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## SHENOWEEN: RETURN TO THE WOODS

MICHAEL MCCUTCHEON '26

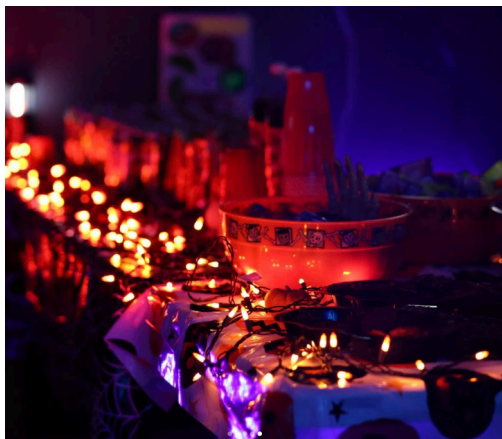
Shenoween is a Halloween event hosted by the men's Residence Life (Res Life) team in collaboration with Campus Activities Board (CAB). It is open to all students and faculty to attend and enjoy the festivities. It is traditionally held at Shenawana Hall (Shen) except for 2022-2024, when Shen was closed.

When Shenoween returned in 2024, a few changes were made. That year, the men's Res Life staff was a combined two-dorm staff with Shen and Rothenbuhler (Roth) Resident Assistants (RAs) due to Shenawana's limited number of residents and RAs. Since there was a small team, Roth RAs, like Ryan Kullander '27 and Cater Hall '27, were a part of last year's event.

Shenoween 2024 consisted of a "haunted tour" throughout Shen with a party



Shenoween 2024.



COURTESY OF @SL.HOUGHTON INSTAGRAM

held in the basement lounge. During the haunted tour, groups were led into rooms set up to cause a fright or even a laugh for the participants. Leading you around from room to room would be an RA in character: an average Houghton tour guide with a Halloween twist. Two of the tour guides were Ben Unger

'27 as the ghost of Houghton's past and Logan Carrol '25 as a zombie tour guide. You might walk by "The Island of Eternal Tickling," "Imprisoned Curious George," or "Early Christmas."

When asked about Shenoween 2025, Men's Resident Director Joey Schunemann '24 said, "This year we

are changing Shenoween a little bit since we can't do haunted tours through occupied floors of Shen. Instead, we're planning to return to the woods from the yonder days of 'Haunted Houghton.'" He explained that, "last year was a high bar to match with great campus engagement and high

effort from everyone on the RA team."

Shenoween has always been a popular campus event, and one that requires all hands on deck. Every member of CAB and male RA help plan and run the event.

Schunemann looks back fondly on his memories of Shenoween, "I think it's a blast to get to experience a real Houghton Halloween party, and it's an excuse to get to dress up, chit chat, explore the woods, and hang out with friends. In undergrad, I never missed the CAB Halloween party, though I was admittedly usually running it, and getting the opportunity to bring it back to Shen after all these years is a treat."

CAB President Emma Podobinski '27 shared that CAB's main task is picking decorations and planning how

See **SHENOWEEN** page #2

## Midterms Aren't The Only Thing Haunting Gillette

*In the Halloween Spirit, the STAR collected a series of spooky stories about Gillette, our oldest residence hall. These stories may be true, or fictional but inspired by real events. We hope you enjoy. Happy Halloween!*

— The STAR Editors

### Gillette Paranormal

I didn't realize Gillette Hall had spirits until I moved into my room on 1st Old last year. My first encounter with the mostly invisible visitors was while I was on the phone with a friend, discussing going to church. I was trying to persuade her sister to join us. As I spoke, the Bible I kept securely on the shelf in my closet flew from the shelf, hit



A more haunted Gillette.

COURTESY OF MARCOMM & LAURA QUISENBERRY

the door, and startled me thoroughly. Nothing else happened for a while, but then I kept seeing a woman standing in a corner. She never spoke or moved. I called her Eleanor, but she hated the name and threw tantrums, moving things more wildly.

