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Successful First Honors Weekend

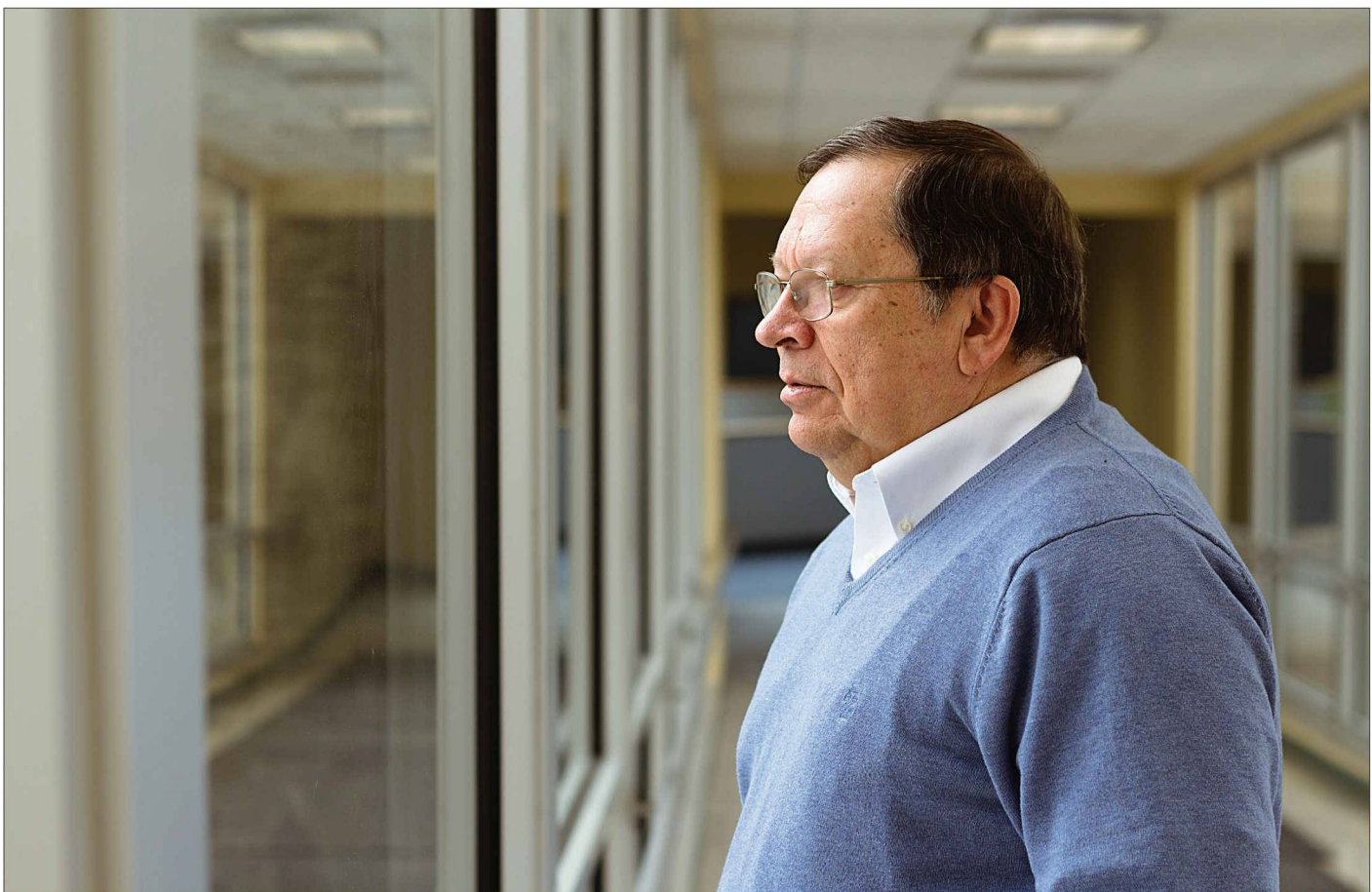
DANI EATON

Last weekend marked the beginning of the honors weekends as Houghton hosted 33 potential students and their families, a significant increase from last year.

This success is a result of changes not only to the honors program, but the approach to the weekend was slightly different as well. One of the most substantial changes, according to Director of Honors Programs, Benjamin Lipscomb, is the addition of the Honors in London program. Honors in London will be reintroduced as an option for current prospective students after a four year absence from the honors curriculum offerings. Elizabeth Rutledge, Assistant Director for Admission Events and Office Operations, thinks it will also attract more potential students. "We believe that the return of Honors in London will help attract additional students to Honors at Houghton," said Rutledge. "We are excited to see how many stu-

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Walters to Retire After Twenty Years of Teaching



ANTHONY BURDO

Theology professor, Michael Walters, who came to Houghton College in 1995, will be retiring at the end of the spring semester after twenty years of teaching.

SARAH SLATER

Longtime professor, Michael Walters, will be retiring from his current position as Associate Dean of the Area of Religion and Global Service and Chair of the Department of Biblical Studies, Theology,

and Philosophy, bringing to an end a career on the faculty at Houghton spanning two decades.

Walters first came to Houghton as the pastor of Houghton Wesleyan Church in 1982, remarking "I originally came thinking it was going to be for one year, and I still

haven't left. So it was kind of a surprise." In 1995, the college asked Walters to join the faculty as a professor in what is now the Department of Biblical Studies, Theology, and Philosophy. During his time here, as well being named Chair and Associate Dean, he has assisted with the hiring of faculty like professor

Jonathan Case, the establishment of the Woolsey lectures, and the recent accreditation of the theology major. Additionally, Walters created the Spiritual Formation class which has been

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Potential Plans for Nielsen Explore Wellness



ANTHONY BURDO

The Houghton College women's basketball team huddle for a post practice talk in the Nielsen Physical Education Center on Wednesday night.

