

THE HOUGHTON STAR

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February 19, 2010

"City Semester" Program in Buffalo Approved by Faculty

by Elisa Shearer

On February 11, a proposal for City Semester, an off-campus program set in Buffalo, was approved by the faculty. City Semester will include two main courses: *Life in the City* and *Engaging Urban Culture* will be four credits combined, taught by Charles Massey, and *Conceptualizing the City: An Exploration of the City in Western Culture*, will be taught by Professor Cameron Airhart for either four or six credit hours. An internship experience will make up the rest of the semester for either four or six credit hours.

Students can choose to take *Conceptualizing the City* and the internship experience for four credits each instead of six, for a 12-hour semester, and then cross-register at a Buffalo college or work on an independent study for a professor at Houghton.

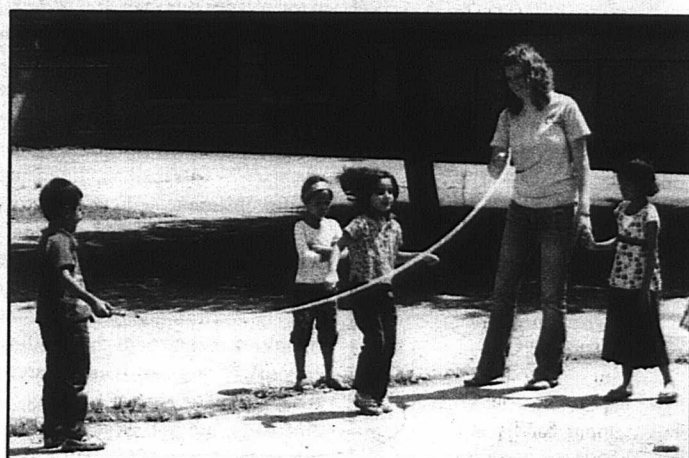


photo by Tim Chen

Houghton already has connections in Buffalo through the Journey's End tutoring program and could capitalize on that relationship.

According to Airhart, the program was designed in this way for "students who might need one course to keep on their major," and Massey said that it "opens some additional opportunities for students to pick up a course that

you couldn't find at Houghton."

Cross-registering is made possible by an agreement between the Western New York Higher Education Consortium, which

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Purple and Gold Week Traditions Continue in Willy Wonka Style



photo by Wesley Dean

Purple and Gold Week stirs school spirit through activities such as the Willy Wonka Party, culminating with SPOT.

by Kristen Palmer

Important to Houghton's history is "an intense intramural struggle between students divided into purple and gold teams," according to the CAB event planners. So, this

week the Campus Activities Board brought to us Purple and Gold week, which is a week full of events honoring this tradition.

The week, put on by the Student Government Association, CAB, and the Student Programs Office,

was organized by co-coordinators Ashley Kuvshnikov, Emily Sacher, and Miki Kaneko, who have worked since last semester planning the week.

The week began with team selections on Monday. Students were instructed to pick up a purple or gold T-shirt in the campus center lounge, and by doing so picked their teams for the remainder of the week. Tuesday was the kick-off for the photo scavenger hunt and also the day both the women's and men's basketball teams took on rival Roberts Wesleyan College. On Wednesday, CAB hosted a Wii-Tennis tournament and a Willy Wonka Party, a first in the history of Purple and Gold week.

Thursday marked the continuation of the Wii tournament, along with a Family Feud game show (Houghton style) in the

Purple & Gold cont'd on page 2

ESA Raises Awareness Through Hunger Banquet

by Colleen White

The first ever "Hunger Banquet" was held in the South End of the dining hall last Wednesday, sponsored by Evangelicals for Social Action. The goal of the event, according to sophomore coordinator Bethany Jamieson, was to open the minds and hearts of all participants to "realize that there are other people who don't get to eat." The club strove to highlight the fact that those people live here in Allegany County, many within a five-mile radius of Houghton.

The evening began by dividing students into three groups upon arrival to the banquet. Each person who came through the door drew a slip of paper from a bowl, designating him or her with an Upper, Middle, or Low Income status. Students lucky enough to pick Upper Income were granted full access to the cafeteria; this meal became just like so many meals previous. Middle Income students were allowed to make one sandwich, consisting of one slice each of meat and cheese, and drink only water, while Low Income students had to choose between a bowl of dry cereal or rice, and half a cup of water. Half of the 65 students who took part in the event were labeled Low Income, because proportionately half of the world's population survives on similar rations every day. This demographic also had to sit on the floor, while the Middle and Upper Income students lounged in chairs around tables.

