wilber's tips concerning upcoming operas and cast members were proving so reliable that the members of his listserv encouraged him to post the information so it was more readily accessible. Wilber thought at the time that "no one would care" about the information, other than the people on his listserv and a few others.

Wilber continued to keep up with his updates about the Met over the past 10 years. A few years ago, he moved the information from the third-party site to his own blog and continued combing

*Wilber cont'd on page 3*

## New York City Memorial Remembers 9/11 Victims



PHOTO COURTESY OF YAHOO.COM

BY ANNELISE HEIN

Two days from now marks the 10-year anniversary of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center. On that day in 2001, nearly 3000 people died. Sunday, the National September 11 Memorial will open to honor those who died in the 9/11 terrorist attacks as well as the 1993 bombings. The memorial, designed by architect Michael Arad, consists of two pools that lie where the World Trade Towers once stood. Each pool is about an acre in size and features a huge waterfall, flowing into the "void," as Arad describes it, in an article from the Huffington Post. Arad intentionally designed the memorial so that the empty space where the towers once stood would be a reminder of the loss of human life. The memorial is named Reflecting Absence.

Surrounding the reflecting pools are bronze panels. The panels are inscribed with the names of each person who died in the attacks on the World Trade Center in both 2001 and 1993. Rather than being alphabetically ordered, the names are arranged with "meaningful adjacency," according to the New York Times, which means that the names of families, friends, and co-workers are located near one another. The official 9/11 memorial Web site explains that the inscribed panels are positioned so that visitors to the memorial can easily read them, since the "display of these names is the very heart of the memorial." To further emphasize the great loss the memorial represents, the names are translucent so that at night, the void created by each inscribed letter is illuminated by the light in the pool below.

The memorial is not merely a morbid reflection on absence. The Plaza surrounding the reflecting pools will be filled with over 400 swamp white oaks to remind visitors of the renewal of life. These trees grow to varying heights and change leaves at different times, to symbolize the uniqueness of individual people. Environmentalists and those who are environmentally conscious will be pleased to note the sustainable design of the Memorial Plaza. Its water collection, irrigation, and pest management systems make it one of the largest green plazas in the world. The trees also help to distinguish the memorial site as a place of reverent contemplation in the center of a bustling

*Memorial cont'd on pg 3*

## Around the Country: Political News

## September 11th: Ten Years Later

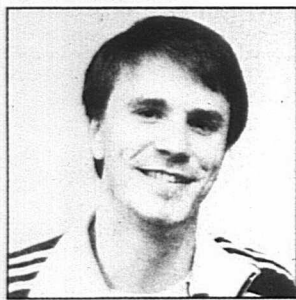


PHOTO BY DANIEL PEIXOTO

BY CHRIS HARTLINE

Sunday marks the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. As Christopher Hitchens stated recently in *Slate*, "10 years ago in Manhattan and Washington and Shanksville, Pennsylvania, there was a direct confrontation with the totalitarian idea, expressed in its most vicious and unvarnished form." On that day, as W.H. Auden put it in 1939, "the unmentionable odour of death/Offend[ed] the September night."

It is important in this time of reflection and introspection to both honor the memories of those lost and contemplate where we've been and where we're going. Much has changed in the last 10 years, both in the United States and abroad; the future success or failure of our country will be determined by the decisions made in the next few months and years.

In September, 2001, the American economy was recovering from the bursting of the dot com bubble but still remained on a solid financial and political foundation. The housing and construction industries were booming, corporations were enjoying substantial liquidity, and inflation and unemployment remained low. Although the 2000 presidential election was as contentious as any in recent history, the government enjoyed a budget surplus and relative bipartisan enthusiasm.

During the Clinton years and the beginnings of the Bush Administration, the United States enjoyed stability in foreign affairs, disrupted only by conflict in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Iraq.

But the world has drastically changed in the last 10 years. In technological terms, the United States has almost entirely completed the transformation from an industrial power to an economic system dominated by technological innovations, financial dealings, and hyper-compartmentalized knowledge industries.

As New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman whimsically stated on *Meet the Press*, 10 years ago "Facebook didn't exist. Or for most people it didn't exist. Twitter was a sound. The Cloud was in the sky. 4G was a parking place. LinkedIn was a prison. Applications were something you sent to college. And, for most people, Skype was a typo."

In many ways, the attacks on 9/11

have altered the military fabric of the world in a way analogous to the way technological innovations have completely altered the social fabric of our country. They are obviously not equivalent in their ramifications, but understanding the extensive challenges we are facing is crucial, else we are deemed to repeat the mistakes of the past.