MARY CRONIN

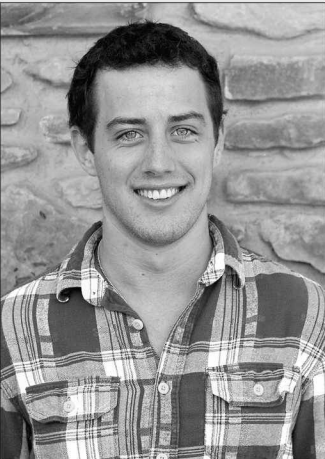
With the opening of the Kerr-Pegula Field House (KPFH) this past fall, the future of the Nielsen Physical Education Center (NPEC) is in question. Athletic Director, Harold "Skip" Lord, said the KPFH is an "enhancement" rather than a replacement for the NPEC. Although the Nielsen was a replacement for the old Bedford gym, which sat between the Campus Center and Gillette until the late 1970s, the intention for how each of the two current athletic facilities will be used is much different. Lord stated that the KPFH is an "enhancement," not a replacement.

The NPEC still sees quite a bit of use, though it is not as crowded as it has been in previous years. The building still houses the training and sports medicine staff, physical education classes, as well as men's and women's basketball and women's volleyball. Varsity spring sports teams also may use the NPEC due to weather conditions, though this would occur only if the KPFH was unavailable.

Lord also observed that before the KPFH was open, crowding from spring and winter sports practices often squeezed out non-varsity athlete students looking to use the NPEC. This was due to the fact that Houghton has added more athletic teams

See **NPEC** page 2

NATIONAL // Cuba and U.S. Make Amends



ANTHONY BURDO

JARED CRAM

A landmark moment in Cuban-American relations occurred mid-December when President Obama loosened regulations on the interactions between the two nations. The changes, which were brought about after negotiations to release American government subcontractor Alan Gross from Cuban custody, in-

clude a variety of different points. Among them, a much freer trade between the two countries, a quadrupling of the amount of remittances Cuban-Americans may send home (from \$500 to \$2000 each quarter), as well as the ability of travelers who meet certain criteria to fly directly to Cuba. These changes continue an overall trend in recent years of diluted sanctions present in the American embargo of Cuba.

The origins of the Cuban Embargo begin with the rise to power of Fidel Castro in 1959 after his successful militarized revolt over then leader Fulgensio Batista. American leaders viewed Castro's ideologies as extremist, which led to the implementation of a trade embargo, as well as a severing of all diplomatic relations with Cuba the following year. In 1993, the U.S. tightened the embargo, forcing Cuban leadership to sign an agreement with the U.S. allowing the emigration of 20,000 Cuban refugees per year to quell protests from its

citizens.

Since that time, sanctions within the embargo have been gradually reduced, allowing for freer travel and the promise of remittances to families and small businesses in Cuba. President Obama has been a sizable advocate for these reforms according to the New York Times. On December 17, President Obama announced his newest change to the embargo. In it, diplomatic relations with Cuba would be restored for the first time in over 50 years. Additionally, American citizens wishing to travel to Cuba for educational, cultural, or religious reasons, as well as humanitarian work, now have the right to do so. In the financial sector, American banks now will have the ability to open branches in Cuba, as well as to allow American customers to use United States credit or debit cards during their time in Cuba. Finally, imports and exports will be restored in a limited fashion, with American citizens being able to

export up to \$400 worth of Cuban goods, and up to \$100 worth of articles like alcohol and tobacco. "I'm going to leave a shell, but it's going to be a proverbial Easter egg – it's going to be hollow" said Obama referring to the remaining sanctions within the Cuban embargo.

Reactions from Congress and other government officials from these changes have been mixed. Nowhere is this more obvious than the fact that the embargo against Cuba still stands in a limited sense. To lift the embargo would require action by Congress. In an interview with the New York Times, Senator Robert Menendez said Obama's changes were "clearly intended to circumvent the intent and spirit of the U.S. law and the U.S. Congress." Others quoted concerns about the implications of these changes, like Florida Senator Marco Rubio. "These new policies will have the effect of enriching the tyrant without benefitting Cubans," he said in a state-

ment to CNN.

However, others in power feel differently. On January 19, a group of 78 lawmakers and other officials signed a document stating their advocacy for the Obama administration's changes in preparation for the upcoming State of the Union address. Notable among the signed are Secretary of State, George Schultz; President Clinton's National Security Advisor, Sandy Berger; and former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. and New Mexico governor, Bill Richardson; among others. In the letter, they were quoted saying, "We may disagree on a number of issues, but we've found common ground for a simple reason; our fifty-four-year-old approach intended to promote human rights and democracy in Cuba has failed." ★

Jared is a senior biochemistry major.

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since becoming an NCAA Division III institution. The existence of the KPFH serves to allow for a spreading out of indoor winter sports and outdoor spring sports as well as track and field (which is both indoor and outdoor). This allows for more traditional practice times and more time for recreational and intramural use of both facilities. Lord emphasized the KPFH and the NPEC "are Houghton College facilities" and all students have priority, not just athletic

teams.

Lord stated this semester offers a wider variety of intramurals, with the future possibility of indoor ultimate frisbee in the KPFH.

The new arrangement is beneficial to current student-athletes. Emily Cronin, a member of both the women's basketball and softball teams, said, "As a basketball player it is nice having all of the spring and most of the fall sports down at the KPFH because we have better practice times, and the gym (Nielsen) is available more often."

Melissa Bell, a member of the track and field team,

agreed stating, "Practice times are more consistent." Bell also believes the dual use of both facilities has had a positive effect on the health habits of students, "I think the addition of KPAC has encouraged more students to work out... because they (NPEC and KPFH) are less crowded."

According to Lord, the NPEC fitness center and weight room will remain open for the remainder of the year, and the decision to keep them in operation will be evaluated based on how often they are used.