After the meal, Professor Paul Shea gave a short talk on what he had discovered about poverty and hunger in the communities surrounding Houghton. According to Shea, 15% of the population of Allegany County lives below the poverty line, including 10.5% of families. Many of these families are composed of single parents, or are multi-generational, meaning that grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other extended family

Hunger cont'd on page 3

THE WORLD IS THERE

by Derek Schwabe

8 of 10 Missionaries Released from Haitian Jail

After nearly three weeks of detention in a Haitian Jail, 8 US missionaries were acquitted of human trafficking charges on Wednesday and allowed to return home. These missionaries, mostly from two Baptist churches in Idaho, were charged with kidnapping crimes when they attempted to escort 33 Haitian children out of the devastated capital of Port Au Prince and into makeshift orphanages across the border in the Dominican Republic. Escorted by U.S. diplomats, 8 of the 10 missionaries exited the jail in a condition described as disheveled, sweaty and unkempt. These 8 were finally released after parents of the children gave assuring testimony that they had agreed to allow the Americans to take custody of their children. Group leader Laura Silsby originally said they were taking only orphaned and abandoned children, but reporters found that several of the children were handed over to the group by their parents, who said the hoped the Baptists would give them a better life.

Olympic Athlete Killed In Tragic Luge Collision

Nodar Kumaritashvili, a 21 year-old Georgian luge sliding competitor in the Vancouver Olympics, died Friday after crashing during a training run and hitting a metal pole. A moment of silence was observed at the opening ceremonies on Saturday in honor of the fallen athlete. His fellow Georgian Olympians wore black armbands as well in his memory. This newly installed luge track was known by some as the fastest ever allowing luge sliders to reach speeds of almost 100 mph. Athletes had raised

concerns about the safety of the track, noting that they were having serious trouble just getting through it during training. It is reported that Kumaritashvili left the track at the final bend of the Whistler Sliding Centre while traveling near 90 mph. His sled hit the inside of this final turn, staying inside the track as his body was thrown into the air and over a concrete wall, colliding with a pole. He was given full and timely emergency care at the scene but died shortly after reaching the hospital. The Vancouver Olympic Games proceeded as planned, with a major alterations being made to the track.

Taliban Resorts to Human Shields, Afghani General Claims

Afghani general, Mohiudin Ghorie reported this week that Taliban militants are increasingly using civilians as "human shields" in their struggle against an Afghan-NATO offensive. Ghorie claimed that his soldiers had witnessed the purposeful placement of women and children in windows, and on roofs of buildings from which they fought. The joint offensive, which began 5 days ago is one of the largest allied military moves of the new year in Afghanistan. Its objective is to release the Taliban's political grip on one of their firmest strongholds in Southern Afghanistan. This stronghold, the city of Marjah, unfortunately contains a high civilian population, which has slowed the advancement effort. NATO has stressed that the security of civilians in the areas targeted in the joint operation is its highest priority. The organization continues to assert its will to sacrifice extra time and resources in order to uphold this priority. Still, military leaders remain confident that, with time, the insurgents will succumb.

Purple & Gold cont'd from page 1

chapel at night. The Wii tournament continues on Friday, and all are encouraged to attend the Campus Store Fashion Show at 6 p.m. in the Campus Center. The Wii tournament championship final and dodge ball tournament will take place at 9 p.m. Purple and Gold week will then come to a close Saturday with

the men's and women's basketball games and SPOT in the evening, where the winning team will be announced.

"The activities throughout the week were meant to encourage people to wear their color, support their teams, and compete in the various activities," said Kuvshnikov.

"This week is like a spirit week

City Semester cont'd from page 1

permits full-time students at any participating college to take a course at another participating college, without cost beyond the student's normal tuition. Some participating Buffalo-area colleges are SUNY Buffalo, D'Youville, and Daemen. "There may be a very modest transportation fee, and a very small fee to cover admission to events. It's about equivalent to a lab fee," said Massey.

Applications will be taken right away for spring semester of 2011. "We're looking for 12 people," said Airhart. "I think of 12 as a manageable number for a first-year experience." The program will run every semester.

Airhart said that a student of any major can participate in City Semester. "We've got a huge variety of internships lined up as possibilities. There's almost no student interest that we can't accommodate." He thinks the internship aspect of the program will be extremely valuable, as "many students will be finding themselves working in urban areas [after college], so this is a good time to go out and experience the cultural richness of the city and its diversity and complexities."

Airhart is excited about the program's applicability to students of all fields of study and said that there is "a remarkably interesting liberal arts challenge of beginning to understand what the city is, how it functions, and, conceptually, how it operates."

The new semester will be "a program where the city isn't just a place different from Houghton

where you go off to, but where the city really is the classroom," said Massey. "There's so much wonderful culture in the city," said Massey, which he will help students to explore during the course with *Engaging Urban Culture* by visiting museums, galleries, and other local points of interest.

In the last five or six years, said Massey, "students have discovered Buffalo and found it kind of an interesting place."

"In the '80s we put together a program [in Buffalo] that was approved by the faculty, and we offered it to students but there were no takers," said Airhart. "People didn't want to go to Buffalo. They didn't want to go to the city. But now they do."

According to Massey, in recent years "students have discovered the city and started getting involved," especially through various service programs. "A few years ago we saw students graduating and coming in fairly significant numbers to come to work with AmeriCorps," said Massey. Airhart noted that "about 25 very recent Houghton graduates live in the west side of Buffalo within walking distance of each other. I don't quite know why, but there's this sort of interesting move back into the city."

