

THE HOUGHTON STAR

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October 30, 2009

H1N1 Update: 15% Get Vaccine

by Johanna Hummelman

As we enter the critical month for the seasonal flu, Houghton has continued to avoid any outbreaks of H1N1, minus one exception of a student diagnosed at home.

As a quick recap for those still unaware, H1N1 is a flu-like virus that targets young adults, varying from mild symptoms to terminal illness. Most recently in the news, President Obama has declared H1N1 a national emergency. Although it may not feel so urgent in our own college, this allows health care services to bypass certain requirements so that the vaccine is more readily available for the public, and specifically on school campuses.

The prevalent question on campus seems to be the decision regarding vaccination. The seasonal flu shot, which was taken by 220 people in the Houghton community, came to a cost of about \$30.

In contrast, the H1N1 vaccine was available free of charge, though not free of a line-up. A total of 260 people were vaccinated in the campus basement; this broke down into 161 college students, 22 academy students, and 77 others (faculty and staff that fit the criteria, and any children). Some students

were not on campus, or had a class, but about 15% of the student body is a fairly small number.

The threat of an outbreak at Houghton might seem unlikely, and it is easy to think we are safe and sound as we go about our business in our little hamlet. However, it is easy to forget that it is the college student age group that is at the highest risk of infection. Microbiology professor, Jamie Potter,

allowed the H1N1 vaccine was distributed, free of charge, in the basement of the Campus Center. About 15% of Houghton students received the vaccine.

"It's their choice," Potter said, but, "I would prefer not to have a



photo by Wesley Dean

major outbreak on campus, where students miss so much class."

H1N1 cont'd on page 2

College Seeks Better Financial Arrangement for Properties

by Deanna Hoffmann

During this time of fiscal cutbacks, many Houghton students and faculty have expressed concern over the college's ability to continue financing properties connected to the college that are separate from the main campus. Some of these properties are the Houghton Book Shop in Rochester, Earl's Restaurant in Chaffee, and the West Seneca campus.

This would be a valid concern, but in actuality, the college is not financing these properties. Houghton College purchased the former Bryn Mawr Book Shop in downtown Rochester in February of 1998 from alumnae of Bryn Mawr College.

Also, the expenses of The Houghton Book Shop are covered by its sales. The shop "currently operates under the organizational umbrella of The Willard J. Houghton Foundation and under the supervision of the Alumni Office," said Barbara Bates, the volunteer Houghton College liaison who was also the manager of the bookstore until October 2009. The Houghton Book Shop is a volunteer enterprise that not only accepts book donations but also has a team of volunteer workers who staff the shop.

Earl's Restaurant is located in Chaffee, NY (10 minutes northwest of Arcade on Rt. 16), and has been thought to be owned and operated by Houghton College. At one time, conversations arose about a partnership with Earl's that would have shifted the management and property, but those plans were never materialized, according to Scott Wade, Vice President for Advancement. Houghton College does not currently own the property or the restaurant.

The restaurant was started by Mr. Earl Northrup and his late wife Marilyn in 1956, and Mr. Northrup is the current owner, operator, and manager. While it was closed for a time in 2007, Earl's Restaurant was reopened in the spring of 2008.

Properties cont'd on page 2

Houghton Hosts Multi-Cultural Conference

by Emily Rinehart

The National Christian Multicultural Student Leadership Conference (NCMSLC), whose main goal is to embrace cultural diversity "while motivating inclusive leadership" in Christian higher education, begins this Thursday, Oct. 29, and lasts through Saturday, Oct. 31.

According to Brian Webb, who works in the International Students Office, "The desire to see our students engage with the topic of multiculturalism in a dynamic and exciting way" is one of the greatest motivations for having this conference at Houghton this year.

The conference is not just for international students. Last year,

the event was held at Eastern University. Liesl Williams, junior, along with five other Houghton students, attended the conference, and she said that she is looking forward to having this event be hosted at Houghton this year.

A schedule of events for the upcoming weekend was put into students' CPO boxes earlier this week. Workshops, panel discussions, films, and artistic events are just a part of the

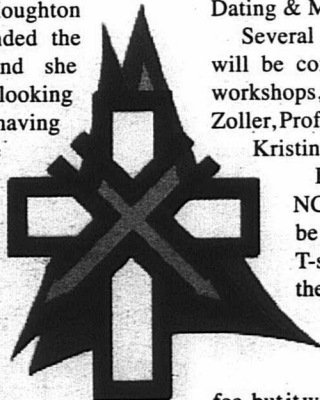
conference, and will cover a wide variety of topics from "Living Among the Poor" to "Interracial Dating & Marriage."

Several of Houghton's faculty will be conducting some of the workshops, such as Prof. James Zoller, Prof. Mark Hijleh, and Prof. Kristina LaCelle Peterson.

During the conference, NCMSLC volunteers will be wearing bright orange T-shirts, indicating that they are available to answer questions.

Normally, there is a \$200 registration fee, but it was waived for Houghton students, who are permitted to attend any of the events for free.

NCMSLC cont'd on page 2



THE WORLD IS THERE

by Derek Schwabe

Same Sex Marriage Battle Continues in Maine

Astronomers Observe Record Explosion

The reaches of the universe were pressed even further this week as NASA astronomers confirmed a supposed exploding star to be the most distant object ever detected by telescope. Using the NASA Swift satellite, and other equipment, two teams of astronomers were able to detect a 12 second long gamma ray burst emitted from the star, which is estimated to be located 13.1 billion light years away. The star was also reported to have shown an afterglow effect lasting 10 days, visible by telescopes as an unusually red dot. Astronomers all over the world heralded this moment as key to uncovering "the last blank bit of map of the universe."