Plans for the NPEC, which are still on the drawing board,

include creating a wellness center at the location. "Wellness involves the whole person," stated Rob Pool, Vice President of Student Life. The whole person refers to one's academics, spirituality, mental health, and fitness. "Each of those aspects are really just available ... à la carte currently" Pool added. A wellness program would be an intentional integration of every aspect of wellness. Though nothing has been decided, Pool stated that Houghton is "seriously looking" for funding for such a program.

With all the emphasis on wellness and fitness, as well

as two facilities in which to practice them, Lord spoke to the overall fitness level of the Houghton College community stating, "According to our wellness and fitness professors, we are below average [in physical fitness]".

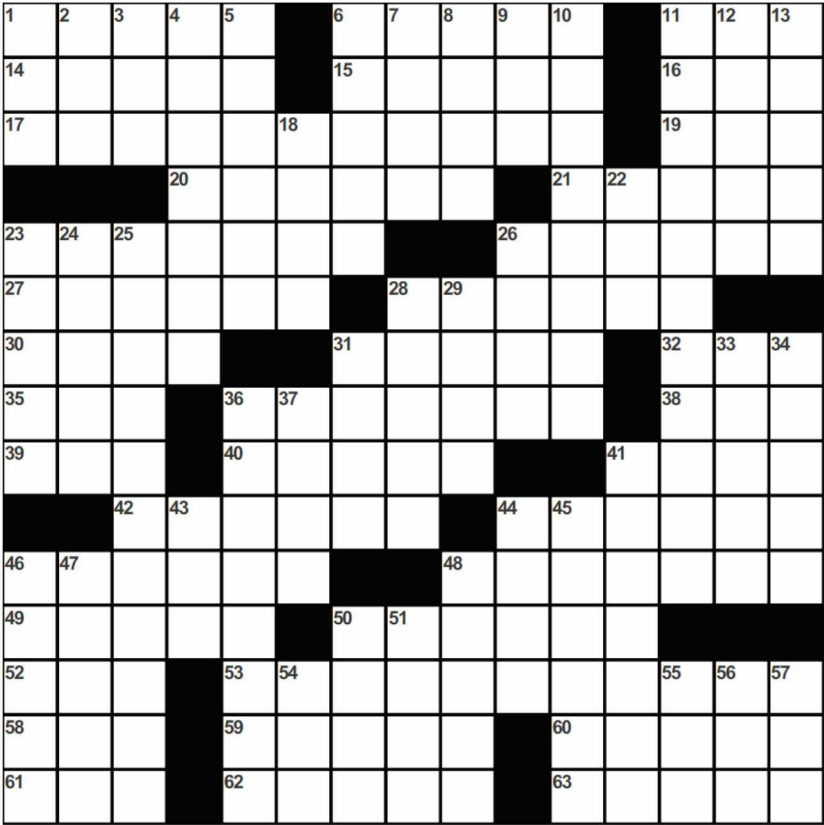
Lord hopes that the added space the KPFH adds to both facilities will encourage community fitness. "People need to find something they enjoy doing, so that they can stay fit," he said. One thing he hopes will help is "easily being able to find an open racquetball court, use a treadmill, or have a basketball court to play 3-on-3 with friends." ★

ACROSS

1. Remove, as a dowel
6. Court call
11. Private bed?
14. Tex-Mex topping
15. Sao ____
16. Have life
17. Start of a quip
19. Touchdown total
20. Unenviable grade

DOWN

21. Moo goo ____ pan
22. "The Hollow Men" poet
24. Changes course
26. Bugs and Porky
27. Part 2 of quip
32. Man in Exodus
33. Moorish palace
37. Numbered rd.
38. Buddy
40. Big galoot
41. "So long!"
44. Polynesian kingdom
46. Part 3 of quip
49. Groucho trademark
52. Traffic tangle
53. Antioxidant source
56. MDX divided by X
57. Eye, in Uruguay
60. D.C. denizen
61. End of quip
64. Go on to say
65. Belly-button type
66. Used a beam
67. Code-cracking org.
68. Senator Kefauver
69. Red-carpet walkers
11. Electronics giant
12. Betelgeuse's constellation
13. Bookstore purchases
18. Pull down
23. Arachne's tool
24. Tango quorum
25. Surreptitiously follows
27. Small-scale racer
28. Post-WWII grp.
29. Droxie alternative
30. Antiquated
31. Abbott's first baseman
34. U2 frontman
35. Sauce brand
36. Way over there
38. London's ____ Gardens
39. Charged particle
42. Actress Cannon
43. University of Wyoming city
44. Electrifies
45. "Thimble Theatre" character
47. Foot fractions
48. Soft mineral
49. Political talk channel
50. MP3 players
51. Radner of "SNL"
54. Swindles
55. Pursue prey
57. Greek peak
58. Catcall
59. Vegas calculation
62. Reason for overtime
63. Granola tidbit



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“probably [his] favorite course over the years”.

Kristina Lacelle-Peterson, fellow theology professor, remarked on Walters’ “amazing service” to the college. She particularly noted his importance as an “inspirational” mentor in the ministerial program, which is “a service that this college offers to the Wesleyan Church in particular, but offers in general to students who are preparing for ministry.” The ministry program at Houghton is important, she said, because it is “central to the faith development of most Christians to have strong preaching and pastoral care and fellowship and worship” at their churches.

Building relationships with other faculty members and students was one of the most rewarding parts of teaching at

Houghton for Walters, who said it was “a wonderful thing to watch [students] develop... and to know that you had just a small part helping to form them”. Former student, Veronica Gerace, said she admired Walters’ wisdom and stated that he teaches theology in a “very clear and concise way.” She also said she used the lessons she learned during the class to answer the questions of summer camp kids she worked with during her time on the Houghton travelling ministry team last summer.