"You could learn I think, in Buffalo, in a far more deep and detailed and meaningful way, about how cities work," said Airhart. "Lots of other cities that might have more glitz, but if you're actually talking about something that's educational, this is it. This is a great resource." ★

in high school, because it's a week full of activities that every student can get involved with" said Kaneko. "We want students to enjoy the weekend, and we want them to bring out the spirit of Houghton."

This one week is a culmination of several months of planning.

"Around Christmas break of last semester, we began brainstorming events and ideas, and about a month prior to the week, we were creating plans, organizing final details, and ordering what we needed," said Kuvshnikov. "It is a fairly large task to undertake, because you have to make sure every event for each day is planned accordingly, and you have to make sure you have staff to help it run smoothly."

Kuvshnikov, Sacher, and Kaneko did not do it alone. Although they organized and planned the main events for the week, CAB director Sonja Mindrebo and the helped to decorate and run the events. Greg Bish also helped throughout the week, along with various outside groups, which organized the dodge ball tournament and the campus

store fashion show.

The team of organizers has high hopes for this year's Purple and Gold week. Kuvshnikov and her cohorts tried to boost competition between teams throughout the week.

"If you are seen wearing your shirt around campus, you can gain more points for your team, and we are measuring that by handing out 'point sticks' that students can turn in," said Kuvshnikov. "For many of the events, like the lunch competition Thursday, winning games not only gets your team points, but also wins you pretty awesome prizes."

CAB event planners are hopeful that students and faculty have enjoyed and will continue to enjoy the planned activities, while competing among the rivals. Purple and Gold week is one of the biggest events of the year, according to Kuvshnikov, and as long as it is a memorable week, she thinks that CAB has achieved success in carrying out the esteemed tradition. ★

Students Provide Free Tax Prep for Community

by Emily Rinehart

Houghton's business department has worked with the IRS' nationwide VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program for nearly 15 years. This year, ten students offer their tax preparation expertise free of charge.

The group, advised by Associate Professor of Accounting Lois Ross, mostly consists of business or accounting majors. Senior Erica Bush is this year's student supervisor in her second year of tax preparation. She explained that the group's target market is "Houghton students and people in the Houghton community." Professor Ross further emphasized the value of the group's work to Allegany County as a whole. Many people living in Allegany are low-income and could benefit from refund credits; offering the service to them free of charge increases their chance of profit.

Students and professors working in the group are required to pass a test sent to them by the IRS as a part of the VITA program. The levels taken at Houghton are basic, intermediate, and advanced. About half of this year's group has achieved the basic level, and the other half has reached

intermediate. Ross and Bush have both taken and passed the advanced level. According to Bush, most of the students have already taken an introductory class in federal taxes. Some students in the group have arranged to receive internship credit for their work. Many of the students hope to become a CPA (Certified Public Accountant).

Ross explained that after making an appointment, the taxpayer comes in with their information and sits down with a student. Students feed the data into an IRS software program. Taxpayers are given a paper copy of their return, and have the option of sending it in via hardcopy or going with electronic filing, a much quicker route. If a return is saved to electronic filing, a professional from Allegany County is able to access the information and review the form, checking for any discrepancies or missing data. The information is reviewed a few times before being officially filed. If an electronically filed form is rejected for any reason, notice is usually given within 24 hours and corrections can be made.

The students began their efforts in Library 303 on February 10 and work on Wednesdays, 6-8pm,

except for February 24. This continues through March 31 and includes one Saturday, March 6, during which the session will be from 9am-4pm. Tax payers with an annual income of \$49,000 or less are welcome to bring both their federal and New York returns. There are

six slots open each hour, providing twelve people with tax preparation every session. Plenty of space is still available; appointments can be made either by e-mailing Bush at Erica.Bush10@houghton.edu or calling the Public Events Office at 585.567.9210. ★

Hunger cont'd from page 1

members live together in the same household to save money.

Only every three out of 18 families who visit the food pantry run by Houghton Wesleyan Church are "normal two-parent families," according to Shea. This food pantry, which was filled by community members during the Christmas season, is now significantly depleted due to great need. Only two months into the present year, the food pantry has served over 240 individuals within a five-mile radius of Houghton. Shea commented that there are hardly any repeat visitors, due to the policy of the food pantry, according to which it may only give out food twice a year to the same person, barring an emergency. Emergencies are all too common however, as was illustrated by a story Shea told about a single mother of a newborn and toddler, who came home from the hospital and had no food, money, or transportation. When she called the church and found out that they were more than willing to help, she began to cry with relief.

It is at these times, Shea reminded the group on Wednesday, that the church is fulfilling its mission. He referenced 1 John 3:18, which says, "Dear children,

let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth." Participants in the Hunger Banquet were therefore encouraged to take action: first by praying in groups for the hungry people of Allegany County and for the students of Houghton, and secondly by becoming a part of one of the many ministries in place to reach out to members of the community in need. ESA provided a resource list of several ministries including the food pantry, Meals on Wheels of Houghton, Wellspring Ministries in Belfast, and the Food Bank of Western New York in Buffalo, which serves over 100,000 people every month.