The state by state legal struggle over same-sex marriage landed itself in the small state of Maine this week. A pending state-wide referendum that would overturn the allowance of same-sex marriage has money and other forms of support pouring in from proponents on both sides from around the nation. Law makers and social analysts alike acknowledge the events surrounding this decision as a nationally significant battle. The polls show that support for either side is nearly 50-50 and both sides, eager to tip the balance in their favor, are working tirelessly to make it happen. If voters turn down the referendum, this will constitute the first major victory at the ballot box for same-sex advocates. As of now, 30 states have already taken legal action to ban same-sex marriage.

NCMSLC cont'd from page 1

except for the closing banquet.

Since each person is a part of the world and the global community, Houghton students – whether international or not – have a lot to gain through NCMSLC.

Webb hopes Houghton students will see this in the same way he does, "an amazing opportunity...

to dialogue with Christian student leaders from across the country on important issues such as race, gender, culture, poverty, ministry, leadership, privilege, and difference – all without leaving Houghton's campus."

Bonus chapel credit will be given for up to three events this weekend. ★

Properties cont'd from page 1

Mark Pavone, member of the P.A.C.E. administrative staff, clarified some of the history and current goings-on of the West Seneca Campus. The campus was "given" to Houghton College in 1969 by the Buffalo Bible Institute. It was in the mid to late 1980's that Houghton stopped offering classes and programs for traditional age students.

Since October of 1991, the main function of the West Seneca campus has been for the P.A.C.E. program, Houghton's adult degree completion program. Other minimal use of the campus space also goes to those teaching or doing internships in the Buffalo area – although the number of students using West Seneca for this purpose has been decreasing as students utilize other housing options in the greater Buffalo area. Two

classes are offered for traditional students during Mayterm, and the average enrollment for those is approximately 60 students.

However, the main concern for the satellite campus still remains with the P.A.C.E. program. Each year there is an average of 50-60 students enrolled in the program at the West Seneca site. The P.A.C.E. program requires classrooms and offices in order to continue functioning, but not a 36-acre campus and all the maintenance that goes along with it, which is why the West Seneca campus is being sold to a new owner with the intention of leasing back space for the program while bypassing costly upkeep of the large West Seneca property.

(to learn more about the Houghton Book Shop, check out: <http://www.houghtonbookshop.com>) ★

H1N1 cont'd from page 1

Amanda Hiers, a junior, had to have the vaccine because of her job.

"It is required for me as a volunteer at a hospice."

Andy Keller, a senior, considered getting the H1N1 vaccine but then decided against it because "the line was too long."

Other reasons for not getting the vaccine include apathy or the fear that the vaccine rapid production and the bypassing of some FDA safety procedures. Keller however, is "more afraid of the co-ed quarantine."

The importance of prevention has long been stressed, and although vaccination is a personal choice, that choice affects the rest of the

population.

Houghton's on-campus physician, Dr. David Brubaker, argued that "population risk isn't something we think about." Vaccination doesn't only minimize personal risk, but also the risk for the people with whom students interact. The H1N1 vaccine is available in two forms. The nasal spray is a live, attenuated virus, while the vaccine injection consists of killed virus particles and adjuvants, which boost immune response.

The college is in contact with Health Officials, and another round of vaccines will most likely be available in the future. Until then, the health center stresses that other forms of prevention are important to maintain. ★

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JOIN THE OPEN FORUM DISCUSSION AT H1N1

un christian
WHAT A NEW GENERATION REALLY THINKS ABOUT CHRISTIANITY... AND WHY IT MATTERS

ALSO ONLINE:

- Entertainment Guide
- "15 movies to watch while your all-organic, vegan meal is heating on the stove" by Katherine Thompson

Houghton Wesleyan Hosts Three-Week Prayer Vigil

by Kristen Palmer

During the month of November, the Houghton Wesleyan church is housing a 24-hour, three week long prayer vigil, open to all members of the community.

Wes Oden, senior pastor of the church, came up with the idea to host the vigil after speaking to a fellow pastor and discovering a book called *Red Moon Rising*, by Pete Grieg and Dave Roberts, about a 24/7 prayer movement. Oden read the book and gave a copy to each of the other members of his pastoral staff, including assistant pastor Todd Leach.

"The book provided a spark of motivation for the planning of this prayer vigil," said Leach. "The book teaches us that we, as Christians, need God, and that our access to Him is through prayer."

Oden was also motivated to begin planning after speaking with several people in the community who shared with him about their feelings of discontentment. They are tired of existing in mediocrity.

"I've had so many people come to me wanting something new from God," he said. "They are looking for something new, and the only way that is going to happen is if God does it, and the only way we can prepare ourselves for His changes is to pray."

"When Wes first talked to a group of us about this prayer vigil, he spoke of answering a spiritual hunger in this community," said Kelley Hijleh, who was part of the planning process.

After Oden shared his vision with the staff, the idea went to the Board of Elders, and soon after, a prayer team was created, which includes the pastoral staff, several students and members of the community eager to help.

Prayer times are divided by the hour. Those wishing to participate can sign up individually, as a couple, as a family, or as a group — including residence hall floors, or students who live together in a townhouse.

Those who sign up will have three rooms, located in the basement of the church, available to them. The first room is fairly traditional and contains a kneeling bench, according to Oden. On the walls are suggestions about how to spend the hour in prayer, although Oden claims that there is no right or wrong way to spend your time, as long as you come to God with a spirit of openness.

The second room will contain several interactive items.