Later, when my roommate's ESA cat arrived, a new visitor appeared—a shadow cat imitating her. The shadow

would dash across my feet and meow from the opposite corner of the real cat. Not long after, I experienced my scariest paranormal encounter. Before bed, I saw a creepy child-like figure underneath my roommate's bed, hugging a purple balloon leftover from my birthday. The next morning, I woke up to my alarm going off, but my phone was no longer beside

my bed. It had fallen beneath the bed, and the books beside my bed had been rearranged. A card from my boyfriend was also thrown aside and replaced with a creepy drawing I had made, which had previously been in a drawer but now seemed to stare at me. Afterward, I was sufficiently terrified and put holy water around my room and prayed for protection.

### The Tunnels of Gillette

It was mid-October, and the leaves on the trees fell rhythmically with the wind as it howled into the night. Sarah, a freshman, lived on the fourth floor of Gillette. She was feeling a bit warm under all of her covers, so she decided to briefly step out of the room to cool off.

She crept to the door to not wake any of her roommates. The room was still, and her three roommates occasionally snored to break the silence. Out in the hall, she felt the immediate relief of the cold. Sarah spent the next ten minutes silently sitting in the lounge when she heard a loud noise.

Getting up to investigate, she realized it came from her room. She cracked open the door to look at what caused the racket, and a cold gush of air swept onto her feet. Startled, Sarah quickly shut the

See **GILLETTE** page #2

## Mark Corbin: Men's Volleyball Coach

WES STEVICK '28

This fall, Mark Corbin was hired to be the head coach of the men's volleyball team. According to the Houghton Athletics News, he has more than twenty years of experience, including coaching at Emmanuel University in Georgia, Truett McConnell University, and Bob Jones University under Vicki Denny. Corbin looks forward to working with "a group of men who are eager to grow in the game of volleyball and in their love for Christ, their school, and their community."

Recently, Corbin has been drilling the team on communication. "We have to move and talk all the time," he said. "If we can't do that without a ball ... how are we gonna do that when the ball's in play and we have so much more going on?"

So he has the team play no-ball volleyball. Jonah Sissel '27, outside hitter and defensive specialist for the men's volleyball team, describes this game:

"He'll make the throwing hand signal, and we have to talk to each other like 'the ball is here, I'm the one getting the ball, and it's going to there.'"

This forces the team to develop the habit of communicating during the real games. Sissel found this strategy helpful and felt it improved communication within the team.

"He's very serious about practice," said Sissel. It's important that the whole team understands foundational skills early in the season, so later on, they don't have to waste time catching up. Sissel added, "If there's something that's going on in practice that some of the guys don't understand, he'll stop ... he'll talk to us through it."

Communication is only part of what Corbin wants to teach. "We wanna win; we wanna grow and get to that point where we can win championships," he said, "but more than that, we wanna develop good, godly young men."

Corbin sees the role of coach as a moral guide

and as a physical educator. He recalled Billy Graham's quote, "A coach will impact more people in one year than the average person will in an entire lifetime."

This is a responsibility Corbin takes seriously. "I have to be careful that I am being a good example to the guys, but also show them what it's like to be a godly man ... Through my experience, maybe I can help them through things that they're going through."

The men's volleyball team is very new, having been created in 2023. "We're still growing, still trying to lay that foundation of the team," Corbin said. He's excited, though: "The guys are working really hard, they have great attitudes, doing awesome ... they're going to see a big difference even in this season, and in the seasons to come it's just gonna get better." ★

*The men's volleyball team will scrimmage on Dec. 6 at 10 a.m.*



COURTESY OF EMMA PODOBINSKI / CAB

### SHENOWEEN from page #1

getting themed snacks and prizes for the costume contest winners. There are drinks, snacks, music, a dance floor and plenty of CAB members dressed for festivities and ready to turn the party up to eleven.

Podobinski stated, "I

think Shenoween is a very fun opportunity to celebrate Halloween! It's a great time to socialize and gather with friends. I didn't know what to expect with my first Shenoween last year, but was blown away with the effort Res Life put in as well. It was an amazing time! I definitely recommend coming to check it out." ★

Tunnels of Gillette.

### The Doors of Fourth Main

When I was an RA in Gillette, one of my RA friends told me a story: she was on duty and doing her final rounds with another RA on a Friday at the end of open hours at one in the morning. They walked through Fourth Main, and everything looked normal: all doors were closed, and everything was quiet, so they turned down the lights. From what I remember, no one was living in Fourth Main at the time. My friend and the other RA walked through to Fourth New and finished rounds (which only took a few moments), then my friend walked back to Fourth Main to go back to her floor and go to bed. But when she walked back to Fourth Main, all the doors

had flown open! She was never able to figure out why or how this had happened.