Senior Kirsten Hughes said that she "hopes this will be the start" of more awareness and outreach from Houghton students. It seemed that in this regard the Hunger Banquet fulfilled its purpose. "I didn't know a lot of that stuff," said junior Daryl Harshbarger.

Reflections from each assigned economic tier were different, ranging from "I can't imagine having less" to "it made me feel guilty," but the overall student reaction was one of not just increased compassion, but of renewed urgency to actively love and serve the poor as Christ did. ★

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Houghton Musical Theatre Assc. in A to Z Cabaret

by Evan Yeong

On February 11 and 13 the Houghton Musical Theatre Association (HMTA) put on its second production, *A to Z Cabaret: A Broadway Revue*. The cast of almost 40 sang and danced through songs from a host of musicals – one for every letter of the alphabet.

A to Z Cabaret, the second production by HMTA, was extremely well-attended, with the Saturday showing being completely sold-out. Amber Payne, sophomore, directed, choreographed, and put together the entire production. Her response to the turnout was that it was expected, due to the many cast members, but that many “didn’t know what to make of [the show],” since Houghton had not done anything like it before. After a few numbers, however, the audience seemed to understand the production as a whole and seemed to enjoy it immensely.

The musical numbers were chosen by the director and ranged widely from the well-known “Shipoopi,” from *The Music Man*, to the extremely obscure “Irene,” from the so called musical, first performed in 1919. In choosing such a wide musical array, Payne intentionally picked many musicals that were off-Broadway to create a broader musical perspective. The content of the numbers often veered into the less child-friendly with songs about murder (“Cell

Block Tango”) and gambling (“Luck Be A Lady Tonight”). Referencing the song “Die Vampire Die” Payne said that the songs are not meant to offend but also not meant to be cut up to appease more sensitive audiences; the songs are meant to tell a story.

With a cast as large as 39, there was a surprisingly equal representation of both music and non-music majors, which is exactly what the creators of HMTA, Payne and Angela Iannaccone, had in mind. Creating a casual atmosphere where all students can become a part of a musical production free

from academic stress is a goal that has been accomplished through *A to Z Cabaret*. For this spring show, all members were allowed to participate in the production, as well as everyone who auditioned. Students were even encouraged to state exactly how they would like to take part, even if it meant simply being a part of the chorus.

One aspect of the show that seemed to be stressed by all involved was an overwhelming feeling of com-



photo by Sheri Tuttle

Houghton Musical Theatre Association performed *A to Z Cabaret* on Thurs and Sat.

munity. Acknowledging that the term is “cliché” and that “unfortunately it’s become that,” Payne stated that theatre is “where it’s at . . . a theology of interdependency is there that [is] experienced nowhere else.” Jonathon Dutweiler, freshman, agreed by saying that “there’s a level of trust with everyone that’s involved, because if you miss a number then everyone looks bad.” He was the main voice of the song “Run Freedom Run” and shared

that other cast members have actually started calling him by this nickname.

A to Z Cabaret met with stunning success on both nights and provided a teaser to the HMTA’s upcoming productions. The group is slated to become an official club later in this semester, and its founders are urging any who might be interested to join; a lovely singing voice not a requirement.★

Patmos Vision takes Battle of the Bands

by Colleen Jennings

Last Saturday, five bands battled it out on stage for an audience of nearly 255 judges, including President Shirley Mullen, for the chance to open for *Relevant Worship* on March 5.

What started as an idea of the freshman class president Josh Mertzluft to host something “the whole college could enjoy,” turned into a benefit concert to help Haiti, a country struggling to get back on its feet after a couple of horrific earthquakes struck last month.

The night quickly gained momentum as *We Are Wanderers* opened the show. After pouring their hearts out, they were followed by *The Woods Themselves*, who quickly got the crowd revved up with their impressive musicianship. Although *The Autumn Equinox: Fall* needed Josh Vitoff to step in on bass, it didn’t seem to be a problem as the men from 3rd Shen joined them on stage for a unique rendition of *Backstreet Boys*’ “I Want It That Way.”

The Autumn Equinox: Fall was followed by *Dreaming Outloud*, who surprised the crowd with their mellow acoustics, strong vocals, and meaningful lyrics. But in the end it was

Patmos Vision that stole the show. Made of entirely freshmen, the band stunned the crowd with powerful lead vocals, strong drum and guitar solos, and the unique sound of the piano and violin.

After the five bands graced the stage, the judges Nancy Murphy, President Shirley Mullen, and three students chosen at random, left the room to decide who the winner would be. Although they acknowledged that *Dreaming Outloud* was a “close second,” the judges chose *Patmos Vision*.