"There will be music and digital pictures of nature to look

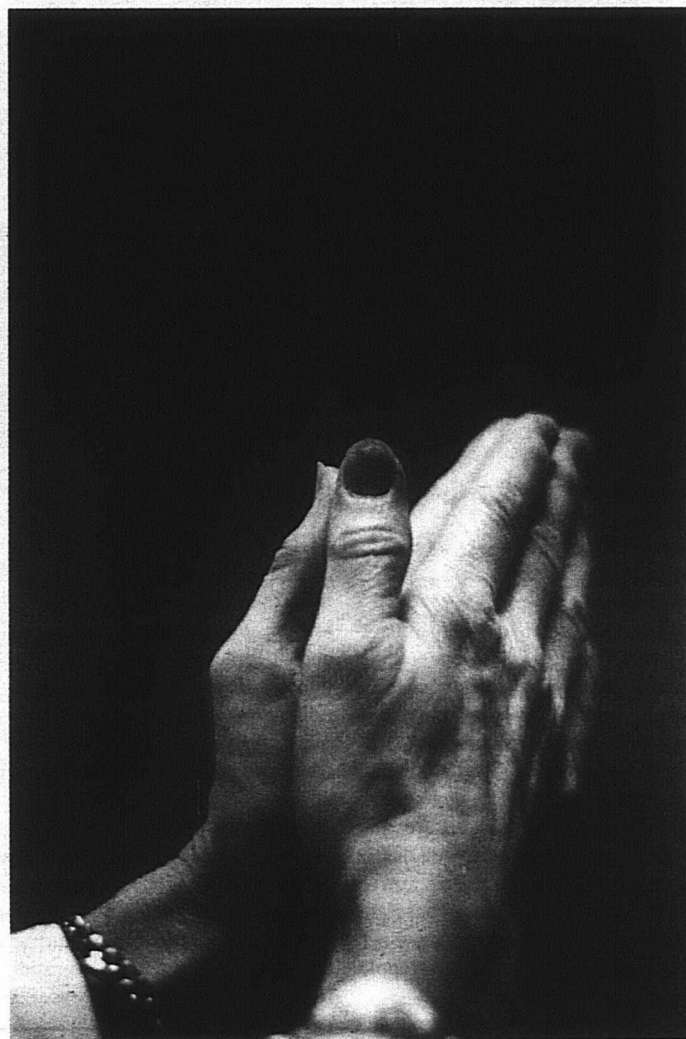


photo by Wesley Dean

Due to discontent with mediocrity and the spark of an idea of a 24/7 prayer movement, Pastor Oden launched a three week long prayer vigil.

at and contemplate creation," said Oden. "There will also be stones to stack up like a memorial, as you remember the things God has done in your life." The room will also include items such as a whiteboard, on which people can write their prayers, poetry, or just pour out their hearts.

The third room will have a large wooden cross, along with cards for those praying to write down areas of their lives they wish to surrender to God. Paints and modeling clay will be available to those who prefer to express themselves through art. "This room will also have a white board on which you can write down praises and adoration," said Oden.

"I believe every move of the Spirit is preceded by an increased desire for God, and these prayer rooms are a wonderful vehicle for seeking the Lord," said Hijleh.

The prayer team recognizes that each Christian communicates with God differently and wants to offer those participating in the prayer vigil a wide variety of ways to express themselves.

"We would also like to encourage people to try new things as well," said Oden.

Oden, Leach, and the rest of

the prayer team are hoping for the prayer vigil to spark an awakening, according to Oden.

"I think any time God's people come together to pray, it draws them together with a sense of unity," said Leach. "The biggest benefit, of course, is that it pleases God when His people pray. When we pray,

God moves."

Oden believes that the students of Houghton College will play a crucial role in this process.

"Many times, in significant movements of God, younger generations are at the forefront, and this is why we are desperately wanting students to come pray," he said. "There is a level of openness to God in this generation that is important, and I think God wants to use that to speak to other generations. This movement should start, or at least be pushed forward, by the involvement of students."

The vigil is housed in the church, but it is not just about the church, according to Oden, as those participating are encouraged to pray for other college campuses and communities around us. As people leave, they will take a slip of paper, write their names on it, and link it to another piece of paper. At the end of the 22 day period, there will be 504 links, representing the 504 consecutive hours spent in prayer by students and members of the community.

"This will display our desire to unify our hearts and our readiness for God to do something miraculous in this place," said Oden. "That is the motivation."

"I think of these prayer rooms as a gift to the community. They don't demand of us, rather they are an invitation and an opportunity to meet God in a space where everything beckons you to relate to Him," said Hijleh.

The prayer vigil will begin at 6 p.m. November 1 and end at 6 p.m. November 22. Students interested in participating may sign up online at www.hwchurch.org or call the church office at 567-2264. ★



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30

1:15-2:15

HOT TOPICS

2:50-4:00

WORKSHOPS

4:15-5:15

PLENARY II- PRESIDENT SHIRLEY MULLEN

7:30-9:30

MULTICULTURALISM IN THE ARTS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31

9:00-10:15

WORKSHOPS

10:45-NOON

PANEL: WELCOMING CULTURES-

AFRICAN & BURMESE REFUGEES

1:00-2:00

FILM: RACE, THE POWER OF AN ILLUSION

2:00-3:00

FILM DISCUSSION

Bazaaro: Seeking Conversation, not Coercion

by Dave Huth

The following article by Professor Dave Huth is editorial in content and would normally be printed in the Commentary section of the Star, but the editors feel that it is important to emphasize that this event concerns the arts, part of the campus culture and so is printed in this section.

I'm writing to engage the public conversation around Amanda Benton's submission to the alumni art show on display in the Wesley Chapel Art Gallery. I'm a faculty member who appreciated Benton's participation as a student in my classes, and also a Houghton art alum who has work displayed in the alumni show. I encouraged Benton to send this work to the show, and am proud that it is displayed alongside my own.

I'm not writing to complain that some people find offense in Benton's work. I myself find the subjects addressed by the work to be offensive, and the images make me uncomfortable. I don't think my young daughter should spend any time looking at it.

Yet I agree with those who think strong reactions are a validation of Benton's work, because these feelings of offense and discomfort are familiar to me at Houghton. I hardly experience a day here which doesn't include a challenging or disturbing set of ideas. I have been challenged and even deeply offended by the presentation of ideas from people in our de-

partments of religion, biology, political science, the Shakespeare Players, Student Life, chapel speakers – all of these arenas and more have confronted me with material that challenged or upset me.

