



THE HOUGHTON STAR

Volume 106, Issue 18

www.houghtonstar.com

March 5, 2010

Houghton Strengthens County Relationships Leadership Allegany

by Kyle Johnson

Houghton College has partnered with the Greater Allegany County Area Chamber of Commerce to construct a new county leadership development program, Leadership Allegany. According to Pam Witter, Houghton's Director of Development and one of the individuals who first proposed the program, Leadership Allegany will annually train 15-20 selected participants "who live, work... or have a vested interest... in Allegany County" through the experience of a 10-month program to help them gain "a really full understanding of what it takes to make this county work" and to encourage them to take on "more dynamic leadership roles" in Allegany County.

The idea for the program was initially concocted by Witter and Scott Wade, Vice President of Development and Marketing. After gaining approval from President Mullen, Witter and

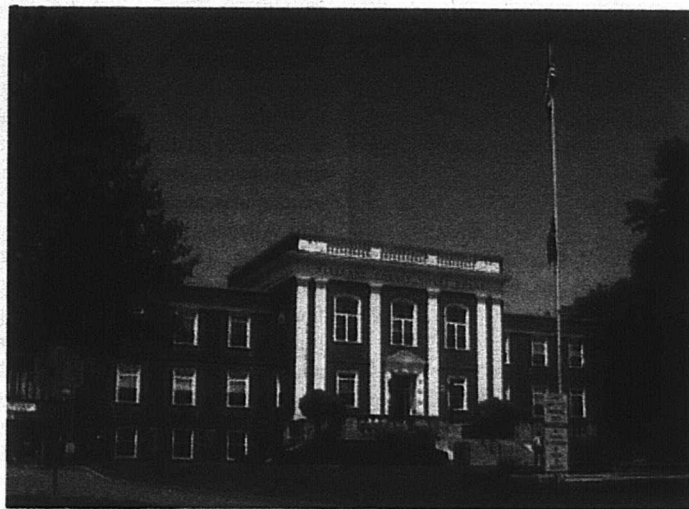


photo by jimmywayne via Flickr

Leadership Allegany will encourage community members to take an active role in the county. It will be a ten month program.

Wade approached the Greater Allegany County Area Chamber of Commerce which had only recently come into existence. According to Brian Loucks, the President of the Chamber of Commerce's board, the Chamber of Commerce had been

planning for a while to form such a program, but "a daunting list of goals, and limited man power and funding" forced them to postpone the project until at least 2011. With

Leadership cont'd on page 2

Students Travel to Albany to Petition for Preservation of NYS TAP Money

by Elizabeth Raucher

Several students from Houghton recently traveled to Albany to talk to state representatives about the New York State Tuition Assistance Program, known as NYSTAP program. On February 8, Marianne Loper, financial aid office, drove six students to Albany and stayed with them overnight as they talked to their representatives, asking them to support the program as it currently is.

NYSTAP has helped many students from the state of New York to be able to afford college tuition at schools in New York. Budget deficits may force the state to cut back on the amount of aid each student receives through the program. Houghton students who are residents of New York are eligible to receive this assistance.

New York Governor Paterson,

facing a significant budget deficit, has proposed cutting the amount of state funds going to the public colleges in the state, as well as reducing the amount of aid through the NYS TAP program by at least \$75 per semester per student. Many economically challenged students receive significant aid from this program and are able to get a college education because of this program. For many of these students the only reason they are able to go to college at all is because they are able to receive this aid. The \$200-\$1000 helps them to make going to school a possibility.

In response to the reductions in aid suggested by the Governor, six Houghton students went to talk to their representatives about the program and encouraged them to prevent the funds for it from being cut. According to senior student

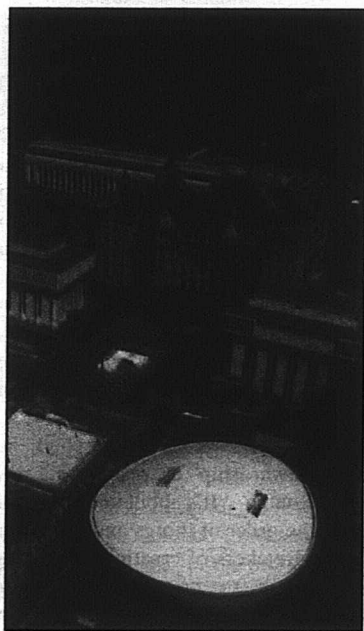


photo by Wesley Dean

NYSTAP might cut back due to budget deficits, affecting NY residents.

Houghton Joins Sustainability Association

by Clara Sanders

Houghton College recently joined the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), an organization of colleges and universities that support each other and share ideas as they work toward campus sustainability.

According to their website, AASHE believes sustainability is holistic, "encompassing human and ecological health, social justice, secure livelihoods, and a better world for all generations." This inclusive view of sustainability corresponds with Houghton's initiative toward organizational sustainability on all institutional levels.

The membership fee came out of the small budget allocated last year to the new Office of Sustainability and sustainability coordinator Ginny Routhe. As a member, Houghton now has access to many resources that will help the college assess its progress toward holistic environmental care and develop plans and policies.

One of AASHE's main programs is the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System, or STARS. This road map covers all aspects of campus, from operations to classroom learning, and also helps institutions develop goals specific to their needs and strengths.

AASHE is one of two supporting organizations for the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), which President Mullen signed in 2008. Signatories to the document agree to 1) complete an emissions inventory; 2) within two years, set a target date and interim milestones for becoming climate neutral; 3) take immediate steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by choosing from a list of short-term actions; 4) integrate sustainability into the curriculum and make it part of the education experience; and 5) make the action plan, inventory and progress reports publicly available.