We are still mired in conflicts of astounding financial and personal cost. The American political system is in a constant state of gridlock, our bond rating has been downgraded, and the budget deficit has skyrocketed in the past 10 years. We are at a crossroads; our leaders are, at this moment, debating if and how we can break out of this funk.

Republican presidential candidates, such as Jon Huntsman and Mitt Romney, have proposed their own jobs plans, including capital gains cuts, tax reform, increased drilling, and free trade agreements, and President Obama proposed his plan Thursday. They have also discussed and debated multiple perspectives on the foreign entanglements in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We can debate amongst ourselves the ideal solution to the issues we face. Does government have the ability and the responsibility to solve this economic crisis through more stimulus spending, infrastructure projects, and education investment? Does the private sector have the main responsibility and greatest aptitude to

create jobs and alter our economic system? Should the United States completely end its involvement in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan?

What is unacceptable as a country is to do nothing. Al Qaeda sought, September 11, to disrupt and destroy the American military, political, and financial sector while simultaneously inflicting the most significant loss of life possible. The effects were disastrous, but the fabric of our country survived, for a time.

Lacking decisive action, our country is on a path toward failure, and by extension victory for al Qaeda, but we still have hope. Al Qaeda is driven by a totalitarian, anti-American ideal which Hitchens describes as "the big lie." Abraham Lincoln commented that "America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves."

Now, 10 years after that tragic event, it is our opportunity to once and for all declare victory. The attacks on September 11th "reordered and distorted the decade that followed," as David Remnick put it in *The New Yorker*. The best way we can honor the memories of the fallen and defeat the "big lie" of totalitarian hate is for our politicians to set us on a path toward financial, military, and political sustainability in the decade to come. All that is required is political will.

## IN THE NEWS:

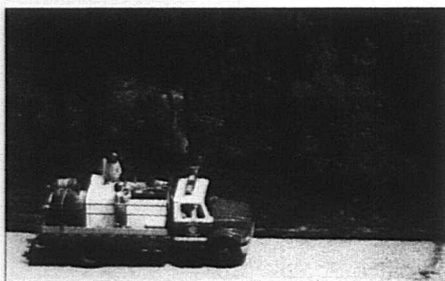


-Global economic tension regarding the European debt crisis eased midweek as stocks surged. The rise was partly due to a German high court ruling that stated it was constitutional to give flailing Eurozone countries bailouts so long as said bailouts received parliamentary approval.

-A Russian plane carrying an international hockey team tragically crashed killing all but two on board. Among the 43 killed were six veteran NHL players. Officials are not yet aware of the cause of the crash, that took place just northeast of Moscow.



-A stash of surface-to-air missiles have disappeared from a Libyan storehouse in Tripoli, prompting fears that they may find their way in the hands of militants or others from the blackmarket. In an attempt to prevent the transit of these weapons across Libyan borders, the US has been busy meeting with neighboring nations, urging them to stop possible smugglers.



-Republican candidates vied for the coveted presidential nomination Wednesday in a debate at the Reagan Library in Simi Valley, California. This was the third Republican debate of the season so far, and the first for new contender Rick Perry.

-Wildfires continued to rage across drought stricken Texas, causing incredible amounts of destruction and massive evacuations in their wake. In the past week alone, about 120,000 acres have been destroyed by the blazes. The largest fire, in Bastrop County, is said to be at least thirty percent controlled, though its cause remains unknown.



## Houghton Ranks in the Top Third of Annual Forbes List of Higher Education

BY KATHERINE KENNEDY

This year, Houghton was ranked 205th in Forbes' annual list of higher education institutions that ranks the 650 best undergraduate universities in the United States. Forbes is the reputed magazine that ranks businesses and colleges around the country, best known for its annual lists of billionaires, the world's richest people, the world's leading companies, and the richest celebrities. The list of higher education institutions has been released once a year for four years in conjunction with the Center for College Affordability and Productivity (CCAP).

Its rankings are based on varied criteria, many of which are not taken into account by other magazines, but Forbes also omits certain criteria that other magazines commonly use, such as school reputation. The criteria Forbes does use include things such as the amount

of debt with which students graduate, average graduation rates, career prospects with the four-year degree, and the standard of teaching. The experts at Forbes have developed scales to measure the satisfaction of students and these criteria, giving each criterion a certain percentage in the equation.

Each college receives a profile page on the Forbes' Web site. These profiles include information on the college's demographics, its social media connections, and opportunities for the general public to weigh in on its rating. Holding the first place for the second year in a row is Williams College in Massachusetts. The last ranked college this year, number 650, is Tennessee College. Houghton was ranked as number 205, improving last year's rating of 213. This year's ranking places Houghton in the top three percent of higher education institutions, because the 650 schools chosen to be listed came from a pool of over 7000 universities in the United States.