The band, which has only been playing together since the second week of January, is “very excited” to open for *Relevant Worship* in March, according to lead singer Hannah Prentice. She felt like their performance “went well” and was honored to win over the talented bands they competed with. Prentice was pleased with the turn out, although she wished “more people could have come so we could’ve raised more money for Haiti.”

According to Spencer Adams, “the bands all played their hearts out and each one did a fantastic job.” Bridget Woolston, who appreciated that most of the bands played original music, thought that “all the bands were

legitimate.” As Rueben Hand put it, “every band was great, particularly with instrumentals.” People were also pleased with the judging, especially with the words of wisdom from Mullen. “I really enjoyed hearing President Mullen’s thoughts on each band,” said Adams.

During the concert it was announced that the sound crew was working for free, so the entire profits could be sent to Haiti. When all was said and done, nearly \$500 had been raised for the cause. The money will be given to the Student Government Association, which is working with World Hope International. *Patmos Vision* will be opening for *Relevant Worship*, a band from Buffalo with musical style similar to Hillsong United, in the Wesley Chapel on March 5.★

GCF Global Prayer Groups

These groups are student-led and meet in the new prayer chapel (in the basement of the chapel). They meet to pray about things going on around the world. Feel free to come to as many or as few as you would like. This schedule will be in effect throughout the entire semester:

PRAYER

Times	Leaders
Monday 3:00-3:30pm	Elizabeth Goggans Nathanael Smith
Tuesday 3:30-4:00pm	Emily Rhehart Meg Sonnenkalf
Wednesday 6:00-6:30pm	Paul Murphy Joella Eppheimer
Thursday 10:00-10:30am	Jacquelyn Wise Courtney Coiro
Friday 6:30-7:00pm	Jenn-yi Chong Stephanie Forsythe

Ryan Shay Awarded Ron Holmes Memorial Award

by Nicholas Fredette

The Ron Holmes Memorial Award is a prestigious award presented by the American Midwest Conference to a player in memory of former Mount Vernon Nazarene basketball standout Ron Holmes. After Holmes was tragically killed in a car accident, the conference created an award to honor Holmes' memory. This year, the award was given to Houghton's own Ryan Shay. It was presented by Steve Gregory, women's basketball coach at Mount Vernon Nazarene and former teammate of Holmes.

When asked about the personal significance of this award, Gregory responded, "The Ron Holmes Memorial Award has special significance to me as I was a former teammate of Ron's. We played together for three years before he was tragically killed in a car accident. Ron was a truly gifted athlete that loved life, loved basketball, loved his community and valued his education."

When the conference was looking for a recipient for this year's award, Shay's name came up, and immediately stood out as a great choice to receive this award. "Not only is Ryan a gifted basketball player, but he has his priorities straight. He has a strong academic background and his community service both to his campus and to

his local community along with his commitment to his church are all commendable and remind me very much of Ron Holmes. Ronnie was larger than life and was loved by everyone he came in contact with. I sense that the same is true with all that I've seen and heard about Ryan," said Gregory.

Gregory, despite not having a personal relationship with Shay, has still seen the positive influence that many people here at Houghton have been blessed enough to experience. When asked about how he felt about Shay's receipt of the award, Athletic Director Harold "Skip" Lord responded, "Ryan is an outstanding example of the kind of student-athlete we strive to have at Houghton College. He is committed to excellence in all areas of his life - spiritually, academically, socially and athletically. I don't know anyone who doesn't hold Ryan in very high regard. This is a great honor for him, for the team, for the department, and for Houghton College."

As evident in the lives of those who he comes into contact with, Shay is an outstanding individual in the Houghton community. This influence is why he was chosen for the Ron Holmes Memorial Award, and the importance of this award is very substantial. As Coach Zarges put it, "the significance of this award cannot be understated. The award is voted on by the men's