Purple & Gold cont'd on page 2

Hunger cont'd on page 2

THE WORLD TO THERE

by Derek Schwabe

District of Columbia Allows Same Sex Unions

Washington D.C. became the sixth United States jurisdiction to allow same-sex marriages, after the Supreme Court overturned a recent legal challenge. Over 120 couples have already received their marriage licenses, but the earliest time couples can get married will be Tuesday, March 9, due to a three day processing time. Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont also issue same-sex licences.

Chile Victim to Earthquake

Central Chile experienced one of the most powerful earthquakes ever recorded last Saturday, Feb. 27. The epicenter of the earthquake was located 70 miles northeast of the city of Concepcion. Areas that have been effected by the earthquake include the Maule region of Chile, and Biobio, with approximately 1.5 million homes damaged at last count and nearly 800 deceased. The amount of damage has led to mass confusion, by both victims and rescue teams,

as well as a looting problem as survivors search for sustenance. On Wednesday, March 3, other parts of Chile experienced earthquake aftershocks at a magnitude of 5.5 and higher. Chilean President Michelle Bachelet has denied reports of food and water shortages and has sent 14,000 troops to the earthquake zone near Concepcion.

Canada defeats US in Hockey Gold Medal Game

The Olympic Canadian Men's Hockey Team defeated the United States team 3-2 in the Sunday, February 28 Gold Medal game. After an unanticipated win by the United States in the Preliminary round of the Olympic Men's hockey tournament on Sunday, February 21, Canada went on to beat Finland (5-0), Germany (8-2) and Russia (3-7), sending them into a rematch with the United States' team. This Canadian win recorded the first win in hockey by a host team in 30 years. Canada was awarded the Gold medal, the United States walked away with a Silver and Finland went on to beat Slovakia for the Bronze medal.

NYSTAP cont'd from page 1

Mary Valvo, traveling five hours to speak to them impressed the representatives who they spoke with.

Valvo said, "Although we were not given any guarantees [from the representatives] as to the complete preservation of TAP as it exists now, we were very pleased to be welcomed by our senators and assembly members and to be given the opportunity to speak for ourselves about how the NYS budget will impact college students, many of whom are voters."

The push to keep TAP at its current levels is not just coming from Houghton. There were students from several other schools around the state there while the Houghton group was, speaking to their representatives about the program and seeking to keep it supported. Mary also spoke to the importance of the program to many people other than herself. "Supporting a cause that may benefit another student far

more than me is no less worthwhile. Our group of six went to Albany to support TAP not just for ourselves, but for the many recipients of this aid here at Houghton, our friends and family back home, and for future students who deserve to receive equal, if not greater, financial assistance from New York State in the years to come." ★

AASHE cont'd from page 1

AASHE provides forums for colleges to share their ideas for fulfilling the commitment as well as frameworks for developing action steps.

"It's definitely worth it," said Routhe. Houghton's report on greenhouse gas emissions is due to the ACUPCC in May, and AASHE will cut days off of the work of consolidating that data.

Professor Paul Young, who chaired the Creation Care Task Force last year, looks forward to what membership in the AASHE will bring.

City Semester cont'd from page 1

the help and ambition of Witter and Wade, the program was able to become a reality. The Chamber agreed to a formal partnership and a planning committee was formed. The committee includes representation from Houghton as well as Alfred State and Alfred University.

Leadership Allegany will draw from a pool of current and rising leaders in the county and, according to Witter, help them "gain some skills that could later on benefit Allegany county" as well as gain "a sense of civic duty" in the hope that participants would "reinvest back into the county." The program will take place annually over the course of 10 months. During that time, participants will hear from leaders around the county and have opportunities for gaining practical experiences, and an "insiders' look" into Allegany County's important industries. The program will also include an academic component, featuring a curriculum in leadership training developed by Houghton and Alfred. The inclusion of such an academic component makes Allegany's program unique among other programs of its kind. Leadership Allegany will begin with a retreat for the participants, and will also include a major service project. Loucks called the curriculum "exciting". According to Witter, "It's been a goal of Houghton's the past few years to be more involved in the

county." Phyllis Gaerte, Houghton's Director of Community Relations, also expressed the importance of recent attempts to develop a better relationship with the Commerce and with Allegany county in general, citing recent "increased involvement" with the Chamber and the development of key relationships between Houghton and the Commerce and the county at large. "It's been one of the most satisfying parts of my job", remarked Gaerte.

Pam Witter believes that Houghton's collaboration on Leadership Allegany is important in furthering such relationships with the community. She remarked that it has been "pretty exciting" to see all 3 higher education institutions in the county working together, and it has also been "good to see partnership between business and higher education in Allegany County."

Houghton College has already started to benefit from such relationships, says Witter, citing internship opportunities for Houghton students that have developed as a result. Brian Loucks affirmed this growing relationship, saying that connections between Houghton and the Chamber of Commerce have "been able to grow in many ways due to the Leadership Allegany collaboration. The Chamber looks forward to working with Houghton College to ensure that Allegany County remains a positive and vibrant place to work, live, and play." ★

"We dismissed some things last year because of cost, short-term thinking, or lack of enthusiasm, and it will be good to see what other schools are doing...to see what energy and the future can look like," he said.

According to Young, Houghton's commitments toward the ACUPCC to be fulfilled within two years included green appliance purchasing and LEED standard for new buildings, such as the Paine Center addition. What is more challenging, Young said, is setting a goal for the actual reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Routhe has been chairing the newly-established Creation Care Committee (CCC), which has been developing some tangible sustainability plans for the next few semesters. By the end of this semester, the college will be working with Pioneer to compost food from the kitchens; as Sodexo moves in for next year, composting will also be available on the "eating side" of the cafeteria. The CCC also has the unique opportunity to recommend local food vendors for Sodexo.