Houghton was also listed 21st out of the 56 New York colleges listed in Forbes' choice. According to the Forbes' Web site, Houghton is rated 174 out of the private colleges listed and 78 in the Northeastern portion of the United States. However, the Web site does not give the number of private colleges or colleges located in the Northeastern United States as a frame of reference for these figures.

While our rating as a university has fluctuated, we have been listed in Forbes for three years out of the four that the list has been published. This honor has helped to establish Houghton as an academically sound school that is financially sound as well. The beginning of the Forbes' article begins with the assertion that the purpose behind this list is to give an accurate judgment regarding the value of U.S. colleges, many of which cost almost \$250,000 for four years of undergraduate work.

*Wilber cont'd from pg 1*

the Internet for interviews and other clues to help him piece together an impression of the Met's schedule for the next few years.

In May, Wilber was contacted by the Met's general counsel asking him to consider taking down his Web site. It seems that Wilber's reputation and the accuracy of his site was finally too much. After talking with an attorney, Wilber complied, and by August, the site was no longer accessible. Both the New York Times and the New York Observer wrote stories on Wilber's experience and some have suggested that Wilber was well within his First Amendment right to continue posting information about the Met's future operatic endeavors, but Wilber maintains that he didn't want to jeopardize the Met's staff. Wilber suggests that the change of the Met's general management in 2006 may have led to a stricter and less tolerant attitude towards his blog and

so, in turn, contributed to the request to stop posting. If the management had any concerns that Met employees were providing insider information to Wilber, unwittingly or not, he did not want to prolong a negative atmosphere. Wilber still enjoys the opera and the Met and was given complimentary tickets for an opera which he will be using next May.

So, despite all of the press, Wilber says he is "relieved" that he is no longer involved with the opera updates. "You start to rationalize it because there are a lot of people who care," he said about his pastime for the last few years. Also, there is the argument that the percentage of readers is so much smaller than the percentage of people attending the Met's operas. But, Wilber understands the Met's side of things; in February and March, the Met announces their pieces and cast for the upcoming year and Wilber's site would "rob the Met of their sense of occasion." ★

*Administration cont'd from pg 1*

position afforded to listen to stories from alumni and hear "how transformational Houghton was in their lives."

Kirksey and his wife have a daughter named Campbell, age three, and are expecting twins.

Houghton lost several staff members entering the 2011-2012 year. Elaine Tooley finished her time as Director of Marketing and Communications September 2 and will be moving to work at Wake Forest University. Jeff Babbitt will transition from Associate Director of Admission to fill Tooley's position. Troy Martin is now the Director of Financial Aid at St. Bonaventure University, and Marianne Loper will oversee Student Financial Services as the interim as they undergo a national search for Martin's replacement. Andrew Oden, who graduated in May, now manages the Visit Office as Rachel Wright

works with the girls of Fancher Dormitory at Houghton Academy.

Changes also came to the admissions counselor staff. Ethan Stowell moved on to study Law at Regent University. J.L. Miller took on new responsibilities with the Church Relations office, connecting with youth groups and their leaders. Darby Emerson, another May graduate, was brought on as a new admissions counselor, and another will join the team in time for the travel season beginning September 12.

With the departure of Wayne Macbeth as Vice President of Enrollment Management and Church Relations, the two main offices under Enrollment Management, which are Financial Aid and Admissions, were redirected to new supervisors. Financial Aid now reports to the Chief Business Officer, Dale Wright, and Admissions reports to the Vice President for Student Life, Sharra Hynes. ★



PHOTO COURTESY OF YAHOO.COM

*Memorial cont'd from pg 1*

city.

The combination of the voids of the reflecting pools and the growing trees is, as the Memorial Jury stated when selecting Arad's design, "a memorial that expresses both the incalculable loss of life and its consoling regeneration." The memorial will open to family members with a dedication service, and to honor those who died as a result of the terrorist attacks, the victims' names will be read aloud, then there will be a moment of silence to remember them. On September 12, the memorial will open to the general public. ★

**Do you want to report on the goings-on at Houghton? We want you!**  
**E-mail us at [houghtonstar@gmail.com](mailto:houghtonstar@gmail.com) for more information.**

## Houghton's Bringing Baseball Back - And Softball, Lacrosse, Golf, Tennis

BY BEN MURPHY

On the evening of Wednesday, August 31, Houghton's newest athletic team gathered together in a sweltering Nielson Center classroom to begin a long-anticipated preseason. Break out the flat-brims, because Highlander baseball is back.