### An RA's Nightmare

It was a dark, cold night in Gillette when I was on duty. The night had gone well, I had friends visiting, and it had been a quiet, non-nonsense night. During the day, we had a planned water shut off, but the building was working like a well-oiled machine yet again. Or so I had thought. Nearing the end of my duty, I began to hear whispers of complaints about the cold water not working. And whispers of complaints about brown water. Then, these whispers turned into real complaints. And suddenly, I had residents from each floor telling me their water was no longer working. Oh no. What could I possibly do? I have no plumbing skills of my own. And so, I did the only thing I knew how to do. I called Safety and Security. They came into the wee hours of the night and told me the most horrifying thing I may have ever heard: The water would be off for the night. A building full of women? And no water? And I was in charge? I was terrified. Perhaps the spookiest night I have spent in Gillette to date.

Shout out to Facilities for getting our water back, though! ★

### GILLETTE from page #1

door. She put her ear to the door, trying to hear if one of her roommates was up and maybe opened the window. Silence. Maybe I'm just hearing things. They're probably still asleep, she thought to herself.

After building up her courage, she opened the door and walked in. Something is wrong. She felt a pit in her stomach. Glanc-

ing over at her roommate's bed, she realized they were gone. All three of them. How could this have happened? I was only gone for ten minutes!

Sarah frantically rushed around the room, searching for them and praying that this was just some cruel joke. Where could they have hidden? As she approached the closet, the air became icy cold. Pushing the clothes

aside, she revealed a dark, large hole where an attic door used to be.

Before she could even grab a flashlight, a hand lunged from the darkness and dragged her inside. Sarah and her three roommates were never heard from again. But sometimes, at exactly 12:13 AM, you can hear faint scratching echoes from the closets. Whispers say that it comes from The



## THE WEEKLY W'S

These Highlander teams took home the win this week.



### WOMEN'S SOCCER

	1	2	FINAL
HOUGHTON	0	1	1
SAGE	0	0	0

Grab a STAR to stay up to date on the Houghton Highlanders!

### WOMEN'S FIELD HOCKEY

	1	2	3	4	FINAL
HOUGHTON	2	1	1	3	7
ALFRED	0	0	0	0	0

	1	2	3	4	FINAL
HOUGHTON	2	2	4	0	8
SAGE	0	0	0	1	1

# A Christian's Response to the Epstein Files



ISAAH BORCHERT '28

Although Jeffrey Epstein has been dead for over six years, questions and investigations surrounding his crimes, and those who assisted or participated in them, still haunt our politics. While much of the media coverage has focused on the political and legal dimensions of the case, it is important to remember that this is, first and foremost, a moral issue. The Epstein scandal serves as a sobering reminder of how sexual sin and the devaluation of human life grieves God and demands both justice and moral accountability.

Epstein, an ultra-wealthy financier, was arrested in 2019 on charges

of sex trafficking and the exploitation of minors on his private island. Just a month after his arrest, Epstein was found dead in his jail cell after, reportedly, threatening to expose others who were involved. His death was alleged to be a suicide.

With Epstein gone, many believed—and still believe—the only way to uncover the full truth about who participated in these crimes was through the release of the Epstein files. Frustration over the lack of

As Christians, our call is clear: we must advocate for justice in all areas of life. Scripture repeatedly commands God's people to act justly and uphold righteousness (Leviticus 19:15). God Himself is perfectly just, and, as His followers, we are called to reflect that justice in the world. In this case, justice means that every person who participated in or enabled these crimes should be held accountable for their actions without ex-

*“At its core, the Epstein scandal exposes something far deeper than corruption or secrecy: it reveals a cultural loss of belief in the sacred worth of every human being.”*



given us. This does not mean excusing or minimizing wrongdoing, but it does mean that our hearts should not harbor hatred or vengeance. We must leave ultimate judgment to God, as He alone sees every truth.