Clothes dryers are some of

the largest energy consumers on campus; the CCC is working to develop a drying rack loan program for the Flats and Townhouses. Houghton is also in the early stages of exploring a feasibility study for wind turbines on campus property.

AASHE information from other schools gives Houghton information on the integration of themes of sustainability into the curriculum, possibly even leading to a new minor or major.

The Earth Week chapel speaker for this year is a religion professor from Hope College who specializes in issues of faith and earth care.

Routhe hopes that incorporating AASHE's concept of inclusive sustainability can make the idea of sustainability a trend or simply environmentalism.

"This is a bit beyond just stewardship of resources," said Routhe. "It's about understanding the order of things and humans as caretakers of creation. Houghton hopes to prepare students for global Christian service, and sustainability is definitely a part of Christian service." ★

SGA Election Guide: Candidate Platforms

Note: Platforms written by the candidates. For more information go to <http://campus.houghton.edu/orgs/sga/Electiontemplate.shtm>

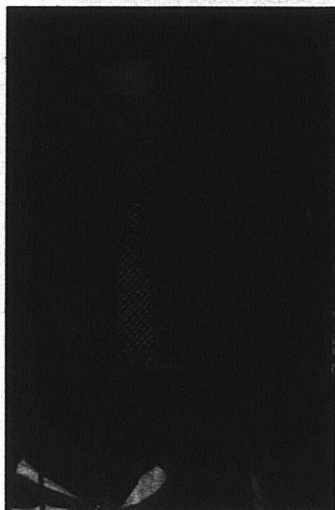


photo by Wesley Dean

Zach Adams, junior

President

Zachary Adams

Student Government is an organization with an intentional mission and focus that cultivates and maintains the academic, spiritual, and physical growth of students. I believe this mission must be placed into the context of the larger goals and purposes of the College. As a liberal arts college in the Wesleyan tradition, Houghton has a particular way of creating an environment where we can converse and fellowship around issues that help us to explore the nuances of our faith. This environment transforms students into reflective leaders rooted in their faith—fully capable of exploring the intersection of faith and God's calling in their life.

SGA finds its niche in this environment and I hope to continue to create a culture where all students have the opportunity to become agents of change and effective stakeholders on the campus. While members of SGA are charged with voicing the student opinion, every student should feel empowered to voice their own opinion. Being a leader does not necessitate a title. SGA must provide all with the opportunity to serve. In fact, this is a sign of vibrant campus culture.

SGA must constantly be reflective and critical of how we are operating and how we are carrying out the purpose of SGA. Lines of communication throughout the branches of the association must always be open in order to be successful advocates for students. This introspection creates an atmosphere that allows for positive, natural change to occur. It deepens the sensitivity of those in the organization to the ever-changing dynamic of the student body.

There are several areas that need attention in order for SGA to continue to serve and respond to student interests well. We must



photo by Wesley Dean

Garrett Fitzsimmons, sophomore

become more creative in our communication with students. We need to explore different social media like Facebook and Twitter to communicate with students. We need to continue to renew our website and utilize it more to connect with students. Initiating enhancements like blogs and video updates will allow students to quickly catch up on issues that are affecting students in that moment.

With my first tenure of service as President coming to a close, I have deepened my commitment to introspection. I am critical of myself and will build on what has worked and learn from the mistakes that I have made. One of the main tenants of my platform last year was better and more comprehensive communication with all sectors of the campus. I was able to achieve this with the Administration. Relationships formed with administrators are crucial to advancing the students' agenda and maintaining the legitimacy of SGA as the representative of students. However, there is still work that needs to be done in communicating with students. Experience and introspection are a powerful combination; the only combination to promise true change. I will continue to build my relationships across campus to insure that SGA is contributing wholeheartedly to the mission of the College and investing in the community that God has created for His purposes in this time.

Garrett Fitzsimmons

"What do you want to see in an SGA president?" I have been asking this question since I decided to run for this position. I asked this question because the primary role of the president should be to search out the needs and concerns of the students and act to resolve them. And this question did not go

unanswered. My goal is to address these student concerns as my platform for election.

The primary concern of the majority of those that I spoke with was the SGA's connection with the students. They felt that the SGA senate and cabinet have been too distant and hard to approach. Students, seeing the formalities, cliques, and general isolation of SGA in combination with the lack of information available about it, view the SGA as lofty and not down to earth. I intend on proactively ensuring that the SGA maintains a student-oriented attitude.

The next thing students were concerned about is something that I mentioned previously: the lack of knowledge concerning the SGA. It seems that everyone needs to know more about what we do and how we run. There have been multiple suggestions from students with possible solutions like having informational booklets or articles in the STAR enumerating the powers and responsibilities of the SGA.

Students were also perceptive as to why the SGA can come across as ambiguous or distant. Most people recognized that being involved with SGA means being busy. Sometimes they just don't have time to spend with students listening to their concerns or explaining to them how things work because they are students themselves. Though this cannot be completely avoided the effect can be lessened. I am a History/Political science major which is not strenuous compared other majors and I think educating myself in political science can only help me become a better president. I intend on planning out my schedule so that I have enough time to effectively represent students.

One of the main duties of the president is to maintain the relationship between the student body and the administration. I think the SGA as a whole needs to be more outspoken about students rights and concerns to the administration. This does not mean that I will be hostile toward the administration, because in most respects they want to know your concerns as much as I do. But my experience in SGA has shown me that sometimes you need to stand firm with administrative authorities when rights of the students are being infringed or their voices are being ignored or drowned out. I believe that I have a good sense of where the balance is to insure that I am being a liaison to the administration from the students while not coming across as combative.