Head coach Brian Reitnour and assistant coach Kevin Austin are the duo that has been chosen to head up this new team. Although the schedule is somewhat tentative, this upcoming spring may include up to 13 home games taking place over seven dates throughout the season. Among other pending options, both the Bolivar-Richburg high school, which is about 30 miles south of Houghton, and the minor league Batavia Muckdogs ballclub, about 45 miles north of us, may act as a home-field for the Highland-

ers. (Yes, this does mean that Shen-bloc will have to car-pool.)

Fourteen of the 20 rostered baseball participants are not only new to the team, but also new to the school. However, members like transfer Kameron Konert, junior, feel confident and encouraged by early team development.

"I think we all understand what it means to be college student-athletes, especially at a place as special as Houghton," said Konert. "Naturally, we are still coming together as a team, but right from the getgo we really bonded. The most important aspect in the development of our team unity is brotherhood. I already feel more comfortable with my teammates here than I ever did on any team I was a part of in the past."

As baseball is only the first of several new programs set to bolster the

athletic department, this team represents an important process that will become increasingly familiar throughout the next few years. In discussing his team building, Coach Reitnour said, "I truly believe that God put this team together, because he wants it together. There are too many coincidences for it to be chance. Ultimately God has to be your recruiter."

With softball also set to begin in the 2011-2012 calendar, Coach "Skip" Lord commented, "I am very excited about the move to the NCAA and the Empire 8. Our addition of baseball and softball helped pave the way for that move. Coach Reitnour and Coach Shepard have done a great job so far in recruiting for these new programs. There are at least 20 students here now who wouldn't have been here without these programs and their hard work. I look forward to watching their teams

play this spring."

Along with softball and baseball, men's and women's lacrosse (2012-2013), golf (2012-2013), and tennis (2013-2014) will also play an integral role in Houghton's recent and ongoing transition from NAIA to NCAA division III membership. This academic year will mark the last post-season eligibility for NAIA play, and although Houghton's provisional Empire 8 membership will prohibit playoffs for a minimum of four years, a recent recommitment to the NCCAA (National Christian College Athletic Association) now permits Highlander teams to compete in post season play with Geneva College, Malone University, Mt. Vernon Nazarene University, Nyack College, and Roberts Wesleyan College. ★

## THIS WEEK IN PICTURES



BRYN PEARSON



NICOLE MASON



BRIANNA WINZENBURG



CHELSEA ELLIS

*This week's finalists (clockwise from top): Lambein Ninjas patrol the hallways of the girls' dorm; Women's Soccer players in Indiana; the stray "Roth Cat" along the path to the Flats and Townhouses; A "fiesta" outside the Randall Townhouses.*

### THE STAR WANTS YOUR PHOTOS!

We are looking for pictures that tell a story. They may include anything - from friends to feral path-wandering cats - as long as it gives a glimpse into life as a Houghton student. Please submit (with photo credit and a brief description) to [houghtonstar@gmail.com](mailto:houghtonstar@gmail.com) to enter.

## RECAP: STATS

### MEN'S SOCCER:

Friday, 9/2  
vs University Maine Fort Kent -  
W 5-4  
Saturday, 9/3  
vs Bethel College - L 2-3  
Season Record: 1-3

### Upcoming this weekend:

Friday, 9/9  
vs Buffalo State @ 3pm  
Saturday, 9/10  
vs Fredonia @ 5pm

### WOMEN'S SOCCER:

Friday, 9/2  
vs Huntington University - W 5-0  
Saturday, 9/3  
vs Bethel College - W 2-0  
Season Record: 4-0

### Upcoming this weekend:

Saturday, 9/10  
vs Carlow U @ 6pm

### FIELD HOCKEY:

Thursday, 9/1  
vs Wells College - W 2-1 OT  
Saturday, 9/3  
vs SUNY Oswego - L 0-2  
Tuesday, 9/6  
vs St. John Fisher College -  
W 6-0  
Season Record: 2-1

### Upcoming this weekend:

Friday, 9/9  
vs Susquehanna University @  
7pm

All information from the official web-site of the Houghton Highlanders:  
<http://athletics.houghton.edu/>



# Kasarian Dane Featured in Ortlip Gallery; Closing Reception Tonight



BY MEGAN SPECKSGOOR

Upon first stepping foot inside Kasarian Dane's exhibit, "New Paintings," one may find oneself feeling tricked into looking at nothing more than a Seussical spectrum of colorful geometry—a funhouse of squares the shades of those leftover bellbottoms your parents don't want to admit still tenant their closets. But if one is open-minded and willing to absorb the experience, it is possible that much will be gained.