According to Lacelle-Peterson, the ministry courses Walters currently teaches will be distributed among the Biblical Studies and Theology faculty, all of whom are ordained and who have worked in churches. The department is currently undergoing a search for a new Associate Dean as well as a Chair of the department. Any positions will be hired internally.

She stated both of these topics are an “on-going conversation” between members of the department and Academic Dean Linda Mill-Woolsey.

Historically the Associate Dean and Department Chair have been the same position, but Lacelle-Peterson stated because of the re-alignment of the academic area to include the department of intercultural studies and world languages, it is possible that will not be the case going forward. Because of Houghton’s position as a college in the Wesleyan church, there are certain requirements that have to be fulfilled regarding representation of Wesleyans in leadership positions of the college, particularly in the Department of Biblical Studies, Theology, and Philosophy. This is intended to “maintain Wesleyan identity in the school,” said Lacelle-Peterson.

Walters said retirement will



ANTHONY BURDO

Professor Walters, plans on using his retirement as an opportunity to spend more time with his children and grandchildren as well as other family.

allow him more time to spend time with family, including his children and grandchildren. His immediate plans are to stay in the area. Despite not initially intending to live in Western New York for so many years of his career, Walters remarked, “I obviously love this institution and have been shaped and formed by it and this community in a variety of ways.” ★

HONORS from page 1

dents choose to join the Houghton community.”

Another contributing factor to the success of the weekend, according to Lipscomb, was the date of the event. While the decision to schedule the event so early in the semester and during Martin Luther King Jr. weekend was partly due to scheduling re-

straints, it was a strategic decision as well.

In previous years the event had fallen on the Friday after Martin Luther King Jr. day, and only 11 or 12 students were able to attend. Lipscomb thinks this hurt their outcome, stating, “If you’re a family visiting colleges, you might well have used that three-day weekend for that purpose. You’d be less likely, then, to sign up for an honors weekend right afterward.” Lip-

scomb also credits admissions counselors for encouraging students to come to the first event, rather than waiting. According to Lipscomb, this works to Houghton’s advantage, “All the data suggest that the earlier we complete our process and get students a decision about honors, the likelier they are to commit to Houghton.”

However, sophomore Ian Patrick said that when he interviewed for the honors program

the date of the event was not a factor for him, “I don’t think it would have mattered so much, for me anyways, because I was more interested in the subject matter.” Patrick said one of the main reasons he chose Houghton, as opposed to other colleges, was due to his acceptance into the honors program.

The last change made to the event was the decision to invite alumni to come and help interview. This helps Houghton tighten connections with its alumni, as well as introducing prospective students to honors program veterans. The alumni interviewers provide a unique perspective, Lipscomb said, “as the alums could reflect on how an interviewee would have fit into their honors cohort.” The success of this weekend is a promising start to the search for next year’s honors class. ★

ECONOMICS // 2015 Fiscal Prediction



ANTHONY BURDO

JOE GILLIGAN

As I write this Jan. 1, 2015, I am truly optimistic about this year economic outlook. Unlike many experts and analysts, I believe America is poised for steady growth in 2015. Many economists cite a slowing economy due to low energy prices. It’s probable energy companies will suffer, but since when did we care so much about paying a lot more at the gas pump? Other economists cite as the economy grows, the Federal Reserve will start raising interest rates which will hurt the financial sector. Since when did we start caring for cheap money given to Wall Street?

In the last decade our currency has been devalued, but recent events point to the dollar making a strong rebound,

despite the last two administration’s fiscal policies. Economist Larry Kudlow calls it the rebirth of “King Dollar” which will strengthen our currency and create more bang for the buck on all goods, services, and aids the middle class who have not seen wealth gains in nearly a decade. With a new pro-growth 114th Congress, American politics will shift from creating welfare incentives towards creating private sector jobs driving more money back into the economy though repatriation of capital, hiring, and stronger revenues. A consistent and durable U.S. job growth will increase hours worked, job mobility, raises and better paying jobs as the economy heats up. I predict the U.S. will strengthen and the economy will grow a steady 3.3% because of low energy, a new political climate, a growing job market and the rebirth of king dollar.

Let’s start with lower gas prices, which began its dramatic dissent in the second half of 2014. American fracking has led to a worldwide oil supply shock. The oversupply of oil will continue in 2015 because the International Energy Agency projects the U.S., now the world’s largest oil producer, will produce an additional 680,000 barrels next year. However, the “bears” on Wall Street see the sky falling as lower energy

prices will also kill America’s heavily leveraged energy industry and the financial firms that have loaned to them. Yet most energy corporations are secured in fixed long term contracts and also have hedged against lower energy prices through the futures market. Economist Larry Kudlow is emphatic that “lower oil prices are unambiguously good for the U.S. economy.” The extra discretionary income leads to more business saving and consumer spending, quite possibly \$1500 in every working person’s pocket at the gas pump.

A second good indicator is the U.S. dollar has strengthened. We have seen this before in the 1980s and 1990s leading to lower commodity prices such as gold. As the value of the dollar increases and a combination of steady U.S. economic growth with sluggish economies in the European Union, Japan, and China makes the U.S. attractive to foreign investors. According to Cliff Droke of Kitco, the 1980s and 1990s was a “time the U.S. economy was white hot, stock prices were on a relentless upward march, energy prices were low and the U.S. was the undisputed leader in attracting foreign capital inflows.” For the American middle class, a strong dollar couldn’t be more welcomed because a strong dollar is one of the best forms of

stimulus. According to David Howden of the Von Mises Institute, “Consumers can continue to enjoy cheap access to foreign-made goods, and export-based industries can maintain their stature by shifting their cost base to take advantage of cheaper foreign inputs.”