It is difficult to express all that I would like to within the 500 word limit of this platform. But the main thing I want you to take from this

is my focus on student concerns. When I ran for president of my class my platform was similar. I ran on that I would not come into office with radical plans that I wanted to implement, but to come in with open ears to the students, listening for what they wanted to see accomplished.

Vice-President

Joshua Mertzlufft

The position of Vice President is a job that will require very careful attention as it involves quite a bit of work. Being the Vice-President involves supporting the President and presiding over the Senate. It also involves coordinating the plethora of clubs and acting as a bridge between all of them and the Student Government Association. These are jobs that I would look forward to taking on as I find myself a person that enjoys working with different groups to get things done for the better of everyone. In general, I find serving the students of Houghton College to be an enjoyable opportunity.

Over the last year, I have had the privilege to serve as the Class of 2013 President and as a senator on the college Senate. During this time, I have learned what it means to be a coordinator, a counselor, and a companion to my fellow classmates. As a senator, I served alongside administrators, faculty, staff, and students alike on several committees including the food service selection committee and on the committee that analyzed the college's financial aid situation a few months ago. I am also considered the student representative to the incoming food service company, Sodexo.

As the Vice-President, one of my dreams is to see the SGA made more visible and open to the rest of the student body. Believe it or not, some of the decisions that the twenty student senators make don't only affect the school, but even Allegany County as a whole. One way to increase the campus' voice could be to create a group of club representatives that meets to discuss what they would like to see. Another thing that I believe needs to be done is for the SGA to work more closely with the Class Cabinets. I think that it is important to work towards bringing the school together as not just the body of students but the body of Christ. I am fairly confident that I can speak for all of us running and say that we are all here to serve you, the students of Houghton College.

Platforms cont'd on page 4

SGA Election Guide: Candidate Platforms con't

Platforms written by the candidates. For more information, visit <http://campus.houghton.edu/orgs/sga/Electiontemplate.shtm>

Commissioner of Communication

Anna Austin

Commissioner of Communications: what do those words even mean? A commissioner is charged with a duty, and if it entails communication then it is difficult to imagine another task that I am more suited for. From preschool to high school, I never received a report card without some variation of the comment: *Anna is very social*, a clear euphemism for the remark: *Anna talks too much*. So, why on earth would you consider a motor-mouth sophomore for this position? It is my guarantee to revolutionize Houghton's Student Government Association technologically and relationally between SGA itself and the student and faculty bodies.

Whoever is elected as Commissioner of Communications must perform secretarial duties both in SGA meetings and when the Senate assembles. Rewind with me for a moment to my previous experience. Minor but useful qualities include my handwriting and typing experience. I have not yet met someone disappointed in my handwriting. I can type quickly and efficiently. This year, I have been fortunate enough to serve on the class of 2013 cabinet as secretary. I am organized enough to have a double major, one of which is Communications. I have designed advertisements for school events, and as I previously mentioned: I am an excellent communicator.

If I am given the privilege of election, my plans for next year are extensive. I have created a flash website for SGA: www.houghtonsga.info as well as discussion pages, info about members, etc. Since Houghton students love their networking sites, it will be linked to facebook, twitter, and various student blogs.

Please consider me for your vote this month; I will do my best to serve Houghton College and the surrounding community. Thank you for your time.

John French

Not enough people at Houghton know what the SGA is or what it does and I can't blame them. Most students do care about what is going on, but do not know how to get involved or who to ask. My goal is to ensure that students can easily find out information and have their questions answered - within the realm of the SGA and hopefully in all other areas of campus.

The duty of the Commissioner of Communications is to maintain and facilitate communication between the SGA, the student body, the administration, and the Houghton

community at large.

In this position I would have to record senate and cabinet minutes, advertise blood drives and donut days, publish monthly informational bulletins, run a survey each semester, and overall communicate what is going on to all of Houghton.

For the past two years I have been working on the website, mostly updating content as requested, as well as bringing the majority of the pages up to web standards.

I would like to make the SGA website a resource for all students, where you can look up helpful guides on using your laptop, find old SPOT videos, or sift through information that can help you decide what teacher to pick for a class. As well the standard information regarding SGA members, senate minutes, committees and clubs information, and blood drives and donut days dates should be updated and improved to be more informative.

I work to be aware of student interests and if you ever have questions, suggestions, or requests I am willing to hear them and see how we can work them out to everyone's benefit.

Commissioner of Finance

Katie Schutel/ Jaime Donnan

As candidates for SGA Commissioner of Finance, running on a split ballot due to studying abroad, we bring unique backgrounds yet a common vision for this position. With experience in leadership and finance positions, such as treasurers for clubs/organizations on and off campus, combined with business and accounting classes, we have the people and business skills necessary for this position.

Our common vision as Commissioner of Finance is to manage the SGA budget in a way that best benefits the student body. We understand the impact that this position and the actions it entails have on the activities surrounding student life. Therefore, we realize that this position requires open communication between the commissioner and the rest of the Houghton community, as well as acting with integrity when managing the funds we are entrusted with. We recognize the responsibility, dedication, and hard work needed for this task; this is a job we will not take lightly.

As business students and members of this college community, we strive to be continually learning while improving our skills and knowledge. We desire to serve in a place where our abilities best meet the needs of the

student body. We want students to feel that we are accessible and willing to listen, and help them get the money they need for their organization or event. We will work to be your financial voice in the Senate.