Discernment, however, is also crucial because the mere presence of a name in the Epstein files does not automatically prove guilt. The Epstein list is made up of people who have visited his private island, not necessarily those who have done something illegal. Many public figures (including former President Donald Trump, Prince Andrew, and others) have been associated with Epstein socially but claim to have had no knowledge of his crimes. While some of these defenses may be dishonest, it would be foolish to assume that every person listed was involved in sexual exploitation. Christians must resist the temptation to participate in modern-day culture and instead wait for the facts to be revealed before making moral judgments.

At its core, the Epstein scandal exposes something far deeper than corruption or secrecy; it reveals a cultural loss of belief in the sacred worth of every human

being. Scripture tells us that “God created mankind in his own image” (Genesis 1:27), meaning every person carries divine dignity that must never be violated or reduced to a means of selfish pleasure or gain. When society forgets this truth, people become commodities, and exploitation inevitably follows. The Church must respond by doing what we can in society to restore a worldview that sees every life as precious in God's sight, modeling purity, respect, and protection of the vulnerable in our homes, congregations, and institutions.

When the Epstein files are finally made public, we must be prepared to face the uncomfortable truths they reveal. Some of the names may shock us. Those we once admired may be exposed as participants in unthinkable evil. This is the tragic reality of a world broken by sin, a world in desperate need of a Savior. As believers, we must meet these revelations not with despair, but with prayer, repentance, and renewed commitment to God's justice and mercy.

Ephesians 5:11: “Don't participate in the fruitless works of darkness, but instead expose them.” ★

*“The Epstein scandal serves as a sobering reminder of how sexual sin and the devaluation of human life grieves God and demand both justice and moral accountability”*



transparency has only grown across the political spectrum in the years since. It can be assumed that names from both sides will be included on the list as the files have remained sealed over the duration of two presidencies of two different political parties.

ception or favoritism.

It is important to remember that justice must be accompanied by grace. Christ commands us to love the sinner, even while condemning the sin. In Matthew 18, Jesus reminds us that we are to forgive others just as God has for-

Have an opinion you want to share?

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## SPEAK OUT!

Letters to the editor should be less than 600 words

SUBMIT TO  
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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  
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# Movie Review

## The Nightmare Before Infamy

MIRIAM BROOKS '29

*Warning mild spoilers*

*The Nightmare Before Christmas* (1993) is a Halloween classic. Using stop-motion animation, spooky songs such as “This is Halloween” and “Making Christmas,” and an original storyline by Tim Burton, the film has remained a household name since its creation.

The film was directed by Henry Selick and features an 11-song score by Danny Elfman, who also doubled as the iconic singing voice for Jack Skellington. The movie featured big names like Chris Sarandon, Catherine O’Hara and Ken Page, who helped bring the story to life. The film began production in 1991 and, with a crew of 120 people creating scenes frame by frame using stop-motion animation, it was ready for release in October 1993. The film used puppets, which required each character to have fluid movement and animated facial expressions. The dedication to this style of animation heavily influenced the length of the creation process. In just 76 minutes of runtime, *The Nightmare Before Christmas* managed to captivate audiences with its eye-catching visuals and new holiday perspectives.

*The Nightmare Before Christmas* follows the story of Jack Skellington—a *Halloween-town* public figure—the people of his community, and the people of *Christmastown*. Jack longs to change his world of Halloween to a world of Christmas after he no longer feels content with his life. Dragging his community along with him, Jack

makes a mess of things as he tries and fails to understand Christmas. After his failure, he realizes that his desire for change was unnecessary. Jack then sets everything right, recognizing that he can be happy with the world he knows and the people in it.