With the 114th Congress, a new era of pro-growth legislation will be brought. President Obama can choose the same route as President Clinton did and work with a Republican Congress with the same economic results seen in the 1990s. It seems the Republicans, the majority party, will first pass the Keystone XL pipeline bringing an influx of oil from Canada and the North Dakota’s Bakken oil fields. Congress is also likely to bring tax cuts to both the individual tax code and the corporate tax code helping create more jobs as well as repeal the odious tax on money earned outside of the U.S. which will could repatriate \$2 trillion dollars so that capital is invested here in the U.S. instead of abroad.

Congress will also try to severely weaken the negative effects of the Dodd-Frank Bill, which has crippled our small community banks and small business lending. Legislation will try to clip parts of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The intent of the new bills will be to push back deadlines and change the definition of a full time worker from 30 hours a week defined by the ACA to the traditional 40 hours. As it stands right now, many companies have simply cut part time jobs or outsourced work so they avoid benefits they cannot afford.

My only disappointment for 2015 is that I believe our economy could be growing at 5.5% to 7.5% witnessed in the 1920’s, 1960’s, 1980’s and 1990’s. However, we lack the key ingredients characterized by those decades such as pro-growth-political executive leadership, a strong suspicion of large institutions, deregulation, a tax code driven by incentives to work-save- risk, and an electorate with a strong reverence for liberty, individualism, and with a slight hostility towards taxation.

Possibly 2014 was just a 1979 redux and a very strong economy and political resolve is still just a few years away. It is my hope in 2015 America can do even better than my baseline economic recovery predictions of 3.3% growth. Our nation has the power to break this 1970’s style economic malaise and the crisis of confidence we find our country in once again.

Joe is a sophomore business and accounting major.

The Resurrection of the Lanthorn

New co-editors revitalize a withering publication

HOLLY CHAISSON

Of the trinity of Houghton student publications that includes The Star, The Drawing Board, and The Lanthorn, it is the latter that is perhaps most foreign to students this year. In part, this is due to the case of the missing editorial staff and the resulting scramble for their replacement about halfway through last semester. Fortunately junior Essie Fenstermacher and sophomore Ava Bergen volunteered to take charge and revive the Lanthorn once again.

For Bergen, a sophomore English and communications major, the Lanthorn was an important part of her experience her first year, and the same goes for Fenstermacher. As a literary magazine that includes poetry, selections of prose, short stories, and more, the Lanthorn appeals to avid readers and writers alike. For writers, the Lanthorn is a “good space for writers to put themselves out there,” said Bergen, as well as being a practical and simple way to get feedback



Lanthorn editors Ava Bergen, sophomore, and Essie Fenstermacher, junior.

ANTHONY BURDO

from their audience, other writers, and the editors themselves. Students who write more for leisure might enjoy the chance to see their name by something in print out there for all to see, but they also benefit from the ability to be anonymous. Anonymity, according to Bergen, affords

writers a certain “freedom [they] don’t have in other areas,” the Lanthorn is a “safe space for somebody who wants to talk about something very uncomfortable or talk about controversial ideas.” Fenstermacher added that it is an outlet that fosters connection and offers people the

chance to “put in their own input, or just come to it and find new ideas.”

More than another thing to pick up and read when you’re bored on campus, the Lanthorn’s mission is to engage the student body and to have them then engage each other. According to Bergen,

“if the Lanthorn can spark conversations, spark ideas, spark somebody to think in a different way or to think of someone else’s perspective, that would be really wonderful.”

With an ample budget, Bergen and Fenstermacher hope to publish quite a few issues this semester. The arrival of over 90 submissions over the course of a week and a half in the fall indicated to the editors that “people do want to write things, people are writing, and they already clearly had this material they submitted.” A trend they hope continues this spring.

In a world of where conversation is carried out in online comments, Facebook messages, and texts, Bergen thinks that it is “important for people to engage in actual conversations with each other, which isn’t to deride texts or Facebook, but I think you can’t underestimate the value of reading something on a page and taking the time to absorb that idea, that concept, and the effect that has on a person. If the Lanthorn can encourage that then I think we’ve accomplished our goal.” ★

The Promising Final Season of *Parks and Recreation*

AVA BERGEN

Arguably the funniest show on television right now, *Parks and Recreation* is back for its seventh and final season. The sitcom premiered this past Tuesday (January 13) on NBC, marking the inevitable end of the viewer’s relationship with the town of Pawnee, Indiana (First in Friendship, Fourth in Obesity), and the quirky characters that live there.

Featuring former *Saturday Night Live* star and Golden Globe Award winner Amy Poehler as the energetic and capable Leslie Knope, *Parks and Recreation* follows the lives of an eclectic band of government workers employed by the Pawnee Parks Department. Leslie’s boss Ron Swanson (Nick Offerman), is a profoundly libertarian, whiskey-drinking woodworker who acts as a foil for Leslie’s ceaseless work ethic and optimism; Ron only works for the government with the hope that he can destroy it from the inside.

Parks and Recreation’s brilliance lies not only in absurdist, deadpan humor (think 30 Rock meets The Office), but also in the gripping, sentimental evolution of the characters. I mean “sentimental”

in the most complimentary sense, with the viewer becoming emotionally invested in the lives of each individual character, as well as their interactions with one another.

Leslie Knope begins the series as an annoyingly perky, overzealous and ineffectual government employee. Her character development is inspiring; over time her inner zealot gives way to heartfelt passion for Pawnee, working to beautify her hometown and eventually running for city council. Similarly, the viewer is allowed glimpses past Ron Swanson’s brusque exterior to the genuine respect he feels for Leslie and his assistant April Ludgate (Aubrey Plaza). The shoe-shine boy, Andy Dwyer (Chris Pratt), is eventually promoted. Selfish wannabe business mogul Tom Haverford (Aziz Ansari) learns the necessity of organization after his start-up ends in bankruptcy.

Over time the characters are redeemed, though admittedly not without numerous mistakes and painfully (yet hilariously) awkward moments. The only character who never surpasses his initial situation is the useless Jerry Gergich, who defaults as the scapegoat for all Parks Department mishaps.