Shannon Emley

The purposes of Houghton's Student Government Association are to promote the growth and development of the student body, represent student interests, and provide activities and services for the students. The Commissioner of Finance plays an important role in each of these functions, specifically in the area of student funds. I believe that the student in this position has a great obligation to show true financial responsibility in overseeing SGA spending and distributing money in a manner that presents the greatest benefit to the student body. Another significant aspect of this position's duties is preparing a budget for the SGA that is dependable and works for the students. Lastly, there is a call to promote unity and openness, not only within the SGA, but also between the SGA and the students.

As a candidate for the Commissioner of Finance, I feel that I have the attributes and experience suitable for

the duties mentioned. I am majoring in both business administration and accounting, and have a sincere interest in each area. For nearly six years I have been employed at my family's supermarket. A great deal of my experience has been earned there, as I have assisted with the bookkeeping duties, handled various monetary transactions, and learned to accept increasing responsibility. I have taken part in the finance and accounting group of Houghton Student Agencies over the past two semesters, which has allowed me to work extensively with financial statements and provided hands-on experience. I sincerely believe that my experience and the knowledge I have acquired would allow me to feel comfortable managing the tasks of the Commissioner of Finance and offer the student body a representative they can trust.

Black-Eyed Susan Acoustic Café

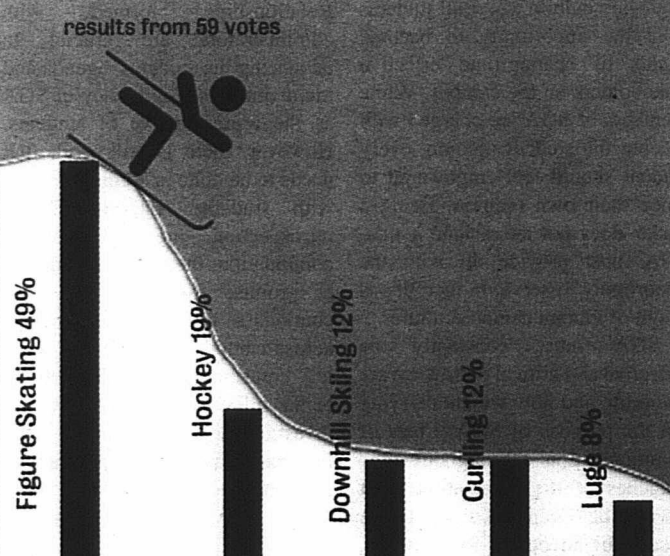
22 w main, angelica

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Folk / Rock / Experimental / Jazz

Mar 13: **George Hockbrueckner**
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Theatrical Preview: Neil Simon's *Jake's Women*

by Renee Roberts

Jake is a pretty ordinary guy; he has been married to Maggie for eight years and makes a living as a writer. Yet, as their marriage deteriorates and Maggie decides to leave, Jake relies on the imaginary conversations he has with his therapist, deceased first wife, daughter, sister, and current wife to reflect on the past and find a way to win Maggie back before it is too late.

Jake, played by Erik Mikols, is the driving force behind *Jake's Women* with his obvious energy evident in his animated movements throughout the show. Mikols said he enjoyed that Jake was "strangely relatable" to him in regard to trust issues. Jake struggles with trusting women in the play and Mikols says that he can also understand Jake's unwillingness to take risks.

Maggie, played by Jillian Parsons, offers an equally passionate performance with her character's varied emotions, ranging from "misery, giddiness, frustration, heartbreak, and seriousness," according to the actress. Her favorite

part of the role was Maggie's dynamic character and "great heels."

Perhaps the most compelling element of the play, however, was the humor tempered by the unfolding human drama. The show provides an interesting juxtaposition between the seriousness of a failing marriage with the hysterics of Jake carrying on conversations with several women in his head. And the interactions are utterly hilarious. For a cast with only one male, the performers on stage made each interaction seem natural. Mikols remarked that it was a "bit of an adjustment being the only guy, but that 'it was a fun time.'"

For the audience, the play brings together a cast of quirky characters. Mikols pointed out, "it's relatable"; the audience will recognize bits of themselves in each of the characters whether it's Jake's idealism of others or Maggie and her need for space, or any of the other handful of characters in the play that each bring their own unique issue to the proverbial table.

If you are not already convinced to spend the five bucks burning a hole in your pocket, perhaps these comments from Mikols and Parsons



photo courtesy of Nic Gunning

Jake's Women will be putting on 4 performance the weekend of March 4.

will change your mind. Mikols asserted, "I love the show, love the script. I think the humor is great and love the struggle Jake goes through. I love how the play shows how much our relationships can shape our personalities," while Parsons commented, "[a] little saucy and a lot of fun, Jake and his women promise

you an enjoyable show! Don't miss it!"

The college-produced play, *Jake's Women*, under the direction of Nic Gunning with Rachel Stowe, runs at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 4 through Saturday, March 6 with a matinee showing on Saturday at 2 p.m. ★

SPOT Leaves Audience Rolling, Some Offended

by Lauren Kososki

Another Houghton Purple and Gold week concluded on February 20 with the spirited finale of SPOT. The Spring 2010 edition consisted of the usual proven blend of skits, videos, impressions, and unashamed dancing, providing a touch of entertainment for nearly any audience member.

Hosts Alex Vitale and Josh Wallace had a clear, multi-faceted vision for this semester's SPOT performance. Seeking to constantly provide the audience with something entertaining, they made an effort to keep the action moving at all times. "We wanted to ensure the show's seamless pace so there were never any dead spaces," Vitale remarked. This desire to keep the show running smoothly led to the second part of Vitale and Wallace's vision. Rather than punctuating the acts with potentially dry and distracting commentary, the hosts themselves became a part of the show. With an emphasis on impersonation, Vitale and Wallace performed three short skits throughout the show, providing smooth transitions without breaking the amusement.