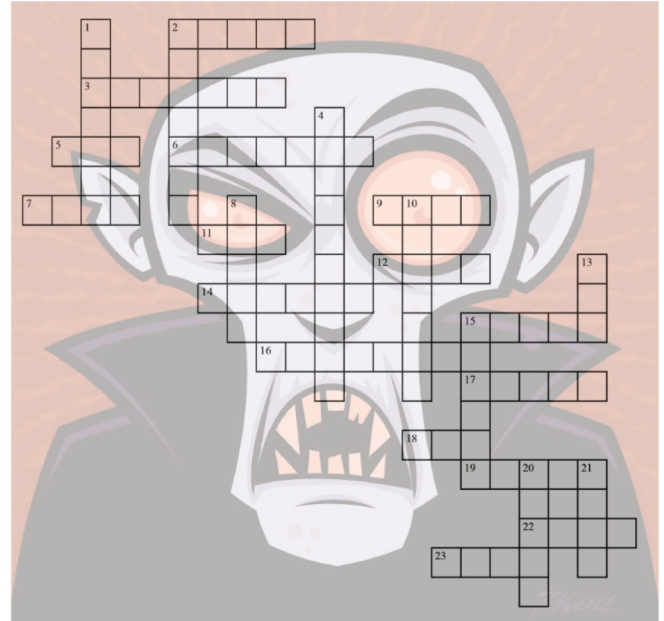
What initially appeared to be a bizarre and unique children’s film became an animated depiction of the struggles with self-identity and the roles people play in society. Jack’s character is relatable to many because longing for something greater is a natural human desire. Others may find that they connect best with the film’s theme of rebellion. Watching characters go against what society tells them to do can be refreshing for people who feel burdened by similar expectations. Children enjoy this film for its music and interactive animation, while adults find pleasure in its nostalgia and lasting impressions. *The Nightmare Before Christmas* found lasting success in its relatable plot and thematic elements that encouraged viewers to be content with what they have during the holiday season.

In 2023, the Library of Congress selected the film for preservation, a privilege awarded to films that are culturally, aesthetically, or historically significant. In the 32 years since its release, *The Nightmare Before Christmas* has symbolized holiday fun, the power of community, and the importance of being content. As a result, the timeless film remains a Halloween and Christmas movie masterpiece. ★

# Puzzles of the Week

## VAMPIRE CROSSWORD

Provided by *SchoolPrinting.com*



**Across**

- 2. Vampire’s weapon
- 3. Female vampire portrayer
- 5. Two people
- 6. Vlad the \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. Modeling compound
- 9. MTV VJ
- 11. A parent
- 12. Jump
- 14. Adams first wife
- 15. Begin
- 16. Italian city
- 17. Inexpensive
- 18. “Enemies of the \_\_\_\_\_”
- 19. “Lost Boys” villain
- 22. Popular flower
- 23. Search engine

**Down**

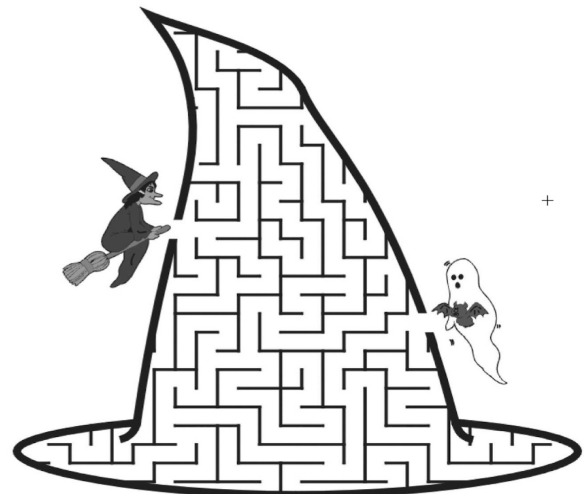
- 1. “Dracula’s Soul Brother”
- 2. College fee
- 4. Vampires lack one
- 8. Vampire Brad
- 10. Brand, “Vampire \_\_\_\_\_”
- 13. Vampish flyer
- 15. Measurement of time
- 20. Sixth sign of zodiac
- 21. “From \_\_\_\_\_ till Dawn”



## EVENT CALENDAR

- FRI, 31<sup>st</sup>** — 9:00p - 11:00p, Shenoween, *Shenawana*.
- FRI, 31<sup>st</sup>** — 9:00p - 10:00p, Lander Nation Pep Rally, *Nielsen*.
- SAT, 1<sup>st</sup>** — 8:30a - 5:00p, Fall Dressage Show, *Equestrian Center*.
- SAT, 1<sup>st</sup>** — 10:00a - 12:00p, Women’s Basketball v. Daemen, *Nielsen*.
- SAT, 1<sup>st</sup>** — 2:00p - 3:30p, Women’s Volleyball v. Nazareth, *Nielsen*.
- TUE, 4<sup>th</sup>** — 7:00p - 8:00p, CAB Thanksgiving Trivia!, *Java*.

*check CampusGroups for additional information*



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