Initially in the series it seemed that the characters were at risk of becoming caricatures,



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The cast of the Golden Globe Nominee for Best Television Series, *Parks and Recreation*.

yet the joy of the show is in vicariously experiencing their maturation from the unrealistically flawed to the believably human. The viewer becomes invested in the Parks Department’s success; Leslie Knope’s triumphs are our triumphs.

Nominated for a Golden Globe for Best Television Series, *Parks and Recreation’s* accomplishments have served to launch the careers of previously obscure cast members, with real life paralleling the individual achievements most characters attain as the show develops. Actor Chris Pratt

(Andy Dwyer) recently starred as Star-Lord Peter Quill in Marvel’s smash hit *Guardians of the Galaxy*, as well as securing a lead role in Stephen Spielberg’s upcoming film *Jurassic World*. Nick Offerman, and Audrey Plaza (whose personality apparently mimics April Ludgate’s in real life) have gone on to various movie roles in big names like *22 Jump Street* and *Life After Beth*.

Though Pratt is now a full-blown movie star, he comments on the importance of his experience working on *Parks and Recreation*: “I’m realizing the

things that really matter about what you’re doing, for me at least, are just the relationships you have while you’re doing it. And for me, this show... I hope that I could possibly have the good fortune of finding another group of people like this, but I don’t expect I ever will.”

With a dynamic cast that loves their characters almost as much as we do, and comedic writing that integrates themes of persistence and hard work, *Parks and Recreation* is the television equivalent of optimism. ★

The “Perfect” Local Coffee Shop

LUKE LAUER

A half hour drive away in Cuba, NY is the recently opened coffee shop, *The Perfect Blend Coffeehouse and Eatery*. Located downtown along Main Street in the historic opera house building, next to the *Cuba Cheese Museum*, *The Perfect Blend* provides a hybrid coffeeshop-cafe feel. It offers a good place to go off campus for breakfast or lunch, to do homework, or simply escape from the typical everyday scenery around Houghton.

The environment is comfortable—the kind of place you can go for a quick visit or stay and spend an entire afternoon. The staff are friendly, helpful, and excellent baristas. As for music, there is a good mix of pop, alternative, and indie, including *Lorde*, *Imagine Dragons*, and *Capital Cities*. It’s the kind you would probably want to listen to at a coffeeshop.

With booths, tables, and cushy furniture, *The Perfect Blend* offers a place to eat or sit and just drink coffee, depending on your mood. An electric fireplace surrounded by a leather couch and two armless chairs sits against the wall decorated with an assortment of clocks of varying size and shape. The rich wood coffee bar goes nicely with the beautiful old hardwood floors which throughout the second half of the shop, which is also decorated with burlap and other natural colors. The large front windows let in a lot of natural light, which is complemented by tasteful lighting from lamps and hanging ceiling lights.

With fresh brewed coffee, espressos, lattes, and cappuccinos with an assortment of flavors on their menu, they have all the staples of a good coffeehouse. All their coffee is sourced locally from the *Finger Lakes Coffee Roasters*. They also have hot teas and cold drink menu which



includes iced tea, frozen lattes, chai chillers, and soft drinks. Most of their drinks average around three dollars.

Their colorful chalk board food menu has a variety of breakfast items, salads, and paninis. Many have local names such as the “Western New Yorker,” “Patriot,” or “86er” (named after interstate 86, which runs through Cuba). Continuing with their locally sourced theme, all the sandwiches that made with cheese use the famous *Cuba Cheese Shoppe*. Their food items are fairly priced with most ranging from four to seven dollars. You can get a soup, sandwich, and drink for right around ten dollars, maybe a little more with dessert.

There is also a variety of sweet baked goods to choose from. These include muffins, cookies, cakes, and their delicious energy-filled “Go-Go Balls” made from peanut butter, nuts, chocolate, and flax seeds. You’ll definitely want more than one.

With pretty much everything you could want from a

coffee shop, there is precious little it is lacking. However, there are a few out of place “corporate coffee” poster advertisements which take away from the antique, old opera house feel of the place. They are your typical pumpkin spice or other photographic advertisements and they don’t fit with the overall decor.

Perhaps to be attributed to the old building, a somewhat weird or quirky aspect of the shop is the location of their bathrooms. To get to them you feel as though you are exiting the building as you go through a backdoor, down a hallway and turn left to find them.

For their winter hours *The Perfect Blend* is open weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., but unfortunately they are closed on Sundays. Starting in March they will be open longer hours. To get directions, their address is 14 West Main St, Cuba, New York. While you’re there you can visit the vintage shop, *By the Light of the Moon*, which is connected to the coffeehouse. ★



Photo of the Week

WINNER // Judith Marklin '17

Winter Break Edition



On Free Speech: *Charlie Hebdo*



ANTHONY BURDO

REBEKAH KIMBLE

On January 7, 2015, the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* made international headlines after two gunmen entered its office in Paris and proceeded to kill eight journalists. The attack sparked a three-day manhunt in Paris that culminated in the deaths of the two gunmen, brothers Said and Cherif Kouachi. The brothers, who had links to the Yemen branch of Al Qaeda, had targeted *Charlie Hebdo* because of its portrayal of Islam, generally, and Muhammad, specifically, in both articles and cartoons. The act of terror, heralded by journalists as the worst attack in France in forty years,

familiarized millions of outsiders with the name Charlie Hebdo. Within days, the cry “Je suis Charlie” (“I am Charlie”) had filled social media, as foreigners adopted the phrase to show their support for free speech. Here, however, it seems important to make a distinction between the two issues at hand: terrorism and free speech. The attack on *Charlie Hebdo*, undoubtedly an act of terror, cannot be justified, and France is right to take the necessary actions to bring the perpetrators to justice and prevent further attacks. But the issue of free speech isn’t as straightforward. Although most Westerners view freedom of speech as a paramount value, in this instance one wonders how many people know exactly what kind of free speech they are supporting. After all, familiarity with the title of a publication doesn’t necessarily signify familiarity with its content. And I wouldn’t be surprised if at least some of