Any of us may push back against the appropriateness of these challenging ideas at any time. I myself have argued against many offensive ideas put forward on our campus. When I'm offended I don't just "sit and take it," and I don't readily accept a dismissal of my feelings because I'm "a weaker brother" (though discomfort often exposes weakness in me).

The legitimate means of push-back is through dialogue and community conversation. What I am not free to do here is take unilateral action to eliminate what challenges me from this learning community. The intentional, knowing removal of Benton's work from the gallery is what disturbs me about this controversy, as well as the attitudes of others who are supportive of this action in principle. These are the more serious circumstances I believe our community needs to grapple with and come to terms over.

We repeatedly remind one another that this is an integrated learning community. Our ongoing liberal arts education does not stop when we exit the classroom. There is no space on

our campus where we are excused from critical thinking or sheltered from learning experiences.

We know it's illegitimate to say, "Roman Catholic theology offends me and I should not have to live in the dorms among Catholics." Where we disagree, we are obligated to discuss and seek understanding. We all seem to understand that grabbing offensive

books from library shelves, gathering up and destroying offending issues of the Star, tearing down or defacing signs advertising controversial speakers or student organizations – none of

these things are right or fair in a community devoted to academic integrity and integrated education. Yet intentionally displayed art in an educationally planned gallery space seems fair game for some people who don't wish to engage in dialogue. Why is this?

Benton's work is not among us as a student prank or enforced on our community by outside interests. I participated in a lengthy group discussion of this artwork that included the gallery director, the vice president for student life, the associate academic dean, the dean of the chapel, and the director of alumni relations. Not everyone liked the artwork, no one was happy that people were offended, but agreement was unanimous in that

meeting that the artwork's inclusion in the alumni show is a legitimate use of that educational space and it should remain displayed on its pedestal. Those who are offended by these decisions should engage these people in conversation or advocate for their removal from authority. I have done both in my time here regarding other issues. Such dialogue requires maturity and courage, but is possible.

This is what I hope our community will discuss in the days ahead. Benton's work has exposed a larger community problem we are facing over the boundaries around art that challenges and confronts in an educational community, and has called into question the tactics some people use when they are disturbed by what others find valuable. I have a great deal of empathy for people offended by Benton's work, and as a friend of the artist I know that she does as well. Yet coercive action to force the exclusion of what isn't liked is a betrayal of academic integrity that makes compassionate dialogue much more difficult, if not impossible. Our commitment to pursue understanding and consensus through dialogue must come first.

Dave Huth is a Professor of Communications.

To read Art Professor Ted Murphy's reaction to Bazaaro, visit us at www.houghtonstar.edu/commentary.

Where we disagree, we are obligated to discuss and seek understanding.

Dan Woolsey Publishes Book of African Folk Tales

by Joelle Eppehimer

A background involving children's literature, Africa, and the interaction of different cultures, inspired Houghton Professor of Education Dan Woolsey to compile and publish a book of East African folk tales this past summer. The finished work, entitled *Under the Story Tree*, contains five stories – consisting of both entertaining and thought-provoking stories.

Woolsey, who spent the first eleven years of his life in Sierra Leone, West Africa, has been collecting stories since his trip to Tanzania in the summer of 2007. He initially received the idea from a missionary friend in Liberia who gathered anecdotes which the local people connect with, and his vision for the book began when he saw the low literacy among African refugees currently residing in Buffalo, NY.

Working with fellow graduate Bonnie MacBeth of Hope Refugee Services, the composition has dual purpose in regard to the refugee population. It intends to help foster literacy skills

among both children and adults, who, according to Woolsey, will already be familiar with many of the stories because of oral traditions, thus making the process of learning to read easier. The stories are also expected to help children who have grown up in refugee camps to reconnect with the native culture from which they have been removed.

In an effort to keep the collection of stories as authentic as possible, Woolsey gathered them from his time in Tanzania and from accounts of East African refugees in Buffalo. After translating and editing them to be used in a book, he shared them with Houghton Prof. Jon Arensen, who spent much of his life in East Africa, to ensure the accuracy of his writings. In an attempt to make it a truly collaborative work, Woolsey allowed a group of refugee students participating in an art club, run by Cornelia Dohse-Peck and Katie McClain-Meeder, to choose stories to illustrate. "I wanted them to choose stories that they cared about," said Woolsey, who used the five selected by the group to compose

the book. Each tale included in the work "[celebrates] significant values of their cultural origins," according to the introduction, "but they also illuminate the experiences and beliefs that link all of us together as inhabitants of planet earth," Professor Dan Woolsey and his book, *Under the Story Tree* according to Woolsey.

When asked how the project has affected refugees living in Buffalo so far, Woolsey said, "what really pleased me was one of the students... told a Buffalo news reporter [he] wasn't doing that well in school, but listening to these stories and working at [them]...helped [him]."

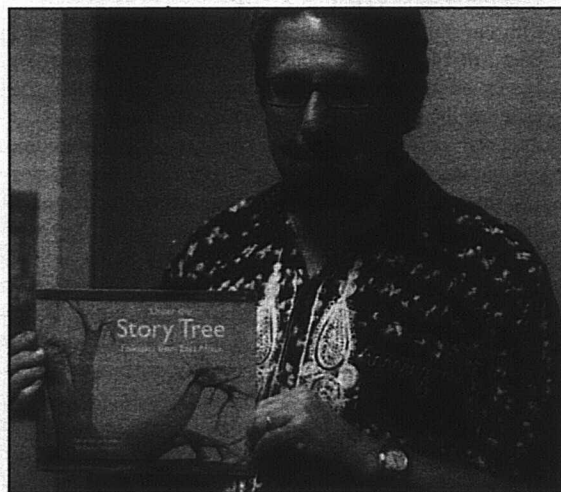
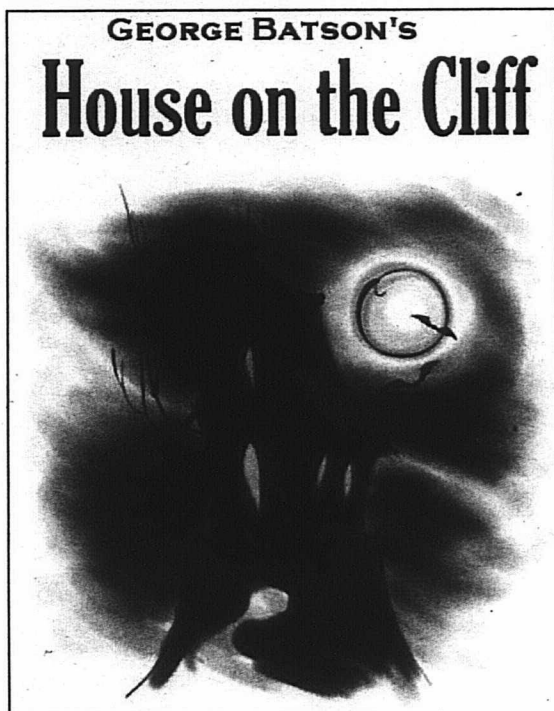