Professor Ryan Thompson, Art, confesses that in blunt reality Dane's work runs the risk of being considered merely bands and stripes of color on sheets of aluminum. However, Thompson believes that more is to be said for the artist

ing elements, Dane's pieces focus on the way in which certain colors when mingled or neighbored "vibrate and reverberate," resulting in colors that serve as "moments."

"The paintings are very precise and clean looking," said Thompson, which hinders the viewer from "seeing the layers, the labor, the time, and the marks underneath"—namely, the effort Dane puts into actually recreating colors he has seen in real life situations.

Thompson's advice to skeptics is to "try to enjoy the experience of looking at the paintings for what they are."

Professor Ted Murphy, Art, follows a similar line of thinking concerning the exhibit.

"It's not always essential for art to be something external from itself," said Murphy, who added that even something simple like color can be significant.

"All it takes is a relationship between two colors to trigger some kind of feeling or emotional response." In Murphy's eyes, Dane's paintings are "deeply subconscious," the result of Dane's attempt to create as "pure of an artistic experience" as he possibly can without imposing specifics.

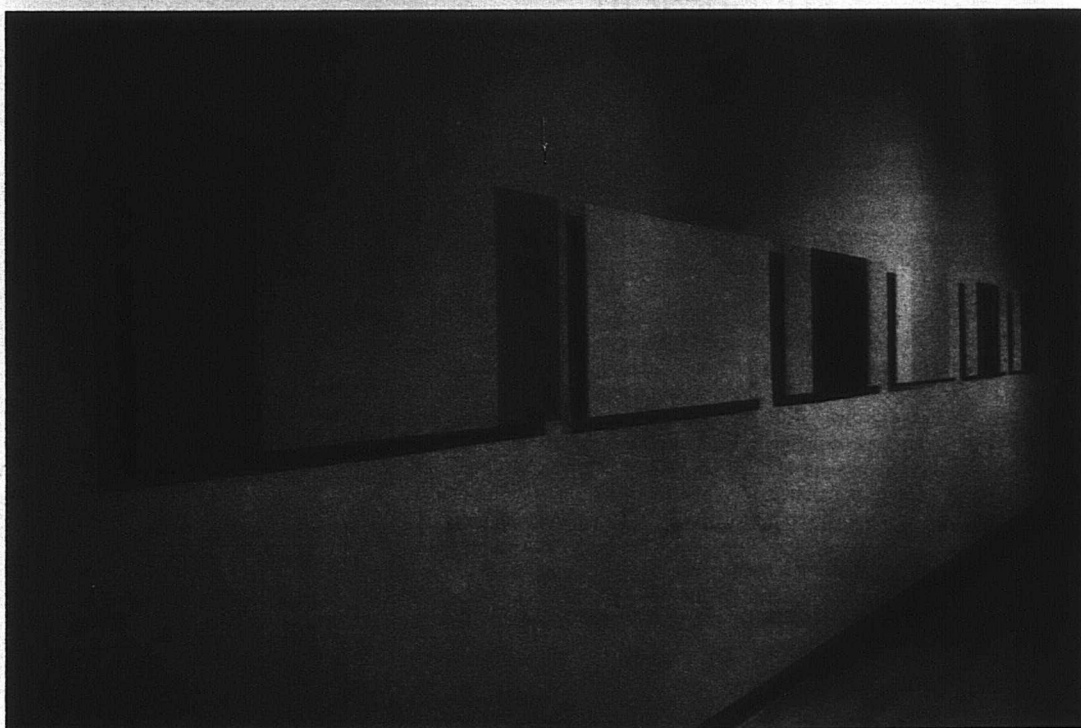
There is no sheen to the paint or reflective luster, but according to Murphy, "art doesn't always have to be decorative and pleasing." It "slows the pace of life," said Murphy, demanding contemplation.

"Give it time and it grows in meaning."

"Art flirts with a deeply spiritual, meditative state," said Murphy, who referenced members of a certain religious group who "stare at a wall until they can empty themselves."

He advises viewers to "drop preconceptions about what makes something art." Enter the exhibit alone, and simply "try to let [the paintings] roll over you," the way one may be affected by an empty cathedral whose colors are suddenly illuminated by outside rays.

The closing reception of Dane's exhibit will be held tonight from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Ortlip Art Gallery, with commentary from the artist beginning at 7:30 p.m. Refreshments and live music will follow. ★



PHOTOS BY ANDREA PACHECO

Dane's "New Show" paintings are a minimalistic exploration of color in its purest state and the effect these palettes can have on a viewer.

and his extremely simplified pieces. He suggests that Dane's work represents an exploration of the relationships between different colors, the way in which they interact and function "in painting and in the world."