When, however, did cultural practice become the litmus test for basic decency?

the people who jumped on the bandwagon of free speech would stop short of supporting some of *Charlie Hebdo*’s publications. In light of the American tendency to pay at least verbal homage to tolerance, *Charlie Hebdo* is a bit of an anomaly. Its reputation for lambasting Islam, Christianity and Judaism and for publishing articles and cartoons intended to cause offense to adherents of these three world religions certainly hasn’t gone unnoticed. (In fact, major American and British newspapers have refused to republish some of *Charlie Hebdo*’s content – though whether this stems from scruples

about decency or from fear of inviting attacks similar to the one in Paris is unclear.) That is why I hesitate to ally myself with the cry for free speech in this particular instance. Like most Westerners, I view freedom of speech as an important value. But I also believe that there are values more important than this – values such as, say, decency, respect, and truthfulness in publishing. In other words, I think it’s perfectly acceptable to distinguish between free speech and responsible speech. In an ideal world, the two would go hand-in-hand. But *Charlie Hebdo* serves as a reminder that we don’t live in an ideal world. Here free speech can be both irresponsible and insensitive. It can be used, as *Charlie Hebdo* uses it, to publish inflammatory content purposefully designed to anger and offend certain groups. Over the last several days, *Charlie Hebdo*’s content has elicited not a few articles distinguishing between free and

responsible speech. And given some of the magazine’s tasteless – may we even go so far as to describe the content as crass? – publications, I’d say that that is a fair distinction to make. Before I’m accused of looking at *Charlie Hebdo* through the biased lens of toleration, I will point out that the issues surrounding some of its content have already evoked responses in its defense. One French citizen, in particular, asserts, “Even if their sense of humour was apparently unacceptable to English minds . . . it fell well within the French tradition of satire – and after all was only intended for a French audience.” The likes of Rousseau and Voltaire did come out of France, so I guess this shouldn’t come as a surprise. When, however, did cultural practice become the litmus test for basic decency? In the upcoming weeks, people of vastly different religious beliefs will be working through the two issues surrounding Charlie Hebdo, and as they do so, I think that it is perfectly appropriate to distinguish between supporting France’s fight against terrorism and supporting *Charlie Hebdo*’s inflammatory content.

Rebekah Kimble is a senior history major.

Here free speech can be both irresponsible and insensitive.

“Please Silence Your Phones.” Now.



ANTHONY BURDO

ALLYSON MURPHY

Many of you may have watched the Oscar-winning film *Her* last year and if you didn’t, then you should. The way our world is progressing this film may as well be a true story: a man falls in love with his phone’s operating system. According to 2013 Apple consumer reports, more than 120 million smartphones were sold in the U.S. alone that year. It is painfully evident that our culture has experienced drastic technological advances particularly in just the last couple decades. The rise of the Internet age and information

at the click of a button has been fast progressing. Our millennial generation may be marked as living in what the cultural critic, Alan Kirby, has named the digimodern world: a paradigm shift from the actual to the virtual has taken place. Instead of human interaction, a person now interacts with a screen. Most likely, the “shock and awe” statistic posited above unfortunately neither shocked nor awed the reader of this article. That is part of the problem. People must realize that the world we live in today is even staggeringly different than it was just a few years ago. My experience in the social world is already vastly different than it was my first year of college.

Apple released their first smartphone in 2007, yet last year was the first time that I began to see a smartphone each direction I looked. Right now is probably the part where I should stop and

The constant ring, bing, hum, or buzz adds its voice to every conversation.

confess that I, myself, do own a smartphone and yes, I like you, am glad of the convenience which it provides. However, there is a stark difference between convenience and reliance. Our world is far too reliant on the phone. Last semester I studied off-campus through the college program, The Oregon Extension (side note- I highly recommend it). During this off-campus experience my peers and I lived in a remote community of students and professors in the mountains of Oregon: an ideal place for reflective thoughts and

However, there is a stark difference between convenience and reliance.

intentional communal living. During the semester all phones were taken away from Monday morning until Friday night and Internet was seldom available besides on the weekends. For some readers this situation may sound like your worst nightmare, yet for others, such as myself, this may sound like a dream come true: four months without the daily infringement of phone and Internet. Now that I am back to normal campus life, culture shock strikes me multiple times a day. Suddenly, it seems that every person has an extra limb- the smartphone. The smartphone is now an added conversation tool at each and every turn. People-whether close friends or new acquaintances- seem incapable of conversation without this intrusive device. Silence is awkward now. Giving someone your full attention is a rarity at best. The constant ring, bing, hum, or buzz adds its voice to

every conversation and honestly I have had enough. Notice the it of the last sentence? The phone is not a person and therefore should not be treated as such. I do not condemn the smartphone’s essential usefulness, but I condemn the smartphone as citizen. As I transition back to this campus culture engrossed in a digimodern age, I plan to resist a few cultural norms so prevalent in daily life. Unlike many peers, when at a meal my phone will not take precedence over a person. If on occasion I must be in contact with another I will graciously apologize as I interrupt discussion. I have not been too hard on our culture. I have not been too hard on our millennial generation. Each person, young or old, should be attentive to the ‘really real’ tangible relationships in front of us. Our present day and age posits an absurd paradox: it is easier to communicate with others at a distance, but it is harder to communicate with relationships in proximity. Pay attention to the really real, live an authentic life, and silence the phone.