Photo by Wesley Dean

Professor Dan Woolsey and his book, *Under the Story Tree*

Woolsey plans to continue compiling stories for the next year. He also told Buffalo news reporters that he "[doesn't] know of many traditional stories that end sadly or end with ambiguity." Woolsey believes that "perhaps when life is so complicated, stories where it all works out...do lend some hope." ★

Preview: House on the Cliff



by Colleen Jennings

This weekend, Houghton College will be presenting *House on the Cliff*, a murder mystery by George Batson. Performed by a cast of only six Houghton students, *House on the Cliff* was chosen by Director Nic Gunning particularly for Halloween weekend and because of its riveting plot.

Although this is his first time directing a play at Houghton College, Gunning has also directed for the Valley Theatre. Gunning was excited about Batson's *House on the Cliff* because "it's clever and keeps you guessing." The play may sound unfamiliar to the average Houghton student, but that is part of why Gunning liked it so much. He explained, "because it's lesser known...it will be a bigger surprise."

The story takes place in the living room of an old house on a cliff, the closest neighbors being miles away. Widow Karen Clayton, played by freshman Alice Browning, and her step-daughter Ellen, played by sophomore Rachel Stowe, are struggling to cope with a family tragedy that took place months before. In the midst of their grief, the Claytons are joined by a permanent nurse and the handsome new doctor in town. Bizarre things start to happen as the group begins to interact, and drama ensues.

While there are only six people in the show, Gunning liked the overall tone it brought to the stage. The smaller cast is "a different experience, it has good energy and improves the way the actors interact." As the show progresses it is easy to see the vital importance of each performer on the stage. "Each character is a good role," Gunning explained. "Each

of them has at least one line that is pivotal to the play."

Freshman Carly Trask, who plays the witty and straightforward nurse, also appreciates the small cast. "It's a lot more intimate with only six people; as opposed to a huge cast of forty... you make really good friends." These friendships were strengthened over the weekend, as the cast and crew, including Micah Warf, Kara Mastin on the lights and Hilary Gunning on the sound, got together and built the set. Sally Murphy also contributed her skills and time making the set look like a home. Their hours of effort paid off in the form of a multi-leveled set complete with a fireplace and artwork.

Everyone has put hours upon hours of hard work into making the show come alive. Whether in the daily rehearsals, building the sets, or learning lines on their own time, each student has gone above and beyond to make sure *House on the Cliff* is as good as possible. "It's time-consuming, but fun," explained Trask.

Complete with spooky effects, an enthralling script, and a suspenseful plot that will keep you on the edge of your seat, *House on the Cliff* does not disappoint one's expectations of an entertaining murder mystery. When prompted for more she simply smiles and says, "Come to the show."

House on the Cliff will be showing Thursday, Friday and Saturday night at seven and a matinee at two on Saturday the 31st in the Tysinger Auditorium at Houghton Academy. Tickets are five dollars and will be sold during lunch and dinner Thursday and Friday. Tickets will also be available at the door. ★

from the ARCHIVES

From the Archives is a series of articles pulled from past issues of the Star. This article, entitled "Crane Report: Houghton Losing It's Edge," was printed in the October 7, 2004 edition of the Star, and was written by Anne Merry. The current Star staff finds this article particularly relevant given the Houghton's renewed emphasis on the country of Sierra Leone.

"Houghton is the best-kept secret in Western New York." This statement has probably been uttered numerous times by students, faculty, and visitors to Houghton College in reference to the enclosed, bubble-like, somewhat protective and close community that characterizes this rural center of learning. Some may consider this advantageous, yet a clear negative overtone surrounds this comment.

Due to the Advancement/Campaign Department's failure to initiate a conscious effort to present Houghton College distinctively and certainly as an academic institution set apart in its standards and objectives, enrollment has steadily declined in recent years as competition with other Christian colleges has become more aggressive, making it increasingly difficult to attract a large number of prospective students.

The Office of Advancement is thus forming a directive campaign aimed at strengthening the college's identity in an effort to establish it as a place of higher education worthy of an intellectual, discerning student's selection.

One must not misconstrue this to mean that Houghton is not already a school of excellence.

In fact, this past summer the national Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) has awarded Houghton with two prestigious awards: the Circle of Excellence for overall improvement – only one of a few given in 2004 – and an award for instituting notable advancement goals, including appreciation of faculty members who display exemplary behavior both for their peers and in communicating edifying values to students in the classroom setting.

The CASE seeks exemplary educational programs to recognize nationally and proffer seminars, expertise, and initiatives to enhance fundraising, marketing techniques, and other campaign skills.

"With a budget surplus of \$400,000 in [the] 2003-2004 [school year], the advancement department has the means to" work toward the challenging objective of expanding Houghton's publicity and unifying its identity Eric Alcott, Vice President for Advancement said.