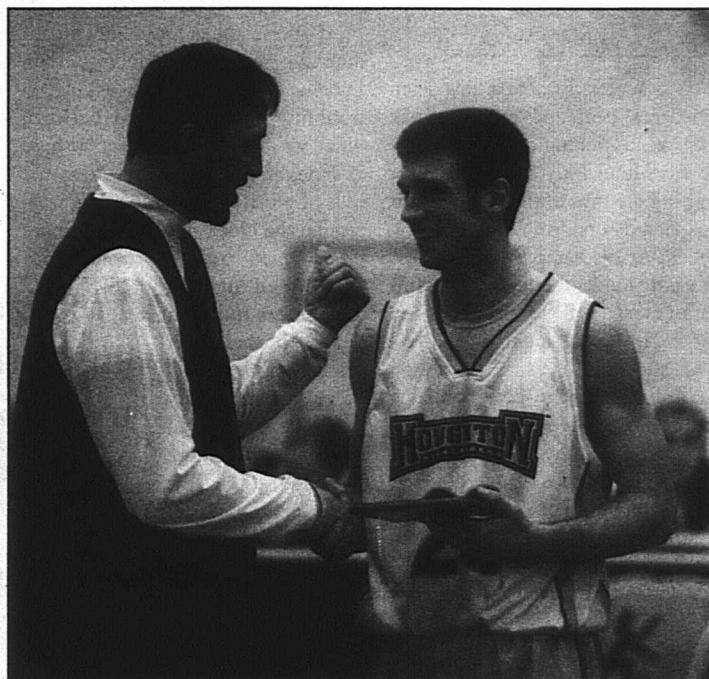


photo by Wesley Dean

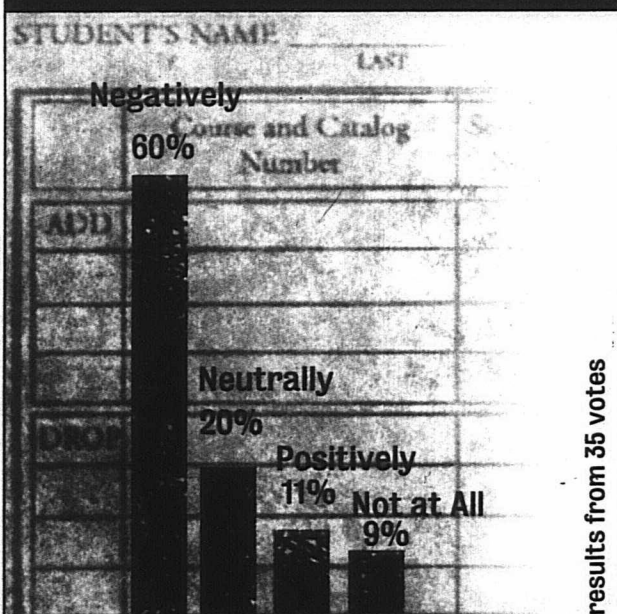
Shay is the recipient of the Ron Holmes Memorial Award.

basketball coaches, so for Ryan to be selected is an indication that he is making a difference, not only internally, but also externally. Other coaches have recognized his work, play, and maturity. I would put this accomplishment above the All-Conference selections that will come out in a couple of weeks."

Shay was honored to receive the award, and agreed that it

demonstrated a certain significance, not only personally, but within the entire program here at Houghton. He said, "Winning the Ron Holmes Award was a great honor for me, as well as for the Men's Basketball program at Houghton. I feel that it really shows what a great group of guys we have on our team and how our program is being noticed throughout the conference."★

Poll Results: How has the new four-credit system affected you?

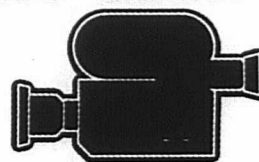


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Film Viewing: 9:00 PM in Wesley Chapel

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Open to Possibilities, Obedient to a Higher Purpose

by Mary Valvo

As a senior, I confess that I am sometimes deafened by the clock in my head, ticking off the minutes and days until May 8. I am eagerly awaiting the joys of the future, from unexpected opportunities to new friends. At the same time, I realize there is no longer the cushion of a full year or even a full semester between now and my expulsion into "reality." Sometimes this pressure is enough to make me want to hide behind a purple Prospective Student folder and pretend that my only concern is the slickness of those snow-covered metal squares on the sidewalks as I scurry behind a tour guide. Oh, how delightful to imagine I still have four more years left to figure out life...a dream always eclipsed by the ugly nightmare of school loans, the job market's promises for English majors, the necessity of obtaining health insurance, and the requirement to find a husband in (less than) three months.

For those students who are not second-semester seniors, change is still an intimidating force. Not surprisingly, the burden of declaring a major, the chaos and uncertainty of changing one, or even the ending of a relationship intended for eternity create sudden life shifts that leave nothing but paperwork and several questions. Is Houghton College really where I am supposed to be? Have I made a choice that will permanently derail me from the track God had me on? What does my future hold after graduation?

If these questions are at all daunting or panic-inducing, then I believe that in their asking, a troubling gap is revealed between what we believe and practice here at Houghton College. We love the idea of glorifying God in every way, around the clock, but I think we are preoccupied with the tremendous

pressure of figuring out life in four years so that after graduation we can delve immediately into The Work that our entire devotion to God will be measured by. After all, one doesn't usually spend four years in a field of study thinking s/he will graduate and "do whatever" — There is a plan and a

focus fueling hours of reading and note-taking. Whether it is to become a lawyer, a teacher, a physical therapist, or a youth minister, there is usually a specific post-graduation target shared with friends, family, and teachers in response to the dreaded question: "So what do you plan to do with a (fill in the blank) degree?" And "I'm not sure yet" isn't exactly a satisfactory answer.

Recently I changed majors and found myself graduating a semester sooner than expected. Suddenly I was in a bewildering mess of graduate school applications, GRE study books, and online job listings, hoping desperately that one of these

would reveal exactly how I would earn a living and serve God for the next thirty years or so. Then, suddenly...it didn't happen. I felt like a failure. Here God had given me four years to prepare myself to do the work He set out for me, and I wasn't even 100 percent sure what that was. I have many interests,

I realized that my difficulty to choose just one path for the rest of my life was not a burden, but an exciting gift

and life holds so many different opportunities to pursue, but in spite of this, I was blinded to life's thrilling variety by what I perceived to be an undergraduate catastrophe. Why couldn't I be the student who knew she wanted to be a doctor back in seventh grade, the student who already had the medical school acceptance letter and summer medical missionary trip lined up?