Allyson is a junior english and visual studies art major.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Regarding last [Dec. 5, 2014] week's letters, it seems that Ms. Wool, class of '16, and Mr. Oliver, class of '15, can't see the whole point of the new napkin policy. Neither did I at first. But, it is fully explained for all to see on the new, snazzy, dispensers: "Better for you" they proclaim in bold print. Smaller, yet still quite legible for those who can read: "One napkin at a time means better health." Get it? Please remember it when I wipe my hands on the back of your shirt.

Carlton Fisher
No class at all.

Dear Editor,

I was disappointed with the news article "Riots in Ferguson Cause Unrest" in the last [Dec. 5, 2014] issue. It was unfortunately biased. The title starts out the piece with a questionable cause and effect relationship. Doesn't unrest cause riots? I think it's safe to assume that the unrest was there long before the riots. Or better yet, we need not try to mention any solid cause and effect relationship. A much better title could have been chosen. Regardless, as the article continues it severely undermines the voice of the protesters. Calling the shooting of Mike Brown a

"not so ordinary incident" expresses bias because a major aspect of the controversy surrounding this case is that it is believed that this is not a rare occurrence. Then, it is implied that all the protests were violent and the article fails to truly explain why the protests even occur upon first mentioning them. Then the account of the event, although it is mentioned as being debatable, is given from the final court decision, ignoring the voice of the protesters and their slogan "Hands up don't shoot." While you can say the evidence seems to support the side given -- it is important to explain

why the protesters are protesting by representing their point of view especially as they responded before the court case and release of evidence. Towards the end of the article the questions surrounding racism are finally brought to attention, but with some false conclusions. After the paragraph of quotes from President Obama about the "legacy of racial discrimination" it is said "these statements reflect the facts that Ferguson County consists of predominantly black communities". The quotes used do not reflect that at all. Other assumptions are

made that had just as little obvious correlation. Overall the article was a disservice to the Houghton community. Many of the students here have not been following the Ferguson case or any others, and it is difficult for them to understand the complexity of Ferguson through this article. Some fine tuning could make this article much more informative.

Thank You,
Emma Brittain
Class of 2016



The mission of the Houghton Star is to preserve and promote the values of dialogue, transparency and integrity that have characterized Houghton College since its inception. This will be 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.

SPEAK OUT!



Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less

SUBMIT TO
editor@houghtonstar.com

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Artist of the Week

Laurissa Widrick

//senior BFA studio arts major



ANTHONY BURDO

Titles & Media

from left to right descending

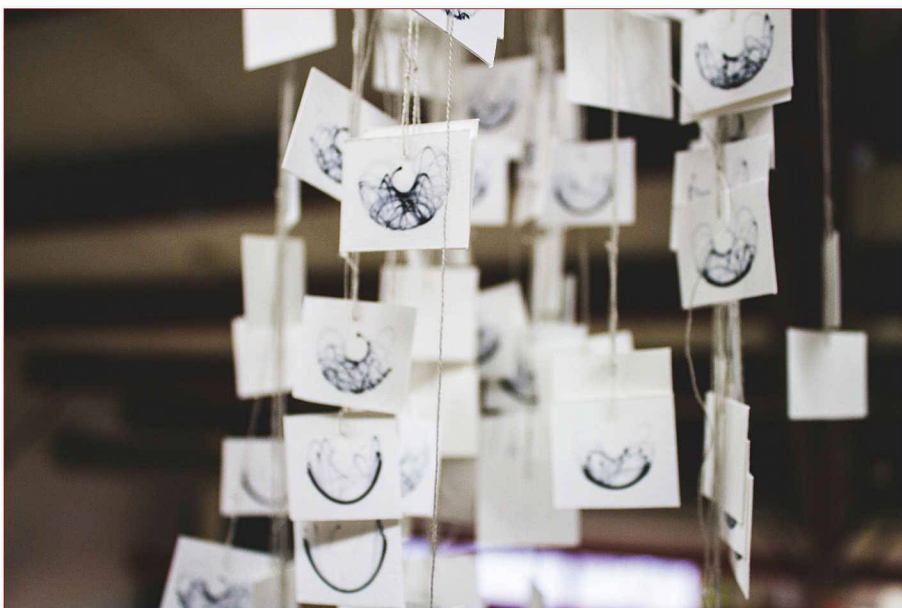
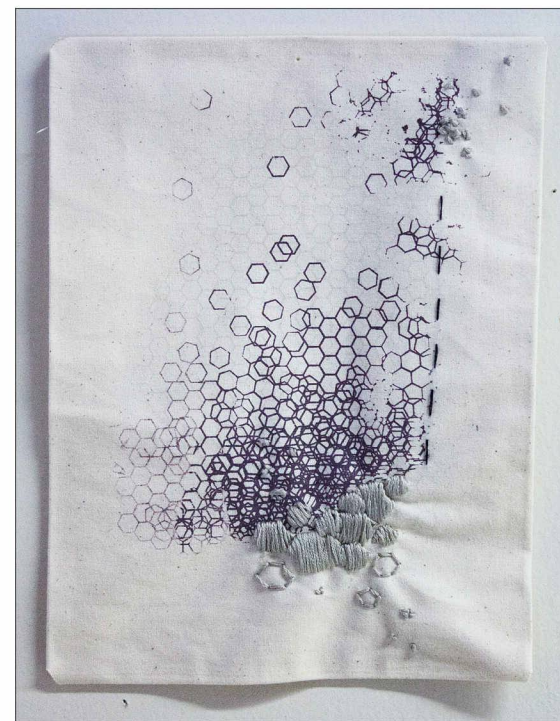
"It's a mess in there." photography, mixed media

"Sugar Shock", ceramics

"untitled", ceramic installation

"may contain artificial ingredients", handmade paper, processed food packaging

"Kerri", mixed media, screenprint



“ The question, O me! so sad, recurring -
What good amid these, O me, O life?
Answer.

That you are here - that life exists and
identity,

That the powerful play goes on, and you
may contribute a verse. ”

-Walt Whitman