As a result of the drop in annual enrollment the Department of Advancement decided to enlist the aid of the Crane MetaMarketing Corporation, an educational board that specializes in conducting national surveys of Christian colleges with the purpose of discovering the reasons for declining enrollment. If the board determines that a trend is developing in which applicants matriculated students of an institution are steadily decreasing on a yearly basis, aggressive attempts reverse such a movement would be emplaced.

In Houghton's case, such a pattern was discovered to be developing and now action is being taken to ensure that the pattern does not become a trend.

The undesirable change that has taken place in the past decade is illustrated by Houghton's past position as one of the highest academic institutions in comparison to other leading Christian colleges such as Calvin, Wheaton, Gordon, and Roberts Wesleyan. Houghton stood firm and unshakeable as a strong oak tree at the top of the mountain of academia, whereas that aforementioned colleges that strove to match Houghton's reputation as a stellar and desirable academic institution were mere saplings surrounding the college.

Now these formerly less revered establishments are growing in strength in an effort to equal and exceed Houghton in their quality of education and Houghton is struggling to set itself apart as a unique institution while, at the same time, pushing itself to catch up to these colleges' standards.

To read the rest of Merry's article, visit us at www.houghtonstar.com/culture

An Endless Fascination with the Forbidden Fruit

by Woody Zimmerman

This article is in response to the last "From the Editor's Desk" editorial of last year's Houghton Star, written by then Editor-in-Chief, Katarina Kieffer

Over the summer I reflected on Katarina Kieffer's parting shot, "The Last Word: Man, I Love College!" (*Star*, 4/24/09) which damned Houghton's behavioral code with faint praise. Departing seniors often do this, but most are not retiring editors of the *Star*. Their shots gain *de facto* validity if they stand unanswered. Miss Kieffer says Houghton's Community Responsibility codes on sex, alcohol and tobacco, are irrelevant to students' lives. That charge deserves scrutiny.

I must clarify that while I am a trustee of the college, these are my views alone, not those of the entire Board. Trustee or not, I'm still an alumnus of Houghton. These things matter to me.

Miss Kieffer was on-site. And as an ex-editor of the *Star*, she presumably would not hurl baseless charges. She says she *knows* of students "...who break the rules almost every weekend, if not every day, and have never once been 'caught'..." – veiled, specific cases, but no polls or data. Instead, she writes, "I would venture to say..." and "I'm going to go ahead and guess..." This is speculation, not evidence. She admits her inference of widespread disobedience of the CR standards is based entirely on "statistics about this age group, and common sense."

I was a Houghton student, too, so I share Miss Kieffer's intuition (from experience) that the rules are imperfectly kept. But this skeptical journalist doubts her claim that most students live outside Houghton's CR standards. My old writing prof would call this a "sweeping generality." (Politicians often extrapolate anecdotal cases in exactly this way to push for legislation.)

Since 1960, attitudes have changed toward the "big three" social sins – i.e., smoking, drinking and fooling around (SDFA) – not only in American secular culture, but in Christian culture. Fifty years ago, society disapproved of pre-marital sex. Today, not so much – even within Evangelical churches. In recent years I have attended churches where unmarried, cohabiting couples were members. Fornication is the elephant in the parlor no one wants to mention. The larger Church is ambivalent

about such arrangements. Houghton students bring that ambivalence with them.

In my student days, sex tempted couples in serious relationships. (Old-timers who say otherwise may suffer from memory-loss.) This demonstrates no spiritual failing. We are created with a God-given thirst for physical intimacy to complete a relationship. I appreciated this natural inclination as a young man, and I appreciate it now. It is the Lord's gift. Without it, life would be much less colorful (and we would have no new Houghton students).

I'm not the first to note that physical intimacy is like fire – wonderfully warming and affirming in the right circumstances, but fearfully destructive when uncontrolled. Miss Kieffer is right: sex is enjoyable.

Many things are enjoyable – buying a house, for instance. But there is a right time to buy, as we have seen during the past year. Responsibility is a major factor in knowing when. This is doubly true for sex.

I was as interested in sex as the next student, but I hope I was a Christian gentleman who avoided hurting others as well as myself. In my day, this objective was actually simplified by the lack of reliable contraceptives. For this and other good reasons, abstinence was the best policy.

I happily got married at age 19 – although I had to leave Houghton for it – to a fine woman who has put up with me for 47 years. Bless the Lord for His provision! He knows young men and women are not made of stone.

In 1960, abortion was still illegal, which kept that destructive factor out of our hair. Abortion is the ultimate eraser of sexual evidence. This is the "dirty secret" of some Christian institutions. As students at a Christian college (not Houghton) in the 1980s, my children learned that abortions had kept some classmates in school. Once a pregnancy became obvious, students risked expulsion, even if they married. But abortion eliminated the witness.

Does this happen at Houghton? I hope not. No Christian institution should be skating on such thin ice. Rules become discredited if they produce a greater wrong than the behavior they were framed to prevent. On this principle, I believe Miss Kieffer and I would agree.

Just as attitudes toward sex have changed in Christian society, so

have attitudes toward alcohol. Many Evangelicals now see moderate social drinking as acceptable and convivial. Christian friends of mine see no problem with wine "at dinner" or in other responsible contexts. (Most Christians eschew strong spirits.) This adds more ambivalence to the Houghton student's menu.

The last century has seen much societal ambivalence about booze. We tried prohibiting the stuff, but got massive civil disobedience, oceans

of bootleg cash, and organized crime. After we re-legalized alcohol, society went into "denial" about it.

Today, we have 15 million alcoholics, pre-teen drunks, and kids wrecking cars. One traffic accident in two involves alcohol-impairment; thousands die every year in DUI crashes.

Is booze a serious problem? If not, I'd like to know what a serious problem looks like. We're up to our hips in laws, but nothing helps. We're actually tougher on tobacco than on booze.

In truth, most Christian drinkers wouldn't dream of smoking. They think tobacco is far worse. I won't debate it. The point is that we have stopped thinking of alcohol as a societal problem. Christians can be conflicted about these things, as Miss Kieffer's article shows.