The line-up of SPOT was thoughtfully arranged, with each half of the show consisting of a balanced amount of videos, musical acts, assorted skits, and impressions. Senior Matt Stein's portrayal of various professors appealed



photo courtesy of Alex Vitale

Wallace and Vitale hosted SPOT, the conclusion to Purple and Gold week.

especially to those in the audience who, from personal experience, could affirm his accuracy of capturing mannerisms. As a whole, the video entries seemed to be crowd-pleasers as well. The guys from 4th West in Roth offered a creative rendition of a Saturday Night Live act that was so successful, it is likely that prior knowledge of the original skit was not necessary. Monica Sandreczki and Esther Shield's parody of Leona Lewis' scorching and sorrowful song "Bleeding Love" also earned laughs of approval. And then the final act: unabashed, unapologetic dancing complete with ribbons and a mini-

guitar to match the mini outfits; the type of act that is both hoped-for and feared with the approach of every SPOT. Judging by the audience's favorable reaction, however, those who had secretly hoped for it were not disappointed.

Part of the appeal of SPOT is that audience members attend with the anticipation to see certain acts that have become fixtures in the most recent SPOT performances. Senior Alex Glover, though expected to perform some sort of an original musical critique, always manages to shock the audience with something new and unpredictable. His rap

revealed yet another facet of his musical talent, as well as a side of President Mullen that has neither been imagined, nor will soon be forgotten.

Another skit that returned for an encore presentation was "The Weekend Update." The segment, "Really?!" attempted to use humor to focus on one aspect of Houghton life that apparently needs to be re-examined. The spotlight fell on "Nerf Wars" and the push to make it an official club. Although immediately met with some laughter, this skit also brought about opposition from members of the audience. Sophomore Bradley Meyers saw the act as a cheap grasp at humor at the expense of others. Meyers stated that "there was no reason to attack the people wanting this club to be realized on the grounds that their interests and pursuits are childish and a waste of time."

While some of the specific acts were not met with total approval, Vitale counts SPOT 2010 as an overall success, conceding that it isn't likely for every member of the audience to enjoy every skit. Returning to the original vision for this SPOT, he remarks that the greatest triumph was putting together a smooth, varied, and entertaining show that was unlike any previous SPOT. Cherishing a sense of overall approval, Vitale says he has "no regrets, qualms, or anxiety over the show we put on!" ★

The Gettysburg Address was 272 words...

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We want our readers to be an integral part of the conversation.

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What Would Jesus Wear? Probably Not a White T-Shirt

by Bryan Overland

At the February 2 meeting, the Student Government Association (SGA) Senate received a CEF Type II request for funding to purchase t-shirts for students to wear as a way to make a proactive stance concerning the upcoming visit by the Soulforce Q Equality Ride. The proposed t-shirts would be white with the words "I Have Died" printed on the front and "My New Identity is in Christ" printed on the back. The SGA postponed the decision on the request until their next meeting so that senators could have a chance to carefully consider the issue and get in contact with their constituents about it. At the February 16 Senate meeting, the request was again brought up and discussed. Student Martin Hegeman explained the details of the request. The request was put to a vote and failed: 6 votes in favor and 11 against. I was not present at either of these meetings, but I have talked to people who were present, in addition to reviewing the meetings' minutes and studying the three-page document that was presented along with the request for funding. All these documents are available upon request through the SGA. After failing to receive SGA funding, the students behind this movement have decided to provide blank t-shirts to students so that they can write the message on it themselves.

There is something wrong here. Don't misunderstand me; I have no problem with protest, and wearing a t-shirt emblazoned with words is an acceptable form of free speech. I am not saying that any sort of protest against the Equality Ride is wrong. Neither do I have a problem with the words

themselves which are being written on the shirts. These words should be essential to every Christian. I do have a problem, however, when those protesting are doing so as representatives of the whole Body of Christ.

The three-page explanation presented before the senate states that the goal of the t-shirts is "...to represent without fear to the Houghton student body that there are those who will gladly make a statement of faith and be willing to tell any inquirer how Christ has transformed their life, something that a homosexual cannot answer concretely. This is an avenue of response, a conversation starter and an invitation to share one's walk with Christ." This reasoning may appear noble, but I find it to be divisive and even offensive.

I find fault with the claim that "a homosexual cannot answer concretely" a question about "how Christ has transformed their life." According to this, Christ cannot have any sort of concrete transformative effect in the lives of people with homosexual orientations. This is not the case. Just because a person has a homosexual orientation does not preclude Christ from working in that person in a transformative way. I struggle and have sin in my life, despite the efforts I make; "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). I

would say that Christ has moved in powerful ways in my life in spite of the sin I still live with.

Another danger of the shirts is the divisive nature they carry. On the day people are wearing the shirts, what does that mean about the people not wearing them? Are they not real Christians? Are they just people afraid to share the transformative power of Christ in their lives? Are they people

Consider how Christ interacted with people identified as unclean in His society. He sure didn't use a t-shirt to get his message across. He met people and talked with them; he went to their houses and ate with them.

who don't need another Houghton t-shirt stuffed in their dresser? These shirts will serve to separate-not bring together. At this point, I want the proposers of the idea to consider how Christ interacted with people identified as unclean in His society. He sure didn't use a t-shirt to get his message across. He met people and talked with them; he went to their houses and ate with them.