But after several conversations with my family and a friend in Career Services, I realized that my difficulty to choose just one path for the rest of my life was not a burden, but an exciting gift. In the Bible, there are few individuals who served God in only one way—so why do we treat "the rest of our lives" like our major-based career choice is the primary way to glorify God? In Genesis, Joseph consistently honored God as a slave of Potiphar, a jail keeper, and finally, Pharaoh's right-hand man—none of these

tasks being planned career choices. I admire Joseph because he honored God through his work, regardless of his circumstances; from serving Potiphar faithfully and fleeing his conniving wife, to aiding Pharaoh with his gifts of dream interpretation, and finally, using his position of power to provide for his people and demonstrate God's forgiveness to his brothers.

Just like our interests are not limited to one area, and our talents not limited to only one marketable skill, we should not treat our futures as if they hold only one major vocation that will be the singular path to honoring God. I dare us to deny the pressure of restricted academic majors and careers and welcome the possibility that God may lead us along several different paths, some or none of which we ever expected. Like Joseph, we may find ourselves doing work we had never dreamed of doing, without any idea of its relevance to His kingdom and no clue as to what the next day holds. Instead, let us remember that God has not given us the responsibility of figuring out the why or the how of His plan; we are simply called to "Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; He's the one who will keep you on track (Proverbs 3:5-6)."

Mary Valvo is a senior English major

Letters

to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Although I feel like Lauren Moss misunderstood the impetus behind the article I wrote about American agriculture, I am grateful to her for bringing up several misconceptions about the organic farming movement. First of all is the notion that "organic" is synonymous with "Amish." Most organic farms do use tractors, along with all of the other equipment necessary for operating a large farm, besides pesticides. The main difference that most people think of as the result of this process

is a safer product to consume: one that hasn't been coated with synthetic chemicals. However, if this is where your knowledge of the benefits of organic farming ends, then you're missing the big picture. People who pay more for organic food don't do it because of its potential health benefits, but because of the overall long-term detriment that pesticides and synthetic fertilizers are to the environment.

The takeover of corn in the Midwest has meant that so much fertilizer and topsoil have been washed off the fields that there is now a "dead zone" in the Gulf of Mexico, an area of algal bloom the size of Connecticut where nothing can live. These fertilizers deoxygenate the water so that fish and plants can't survive in that area any longer. More disconcerting for humans however, is the fact

that these farms have been so mismanaged that topsoil that used to be up to 16 inches deep 150 years ago, is now only four inches thick in parts of Iowa. I'm aware that talking about dirt isn't all that trendy, but the fact remains that high-quality soil is vital to producing food, and it scares me to think that soil fertility could be depleted so rapidly. It takes a 1,000 years to produce one inch of topsoil, so if you think about it, it has taken Americans less than two centuries to undo 16,000 years of natural accumulation.

My intent is not, however, to point the finger at American farmers. As Lauren brought up in her letter, small-time dairy farmers are suffering from too-low milk prices (which I'm made

Letter Cont'd on pg 7

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Delighted?
Just confused?**

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of the conversation.**

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From the Editor's Desk...

The Commercialization of the Human Spirit

by Amy Buckingham

As the 2010 Winter Olympic Games continue in Vancouver, the excitement around campus has grown palpable. There is something about the human-interest stories between events, the underdog-come-champions fighting their way to the top, and the fierce competition between nations that makes even the most disenfranchised cynic into a patriot, if only temporarily.

The Olympics claim their origin in Olympia, Greece, something I'm sure we all learned in grade school. However, in contrast to the games as they are now, the ancient Olympics was centered around the idea of praising the gods through the accomplishments of the participants. In addition, the Greek-style Olympic Games emphasized art, with artisans showcasing their works that glorified the human form and the individual.

Interestingly enough, I find myself being more involved in those events where I am aware of any heart-breaking back-story of a participant, rather than what they eventually accomplish. I didn't care that Shen and Zhao were skating at the highest level and that they really deserved the gold medal in Pairs Skating, but I wanted them to win because of their off-ice romance. This is representative of the commercialization of the "Triumph of the Human Spirit," where athletes are praised and admired for all of the things they

overcome to get where they are rather than on their skill alone. Both the ancient games and the current games focus on the individual, but the ancient games praised the individual for their ability to praise the gods through their athletic accomplishments alone.

Featured in the February 11 episode of "The Colbert Report," museum curator David Ross explored the changes in Olympic art from the ancient games to the present. Ross pointed to Myron's Discus Thrower and scene of the games on ceramics that focused on the individual, on the human form and glorified the contestant in his own right. The move in Olympic art is towards a more all-encompassing design, with the most recent a variation on the Canadian maple leaf, engaging the emotions of citizens in the Olympic proceedings.