When I grew up, smoking was widely accepted in society, even by some Christians. Today, everyone hates tobacco, so we're taxing it to death. Tobacco can relieve stress, but it's addictive. Addiction produces overuse, which can injure you. A few cigarettes a day might not hurt, but it's hard to stay there. Teens, especially, struggle with restraint because exhibitionism dominates teen culture. One thing tends to lead to another, too, as Meredith Willson wrote:

Nicotine stains on your index finger, and a dime novel hidden in the corncrib...

First, medicinal wine from a teaspoon, then beer from a bottle... Then on to the dance at the armory – libertine men and scarlet women, and Ragtime...

All seriousness aside – many things are bad for us if overused. Christian comedian Mark Lowry said: "I'm a Baptist. Eating is all they let us do. Please, don't take that away from us..." We laugh, but Evangelicals do pack it away. A little more wine and less pasta wouldn't hurt most of us. (On the other hand, no one ever wrecked a car under the

influence of spaghetti.)

Miss Kieffer wants slack for students, so they won't have to break rules to live "normal" lives. Point taken, but Houghton didn't *invent* those rules. As a Wesleyan college, Houghton follows the Wesleyan Church Discipline, which specifically enjoins these practices. The Discipline is part of the college's "charter" with the Wesleyan Church.

Are SDFA disciplinary actions scarce because rule-breaking students slyly evade detection? Perhaps. But it's more likely that resource-limited officials concentrate on "disruptive" situations. This was true even when I was a student. One classmate was expelled after an artistic pyramid of empty beer cans was found in his room. Officials considered this in-your-face display intolerable.

St. Paul wrote, "All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient." Smoking, drinking and fooling around aren't the worst "crimes" in the catalog, but for students – who can be adolescents as young as 16 – these behaviors are not *expedient*. They hold significant risk. The standards protect those who lack maturity and judgment.

Miss Kieffer admits that the standards restrain students. Quite so – they act like highway speed limits. Most of us probably speed sometimes without being caught, but those posted limits do restrain us. Perhaps restraint is our best outcome with respect to the CR standards.

I wish Miss Kieffer the Lord's blessing out in the "real" world. Making your own lifestyle decisions is heady, but the thrill recedes quickly. A year after graduation, that bottle of wine on the sideboard won't seem nearly as scintillating. Two years out, it won't matter at all.

Grown-up life is about putting food on the table, finding useful work, paying your bills, and forming solid relationships. Those old SDFA college debates fade out. Before you know it, you're an old fuddy-duddy wondering what the college is coming to.

My best to Houghton's students: I have confidence in their faith and good judgment. I advise them to live, learn, love, and bless the Lord for each day. May you have a heart for God and not get distracted by trivia. These values will carry you long after you leave Houghton.

-Woody Zimmerman is a 1964 graduate of Houghton College and currently serves as a Trustee of Houghton College

To see Katarina Kieffer's original editorial go to www.houghtonstar.com

These behaviors are not expedient. The standards protect those who lack maturity and judgment.

From the Editor's Desk...

Back in the USSR: Remembering the Berlin Wall

by Monica Sandreczki

On this day in history, Nov. 9, 1989: The Iron Curtain Falls.

This November marks the twentieth anniversary of the day the Berlin Wall came down. The toppling of the Wall, a symbol of the Cold War for almost three decades, marked the dissolution of the divisions between Western democracy and Eastern communism that plagued the end of the last millennium. Thousands of East Berliners crowded against the Wall before pouring in by the thousands into the arms of welcoming West Berliners. Families and long time friends were reunited and East and West Berliners alike began swinging sledgehammers, chiseling away at this barricade, breaking down the disunity of the East and West of our not so distant past. Our parents are an entire generation that grew up only knowing the USSR, only to have that reality turned upside down.

Before the Wall fell, life in the United States was a different story than it is now. My mom has talked about life in America

while only knowing the USSR, saying that barely any information left the Soviet Union and came to the West. She said that she remembers walking past a bookstore in the late 1980's and saw a book by Mikhail Gorbachev and she was just stunned to see it.

"Alexander Solzhenitsyn's books (like the *Gulag Archipelago* and *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*) had to be smuggled out of the Soviet Union in order to be published and here was a book written by Gorby?" she said.

Uncle Paul visited Russia several times in the 1980's and one time was asked by a man there, "Is the West really more advanced than here?" and all Uncle Paul could do was laugh because this guy just had absolutely no way of comprehending the difference between the Eastern Bloc and the West. Uncle Paul was talking to a man who had absolutely no concept of modern buildings or stocked shelves or anything like that. I mean, even bagged cereal. There was none of that there.

In June 1989, Ronald Reagan delivered his famous, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear this wall down!" speech, but I've talked to several people who heard it and no one really thought that it would become a reality. They were just words with empty meaning.

No one really thought that it would become a reality. They were just words with empty meaning

Soviets in the Eastern Bloc were trapped inside this, essential, prison for almost thirty years. After Hungary and Czechoslovakia opened their borders in the summer of 1989, thousands of Soviets fled to the West and were laxly asked to return, but weren't

more severely punished. Thus, it was only a matter of time before the gates separating East and West Berlin were opened.

On Nov. 9, 1989, the East German government announced that its citizens could now move freely between East and West Berlin. East Berliners flooded the Wall, climbing over it, crossing through it, swinging at it with sledgehammers. The entire West watched in utter shock.

Mom said that she watched in on the news that evening and when Dad came home, she said, "They knocked the Wall down," and his jaw dropped to the floor. All night, there were parties in the streets of Berlin celebrating this end of an era of utter imprisonment.

The only thing I think we could even relate this to is if President Obama announced the opening of relations with Cuba or North Korea. Yes, two completely different contexts, but two countries we haven't had real interaction with in decades. What's the deal with Fidel Castro? Is he even still alive? Or Kim Jong-Il? What's going on there? Just like our parents had almost no idea about what was happening behind the Iron Curtain, we have no clue what goes on in these two countries. But, we must still learn from it, recognizing that we are made by this history.