Minimal and stripped of all distract-

## Get Out! (Finding Fun in and around Houghton) Unwinding at the Riverhurst Park Campgrounds

BY ANDRE NELSON

While there is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens, Western New York, having very pronounced seasons, facilitates a wide range of activities. Year round you can do anything from water skiing to snow boarding. Right now, as the weather still allows for an enjoyable outdoor experience, you may check out the various places to pitch a tent within the surrounding countryside.

Along the banks of the Allegheny River lies a great picturesque family-owned Park called Riverhurst. Riverhurst Park is one of many campgrounds scattered in the region and is an ideal place for an escape with the tent and the "Campfire Companion." You can

pitch a tent, light a fire, and kick back for a weekend of stress-free living.

Riverhurst offers many small trails over its 45 acres of property; other activities also include various forms of boating and kayaking on the Allegheny River. If the mood calls for a bonfire, you can purchase firewood at the front desk to strike up a fiery blaze. At each campsite there is a picnic table and seating around the fire pit. After a long week of classes nothing compares to the feeling you get when you gaze into the madness of the blazing bonfire.

Located just a few miles outside of Great Riverhurst is the perfect place for a quick escape. One of the many things to do in the area is to go camping. The Riverhurst Park Campgrounds are always a good choice.

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PHOTOGRAPHY | WRITING | EDITING | WEB DESIGN



# Discovering Growth in Displacement



PHOTO BY ANDREA PACHECO

BY GARRETT FITZSIMMONS

As this semester approached and became reality, I've often thought about what this year means to the people who compose our Houghton experience. The beginning of the school year contains such carefree excitement. For first-year students, this is the very beginning of the journey of maturity, growth, and intellectual stretching. You will begin to form lasting, valuable friendships which will stimulate you to think, as well as provide an outlet to relax. But relationships here extend beyond fellow students; the faculty are very involved and relational. A few days ago, I played noon-ball with some faculty and community members. If you play, it does not matter if you are a student, a Dr. or a VP of the college, everyone is equal on the court. They play to glorify God through encouragement and good sportsmanship, get some exercise, and have some fun. I'll never forget the moment the other day when I dribbled the ball through the legs of my choir director, Dr. Johnson; we rehearsed over 10 hours last weekend, he mildly deserved it. I missed the subsequent lay-up, but he still smiled

at me and said "nice move." Fun and games aside, for students to have such personal relationships with such over-qualified faculty is unheard-of. Faculty like Dr. Johnson make the Houghton experience worth it. Don't take them for granted.

There are so many things to look forward to. But as a senior, the excitement of a new year at Houghton is tempered by the responsibility, as well as a sort of preemptive nostalgia at our pending departure. Granted, some seniors are counting down 'til commencement, but for

others it's almost like they have started missing Houghton before we've even left. As seniors, our experience and maturity call us to be leaders on campus. We have a responsibility to practice what we have learned here, producing an example of who we will be when we return to the world outside this place. Dr. Airhart once told me that Houghton is like a train station, a stop along the journey of life preparing you for the next step. We have grown so much, but this is the beginning of the end of our experience here; we ought to be a beneficial part of the experience for those who have just stepped on to the platform.

I will do my part in sharing what I know. So here is my advice to get the most out of your time here: Houghton

provides an excellent environment for growth: take advantage of it and grow as much as you can. We seldom find being stretched, formed, and tested very palatable. Growth is not pleasant, but we need to grow anyway.

**Life is not about catching what you are chasing; it's about giving your best in pursuit**

If you ask those who know me best, they will tell you that I have changed and grown immensely during my time here. One of the many things I learned was not to lean on my own understanding of the future. I can be very type A; I organize, schedule, prioritize, and plan. However, at the be-

ginning of sophomore year, I did not have a plan for my life. I had no idea what I wanted to do after school, or what I should be involved in. And to top it off, I was pining over a girl who didn't notice me. I felt that if God had not revealed His plan to me, he must not have one for me. And if He does not have one for me, He must not need me. I felt like I was going through life without a purpose, running without a destination. Imagine running through a thunderless downpour. Silence is precluded by your heavy breathing and by the sound of a million droplets ceaselessly bursting upon the ground. But it still feels silent. You vainly search for a destination, somewhere to get out of the rain. You cry out to God: "Where am I running? Where do I go?" As you

exhale another exasperated breath, you hear a voice say to you, "You don't need to know where you are going, just keep running."