That is how Christ dealt with the unclean. He dealt with those obsessed with the law in a different manner. The proposition states, "We as a community and Student Body must under no circumstances allow ourselves to stand for anything but the truth in Scripture, since it is a law given to us and not created by us, and our mandate is to obey it," and later on, "This isn't the Heterosexual's response to the Homosexual Christian, this is the Christian response to those who are deceived." No matter how much you say discussion

is your goal, all discussion is precluded by such a statement. If you declare yourself to have a corner on all understanding of absolute truth, then everyone else is wrong; discussion is pointless because you think you already have the answers.

The proclamation being made by the t-shirts, that "I have died and my new life is in Christ," is a proclamation that should be actively made by all Christians. Such a message should be written on our hands, faces, tongues, minds, and hearts. That is the identity of a Christian. Christians should be living their lives in ways which make this message unmistakable. If we get to a point where we need a t-shirt to send this message, there must be something wrong with the way we communicate it in our actual lives.

Soulforce's website explains, "Our goal is to carefully and collectively examine the intersection wherein faith meets gender and sexuality. Such discourse, especially when it affirms the beauty of our differences, plays an essential role in creating a safe learning and living environment for everyone." Such a statement, regardless of your personal views, is much more conducive to discussion than claiming to own "the Christian response to those who are deceived."

To those who are behind this idea: Please be aware that despite the positive and helpful message you are trying to send, you are also, most likely unintentionally, sending some very divisive and offensive messages.

Bryan Overland is a Junior English and Philosophy Major

From the Editor's Desk...

It's Not Like It Is the End of the World

by Monica Sandreczki

A couple of weeks ago at church, I was putting some sugar in my coffee at the snack table in the atrium when I overheard a couple of men talking about the recent earthquake in Chile.

"Did you hear about the earthquake in Chile? It was an 8.8 magnitude quake. And with the earthquake in Haiti recently—these are obvious signs of the end times. There's no doubt about it. It's fulfilling prophecy," one of them said.

I didn't know who either of them was, but I had to interject. I couldn't help myself.

"Whoa now. I don't think you can seriously use two earthquakes as definite indicators of the end times. Natural disasters happen all the time," I said.

"Yes, but, according to a blog on paranoid_christian.net, earthquakes have become more frequent showing that we're closer to the end times than we've been in any other point during history," he replied.

With an argument like that, who

could doubt?

I took some amount of creative license with that anecdote, but this is not unlike many conversations and viewpoints I've heard so many times before. Can we start by clearing the air that we are obviously closer to the end times than ever before because with each passing day, we're getting closer and closer. Despite what one may think, this is not some divine revelation.

I recently found a few websites detailing all of the evidence we have of how "biblical prophecy" has been fulfilled in light of recent natural disasters and political elections. Especially with the recent earthquakes in Chile and Haiti, many of these sites are citing Mark 13 which talks about Jesus' disciples asking about signs of the end and Jesus responding with indicators like many people coming bearing the name "Christ," there being many wars and "nation rising against

nation" and "earthquakes in diverse places and famines" (Mark 13:1-8) (I wouldn't say that two countries exactly fit the bill for "diverse places").

According to these websites, this "comprehensive, flawless prophecy" from Jesus, tells us that "earthquakes speak for God" because "earthquakes are a wake-up call for us to repent and get right with God—a warning of impending judgment and a call to righteousness."

It is extremely dangerous to name God as the primary actor behind natural disasters, accidental events that cost the lives of thousands of people. That's blaming God for the loss of these lives, when the cause is really from a slip on fault lines, and audaciously implying that we know God well enough to be able to determine what is

His divine intervention and judgment. We don't need an earthquake to call us to righteousness. How can we associate something so horrific as an earthquake with our divine

call to living righteous lives, which has been made extremely evident to us?

Furthermore, what is the use of trying to pinpoint the arrival of the end times? Shouldn't we be living each day as if the end of this world is near? What we think about the end times and what we think we know about the end times has no sway over what will actually happen and shouldn't affect how we are living our lives today. If we are passing our days with the mindset of wanting to be protected during the end times, perhaps we're not really living our lives in the imitation of Christ. Instead of frittering away these days consumed with what's to come, especially in light of all of this recent "evidence" of the last days, we could be praying for the Chileans and Haitians or donating money to organizations that have people on the ground or go on a mission trip, or raise awareness with friends, or in short, try to make a dent at ameliorating the physical situation.

Monica Sandreczki is a Sophomore French and Intercultural Studies Major and is News Editor

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

After reading or scanning most of the Star's articles and letters on the general topic of homosexuality during the last couple of months, I'd like to make a few observations.

First, it should be recognized by all sides that misconceptions are omnipresent; there is no infallible human. Moreover, we must make no mistake in recognizing that *theory* is found in both theology and science!

Aspects and causations of homosexual orientation, preference, and action assumed by one side are not necessarily to be assumed. Those of opposing mindsets on a question must acknowledge that *both* sides have preconceived ideas. If each side can further admit that its own presumptions should be subjected to scrutiny—perhaps over a period of *years*—to see whether they will ultimately stand, then helpful dialogue may occur.

Published rhetoric of the Equality Riders' spokesperson

gives me more confidence in this group's intent than their bus's inflamed declamations or the bias inherent in their existence and mission. (Yes, they have a bias, too, as was seen in the final quote in the Feb. 5 *Star* article, p. 3 . . . and the hierarchical order of the Star's online survey choices could also indicate bias, despite the alphabetical-order veneer!)

One person's "safe place for discussion" may, in the mind of another, rear its head as a threat; for yet another, equally thoughtful person, the whole discussion enterprise may be a time-waster. The choice to discuss, or not to engage, a difficult and divisive issue doesn't necessarily mean anything about the person's reasonableness, spiritual moorings, or ultimate destiny. In other words, it isn't necessarily appropriate to denigrate a person who doesn't want to spend time discussing homosexuality. Speaking for myself, I'm generally willing to discuss deep or sensitive matters, but the mere engagement doesn't make me a better person than the person who has reached more advanced understandings, or different ones, and who doesn't find the need to discuss. Said yet another way: an open mind is generally desirable, but openness is not the end-all and should not be

idolized.