-Monica Sandreczki is a sophomore French and Intercultural Studies major and is the News Editor

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editors,

I thoroughly enjoyed reading "Why the Houghton Bike Share Program was Dead on Arrival," this past week and agreed entirely with Amy Buckingham's diagnosis, which was basically that the only way for something like the Bike Share Program to work in Houghton is to have some sort of accountability along with it (and I would like to see it succeed in the future in some form). My question, however, is why can't this same logic be used in this whole Chapel argument on campus? I don't presume to speak for everyone who is opposed to the current chapel requirement, but I have read enough angry articles and heard enough fiery conversations to gather that most people are under the impression that students will hold themselves accountable for this particular aspect of campus life.

If students have shown themselves unable to sustain a practice as simple as sharing bikes with one

another, merely because there is no accountability involved, why then should we presume to think that there wouldn't be similar consequences if we instituted a chapel system that had no accountability whatsoever? I think most people on both sides of the whole chapel debate would agree that chapel can be and often is a good thing that contributes at least something, however small, to people's lives on campus. But the downfalls of having a chapel system with no accountability, or what is more frequently known as "requirements" would fail because, to quote directly from the article, "The system would need to do more than just appeal to our better nature...it would need to provide some sort of accountability...Are we really expected to treat [chapel] with respect when the consequence of not doing so is...nothing?" (NOTE: I replaced the word "bikes" with "chapel").

Now I know that you weren't addressing this issue in this article, but please don't accuse me of proof-texting, since I believe the logic behind both is similar. My basic question is, why all of this outrage at chapel requirements? If some are asking for accountability in something as insignificant as bike

sharing, why shouldn't we also be asking for accountability in other, and I think more meaningful areas of life as well: our spiritual lives?

-Marc Smithers, RD of Rothenbuhler Hall

Next Week's Feature:

Interview with Jeremy Begbie

If you have questions for Dr. Begbie, e-mail them to star@houghton.edu

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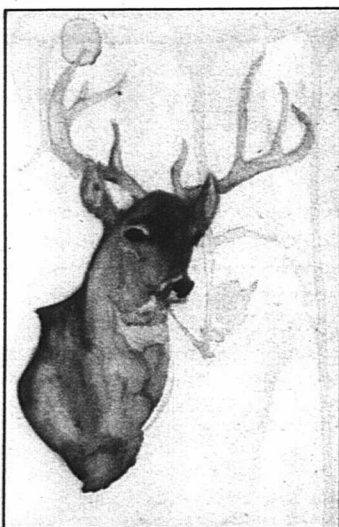
EMILY COLOMBO

Note from the artist: For the last year, I have been using digital, painting, and printmaking mediums in my artwork. With my watercolors and oil paintings, I like to experiment with the way the paint interacts with water or oil. There is something emotional about the way the mediums intertwine with each other.

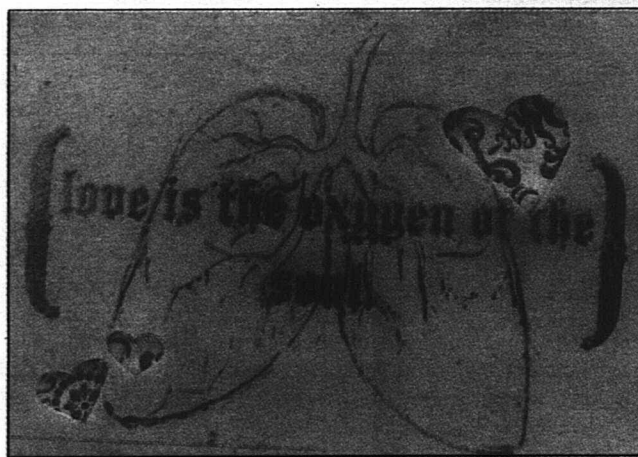
This year, I feel like I am being pulled more into the world of printmaking. I greatly enjoy the process of making prints and the outcome.

The prints that I am currently making are exploring the relationship between the body and the way it affects the way we love.

"To love is to have a heart. To be in love is to make it beat."



Living Room, Watercolor



Breathe In, Screenprint

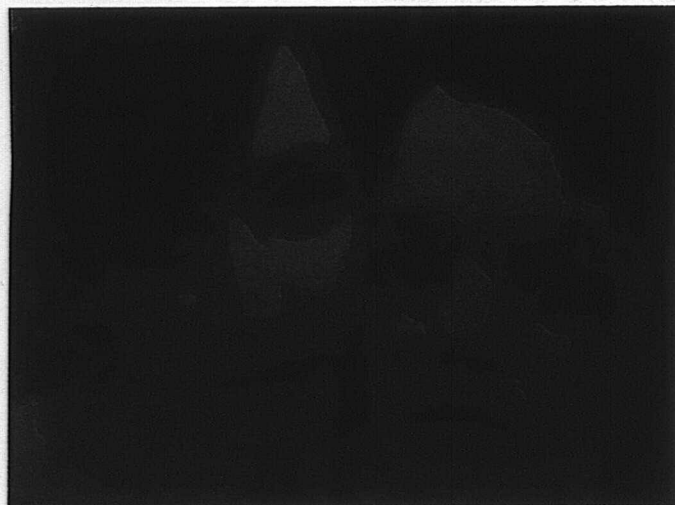


The Bottle Tree, Watercolor



Slow Life, Watercolor

artist OF THE WEEK



Olga and Helga, Screenprint

THIS SUDOKU IS
EASY

Congratulations,
Katrina Biele, last
week's sudoku winner!

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

sudoku CHALLENGE

Bring your
finished su-
doku puzzles
to the STAR
office clearly
marked with
FULL NAME.

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

Prize: Leroy Townes and the
Lone Stars' album!

THIS SUDOKU IS
HARD