Life is not about catching what you are chasing, it's about giving your best in pursuit. It is not about where we are running, it is not about what we accomplish. It is how we run and the manner in which we live out our lives. Even if you don't know where you are going, go anyway. You may get lost, but that is part of the growing process. I am not saying abandon your plans; I am saying do not depend on them. I decided to stop depending on my own plans in the fall of my sophomore year. I ended up getting more involved in SGA and discovered that political science was the major I should study. I still don't know exactly what I am doing after graduation, but God will show me. God also blessed me with a wonderful relationship with a beautiful, intelligent woman, which is far more than I deserve. And most recently, God bestowed upon me the great privilege and burden of being Student Body President. To the best of my abilities, I intend on doing all that I can to glorify God by serving students. We do not know how the rest of this year is going to play out, but we don't need the entire road of our life illuminated, just the path before our feet.

*Soli Deo Gloria.*

*Garrett is a senior political science major*

## The Penultimate Word

### Education Inflation and Prolonged Adolescence in Middle Class America



PHOTO BY JORDAN GREEN

BY ELISA SHEARER

As college attendance rises among the upper and middle class, the idea of a bachelor's degree is starting to take the conceptual place of high school—getting a bachelor's degree, for the middle class, is becoming the norm, such that students are going to college even if they have absolutely no idea of what they're going to do with their education. Since more people are getting an undergraduate degree, the degree is becoming less impressive; more people pursue terminal degrees and that in turn becomes less of a distinction. This results in a whole bunch of people attending school longer for degrees that carry less weight.

There's nothing inherently wrong with the situation above—the increasing education of the population is, by itself, an appealing idea. The problem is that as the education of the middle class stretches to include a requisite two to four years of undergrad and three to five years of graduate school on top of that, the students aren't getting any younger. So we graduate at 27, an age when many of our parents were married, having children, and buying houses. To put it succinctly, our bodies are saying "babies!" our advisers are saying "thesis!," and the largest purchase we've made so far is a minifridge. This doesn't seem to be bothering us too much, though; we are good at school, we figure, so we might as well remain in the bubble so our loans continue to be subsidized. We stay in school, we stay in debt, and we stay economically dependent on our parents.

The idealism eventually escapes our peer-reviewed brains when we graduate and realize that we don't know how to buy car insurance. But that's really okay, because we can ask our parents to do it for us. They're right downstairs, after all.

One major problem is that our generation doesn't know what to do with what we got—more so than generations before us, we are often oversupplied and oversupported. We were told we could be anything we wanted to be and were then gingerly placed into the world, too old and too inexperienced. We are the kids kept inside nice houses so we don't get our clothes dirty—the kids sent on a field trip to the library with two days' supply of food, a spare rain slicker, and an atlas. We are the safest generation yet, and unfortunately many of us are floundering because of that. Everything was set up for us to be effortlessly happy, but the essence of life isn't happiness, it's potency. And a 26-year old who has been in school for 21 years does not feel potent.

And then we feel unable to talk about this—what kind of idiot complains about not having enough work? What kind of ungrateful kid says he or she doesn't want to be pampered? But pampering, while incredibly comfortable, is stifling, and we need to realize that.

And I don't know what to do with this—like I said before, an increase in the college-educated population is

good, and college degrees (once we actually get them) have been shown to increase salaries even in fields unrelated to one's major. But the inflation of the college degree has kept a whole generation of students from recognized adulthood, and the results are debilitating.

I don't know if there's anything we can do. Be grateful for our fortune. Be intentional about our decisions—consciously recognizing that living at home (or whatever) does save money, so we feel like we made a decision instead of just flouncing into the default. Attempt to be mature and self-sufficient people as much as possible before complaining about our situation. Read a lot. Insist quietly and confidently that we are actualized individuals, and behave accordingly. Lie in our beds watching reality TV and complaining to our friends about the whole thing on Gmail chat (just kidding about that last one).

*Elisa is a senior Psychology and English major*



# Embracing the Unexpected

— FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK —



PHOTO BY JORDAN GREEN

BY KRISTEN PALMER

A purse, a license, two bank cards, a credit card, 300 dollars cash, a cell phone, a camera, an iPod, and three passports—all stolen off of the back of my mom's chair in a Costa Rican restaurant.

"Who took my purse? Who took my purse?" she looked at the rest of my family with confusion. It was when we realized it was not one of my Uncle Andy's practical jokes that everyone took off—some checked the bathrooms, some checked the garbage cans, some spoke to the police, while my grandma ran down a tour guide who looked suspicious "because he smoked."