The Olympics has clearly changed its focus since the ancient games. As Ross pointed out, "At some point in time, the Olympics moved away from the glorification of the individual and the power of victory," towards a more emotional tack, focusing on national pride. This is even evident in the story of the current Olympic host country, Canada. Of the three times this nation has hosted the Olympic Games, this is the first time that they have won a Gold Medal on home turf. To have the opportunity to host

the Olympics again and to have finally earned gold boosts national pride, something that many citizens feel invested in.

I think it is safe to say that a change in focus has come about because of the direction in which society has progressed, into a consumer-driven, technological era, towards things that have literally changed

Just as most aspects of society have been affected by this bottom-line style method of working, the Olympics are not exempt from this financial motivation

the way society views the world. The advertising market has grown enormous and new technology is leading the way into widening markets, where an enormous part of society is driven by profit and companies advertise to as many people as possible in hope of selling whatever their product may be. And just as most aspects of society have been affected by and have

adapted to this bottom-line style method of working, the Olympics are not exempt from this financial motivation. This is evident in the slew of sponsors with enough advertising clout to show multiple commercials promoting their brand in a single commercial break, like McDonald's, Coke and Visa. Because of this tendency to sell to whoever is willing to buy, companies make their market as wide as possible, some of them even sponsoring an entire team from a single nation. Canada, although not a business corporation, has capitalized on this attention, as seen through the commercials for British Columbia tourism, focusing

on their green technology for the Olympic Games. In fact, Colbert, a well-known political satirist took on sponsorship of the United States speed skating team, poking fun at the corporate environment that has taken over the Olympics.

Now that businesses have recognized the value of advertising at the Olympic Games, we're starting to see more individualized advertising campaigns, yet all with a very universal message. If an underprivileged athlete works hard and does their best to overcome these inequalities, they'll do well. Visa tells near heartbreaking stories in their commercials with redemptive qualities showing their encouragement of the individual; Proctor and Gamble "Thanks Mom" for enabling athletes to be who they are; McDonalds portrays the entire United States Olympic team eating their food (which, given their athletic accomplishments, is quite incredible) as if to say "Look at all of the people we're trying to get you to identify with! They all buy our product too."

The focus of the Olympics has changed drastically from what it originally was, from the triumph of the individual's accomplishments to the commercialization of the Human spirit so that every citizen can share in that individual triumph of an athlete that they feel emotionally connected to... thanks to the choices made by advertising executives.

Amy Buckingham is a senior Humanities major and is Culture Editor

Letter Cont'd from pg 6

well aware of every Thanksgiving at my uncle's third-generation farm). However, dairy farming is practically the only (largely) family-owned agricultural industry left in America, and it is on the decline as well. Since the advent of corn in the Midwest, the number of farms has decreased from 6.8 million in 1935, to less than two million today. While the number of farms has declined, the population has nearly tripled, meaning that agricultural production has become concentrated to the extreme. Less than one percent of the U.S. population claims to be "farmers" because they've been replaced by "agribusiness."

Agribusinessmen are the ones who own the corporations that own the farms and make all the decisions regarding output. As you can imagine, businessmen in corporate offices miles away from the cornfield tend to value efficiency and the dollar above all else, which explains why we are having such problems today.

Buying local, preferably organic, food from community farmers is the best way to remove yourself from the industrial food system that is doing so much damage to the environment and to people, and is the only way to ensure that there will be land to farm in the future.

-Colleen White, Class of 2011

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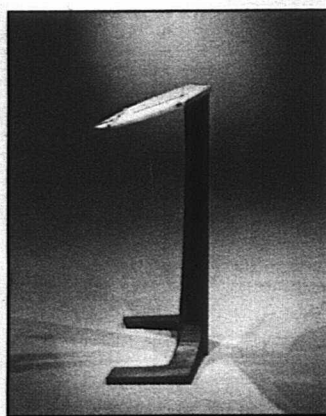
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Lecturn, front



Lecturn, side

JEFFREY ANDERSEN

Note from the artist:

I'm not the kind of artist who is all about exalting the nature of the media he works in. Interesting design is what excites me, and function is a challenging aspect to wrestle with, but I will push my methods and my materials to meet my concepts, which are usually developed two-dimensionally, on notebook paper with ballpoint pens. Wood is what I've found myself using lately, as with these two pieces made for the Prayer Chapel here at Houghton College.

OF THE
artist
WEEK



Communion Table

Keep an eye out for next
issue's crossword puzzle....
Winner will receive
TWO TICKETS to a BUFFALO
SABRES GAME!

THIS SUDOKU IS
EASY

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

THIS SUDOKU IS
**KIND OF
HARD**

Bring your finished
sudoku puzzles
to the STAR office
clearly marked
with FULL NAME.

Prize: Leroy
Townes and the
Lone Stars'
album!

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

**sudoku
CHALLENGE**