Human existence appears more complex to me as years pass . . . these days, I am less compelled to action (or to change of mind) by human arguments than by recent discoveries, for example, in the text of Mark's gospel. May I just say that the inspired purpose evident in Mark's textual structure is awe-inspiring . . . and I prefer to invest my heart and mind more deeply, and at more length, in such

things.

When all is said and done, the Christ stands. And for all who struggle in this life—which is of course all of us—it is in Jesus the Christ that we find the power to act as described in the epistles.

- Brian Casey, Assistant Professor of Conducting and Horn

For more Letters to the Editor, visit <http://www.houghtonstar.com>

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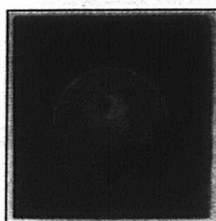
MONICA LORD



Gregory's Leaves, print



Mother and Child, acrylic



The Music of the Spheres, print

artist OF THE WEEK

Note from the artist: While I love painting, drawing, and printing, I enjoy any sort of creativity. Music consumes most of my time, but I think even deceptively simple forms of creativity, like baking or growing a plant, are invaluable. The idea that humans have the ability to create and therefore mirror a divine attribute of the God that formed the universe is fascinating to me. When I make something with my hands I feel I am one step closer to becoming a complete person: I am fulfilling at least a bit of my purpose of existence by doing something that is inherently a part of my being as a human, placed there as a reflection of God's own creativity. Understanding what music and art actually are is also intriguing to me—what separates music from mere sound, and how do I know when a painting is “art” and not just a picture or display of technical skill? I may never be able to answer these questions, but I think they are worth a lifetime of the pursuit of creativity in order to come as close as possible to the answer.



Young Child, acrylic

March is the only month containing the letter H. In this puzzle, the letter H is conspicuous...by its absence...in certain entries. For each of the seven bolded clues, you'll get a suitable answer by removing an “H” from a common phrase.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| Across | 59 “Go away!” | 24 Famous 19th-century Apache |
| 1 Residence | 62 Guideposts | 26 Another name for a shepherd? |
| 6 11-time Gold-Glove shortstop Vizquel | founder Norman Vincent | 28 Web site help page, for short |
| 10 Get out of Dodge | 64 Simple rhyme scheme | 30 Black-and-white “sandwich” |
| 14 More level-headed | 65 ___ stick | 31 Fervor |
| 15 Possess | 66 The esophagus? | 32 ___ Squalor (“Lemony Snicket” villainess) |
| 16 Simpson who’s a vegetarian | 68 Summon | 33 Electrical measuring units |
| 17 Movie about monkey BFFs? | 69 Quick barber-shop job | 34 Radish or carrot, e.g. |
| 19 Browser-history collection | 70 The “N” in TNT | 35 Civil Rights icon |
| 20 React positively to a | 71 Abruptly fired | Parks |
| 21-Across | 72 Captain Hook’s henchman | 37 “Heroes” ainer |
| 21 Standup guy? | 73 Aggressive wannabe | 40 Nautical note warning of possible spoilage? |
| 22 Head set? | | 42 “Pipe down!” |
| 23 Batting next | Down | 45 Canine spy mission partners? |
| 25 No longer a minor | 1 Dog on “The Jetsons” | 47 “Hedda Gabler” playwright |
| 27 Klutz | 2 Low-ranked nobleman | 50 Get equipped for looming conflict |
| 29 Slimy shoreline deposit | 3 Year in the reign of Caesar Augustus | 53 “Gymnopodies” composer Erik ___ |
| 33 First hockey player to win SI’s Sportsman of the Year | 4 Big name in tractors | 55 Ham ___ |
| 36 Bright shade of blue | 5 Chapter in history | 56 Share a border with |
| 38 Goey campfire treats | 6 Birthplace of 7 U.S. presidents | 57 Precious oyster material |
| 39 Backwoods booze | 7 Igneous rock, once | 58 Everglades reptile, for short |
| 41 Peyton and Eli Manning, e.g.: abbr. | 8 Tries not to meet | 59 Org. encouraging adoptions |
| 43 Second-string players | 9 Coast Guard exploits | 60 Many a Bigfoot photo |
| 44 Art made with tiles | 10 What a sad sax player might make? | 61 Check out rudely |
| 46 Like a fashionista | 11 Well-ventilated | 63 Popsicle flavor |
| 48 Cry at a bullfight | 12 Lilliput in “Gulliver’s Travels,” e.g. | 67 Countrywide econ. yardstick |
| 49 What paparazzi might photograph at a Hollywood cocktail party? | 13 Girl from Glasgow | |
| 51 “True Blood” TV network | 18 Longtime Olympics sportscaster Jim ___ | |
| 52 Clock innards, partly | | |
| 54 Pounced | | |

Congratulations to last week’s Sudoku Challenge winner, Nathalie van der Rijst! Stop by the Star office to receive your prize.

CLUES

crossword CHALLENGE

Bring your finished crosswords to the STAR office to claim **TWO BUFFALO SABRES TICKETS** for thier upcoming game against the Dallas Stars on 3/10!

Puzzle constructor Brad Wilber ('91) is a member of the library faculty. His crosswords appear regularly in the New York Times and Los Angeles Times. He recently made his fourth consecutive guest appearance at the annual American Crossword Puzzle Tournament in New York City.