While all hell broke loose in San Jose, my dad sat calmly in New

York, canceling bank cards, a cell phone, and depositing enough money for the rest of the trip into my bank account. His reaction to my mom's frantic call? "Everyone is safe, and that's what matters."

I wish I had inherited my dad's healthy perspective. When my mom, my brother, and I returned from the trip, my dad's car sat waiting for me in the driveway. He bought a new one and the time had finally come: he was giving me his. It seemed too good to be true. And it was.

A week later, my friend and I took a road trip to see another friend when my car broke down. Three miscommunications with AAA, one shady looking mechanic, and six hours in the 98 degree weather later, my parents showed up to our rescue.

I came home to a broken laptop, and two days later, I dropped my cell phone in a cup of water. I remember sitting at work the next day, after being dropped off in the family van, staring out the window feeling helpless and, for the first time in my life, superstitious.

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itself**

I'll risk sounding like a spoiled brat to say that was one of my harder days. But what would life be without the unexpected? How would we gain wisdom without first having the experience? How would we learn patience without having to wait? And what about hope?

I'm always amazed at life's unpredictability and the fact that we, as humans, don't have the ability to prevent it. None of us know what the next year will bring, which is a scary reality for

us seniors, but the truth is, none of us know what the next week holds. We can dream, and we can fear, but most of what happens is unexpected. It is discomforting that life's interruptions come without warning but comforting to realize that life always renews itself.

For me, it's about surrendering to a part of life I can't control.

I can now look back on my summer and laugh. One month; three more emergency trips to the car shop, including a re-built transmission; and four grand later, my dad will be bringing my car back to me. I was excited the first time he gave me the car, but for some reason, it's much sweeter this time. That is, if it works. Knock on wood.

*Kristen is a senior English and communication major*

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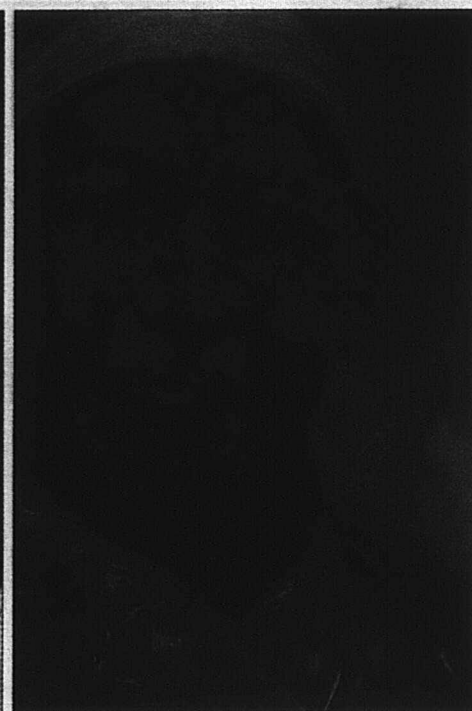
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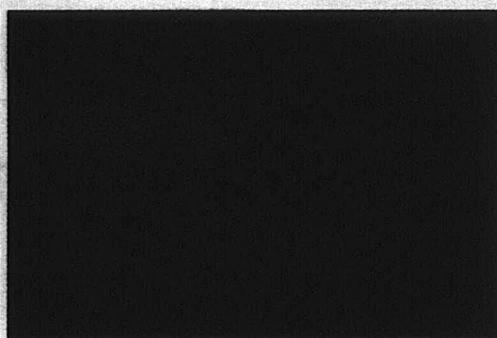
If my life story was sewn onto colorful fabric, as is done in the tribal villages of Africa, my passion for art would be woven into every fold. As a child, I would scramble to color in line drawings before, as I imagined, the characters on the coloring pages snapped to life. Now, as a senior, I take great delight in painting people in such a way that their appearance and personality comes alive in the eyes of the viewer. My interest and love of people is manifested not only in my artwork but in my relationships with those around me. As I look ahead to the future I plan to combine my passions for art and people through pursuing a degree in art therapy.

*Jaela is a senior art and psychology major*

## ARTIST OF THE WEEK



**Clockwise from top:** *Mama Zangu*, oil; *Nyanya*, oil; *The Things We Leave Behind I*, digital photograph; *The Things We Leave Behind II*, digital photograph



## Sudoku Challenge

8	9		7				3	4					8			7	3	
						6				7		3	5			6	1	
			5			8		9				7	6		9	5	8	
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		6		4		2						9		8				
2					1	9				9	1		6			3	8	4
3		2			8							5	4	3		9	7	
		4										7	2			3	1	
7	6				3		5	8		8	9			2				

To win a prize, bring your finished sudoku puzzle, clearly marked with your full name, to the Star office in the basement of the Campus Center.